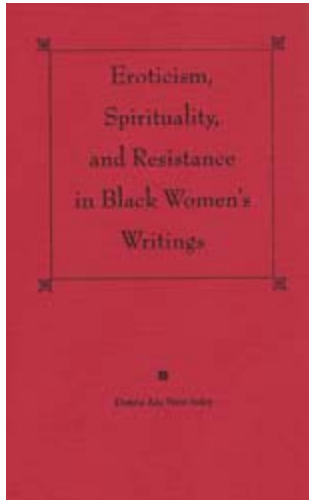


# Eroticism, Spirituality, and Resistance in Black Women's Writings

University Press of Florida



Donna Aza Weir-Soley

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## Overview

"Weir-Soley speaks with an authority that comes from real knowledge of, investment in, and attention to the details of the African cosmologies and textual complexities she unearths."--Carine Mardorossian, SUNY-Buffalo

"The most original and significant contributions are the often brilliant readings of Morrison, Adisa, and Danticat. The work is riveting, both methodologically and critically."--Leslie Sanders, York University

Western European mythology and history tend to view spirituality and sexuality as opposite extremes. But sex can be more than a function of the body and religion more than a function of the mind, as exemplified in the works and characters of such writers as Zora Neale Hurston, Toni Morrison, Opal Palmer Adisa, and Edwidge Danticat.

Donna Weir-Soley builds on the work of previous scholars who have identified the ways that black women's narratives often contain a form of spirituality rooted in African cosmology, which consistently grounds their characters' self-empowerment and quest for autonomy. What she adds to the discussion is an emphasis on the importance of sexuality in the development of black female subjectivity, beginning with Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* and continuing into contemporary black women's writings.

Writing in a clear, lucid, and straightforward style, Weir-Soley supports her thesis with close readings of various texts, including Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* and Morrison's *Beloved*. She reveals how these writers highlight the interplay between the spiritual and the sexual through religious symbols found in Voudoun, Santeria, Condomble, Kumina, and Hoodoo. Her arguments are particularly persuasive in proposing an alternative model for black female subjectivity.

**Details:** 296 pages 6x9

**Cloth:** \$69.95 **ISBN 13:** 978-0-8130-3377-8 **ISBN 10:** 0-8130-3377-2

Donna Aza Weir-Soley is associate professor of English at Florida International University.