

**AML 6357 SECTION 1G32**  
**WST 6935 SECTION 094F**  
**Black Women Writers and Black Nationalism**  
**Revised Final**

Dr. Debra Walker King  
Fall 2013 - M 9-11<sup>th</sup> periods (4-7 pm)  
Class Turlington 4112

Office Hrs by appointment:  
M 6-8<sup>th</sup> periods  
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**Description:** This course explores the challenges, voices, and place of Black women in the discourses of the Black Nationalist and Black Arts Movements of the 1960s-70s with some review of more recent political and social writings. Using Madhu Dubey's *Black Women Novelists & the Nationalist Aesthetic* and Patricia Hill Collin's *From Black Power to Hip Hop: Racism, Nationalism and Feminism* as sites of reflection, we will read, discuss, and analyze materials representing both the theory and praxis of the Black Arts Movement and Black Nationalism.

**Objective:** The class will address questions such as: what direction did black women writers choose to take within the Black arts and Civil Rights movement? What was their relationship to the concept of a Black Aesthetic? How did they negotiate the popular black and feminist sociological and psychological discourses of the time and currently? Was/is there a black feminist aesthetic? If so how was/is it defined and by whom? If not, why not?

**Format:** Class sessions include lectures, discussions, and student presentations.

**Required Texts**

Toni Cade Bambara, *The Black Woman: An Anthology*, (1970)  
Toni Cade Bambara, *The Salt Eaters* (1981)  
Patricia Hill Collins, *From Black Power to Hip Hop: Racism, Nationalism, and Feminism* (2006)  
Madhu Dubey, *Black Women Novelists & the Nationalist Aesthetic* (1994)  
Nikki Giovanni, *Black Feeling, Black Talk, Black Judgment* (1968)  
Gayl Jones, *Corregidora* ((1975)  
Paule Marshall, *The Chosen Place, The Timeless People* (1969)  
Toni Morrison, *Sula* (1973)  
Assata Shakur, *Assata: An Autobiography* (1987)  
Ntozake Shange, *For Colored Girls ...* (1975)  
Alice Walker, *Meri dan* (1976)

## COURSE CALENDAR

WK 1: August 26

Introduction: “Defining a Black Nationalist Aesthetic”

WK 2: September 2 —NO CLASS ( Read for discussion next class session-with *Salt Eaters*)

Toni Cade Bambara, *The Black Woman: An Anthology*, (1970)

WK 3 : September 9

Toni Cade Bambara, *The Salt Eaters* (1981)

WK 4: September 16

Nikki Giovanni, *Black Feeling, Black Talk, Black Judgment* (1968)

**Remember: the first set of panel papers for respondent review are due today.**

WK 5: September 23

Paule Marshall, *The Chosen Place, The Timeless People* (1969)

**1<sup>st</sup> Papers (Panelists 1 and 21** 15 min. each with respondent (#5 ) Q&A to follow

WK 6: September 30

Toni Morrison, *Sula* (1973)

**1<sup>st</sup> Papers (Panelists 3 and 41** 15 min. each with respondent (#1) Q&A to follow

WK 7: October 7

Gayl Jones, *Corregidora* ((1975)

**1<sup>st</sup> Papers (Panelists 51** 15 min. each with respondent (#2) Q&A to follow

WK 8: October 14

Ntozake Shange, *For Colored Girls ...* (1975)

**2<sup>nd</sup> Papers (Panelists 3 and 41** 15 min. each with respondent (#4) Q&A to follow

WK 9: October 21

Alice Walker, *Meridan* (1976)

**2<sup>nd</sup> Papers (Panelists 2 and 51** 15 min. each with respondent (#3) Q&A to follow

WK 10: October 28

Assata Shakur, *Assata: An Autobiography* (1987)

**2<sup>nd</sup> Papers (Panelists 41** 15 min. with respondent (#2) Q&A to follow

WK 11 November 4

Madhu Dubey, *Black Women Novelists & the Nationalist Aesthetic* (1994)

**3<sup>rd</sup> assignment:** Using this text as a starting point, prepare reflection comments (one page) ending with a provocative discussion question.

