



## **Examining the Role of Intersectionality in Zora Neale Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This paper explores the intersectional perspectives of gender, race, class, sex, physical appearance, class division, and particularly the quest for identity in Zora Neale Hurston's novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937) by utilizing Kimberle Williams Crenshaw's (1998) theory of Intersectionality, along with concepts from African American literature and Harlem Renaissance influences. The objective of the study is to examine how the novel portrays the struggles of women of color within a male-dominated and racially segregated society in the American South, shedding light on the compounded form of oppression they experience. Hurston touches on two issues salient in American society, such as sexism and racism, demonstrating how these factors intersect to shape the lives of her characters. This is characterized through the protagonist's relentless quest for independence, emphasizing the novel's ongoing critical significance in the American literary mainstream. It also explores that men of color face racial intersectionality, while women of color face gender and racial intersectionality. Representational intersectionality publicly criticizes the racist and sexist marginalization of colored women. The research employs qualitative analysis.

## Introduction

Intersectionality is a concept that describes the sociological analytical framework for understanding the matrix of discrimination and privileges among groups and individuals. The elements of intersectionality include gender, race, class, sex, ethnicity, religion, physical appearance, age, height, and weight (Crenshaw, 1998). The first and second waves of feminism extended the scope of intersectionality based on the experiences of women and revealed divisions among white, middle-class, colored, poor, and immigrant women. The first feminist wave is concerned with legal rights and issues faced by the white middle-class women, whereas the second wave expresses the experiences of colored poor and immigrant women.

Crenshaw, a renowned American legal scholar, co-founder of the African American Policy Forum (an organization that focuses on issues of race, gender, and social justice) born on May 27, 1959, is one of the most recognized figures for introducing the term Intersectionality in her *Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex* emphasizing the interconnectedness of social norms, such as gender, race and class, shaping individual's experience of discrimination, domination and oppression. She proposes to understand these multifaceted identities simultaneously and addresses social disorders and inequalities. She contributes a wide range of topics, including feminist legal theory, anti-discrimination law, and the civil rights of women, particularly for Black women. In *On Intersectionality: Essential Writings*, Crenshaw examines how social perspectives, including gender, race, class, sexuality, and other identities, intersect and influence each other. Works on intersectionality uncover power dynamics and give voice to marginalized communities. Crenshaw defines intersectionality as a medium of understanding multiple forms of inequalities, creating obstacles that often do not come under conventional ways of thinking. She also gathers key works from her academic career, offering comprehensive views on the theory and its application in various fields, including gender studies, critical race, law, and social justice. She expresses how racism and sexism create challenges for individuals, particularly for women of color. She also examines various aspects of intersectionality, such as policy debates, legal cases, and social justice movements, to better understand different scenarios of oppression and discrimination. She illustrates three types of

Intersectionality, highlighting the importance of multiple dimensions of social issues, such as structural intersectionality, political intersectionality, and representational intersectionality.

### **Research Questions:**

1. What are the key factors of intersectionality that highlight oppression through the protagonist in *Their Eyes Were Watching God*?
2. How does the protagonist regain her identity in *Their Eyes Were Watching God*?

### **Literature Review**

Zora Neale Hurston, a brilliant figure from the south and a renowned American author, anthropologist, and folklorist, born on January 7, 1891, in Notasulga, Alabama, is best known for her contributions to African American literature. She raises her voice for Black communities, particularly in the rural south. She exemplifies in her incredible work, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, the story of a naive girl, Janie Crawford, who comes across intersectional forms of oppression as a Black woman and thereafter her journey toward the search for freedom, self-discovery, and independence in the white American social and cultural environment. Doris Grumbach (1987) proclaims that *Their Eyes Were Watching God* is “the finest Black narrative of its time and one of the finest of all time” (p. 23). Hurston’s narrative incorporates elements of rich prose, vibrant dialogues, and exploration of the concepts of love, gender, and identity, representing her academic background and approach to anthropology, making her paramount in African American and American literary history. Undoubtedly, Hurston’s richness of ideas and authenticity give way to innovative use of African American dialect, allowing her characters to voice their experiences, asserting the importance of Black voices in American Literature. Through her writings, Hurston touches upon the problems of gender, race, and class, dealing with the subject matter of subjugated Black women during the 20th century in the United States.

