

Contents

1.	Introduction: Reading Black Women's Voices.....	1
1.1	The <i>Bildungsroman</i> and Black Female Subjectivity.....	4
1.2	Gender, Sex, and Language.....	9
1.3	Negotiating Respect: Folklore and the Black Female Voice.....	14
1.4	Orality Into Print: Vernacular Sounds in Written Discourse.....	19
2.	Zora Neale Hurston, <i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i>	27
2.1	<i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i> as <i>Bildungsroman</i>	27
2.2	Mules and Women: Sex and Gender in <i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i>	45
2.3	"Crayon Enlargements of Life": African American Folklore in <i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i>	63
2.4	"Ah'll Tell 'Em What You Tell Me To Tell 'Em": Dialect(ic)al Speech-Presentation and Narrative Technique in <i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i>	82
3.	Toni Morrison, <i>Sula</i>	105
3.1	<i>Sula</i> as a Narrative of Failed <i>Bildung</i>	105
3.2	The (M)Other Woman: Gender and Sexuality in <i>Sula</i>	131
3.3	"It Had Been a Place": The Bottom and Its Folklore in <i>Sula</i>	153
3.4	Vernacular Dialectics: Narrative Technique and Speech-Presentation in <i>Sula</i>	174
4.	Alice Walker, <i>The Color Purple</i>	197
4.1	The Danger of Fulfillment: Perplexities of <i>Bildung</i> in <i>The Color Purple</i>	197
4.2	"Sister's Choice": Sex and Gender in <i>The Color Purple</i>	218
4.3	Fairy Tale Blues: Folklore in <i>The Color Purple</i>	241
4.4	The Present Voice: Vernacular Writing and Free Direct Discourse in <i>The Color Purple</i>	263
5.	Conclusions.....	289
	Bibliography.....	295