WK 12: November 11 Veterans Day—No Class

WK 13: November 18

Patricia Hill Collins, *From Black Power to Hip Hop: Racism, Nationalism, and Feminism* (2006)

WK 14: November 25 Writing Day—No Class

WK 15: December 2 Course Summary

Seminar Papers (**due in my email box by 11:58 pm**) and in class Reports (seminar paper research sharing)

#### GRADE DISTRIBUTION

• **35%: First** each student is asked to write two (2) **Panel Papers** and present them to the class. Panels will be assigned during the first week of class. If you enter the seminar after the first class, see me. These papers should be no more than six (6) typed, double spaced pages for the fifteen minute panel presentations—offer a close reading of the assigned texts. Presentations will use a conference format. Please note time limits.

**Second**, each student is responsible for responding to two panel papers orally. By this, I mean respondents do not have to submit a written paper to me. I want you to lead discussion of the panel papers; do not read a written statement. You may use notes during your in-class discussion of both the papers and their relationship to each other, course objectives, and other texts or papers read thus far. Respondents' comments should highlight points of panel insightfulness as well as personal points of agreement and disagreement, additions or enhancements. Time limit—ten minutes.

Because there are respondents, each panel member must complete assigned papers (precis or drafts) one week in advance of the presentation date so respondents have an opportunity to prepare for the session. To ensure things move smoothly, please post respondent prep materials via email to the assigned respondents **by 1:30 the Monday preceding the primary discussion of your assigned text** (see schedule above). Late paper or draft submissions will be penalized by immediate **letter grade reduction** (no exceptions). If you cannot meet the deadline on the due day, make arrangements for the submission with me or a fellow student.

I expect these papers to reflect serious contemplation on the part of each panel member. The focus of your close reading is up to you, but you must address the reading material assigned. Send your panel papers to me by 1:30 on the due date via email.

**The third part** of this assignment, scheduled for November 4<sup>th</sup>, is to read the assigned text for that week, think about it in the light of what we have discussed while studying all the texts read thus far. Students are asked to form a thesis or brief commentary concluding with a thought provoking question for class contemplation and discussion. Submit the one page paper at the end of class for grading. This assignment may be quite helpful in deciding how you frame or approach your seminar paper.

• 65%: Seminar Paper. The content of this twenty-five page, formal paper should emphasize some aspect of the course focus and objectives, using any of the required texts. Students may develop their panel paper(s).

#### Preparation:

All readings must be prepared and ready for each class session.

### **Audits:**

Students auditing this course must attend class regularly and participate. I require an entrance paper (3 pages—due September 2nd) and an exit paper (3-5 pages—due December 2nd—discussing what you learned in this seminar). These requirements must be fulfilled in order to earn a “satisfactory” audit grade. See me for further instructions.

### **Course Policies**

1) “FATAL ERRORS” POLICY: Students must meet high standards in writing. To this end, all written assignments must meet minimal presentation criteria to be acceptable. These standards address spelling, punctuation, format and basic grammar. The term *Fatal Errors* refers to formal writing errors of form. Specifically, they include the following and will be identified in evaluated written assignments by error number:

- 4.1. Each different word misspelled,
- 4.2. Each sentence fragment,
- 4.3. Each run-on sentence or comma splice,
- 4.4. Each mistake in capitalization,
- 4.5. Each serious error in punctuation that obscures meaning, including errors in the use or failure to use italics and quotation marks,
- 4.6. Each error in verb tense or subject/verb agreement,
- 4.7. Each instance of ending a sentence with a preposition,
- 4.8. Each improper citation, or lack of citation, where one is needed
- 4.9. Each misuse of words (*who* for *that* or unwarranted use of clichés, for instance),
- 4.10. Poor Paragraphing or lack of paragraphing,
- 4.11. Lack of conformity with assignment format.

Papers with more than **three (3) fatal errors on any one page** or more than **seven (7) for the entire document** will be returned to the student and will suffer a half letter grade deduction. Only one resubmission is allowed. Penalties for final course papers (where there is no time for a resubmission) will be based on the relative importance of the assignment to the determination of the final course grade. This policy applies to all assignments, excluding entrance cards and portfolio progress grading.