This research also examines whether Hurston’s narrative reflects the characteristics of African American literature or not. African American literature has been closely linked to these themes since its foremost representation in the 18th century. The Afro-American literature begins with the sequence of slave writings in the pre-revolutionary era, based on the lack of restrictions and the abolition of slavery. The period after the

Civil War until 1919 is a call-over to the era of modernization, which is marked by urbanization, rapid industrialization, and social transformation that has reframed the economic and cultural prospect of America. The major subjects of African American literature are influenced by the tendencies of migration, separation, and killing; therefore, the movement of women pays their efforts for the fundamental rights of women. The era of the 1920s observed the Harlem Renaissance, as James Weldon Johnson calls it, the “flowering of Negro literature”. Since World War II, African American literature has investigated Black nationalism, modern ways of high art, and post-racial individualities (Hutchinson, 1995). Moreover, Williams (2009) talks about the hypothesis in his work, *Contemporary African American women writers*, which also tends to focus on the conduct of gender studies and Black identity. Hurston brings up these two main areas, central to African American women’s narratives. It is undeniably right for *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, where we can come across all such kinds of essentials. Hereby, the ideas of Hurston on African American women’s writings are reproduced as it is literary writing that travels around the nature of personalities, investigates Black womanhood, demonstrates the meaning of love toward one’s culture and oneself, a revolt against racial discrimination and patriarchy, a spiritual awareness and mental curing and a link between the present and past (Williams, 2009). Mussarat et. al (2017) argue, “A culture includes art, knowledge, beliefs, values, norms, organizations, social relationships, and so many other things in a community” (p. 16).

The number of classical models consists of the writers who are listed in the ranking of Forbes, such as Richard Wright, Langston Hughes, Toni Morrison, Ralph Ellison, W.E.B. Du Bois, Zora Neale Hurston, James Baldwin, and August Wilson. Frederick Douglass, who was one of the most important advocates for the abolition of slavery in his age, and a tireless defender of the rights of all African Americans after the Civil War (Cook and Tatum, 2013).

The second corpus consists of up-to-date African American literature and thus stands for the latest trend in the Black literary community. Contemporary works refer to books and novels that are being published in the present time. These novels are easy to understand and have a command of the texts that also serve up the aim of amusement. Indeed,

movies and novels deliver a particular message to us (Greve, 2016). Most of the novels within the fashionable amount of corpus are romance or urban. The African American romances and, therefore, urban novels are comparable genres. Both kinds of novels specialize in sex, romance, and relationships, whereas the urban novels center on city life, vulgarities, and brutalities, and therefore, the writers often use bad language. Among the African American writers, Urban is a highly subject genre. Modern writings also include a few historical and crime novels; it could be believed that the corpora of texts within the classics and contemporary writings give us an interesting viewpoint of African American literature (Greve, 2016). In many of the works, the role of women is extremely fundamental, particularly those written by Black female writers. One may see that self-identity is a radical aspect of *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. This novel explores a variety of perspectives, such as self-realization, love and relationships, race and racism, gender roles and feminism, voice and silence, community and belonging, nature and the environment, that give way to Janie's quest for independence and self-expression. Moreover, Hurston conventionally constructs her Black characters in *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (Greve, 2016).

The excellence of elegance and Blackness are the key concepts of African American literature. Franz Fanon gives a heart-rending insight when a white girl looks after staring at him: "Look, a Negro! Mama, see the Negro! I'm frightened!" Frightened! Frightened! the Negro is animal, malicious, cruel, and unattractive" (Fanon, 1986, 323-324). In the statement of "Blackness", Fanon investigates the circumstances of being Black. He illustrates that Black subjects make out their body within the eyes of white people. However, the Blacks feel unwanted by the white social order. Black characters are considered uglier than white people; the idea is that Black authors show off the faces of white people through their novels. We may also see that the concepts of Blackness and self-image are central to the story. This is especially true because Janie suffers from pain and is degraded by everyone being Black. Du Bois, who put pen to paper in *The Souls of Black Folk* (2015) that the biggest fault of the twentieth century was the color line of the people. Though African Americans were free from slavery, their color kept them marginalized and segregated after the Civil War. Even though the white inhabitants had an idea of "the

