

Contents

Acknowledgments xi
Introduction. Voices Within the Circle: A Historical Overview of African
American Literary Criticism 1

I *The Harlem Renaissance*

The New Negro · *Alain Locke* 21
The Negro in American Literature · *William Stanley Braithwaite* 32
The Gift of Laughter · *Jessie Fauset* 45
The Negro-Art Hokum · *George S. Schuyler* 51
The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain · *Langston Hughes* 55
Criteria of Negro Art · *W. E. B. DuBois* 60
Our Literary Audience · *Sterling A. Brown* 69
Characteristics of Negro Expression · *Zora Neale Hurston* 79

II *Humanistic/Ethical Criticism and the Protest Tradition*

Blueprint for Negro Writing · *Richard Wright* 97
American Negro Literature · *J. Saunders Redding* 107
What White Publishers Won't Print · *Zora Neale Hurston* 117
New Poets · *Margaret Walker* 122
Twentieth-Century Fiction and the Black Mask of Humanity
Ralph Ellison 134
Everybody's Protest Novel · *James Baldwin* 149
Integration and Race Literature · *Arthur P. Davis* 156

III *The Black Arts Movement*

- The Myth of a “Negro Literature” · *LeRoi Jones (Amiri Baraka)* 165
Ethnic Impact in American Literature: Reflections on a Course
George E. Kent 172
The Black Arts Movement · *Larry Neal* 184
Towards a Black Aesthetic · *Hoyt W. Fuller* 199
Cultural Strangulation: Black Literature and the White Aesthetic
Addison Gayle, Jr. 207
Toward a Definition: Black Poetry of the Sixties (After LeRoi Jones)
Don L. Lee (Haki Madhubuti) 213
Tripping with Black Writing · *Sarah Webster Fabio* 224

IV *Structuralism, Post-Structuralism, and the African American Critic*

- Preface to Blackness: Text and Pretext · *Henry Louis Gates, Jr.* 235
I Rose and Found My Voice: Narration, Authentication, and Authorial
Control in Four Slave Narratives · *Robert B. Stepto* 256
Generational Shifts and the Recent Criticism of Afro-American Literature
Houston A. Baker, Jr. 282
Literary Production: A Silence in Afro-American Critical Practice
W. Lawrence Hogue 329
The Race for Theory · *Barbara Christian* 348
Appropriative Gestures: Theory and Afro-American Literary Criticism
Michael Awkward 360
Unspeakable Things Unspoken: The Afro-American Presence in American
Literature · *Toni Morrison* 368

V *Gender, Theory, and African American Feminist Criticism*

- In Search of Our Mothers’ Gardens · *Alice Walker* 401
Toward a Black Feminist Criticism · *Barbara Smith* 410
New Directions for Black Feminist Criticism · *Deborah E. McDowell* 428
“The Darkened Eye Restored:” Notes Toward a Literary History of Black
Women · *Mary Helen Washington* 442
Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe: An American Grammar Book
Hortense J. Spillers 454
Gender and Afro-Americanist Literary Theory and Criticism
Valerie Smith 482

But What Do We Think We're Doing Anyway: The State of Black
Feminist Criticism(s) or My Version of a Little Bit of History
Barbara Christian 499

Some Implications of Womanist Theory · *Sherley Anne Williams* 515

Useful Sources for Related Reading 523

Acknowledgment of Copyrights 526

About the Critics 528

Index of Selected Names 531