2) CELL PHONES AND COMPUTERS: Cell phones must be muted or turned off during the class session. If an emergency occurs and you have to respond to calls or texts, please leave the classroom. Computers (iPads or other electronics) are allowed for note taking, access to eBooks and presentations only. Anyone using a computer for any other purpose will be asked to deliver the device to me for retrieval after class. You may record the class (presentations, for instance) with my permission only.

- 3) PAPERS: All papers must be typed and double spaced using the 8 1/2 x 11 page layouts with one inch margins all around. Use Courier or New York Times font at 12 point size. Documentation and form should follow the MLA style manual. Number all pages after the first within the upper right margin.
- 4) PAPER MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITIES: Students are responsible for maintaining duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course and retaining all returned, graded work until the semester is over. Should the need arise for a resubmission of papers or a review of graded papers; it is the student's responsibility to have and to make available this material.
- 5) GRADE DISPUTES: Questions about assigned grades are acceptable during my office hours only. If my written responses do not address your concerns, I will explain why a grade was earned. With the exception of miscalculation or posting error, I will not consider grade changes. **Please do not ask.** You may consult Professor Stephanie Smith, Associate Chair, for grade appeals, however. Please note: appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.
- 6) MISSED CLASS SESSIONS: Make up work for approved absences must be addressed within one week of your return. See me for submission deadlines for missed work within this time frame.
- 7) FINAL PAPER SUBMISSION GUIDELINES: This assignment **must be submitted electronically**. Microsoft Word compatible documents only please. Unreadable documents will be returned ungraded. Submit your final project via email ([dwking@ufl.edu](mailto:dwking@ufl.edu)) by 11:58 pm on the due date. Late submissions will suffer a half letter grade reduction.

### University Policies

DISABILITY SERVICES: The Disability Resource Center in die Dean of Students Office provides students and faculty with information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities in die classroom. It is your responsibility to contact the school administration regarding any disability you may have, and to inform me so we can make any necessary arrangements. For more information, see:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

ACADEMIC HONESTY: Honor Code. "We, the members of die University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity." This oadi represents UF's commitment to academic honesty and integrity. "Cheating, plagiarism, bribery, misrepresentation, conspiracy and fabrication" are violations of die Honor Code. All students must abide by the student honor code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx>

HARASSMENT: UF provides an educational and working environment for its students, faculty, and staff free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see:

<http://www.hr.ud.edu/eo/sexharassment.htm>

COURSE EVALUATIONS: "Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in diis course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>.

Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

### Suggested Readings (not alphabetized):

- Valerie Smith, "Preface," *Not just Race, Not Just Gender* (1998)
- Marie Griffith and Barbara Dianne Savage, eds., *Women and Religion in the African Diaspora* (2006)
- Amiri Baraka and Larry Neal, eds., *Black Fire*
- Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider*
- Important selections: "Poetry is not a Luxury"
- "The Transformation of Language into Action"
- "Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power"
- "Sexism: An American Disease in Blackface"
- "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House"
- "Learning from the Sixties"
- Angelyn Mitchell, ed. *Within the Circle*, Section 3 "The Black Arts Movement" (collection of essays)
- Carlene Hatcher Polite, *The Flagellants* (a novel currently out of print, see the library copy)
- Carmichael, Stokely and Charles Hamilton. *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America*. New York: Vintage Books, 1967.
- Gloria Wade-Gayles, *No Crystal Stair*
- Barbara Christian, *Black Women Novelist*
- Michele Wallace, *Black Macho and the Myth of the Superwoman*
- Addison Gayle, ed. *The Black Aesthetic* New York: Doubleday, 1971.
- Dudley Randall and Margaret Taylor Goss, eds. *For Malcolm X: Poems on the life and Death of Malcolm X*
- Stephen Henderson, *Understanding the New Black Poetry*
- Abraham Chapman, *New Black Voices*
- Mari Evans, ed. *Black Women Writers 1950-1980*
- Carolyn Fowler, *Black Arts and Black Aesthetics: A Bibliography*
- Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*
- ... *Black Skin, White Masks*
- Alice Walker, *In Search of Our Mother's Gardens*
- Melissa Walker. *Down From the Mountaintop: Black Women's Novels in the Wake of the Civil Rights Movement, 1966-1989*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1991.
- Robert Steptoe, *From Behind the Veil*
- Claudia Tate, *Black Women Writers at Work*