

AFRICANA-MELANATED WOMANISM SYLLABUS

Engl. 4420/Black Studies—Contemp. Africana-Melanated Womanist Writers

Class: Tuesdays/Thursdays, 11:00-12:15

Instructor: Dr. Clenora Hudson-Weems, Professor of English

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**Websites: <http://missouri.edu/~engchw/>
www.africanawomanism.com**

Course Description, Rationale, Goals and Objectives:

English 4420, Africana-Melanated Womanism, is an undergraduate and graduate course specifically designed to broaden one's scope from a family-centered perspective in the area of issues, recurring themes and/or trends in modern Africana-Melanated women fiction, highlighting its applicability to our everyday lives worldwide. An in depth study of the lives and selected works by 5 leading Africana-Melanated women writers—Pre-Africana-Melanated Womanist, Zora Neale Hurston (*Their Eyes Were Watching God*); African American/Caribbean Novelist, Paule Marshall (*Praisesong for the Widow*); Nobel Prize-Winning author, Toni Morrison (*Beloved*); Popular Cultural Novelist, Terry McMillan (*Disappearing Acts*); and Former Rap Star Artist, Sister Souljah (*No Disrespect*)--will be enhanced by careful readings of 2 books from the Africana Womanism Trilogy—*Africana Womanism: Reclaiming Ourselves* and *Africana Womanist Literary Theory*--as well as readings of scholarly articles by and about the various authors. Methodologically, we will be highlighting the prioritization of Race, Class & Gender, a key feature in this paradigm, committed to the empowerment and equality of all, rather than a gender exclusive agenda (female-centered, female-empowerment) so characteristic of other female based constructs. Students will be introduced to an authentic theoretical concept and methodology, Africana-Melanated Womanism, and will be applying Africana-Melanated Womanist theory to the 5 Africana-Melanated womanist novels, which clearly reflect our daily lives throughout the world.

Meshed together, the primary and secondary reading materials, and other media materials, will aid students in refining their own individual concepts

about not only the writings of the individual authors, but about critical current issues, particularly as they relate to Africana-Melanated women and their families and communities. The ultimate objective of the course, then, is to enhance one's knowledge and appreciation of Africana-Melanated women and their interconnection with their families (men and children) in particular and Africana life and culture (historically and currently) in general.

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to yet another theoretical construct, in addition to the widely known female-based theory—Feminism. Africana-Melanated Womanism is an authentic paradigm designed specifically for all women of African descent, and by extension, for all men and women in general. It demonstrates that we are all IN IT TOGETHER!

Textbooks and Course Materials:

Primary Sources (Required)

Hudson-Weems, Clenora--*Africana Womanism: Reclaiming Ourselves* (Bedford Publishers, 1993—TRANSLATED INTO GREEK

_____--*Africana Womanist Literary Theory* (Africa World Press, 2004)—TRANSLATED INTO PORTUGUESE

Hurston, Zora Neale--*Their Eyes Were Watching God* (University of Illinois Press)

Marshall, Paule—*Parisesong for the Widow* (Dutton)

McMillan, Terry--*Disappearing Acts* (Knopf)

Morrison, Toni --*Beloved* (Alfred A. Knopf)

Souljah, Sister--*No Disrespect* (Vintage Books)

Secondary Sources (Selections from these Pieces are required)

Bonetti, Kay--*The American Audio Prose Library*--Interview with Toni Morrison (1980s); Interview with Clenora Hudson-Weems (1995)

Hill, Patricia Liggins--General editor, *Call & Response: The Riverside Anthology of the African American literary Tradition* (Houghton Mifflin, 1998)

Samuels, Wilfred & Clenora Hudson-Weems, *Toni Morrison* (Prentice-Hall, 1990)

Web Page Materials—Articles on Africana Womanism

**From *Africana Womanism: Reclaiming Ourselves*
Media Coverage (Newspaper, TV, etc.) on subject**

Hand Out (s)—“Africana-Melanated Womanism”

***You Tube*--on Africana Womanism (Bowdoin College, 2015) & *Voices Unheard: A Conversation within Feminism & Womanism* (U of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, 2015)**

Videos—*Africana Womanism* (Southern Utah U, 2007)

--*Africana Womanism versus Black Feminism*--Barbara Christian and Clenora Hudson-Weems (Lincoln U, June 1993)

***The Issue Is* (St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, June 1994)**

Grade Determination

3 + unexcused absences results in lower class grade, a minimum of 1 grade level.*

--Class Participation 10 %

--Oral Report 15 %

--Pop Quizzes 15 %

--Mid-Term 25 %

--Final Research Paper/Annotated Bibliography (7-10 pages): 35 %

If you anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need to make arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please let me know as soon as possible.