Negro" as a group, moreover, it looks as if they had no concept of it as an individual. One of the shining examples of this theme is "Ralph Ellison's" Invisible Man, in which a Black man, despite extensive efforts, comes across alienation both from the Blacks and the Whites due to the color line (Du Bois, 2015, p. xiv). African American literature, particularly characters, often struggle with identity, who they are, and who they ought to be. Langston Hughes's poems "I Too" and "Mulatto" present this issue; both demonstrate where they belong in society and where they are individuals. Hughes appears to go from the length of a question, stressing the assertion that "I BELONG HERE" (Arnold 2001). Fanon (1961) argues, "oppressed entities could get their position of power along with their identity" (as cited in Hameed et. al, 2025, p. 295), and should not be judged based on color, e.g., "White is often a symbol of purity, cleanliness, and a fresh beginning" (Farooqi et. al, 2025), which is an incorrect perception.

African American culture also uses creative and colorful language. In *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, Hurston brings life to that language and music in their works. African American literature also uses spiritual metaphors, the supremacy of the Black church, songs, and settings within the Black community. In addition to independence, freedom of thought, and feeling free, the narratives of slaves with the details of conflicts and battles to find freedom and fears of slavery have been the major themes of African American literature. Hargons et al. (2017) examine how *Black Lives Matter* is one of the key concepts of Afro-American literature. Black Lives Matter is referred to as political and ideological interference in a world where Black people are intentionally and systematically overwhelmed for their downfall. We may see extensive systemic racism and police brutality against the Black population. However, the Black Lives Matter movement proposes to tackle such kinds of realities at multiple stages, trying to find a way and to raise awareness among Black people against systematic racial discrimination. Activists for *Black Lives Matter* inquire about mediating against the tyranny that Black people face at the personal and relational level. In many ways, the Black Lives Matter association is the critical expression of societal justice (Rickford, 2016). It seeks prosperity and tends to stop the destructive discussions and racially repressive practices that consequence in deadly consequences for Black people. However, it is a statement of Black people to contribute to Black society and humanity. In

short, *Black Lives Matter* recognizes that efforts for the freedom of Black people must be entrenched in the contemporary and historical culture of Black people.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This portion investigates the arranged layouts of the intersectional methods that have been used in this research work to achieve corresponding objectives (Fanta, 2007). From these viewpoints, the researcher applies Crenshaw's *Theory of Intersectionality: Essential Writings on Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics* (1998), and the core text is *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Hurston. The primary aim of this writing is also to recognize the widespread characteristics of African American literature, in both contemporary and older works. From the point of view of African American literary writings, it is important to characterize what the works have in common. For this purpose, literature based on African American texts and data through computer technology is extracted, and several writings from some of the classics and contemporary African American fiction are consulted. African American literature tends to interpret the Black characters as victims in the United States. By using these theoretical frameworks, we can critically examine the intersections of gender, race, class, and other identities in *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by putting insights at a deeper level into the intricacies of the characters' experiences and the general social circumstances in which they are situated.

Firstly, according to Crenshaw, structural intersectionality expresses how classism, sexism, and racism interlock and distress women of color while developing their experiences at different platforms, specifically in battered women's shelters in the United States. Structural intersectionality defines how several structures work together to create complexities and express the experiences of women of color who suffer from domestic violence and rape. Physical assault on women is the foremost manifestation of women's subordination. In most cases, women who love to be protected are either unemployed or very poor. Violence inflicted upon women of color has a multilayered influence. "Their lives are burdened by poverty, and childcare responsibilities, and are deprived of basic rights" (Crenshaw, 1998, p. 6).

Secondly, political intersectionality elaborates on two contradictory sets in political horizons that separate women into two subordinate groups. The experiences of women of color differ from those of white women because of their gender and race. Indeed, white women enjoy privileges over women of color in society. The experiences of Black women are different from those of white women and men of color owing to their race and gender. White women suffer from gender bias while men of color face racial bias. However, women of color experience both gender and racial prejudice. Additionally, in a patriarchal society, both subordinated groups come under male dominance. From the perspectives of political intersectionality, on the one hand, white women can simultaneously be just women and stand for all women, and white men can be just men and stand for all men. Similarly, both white gays and lesbians can be just gays and lesbians and stand for all gays and lesbians, whereas the colored women stand nowhere and are merely Black women. However, the fact is that whiteness and nonwhiteness are identified through normative racial categories on which gender and class are expressed. One of the most troubling concerns of political intersectionality is the inadequacy of antiracist and feminist narratives that people of color and women are marginalized by whiteness (Crenshaw, 1998). We may also see in Hurston's narrative, the exploration of racial ideology is undoubtedly complex and stems largely from the concept of the Harlem Renaissance, which connects the novel's manner to the social reality as well as cultural nationalism that almost racism has almost reduced colored people to mere zero, to beings always facing racial oppression and deprived of basic rights. Hurston argues that one must create oneness horizon; therefore, she asserts in her novel, "a manifesto against the arrogance of whites who assume that the lives of people of color are merely defensive reactions to white actions" (Hurston, 1989, p. 205). One of the great triumphs for equal rights in American history is overwhelmed by the fascination of fearlessness and combat, a fascination leaning to reduce the war to a noble tragedy, putting "brother against brother" (Foner, 2006, p. xii).

