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Hurston shares vibrant language, easy rhythms in *Watching God*

Dr. Lou-Ann Crouther

One of my favorite writers is Zora Neale Hurston, and I especially admire the novel which is considered her best, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937). Hurston (c. 1901-1960) was born in Eatonville, Florida, an all-black town near Orlando. Her southern birth and rearing make her unique among her Harlem Renaissance contemporaries and influenced her attitudes toward racial conditions in America, as well as her perceptions of what her fiction should do and should be. During a career spanning thirty years she published four novels, two books of folklore, an autobiography, stories, articles, and plays. As "the most competent black female novelist before 1950," Hurston also wrote more than any other female Afro-American.

Individualism and personal achievement are two values expressed in *TEWWG* as we see the novel's heroine search for the ideal male-female relationship from about "1883-1923." The 16-year-old protagonist's unrealized romantic aspirations run counter to the realistic expectations of her grandmother, who tells Janie that she should be happy to marry Logan Killicks, an insecure, older man of material wealth. This union lasts less than a year, but Janie stays with her second husband twenty years.

Joe Starks, who becomes mayor of Eatonville, does not allow his wife to socialize with the townspeople, and further alienates Janie by treating her as if she were a pretty, near-senseless, status symbol. Vergible "Tea Cake" Woods and Janie are married for about 18 months before she shoots him in self-defense. (An untreated dog bite and unwarranted jealousy cause Tea Cake to shoot at his wife; ironically he had taught Janie how to shoot.)



Dr. Crouther teaches English and literature courses, including Afro-American Literature. She earned a bachelor's degree in English from Heidelberg College and a master's

and Ph.D. in English from Indiana University at Bloomington. This is the assistant professor's fourth year at Western.

Bob Skipper photo

While she was with Tea Cake Janie had been able to be herself and participate in all aspects of married life because she was not bounded by the demands of a paternalistic husband; instead she learned from Tea Cake mutual respect, new skills, and a real way to love. Janie returns to Eatonville with the "message . . . that self-fulfillment rather than security and status is the gift of life." This, as well as the magnetism of the novel's vibrant language and easy rhythms, are only two of the gifts that Zora Neale Hurston joyously shares with us in her works.

NOTES

1. Martha H. Brown, "Images of Black Women: Family Roles in Harlem Renaissance Literature," Diss. Carnegie-Mellon University 1976, p.24.

2. Alice Walker, ed., *I Love Myself When I am Laughing ... And Then Again When I Am Looking Mean and Impressive: A Zora Neale Hurston Reader* (Old Westbury, N.Y.: The Feminist Press, 1979), p. 8.

3. Darwin T. Turner, *In a Minor Chord: Three Afro-American Writers and Their Search for Identity*. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1971), pp. xix, 90.

4. Marion Kilson, "The Transformation of Eatonville's Ethnographer," *Phylon*, 33, No. 2 (Summer 1972), 112, 114.

5. S. Jay Walker, "Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*: Black Novel of Sexism," *Modern Fiction Studies*, 20 (winter 1974-75), 521.

6. Barbara Christian, *Black Women Novelists: The Development of a Tradition* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1980), p. 59.

Editor's Message

King

"Martin Luther King Jr. deserves the national holiday that was established to recognize his contributions to and dreams for our country."

"That's what you keep saying, but I fail to see how much more he contributed to this country than Franklin Roosevelt or Ronald Reagan. There are no national holidays honoring *them*."

"I can't help that. King and what he stood for transcend time, race and all other such classifications. He was one of those people who comes along once in a person's lifetime."

"The only reason Congress passed the law establishing the holiday was because the radicals who were pushing for it were so overbearing. They would never let the issue rest. They made it a race issue."

"That's where you're wrong. The proponents of the King holiday never raised race as an issue, because it's not an issue. The only factor race plays in the whole affair is that some people don't want a national holiday in honor of a black, whether he or she deserves it or not. No one ever raised the question of

so-called merit when Columbus Day or Washington's birthday were established. Your argument is quite weak."

"I still say you're wrong."

"Well, you're entitled to your opinion. I only hope that one day you will be sufficiently enlightened to understand and appreciate the existence of the King holiday."

"Humph! Hopefully, as long as I'm a student here, it won't be recognized on this campus."