Schedule

Weeks 1-15:

1. **Course Overview Course Requirements—Class Participation; Oral Reports; Quizzes and Exams; the Research Paper/Annotated Bibliography--Documentation, etc.**

Google Africana Womanism; peruse Web Page Materials on Africana Womanism; consult the following Africana Womanism Mizzou Database:

<http://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/resultsadvanced?sid=3d2cd82a-7cc8-4400-9882-150359ef699f%40sessionmgr101&vid=6&hid=121&bquery=africana+womanism&bdata=JmNsaTA9RIQxJmNsdjA9WSZ0eXBIPTEmc2lOZT1lZHMtbGl2ZSZzY29wZT1zaXRl>

2. *Africana Womanism: Reclaiming Ourselves*—ON WEBSITE—Foreword (pp. xvii-xviii) and Chapter I (pp. 17-32)

Africana Womanist Literary Theory—Chapter II (pp. 22-32)

Bonetti, Kay--*American Audio Prose Library*—Interview--Hudson-Weems

3. Hand out—“**Terminology Evolution—Africana-Melanated Womanism**”—originally scheduled for Closing Plenary for the March 2017 Oxford U Roundtable Symposium; it is to be delivered at the 2nd International Africana Womanism Conference, U of Zimbabwe, October 2018.

You Tube--Africana Womanism, Bowdoin College, SEPT 2015

4. ***Africana Womanist Literary Theory***—Preliminaries; Chapter I (pp. 1-21)
Chapters III (pp. 33-50); Chapter IV (pp. 51-63)
5. ***Africana Womanist Literary Theory***--Chapter V (pp. 65-77)
Chapter VI (pp. 79-97); Chapter X—Conclusion-Afterword (pp. 151-139)
Video--*The Issue Is*--Video on Africana Womanism
6. ***Call & Response***--Women's Voices of Self-Definitions, pp. 1376-1381

Oral Reports:

Alice Walker—Introduction to “In Search of Our Mothers’ Gardens,”
(On “Womanism”)--Handout

Clenora Hudson-Weems—“Africana Womanism: An Historical, Global
Perspective for Women of African Descent,” *C & R*, p. 1812

Barbara Smith—“Toward a Black Feminist Criticism,” *C & R*

bell hooks—“Black Women: Shaping Feminist Theory,” *C & R*, p. 1844

Video--Southern Utah U. Convocation Address on Africana Womanism

7. **Oral Reports:**

Linda Ann Johnson—“Claiming/Reclaiming Africana Womanist
Literary Texts throughout the African Diaspora,” Doctoral Dissertation
(UMC, 2006)

Other Africana Womanist Critics (Search Internet, etc.)

Video--Television Interview with Dr. Barbara Christian and Dr. Clenora

**Hudson-Weems on Black Feminism versus Africana Womanism (1995)—
On Webpage**

8. Quiz on Hurston’s *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

**“Hurston’s *Their Eyes Were Watching God*: Seeking Wholeness” in
Africana Womanism: Reclaiming Ourselves, pp. 81-91 (On Website)**

Oral Reports

9. Hurston Cont.

Mid-Term Exam

10. Paule Marshall—Bio Headnotes (*Call and Response*)

Oral Reports

**Marshall’s *Praisesong for the Widow*: Authentic Existence in *Africana
Womanism*, pp. 105-117**

11. Toni Morrison—Bio Headnotes (*Call and Response*, pp. 1694-1699)

Quiz on *Beloved*

From Samuels & Hudson-Weems in *Toni Morrison*, pp. 1-30; pp. 94-138

**“Morrison’s *Beloved*: All Parts Equal,” Chapter VIII in *Africana
Womanist Literary Theory*, pp. 115-126**

12. Morrison Oral Reports

***Africana Womanist Literary Theory*, Movie Review, Chapter IX, 127-130**

Library Research Instructional Class—Dr. Paula Roper

13. Quiz on McMillan's *Disappearing Acts*

McMillan Oral Reports

"McMillan's *Disappearing Acts: In it Together*," *Africana Womanism: Reclaiming Ourselves*, pp. 133-142 (On Website)

14. McMillan Oral Reports Cont.

Quiz on Sister Souljah's *No Disrespect*

Oral Reports

"Sister Souljah's *No Disrespect: The Africana Womanist Dilemma*," *Africana Womanist Literary Theory*, pp. 99-113

15. Sister Souljah's Oral Reports Cont.

Research Paper or Annotated Bibliography Due; Course Evaluations



Africana Womanism: "I Got Your Back, Boo"

Don't you know by now, girl, we're all In It Together?
Family-Centrality--that's it; we're going nowhere without
the other.

That means the men, the women, and children, too,

Truly collectively working—"I got your back, Boo."

***Racism* means the violation of our constitutional rights,
Which creates on-going legal and even physical fights;
This 1st priority for humankind is doing what it must do,
Echoing our 1st lady, Michelle—"I got your back, Boo."**

***Classism* is the hoarding of financial privileges,
Privileges we must all have now in pursuit of happiness.
Without a piece of the financial pie, we're doomed to have
a coup,
Remember--protect the other—"I got your back, Boo."**

***Sexism*, the final abominable sin of female subjugation,
A battle we must wage to restore our family relations.
All forms of sin inevitably fall under 1 of the 3 offenses.
Africana Womanism—"I got your back, Boo"—corrects
our common senses.**

***Clenora Hudson-Weems, PhD*
*"I Got Your Back, Boo," 2009***