Thirdly, representational intersectionality publicly criticizes racist and sexist marginalization of colored women in representation, showing the significance of women of color in media and contemporary settings. In her "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence

against Women of Color," Crenshaw (1991) propounds representational intersectionality within identity politics toward dynamic antiracist and feminist movements for Black women. She draws attention toward how Black women experience violence, face physical abuse at racial and gendered dimensions, and are overlooked, misrepresented, and or silenced. Crenshaw proposes both political and structural perspectives of intersectionality about domestic violence and the rape of women. Through an intersectional lens, Crenshaw's analysis of violence against women of color highlights the critical role intersectionality plays in addressing issues of violence. Particularly, the rape of Black women falls into the intersectional category of racism and gender inequality that keeps them in the void and marginalized. Rape of white as well as colored women comes under the same umbrella, but when the white women are raped by Black men, it is represented as more offensive than the rape of colored women. Nevertheless, such cases solely represent racial domination, yet both abused women need to be represented equally in cultural imagery. According to an analysis of representational intersectionality, these concepts are formed through the overlap of race and gender, as well as the distinction of how racist and sexist approaches marginalize women (Crenshaw, 1991). In addition, various forms of intersectionality include literature, visual art, film, music, and performance art in their artworks. These platforms contribute to a more equitable society and provide marginalized voices to express their stories and profess societal reforms, reflecting issues about identity, privilege, and oppression. These salient factors also enable one to better understand diverse layers of identity.

### **Discussion and Analysis**

Janie, one of the major characters and the protagonist in *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, is shown as a radical and stereotypical element. Being a black female, she suffers from the oppression of intersecting forms of gender, race, and class throughout her life. Afterwards, these significant intersections also help her shape personal experiences, limiting her agency, and demonstrating how these varied perspectives create unique challenges for her. Janie goes through multiple forms of oppression, including gender norms, racial discrimination, economic dependence, as well as societal expectations that affect her status in society. One of the main points of the novel is concerned with household clashes and the difficulties they

produce. This can be analyzed through the experiences of Afro-American Women in the rural South of the United States during the 1930s. This novel also examines the destructive impacts of masculine dominance, white ethnic control, both in Africa and America, and favoritism among the Black group of people.

The main interest of Hurston's work is to increase the responsiveness of women toward women who are mistreated not only because of the color of their skin but also in their community by male hands. Women become victims of sexual aggression both in African and American territories. The women do not find a sense of freedom from tyranny in a male-centered community, and therefore, Hurston promotes the public empowerment of women. However, over time, Janie understands that the patriarchal society in which she has been living is offensive toward all colored women. No doubt, standing on shore, all wish their ships would be on board. Hurston's quest for real love and authentic self seems to be contradictory at first because Janie, the central character, remarkably struggles resiliently with a dictum about the life of men. Certainly, Hurston's tremendous talents represent how her people, men and women, her characters survive for their best. Metaphorically, ships at a distance represent Janie's journey toward self-acquaintance, though mocked to death by time, but never completely defeated. From time to time, Janie recalls all the critical times of her life, since she finds herself a colored, after having labored in bean fields, surviving in a hurricane, and most of all being heartbroken by losing the man she loves, thereafter she retraces her steps, descends from her ship, comes to shore, her home, and remembers, though she has come close to death, yet she has lived a life full of richness and fulfillment. Despite the mass cruelty, she greets herself on her return, her prominent status, the privilege to be the narrator of her tale, and the heroine of her search. Hurston gives Janie a distinguishing voice, situating her in a realistic world, as the audience witnesses her symbolic arrival on the board. Towards the end of the novel, people would see Janie's arrival because it was sundown. Though there remains no more sun in the sky, it has left its signs. It was time to reach the destination, a time to hear things and talk, that "she pulled in her horizon like a great fish-net. Pulled it from around the waist of the world and draped it over her shoulder" (Hurston, 2004, p. 243). This signifies the climax of Janie's journey of self-acquisition,

closing the hard chapter of her life and reflecting on the beginning of a good period.