"But it already is. The university may have no formal recognition of it, but that doesn't keep people from honoring it in their own special ways. And who says the university won't formally acknowledge it? I think the administration will. I know I'm going to do all I can to encourage that."

"Some people are relentless."

"Some people have to be."

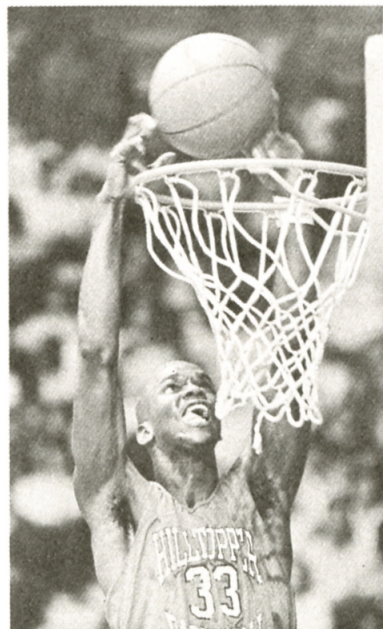


LaMont Jones, Jr.
Editor



Good luck this semester!

Looking Back



On The Move

United Black Greeks

United Black Greeks has donated \$450 to the Julius Price Scholarship Fund, paving the way for criteria to be established for the first scholarship to be awarded.

UBG donated \$100 from their general fund and \$350 from admission receipts from the Homecoming step show, said UBG president Pam Kirkwood.

UBG's donations boosted the scholarship fund's bankroll so high that now the scholarship committee can begin establishing criteria for the scholarship, said Phyllis Gatewood, director of minority recruitment.

Students, alumni, faculty and staff have collected money for and contributed money to the fund, Gatewood said.

Julius Price became Western's first black regent in 1981. He died after a bout with cancer in 1983.

Western Kentucky Minority Communicators

On Oct. 24, a group of students, faculty and guests speakers mingled and shared advice and ideas about a common field: journalism.

This was the first Fall Journalism Conference at Western Kentucky University sponsored by Western Kentucky Minority Communicators, the campus chapter of the National Association of Black Journalists.

The conference began Saturday morning with opening remarks by WKMC President LaMont Jones Jr., and Mrs. Jo-Ann Albers, head of the journalism department.

Conference participants attended various sessions and gained advice and helpful information about journalism.

The sessions included reporting news and feature, resume and portfolio tips, photojournalism, layout and design and internship experiences.

Guest speakers included reporters, copy editors and photographers for the Louisville Courier-Journal and the Dayton Daily News and Journal Herald in Ohio.

"This is the perfect way for students to start meeting people in the field they are interested in," said Toya Richards, vice president. "Now is the time to start asking questions of those who may know the answers."

-By Eleska Aubespain



SPIRIT IN ACTION

Call them what you want: Cheerleaders, yell leaders, pompon girls. They practice long and hard to keep the game crowds revved up for the Hilltoppers. Three of Western's cheerleaders are Pam Brown, Lavonda Burton and Elnora Edwards.

Bob Skipper photo



AIMS
It's working.

Helping Hands

SPECIAL SERVICES PROJECT

This federally funded project provides **counseling and free individual tutoring** for eligible participants. For further information, contact the program office in CEB 235, phone 745-4308.

DEVELOPMENTAL STUDIES

The tutor coordinator in this office provides a matching service for students needing individual tutoring. Students may be matched with tutors for hire or with retired faculty members who have volunteered their services. For further information, contact Dr. Alice Rowe or Jim Garner at 745-5138.

ACCOUNTING

Free tutoring for students who need help in elementary accounting classes (Accounting 200-201). Grise Hall, room 455 on Monday and Wednesday, from 1-2:30. Contact Mr. Sanborn at 745-3895 for more information.

AGRICULTURE

(1) Paid tutoring by graduate students. Environmental Science and Technology Building, Room 268. Hours are flexible.

(2) Free consultation with Department of Agriculture faculty members. Environmental Science and Technology Building, Room 268, by appointment.

For further information on either of the above, contact Dr. Luther Hughes at 745-3151.

