SYLLABUS

English 4420/Black Studies—Contemporary Africana Womanist Writers
Class: Tuesday/Thursday, 11:00-12:15
Instructor: Dr. Clenora Hudson-Weems, Professor of English
Phone: (573) 882-2783 (o); 573.777.7764 (h); 917-715-2965 (c)
Websites:
  http://missouri.edu/~engchw/
  www.africanawomanism.com

Course Description, Rationale, Goals and Objectives:

English 4420, Africana 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 women fiction, highlighting its applicability to our everyday lives worldwide. An in depth study of the lives and selected works by five (5) leading Africana women writers—Noted Pre-Africana 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 critical readings of two (2) books from the Africana Womanism Trilogy, as well as scholarly articles by and about the various authors. Methodologically, we will be highlighting the prioritization of Race, Class & Gender, a key feature in this powerful 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 Womanism, and will be applying Africana Womanist theory to these Africana womanist novels, which clearly reflect our daily lives throughout the world.

Meshed together, the primary and secondary reading materials, as well as 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 women and their families and communities. The ultimate objective of the course, then, is to enhance one's knowledge and appreciation of Africana 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,” which is referenced in the Africana Womanism books. Africana 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, men, women and children, In It Together!

Textbooks and Course Materials:

Primary Sources (Required)


______________________________--*Africana Womanism & Race & Gender in the Presidential Candidacy of Barack Obama* (AH, 2008; 2016)

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*--Interviews with Toni Morrison, and Clenora Hudson-Weems


Samuels, Wilfred D. and Clenora Hudson-Weems--*Toni Morrison* (Prentice-Hall, 1990)

Web Page Materials—Articles on Africana Womanism

Videos of presentations, including You Tube, on Africana Womanism (several)

Media Coverage (Newspaper, TV, etc.) on Africana Womanism

Grade Determination

3 or more unexcused absences will result in lowering class grade a minimum of 1 grade level.*

--Class Participation 10 %
--Oral Report 10 %
--Pop Quizzes 15 %
--Mid-Term 30 %
--Final Research Paper/Annotated Bibliography (7-10 pages): 35 %

Schedule

Weeks:

1. Course Overview Course Requirements, the Research Paper/Annotated Bibliography--Documentation, etc.

   Web Page Materials/Articles on Africana Womanism--“Africana Womanism and the Critical Need for Africana Theory and Thought”
2. *Africana Womanist Literary Theory*—Preliminaries; Chapter I, pp. 1-21; Chapter II, pp. 23-32; Chapter III, pp. 33-50

3. *Africana Womanist Literary Theory*—Chapter IV, pp. 51-63; Chapter V, pp. 65-77; Chapter VI, pp. 79-97; Conclusion; Afterthought

4. Videos (2) on Africana Womanism Presentations—*The Issue Is*
   --Southern Utah U. Conversation Address on Africana Womanism

5. *Africana Womanism & Race & Gender in the Presidential Candidacy of Barack Obama*—Foreword, Preface & Introduction; Chapters 2, 3, 6

6. *Africana Womanism & Race & Gender in the Presidential Candidacy of Barack Obama*—Chapters 7 & 8; Chapter 11; Conclusion; Afterthought

7. Video—Television Interview with Dr. Barbara Christian and Dr. Clenora Hudson-Weems on Black Feminism versus Africana Womanism
   
   *Call & Response (C & R)*—Women's Voices of Self-Definitions, pp. 1376-1381
   
   Hudson-Weems—“Africana Womanism: An Historical, Global Perspective for Women of African Descent,” p. 1812
   
   Barbara Smith—“Toward a Black Feminist Criticism,” p. 1816
   
   bell hooks—“Black Women: Shaping Feminist Theory,” p. 1844

8. Bonetti, Kay—*American Audio Prose Library*—Interview—Hudson-Weems
   
   Zora Neale Hurston (*Call and Response*-pp. 942-946)
   
   Quiz on Hurston’s *Their Eyes Were Watching God*
   
   Hurston’s *Their Eyes Were Watching God*: Seeking Wholeness in *Africana Womanism*, pp. 81-91 (or Web Page)
9. Library Class on Internet Source Documentation—Dr. Paula Roper

10. Quiz on Paule Marshall’s *Praisesong for the Widow*

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

    Oral Reports

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

    Quiz on *Beloved*

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

    Oral Reports

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

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

    Bonetti, Kay—*American Audio Prose Library*—Interview—T. Morrison

13. Terry McMillan (*Call and Response*, pp. 1852-1855)

    Quiz on *Disappearing Acts*

    McMillan’s *Disappearing Acts*: In It Together in *Africana Womanism & Race & Gender in the Presidential Candidacy of Barack Obama* (Appendix IV)

    Oral Reports

14. Quiz on Sister Souljah’s *No Disrespect*

    Sister Souljah’s *No Disrespect*: The Africana Womanist Dilemma in
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.

By Dr. Clenora Hudson-Weems
Conceptualizer of African Womanism