Moreover, Janie determines that women can be equal to men due to the power of their knowledge, including the themes of love and compassion. Indeed, by the end of the novel, Janie overcomes her sufferings and embraces an independent way of life. Hurston deals with the tyranny of women and racism in Black communities. In the novel, a significant parallel between discrimination and the treatment of women can also be observed under the shade of intersectionality. The debate over the domination of men has always been a basic issue of human relations with one another. Hurston's priorities are to highlight the dominant violence against women. She also points out Black-on-Black assault between the characters in the novel. She desires to create a balance between gender clashes since she wants to solve environmental issues in Black communities. We may see the interpersonal associations between the suppressed women and the dominant men, and the understanding of the possible means of aggression of males against women in the novel. It can also be seen that in the novel, all the events and characters represented and told are from Jain's point of view. Hurston seeks evidence that African Americans, who are dealt with hatred and prejudice, also exist in the center of the population. In the novel, Hurston points out the tyranny faced by women in the Black population. In the novel, we may find significant similarities between the discrimination and treatment of women. Furthermore, the connection between the suppressed women and the dominant men is also evident in the novel. In short, all of this represented through sequential events can be viewed through the life span of Janie: Janie's life, by comparison, might seem more turbulent than most. However, both her past and her future can best be characterized by the way she describes her love for Tea Cake at the end of the book. Not like a "grindstone" that is the same everywhere and has the same effect on everything it touches, but like the sea, the sea of distant ships with every man's wish on board, the powerful moving sea that "takes its shape from de shore it meets," and is "different with every shore. (Hurston, 2004, p. 22). This novel is also considered a traditional women's narrative, which is particularly associated with the subject matter of possible means of cruelties within a male-dominated civilization. The present research

intends to explore the completeness of human relations in the age of segregation and fragmentation.

In the novel, both men and women hold different roles; fundamentally, women are considered the weaker sex. Being a woman in a patriarchal society, Janie is exploited based on her gender. Logan Killicks, Janie's first husband, wants a dutiful wife who performs domestic chores well and manages the farm, and Janei says, "Ah ain't gointuh do it no mo', Nanny. Please don't make me marry" (Hurston, 2004, p. 47).

There is much concern about time; there are years that ask questions, and similarly, there are years that answer those questions. Through the passage of life, at first, Janie thinks marriage will change her life, like the sun of the day. Though she does not love Logan Killicks, before getting married to Logan Killicks, she asks herself, standing under a pear tree, wondering and thinking, she would surely have love and intimacy with him, "The vision of Logan Killicks was desecrating the pear tree, but Janie didn't know how to tell Nanny that. She merely hunched over and pouted at the floor" (Hurston, 2004, p. 46). This is because husbands and wives are always meant to have unconditional love with each other, and that is the true purpose of marriage.

Consequently, after she gets married, her lack of understanding with her husband produces bitterness in him, and afterwards, this resentment turns to abuse and anger. Janie struggles to obey, and she begins to realize that this marriage suppresses her voice and desires, leaving her yearning for true love and self-fulfillment. This is because of the lack of tenderness in their relationship, which drives Janie into the arms of Joe Starks. This also reflects the absurdity of Janie and Logan's matrimonial bond and the inequality between them, as Janie's emotional needs and identity are disregarded in favor of traditional gender roles that prioritize Logan's authority and expectations.