ALLIED HEALTH

Free individual tutoring available in Dental Hygiene and Medical Records classes for those who qualify. Possibly more services will be available later in the semester. For more information, contact Doris Thayer (Medical Records) at 745-5239, or Dr. Ted Parks (Dental Hygiene) at 745-2427.

BIOLOGY

Study Hall for Biology 131. TCNW 210 and 212. M-TH 8:00 a.m.-12:00 noon and Friday, 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Contact Wayne Mason at 745-6012. This study hall is an

opportunity for Biology 131 students to study lab or lecture materials on their own. Assistance will sometimes be available. For private tutoring contact Barb Dykstra or Ben Howard at 745-3696.

CHEMISTRY

Chemistry Learning Lab, Thompson Complex-North Wing Room 317. Monday 10:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; 5:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m.; Tuesday 10:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.; Wednesday 10:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m.; Thursday 10:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Contact Dr. N. W. Hunter at 745-3457.

COMPUTER SCIENCE

Programming Consultation, Thompson Complex-Central Wing, Room 203. Help is offered in debugging programs and with equipment problems. Contact Lab Assistant at 745-2911 or 745-2541 for hours.

ECONOMICS

Economics 206 (Statistics) Lab, Grise Hall Room 439. Open 2:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m. **Wednesdays only.** Contact Economics Department at 745-2249.

ENGLISH

(1) WRITING LAB. Cherry Hall 101. Hours 9:15-3:10 Monday-Friday, 5:00-9:00 p.m. Monday-Thursday. Contact John Reiss at 745-5711.

FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Microcomputer Hardware/Business Software Lab, Grise Hall Room 336. CALL DEPARTMENT FOR HOURS AT 745-5283.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Free tutoring in biostatistics. Science and Technology Hall, Room 410C. Hours vary; contact Dr. Baum or Robin Roach at 745-4797.

INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY

EET Course Tutoring, Science Technology Hall room 312,

call John Carr at 745-5857 for appointment. Woodworking Opportunity Lab, Industrial Education Building room 101. Call Dr. Frank Pittman at 745-5397 for appointment.

LANGUAGES

Spanish/German/French/Russian Language practice labs, Ivan Wilson Fine Arts Center. Spanish/German Room 240; French/Russian Room 248. Both labs open Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Contact Dr. Carol Brown at 745-2401.

MATHEMATICS

Math Lab, Thompson Complex-Central Wing, Lobby. Open:

Monday-Thursday 8:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m.

Friday 8:00 a.m.-1:45 p.m.

Sunday 6:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.

Contact Mrs. Mary Humphrey at 745-6226.

MODERN LANGUAGES AND INTERCULTURAL STUDIES

Beginning language students may get assistance in the departmental language laboratory.

NURSING

Free Tutoring in nursing skills and counseling for Diabetic students. Academic complex 112D. Call Nancy Lindsey at 745-3758 to set up an appointment.

PHYSICS

Physics 250 help session, TCCW 201 Monday, 5:00 p.m. for more information call Dr. Humphrey at 745-6197 Physics 207, 208, 232, 233, 251, and 271 will meet at TCCW 208, M-TH 11:45 a.m.-4:00 p.m. and Tues. and Wed. from 6:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m. Call Dr. Humphrey at 745-6197 for more information.

PSYCHOLOGY

(1) Free tutoring in Psychology 100, College of Education Building, Contact Dr. Howton at 745-2695 or 745-4390 for appointments.

Welcome New Faculty and Staff

Ricky Dean Bibb, Physical Plant
Alvin Davis, Residence Life
Anna Lisa Elliott, Food Services
V. Lynne Holland, Credit Union
Barry Johnson, Music
Cassandra Louise Johnson, Physical Plant
Wilma Jean Mahone, Physical Plant
Marie A. Sparks, Physical Plant
Brenda Kaye Williams, Physical Plant
Wathetta Buford, Credit Union

Office of the Dean of Student Life
120 Potter Hall
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Bowling Green, KY 42101

VOICE

The Voice, a bisemester newsletter prepared for black students at Western Kentucky University.

If you would like to submit writing or photographs to *The Voice*, please contact LaMont Jones, Jr. at the Office of the Dean of Student Life, for details. The office number is 745-5067.

Mr. Howard Bailey
Dean of Student Life
LaMont Jones, Jr.
Editor

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