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## **Their Eyes Were Watching God by Zora Neale Hurston; Gender Difference during the late 1800s and into the early 1900s**

During the 1900, woman specifically african american women, were treated as property of men in the United States mainly down south, in states like Georgia and Florida. Woman were forced into submission and there was nothing they could do about it. In the novel "Their Eyes Were Watching God", Zora Neale Hurston shows the problem of gender roles through the story of a young african american woman named Janie, who struggled through an arranged marriage and through multiple characters as well as the plot, sexism comes to the surface.

In the beginning of this novel is evident the roles of men and women play a very big part in the book "ships at a distance have every man's wish on board. Or some they come in with the tide. For others they sail forever... Now, women forget all those things they don't want to remember, and remember everything that I don't want to forget". In this opening paragraph of their eyes were watching God, Hurston compares the wishes and dreams of men and women in particularly interesting way.

By using the sea as a symbol she is saying that men can never really control their dreams, just wait for them to come true. While women on the other hand, can take their jeans into their own hands, molding them as they see fit. Making this comparison establishes the theme of gender differences between lea by using the sea as a symbol she is saying that men can never really control their dreams, just wait for them to come true. While women on the other hand, can take their jeans into their own hands, molding them as they see fit. Making this comparison establishes the theme of gender differences throughout the novel, and ultimately foreshadows the fact that JaNia is going to struggle yet will stop at nothing to achieve what she sets her mind to.

After first setting the tone nanny is introduced her traditional values of womanly roles such as cooking and cleaning lead us to believe that JaNia will be the same but when Janie kisses Johnny Taylor, her view of men changes after seeing "a dust-bearing the sink into the sanctum of a bloom; The thousand sister calyxes arch to meet the love in brace and the ecstatic shiver of the tree from route to the tiniest branch cleaning in every blossom and frothing with the light. So this was a marriage she had been summoned to be holding a revelation" this paragraph is one of the most important if not the most in the whole book. Comparing love to the relationship between a B and it's flour, Jane Jane he suddenly crates, love, passion, and above all, someone she can consider her equal. Unfortunately though, equality was a foreign concept during this time period.

Men were seen as "all powerful", Considered the sole providers and the only ones allowed to hold any sort of office or high status job. Woman on the other hand where the complete opposite. Ingenious first relationship, it is clear that this is not the Equality she has hoped for. Logan Killicks an elderly, black man her grandmother has arrange for her to marry treats JaNia like a servant and not like a wife at all there is no love president, and every day is a chore even though nanny knows JaNia is not happy she insists the marriage is a good one "heah yo is wid

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de onliest organ, amonst colored folks, in yo' parole. Got a house bought and paid for and sixty acres uh land right on de big road... Lawd have mussy! Dats de very prong all is black womenswear gits hung on" in nanny speech, Hurston is trying to emphasize that the females only role is to marry and look good and let the man do all the work. When Joe "Jody" Starks appears out of nowhere, Janie feels like her dreams have finally come true. But after a while the marriage turns out to be a little more than the student with Killicks Starks, like Killicks treats her as property and not as someone who actually loves. One example is how Jody make Janie put her hair up in a rap while working in the store rather than leave it down. Another is when he publicly criticize her periods, saying she is starting to show her age, when he is clearly at least 10 years older "you ain't no young courtin' gal. You'se uh old woman, nearly fourty". Joe feels the need to tear down Janie, in order to make himself feel more important, which was an important part of being a man during this time.

By reading The novel their eyes were watching God by Zora Night Vale Hurston, one could immediately pick up on the difference gender played during the late 1800s and into the early 1900s wow women were expected to stay at home and clean and take care of children, men work to provide for their families and were considered far superior. While these prejudice have slowly gotten better over time most of them still exist to a small extent in today society. Through the characters attitudes and narratives especially Janie's relationships and the society's feelings as a whole their eyes were watching God clearly displays the social issues of sexism and gender roles.