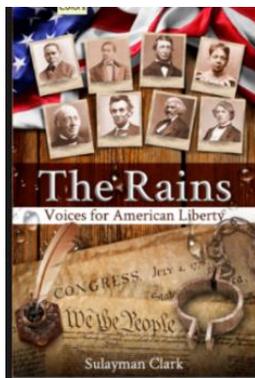


Clafin University Common Reader 2018

Clafin University is committed to Exemplary Educational Programs. We believe that as you begin your journey at Clafin, one of the best ways to understand your purpose as a student is to read a common book, discuss it during orientation and apply what you learn to your life at Clafin University and beyond.

This year's common read book, *The Rains*, reflects upon the importance of social justice, education and individual purpose. As you read, we want you to ponder, question and reflect upon the issues raised in the story of the many historical characters who seek to bring about meaningful and impactful social change. Be prepared to share your thoughts in a small group setting during new student orientation week. **All new students need to read the book before the Common Reader Discussion session on Tuesday, August 14, 2018.** In addition to the common reader discussion, you will continue to explore issues and themes across courses during First Year Experience programs.



Objectives of Common Read Program

- To create a more academic focus to New Student Orientation;
- To strengthen the academic community and create opportunities for intellectual engagement and depth in learning through carefully selected common readings that pose multiple or differing perspectives and questions, followed by theme-oriented academic and co-curricular activities throughout the year;
- To establish an intellectually stimulating environment that is both informal and structured, setting a tone for intellectual engagement among our new students; and
- To provide opportunities for an enhanced new student orientation that includes meaningful ways for the entire college community, including students, faculty, and staff, to participate in the program.

Discussion Questions:

- Can you name all of the persons listed on the front cover of this book?
- Has the book left you with any ideas for ameliorating the conditions that led to the hostilities of race and class even after the 15th Amendment?
- Why do you think the author chose to write this book as historical fiction rather than a biography of Octavius Cato? Have you ever read historical fiction in the past? What grasped your attention?
- What critical factors, if any, in the lives of the characters in the book resonate with you?
- Ellen Craft disguises herself to pull off the greatest escape ever. How do you think you might reinvent yourself in order to succeed in college?
- The “time bandits” are described as those who “incessantly striped the Negro of his humanity and robbed him of the one possession he had at his disposal; time, precious time.” Do “time bandits still exist today? If so, who/what are they and in what ways do they take time?
- The author begins each chapter with a quote from a historical speaker or writer. What types of stories have been passed down in your families?
- Is learning about slavery important to you?