Joe Stark, Janie's second husband, is more authoritative and restrictive, willing Janie to be an obedient and dutiful wife, always obeying his vision and remaining silent, with no participation in community discussions. All his life, he has worked for white folks. Being a mayor, his fundamental tendencies in life are toward purchasing, building, and political planning. He marries Janie because she would prove useful for his schemes. Janie is a beautiful young woman who fits his ideal. He is

obsessed with the concept of power. We may see that after they get married, the sexual spark between them disappears. Both still live in harmony publicly. Janie knows that he does not have respect for her in common. Despite that, she is willing to spend her life with Joe because she does not have other options to live in. Thus, the suppression of Janie's voice is not in favor of women is higher due to the patriarchal system, in which women are made obedient and considered weak. As Nanny says to her, "You know, honey, us colored folks is branches without roots and that makes things come round in queer ways. You in particular. Ah was born back due in slavery so it wasn't for me to fulfill my dreams of what a woman oughta be and to do. Dat's one of de hold-backs of slavery" (Hurston, 2004, p. 48).

It is well believed that ethnicity gives privilege to males. Nonetheless, the dynamics of violent behavior against women revolve around the ideology of patriarchy, culture, and society. Furthermore, Janie's interactions with white people in the novel, such as the police and other authoritative figures, reflect the power dynamics of the age.

Additionally, her marriages and her economic status are shaped by societal expectations in the Black community, creating tension and leading to judgment from others. Moreover, Janie's grandmother, Nanny, persuades her to promise marriage to Logan for a protected future, prioritizing dependability and safety over love, reflecting her subservience; likewise, her marriage to Joe determines her subordination and her husband's desire for power and control. These societal norms dictate Janie's expectations of personal fulfillment. However, Hurston's narrative offers numerous possibilities of structural intersectionality through its representation of gender, class, and other social categories, such as Janie's experiences. Being a woman of color, she faces several challenges, both due to her race and gender in the American South during the early 20th century, and thus political perspectives of intersectionality simultaneously oppress her as she faces sexism and racism from both Black men and white society.

The fundamental focus of Hurston's work centers on the relationship between Janie and Tea Cake. At the start, Janie's first two unsuccessful marriages have implications for her sad past; however, Tea Cake, Janie's third husband, encourages her self-expression and independence. He

listens to his wife and gives importance to her opinions. This shows their mutual understanding and intimacy. Moreover, their relationship is not devoid of complexities. Tea Cake's Jealousy toward Janie, when she is admired by other men, additionally, his idea of gambling with their savings leads to conflict between them. Unfortunately, their relationship was cut short after Cake's illness and afterwards his eventual death, which undoubtedly leaves her grieving, but she remembers the grateful time they both shared. Overall, she finds a life partner who transforms the power of love and values her as an individual, "Because they really loved" (Hurston, 1998, p. 199). Moreover, several key factors shape her identity, like her relationship with her three husbands, her quest for love that would satisfy her spiritually and emotionally, her sense of self that asserts her independence, her association with nature and environment that create a sense of peace and clarity and most of all her experiences of sexism and racism and also prejudice and discrimination from both white and Black communities. These experiences influence and make her understand her place and identity in a male-centered society. Indeed, these numerous instances in the novel make the representational intersectionality evident. Hurston invites readers to ponder how multifaceted forms of representational intersectionality shape the identity of individuals. Janie Crawford navigates her identity, interaction with others, and societal expectations in early 20th-century America.

### **Conclusion**

The study concludes that in *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, a variety of social situations and relationships navigate a complex world where the identity of Janie as a Black woman is shaped in intersectional ways. These intersections not only reflect how she is treated and how she responds to others but also explore her resilience and self-acquaintance with the constraints imposed upon her. Undoubtedly, her quest for individual identity and autonomy overcomes the limitations of intersecting manners in the novel. Janie Crawford's journey toward self-actualization, liberation, and character development was impacted by systemic racism and sexism. She transforms herself from an immature girl to a mature woman. The protagonist achieves self-transformation and inner growth with emotional, physical, and psychological intersectionality. Janie is the true voice of the African American women who face household clashes and the difficulties

in their lives. In addition, this novel also examines the destructive impacts of masculine dominance, white ethnic control, both in Africa and America, and favoritism among the Black group of people. Hurston increases the responsiveness of women who are mistreated not only because of the color of their skin but also in their community by the male hands. Women become victims of sexual aggression. The women do not find a sense of freedom from tyranny in a male-centered community, and therefore, Hurston promotes the public empowerment of women. Through *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, Hurston represents racial and gender issues faced by colored women and advocates for their spiritual salvation and individual identity. No doubt Hurston's work has an everlasting impact on the community; she is considered one of the influential writers of her time, and her contributions celebrate their cultural richness, and her pen work exemplifies racial pride in African American Culture.

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