

ENGL 4373: African American Authors Since the Harlem Renaissance
Dr. Terrence Tucker
TR 11:20-12:45pm

We Shall Not Be Moved: African American Protest Literature and Narratives of Resistance

Using text from various time periods, we will examine how African-American authors construct acts of resistance takes place across political, literary, and historical cycles such as Jim Crow, the Civil Rights and Black Power Movements, and into the 21st century. Acts of resistance in the works vary from the conservative to the militant, often contradicting other efforts and causing tensions within African America. In particular, this course will trace the expansion and maturation of African American literature over the last thirty years. Influenced by the protest novels of the 1940s and 1950s and emerging alongside the rapidly changing social, political, and economic landscapes of post-Civil Rights America, we will chronicle an impressive array of new, young voices that not only reflect the lives of African Americans since 2008, while interrogating how external and internal forces and structures impact the lives the authors depict in unique ways. Contemporary African American literature has been influenced most directly by Black Lives Matter, social media and the digital revolution, hip-hop music, and the remigration to the South and its impact on the last few presidential elections. This class will unfold through several units, as we move from classic “literary” fiction to popular “street lit” to episodes of *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*. By viewing the combination of these cycles, we will view these works to see how the authors negotiate their characters through the minefields of race, gender, and class to resist the forces that seek to deny their humanity.

Richard Wright – *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*

Native Son

William Melvin Kelley - *A Different Drummer*

James Baldwin – *The Fire Next Time*

Douglas Turner Ward – *Day of Absence*

Alice Walker – *Meridian*

Elaine Brown – *A Taste of Power*

Ernest Gaines – *A Gathering of Old Men*

Angie Thomas - *The Hate U Give*

Claudia Rankine – *Citizen*

Kendrick Lamar – *To Pimp a Butterfly*

Beyonce – *Lemonade*