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AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF  
CRITICAL RESPONSE TO ZORA NEAL HURSTON

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Adele Sheron Newson

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AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY  
OF CRITICAL RESPONSE TO  
ZORA NEALE HURSTON

By

Adele Sheron Newson

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## ABSTRACT

### AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF CRITICAL RESPONSE TO ZORA NEALE HURSTON

By

Adele Sheron Newson

Zora Neale Hurston was the only woman writer to enjoy relative success during and after the Harlem Renaissance era. Although the period was dominated by such artists as Langston Hughes, Arna Bontemps, Sterling Brown, and Wallace Thurman, Hurston published nearly a dozen short stories before her first novel Jonah's Gourd Vine in 1934. Subsequently, she published two collections of folklore, three additional novels, and an autobiography. Her last novel, Seraph on the Suwanee (1948) marked both her attempt to reach a wider audience (the principal characters of the novel were white) and the last major publication during her lifetime. She wrote scores of essays, articles, and reviews as well, many of which espoused views which made her unpopular among the community of scholars and artists of the time.

Hurston returned to Florida and fell into obscurity following the publication of Seraph on the Suwanee. She died in 1960 in a welfare home in Saint Lucie County,

Florida.

From the essays, reviews, articles, criticisms, and books written about Hurston in the last half century, a portrait of a driven black female writer appears. This portrait has historical significance for everyone involved in American letters. The annotated bibliography that follows documents Hurston's journey from Eatonville, Florida, to New York, through the South, to the West Indies, back to New York and into obscurity of a Florida welfare home. It also documents America's reactions to her findings.

For Billy James Newson, Jr.  
and in memory of my parents

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Critical attention came early to Zora Neale Hurston. Initially she was greeted with mixed reviews, later taken more seriously as both novelist and folklorist, and finally, posthumously recognized as an important writer whose life and works provide inspiration for and influence on other black writers. The arc of her critical reception bears a close relationship to corresponding changes in social, literary, and racial attitudes. During the 1930s and 1940s she enjoyed marginal attention from the American literary establishment--both she and her subject matter were considered novelties. During the 1950s and 1960s she began to slip into obscurity--in part due to her non-conventional political ideas and because it appeared that her works would not withstand the test of time. In the 1970s and 1980s she has been pulled closer to the center of the American literary establishment because that establishment has become more responsive to minority writers, to women, and to mixed forms and because of the active revival and re-evaluation of the Hurston canon.

In 1921, Hurston began her writing career with the publication of the story, "John Redding Goes to Sea," in

Stylus, the Howard University literary magazine (reprinted in Opportunity in 1926). The story of young John Redding's longing to flee his rural village--that rural village being roughly equivalent to Hurston's own Eatonville, Florida--is described by one critic as Hurston's struggle "to make literature out of the Eatonville experience. It was her unique subject, and she was encouraged to make it the source of her art" (Hemenway, 1977). Several short stories later, Hurston left Washington, D.C. with a storehouse of Eatonville folklore garnered during her childhood. She arrived in New York with the hope of participating fully in the Harlem Renaissance, the movement which celebrated black art of many kinds. In 1924, she emerged at the forefront of the publishing activity that included black writers. Her activity in New York during the 1920s gained her the reputation of being flamboyant, talented person. Her craft during those years was confined to the writing of the short story.

There is some question about Hurston's date of birth, but it is now thought that she was 47 when in 1934 she published Jonah's Gourd Vine, her first novel. More than seven years had elapsed from the time she arrived in New York to the publication of that book. Of those intervening years critic Andrew Burris maintained, "We believed that Zora Hurston was not interested in writing a book merely to jump on the bandwagon of the New Negro Movement, as some

quite evidently were; but we felt that she was taking her time, mastering her craft, and would as a result produce a really significant book" (1934). Yet Burris went on to describe Jonah's Gourd Vine as a failure as a novel because, in his words, Hurston "used her characters and the various situations created for them as mere pegs upon which to hang their dialect and their folkways."

In contrast, reviewer Nick Aaron Ford found Jonah's Gourd Vine (the story of John Pearson's rise and fall in marriage and work) a failure because of the chief character's inability to rise to the heights of Ben Hur, "bursting the unjust shackles that had bound him to a rotten social order and winning the applause even of his enemies" (1936). Leery of what less informed readers would think of John Pearson's antics, Ford concluded that "thoughtless readers of other races...[might find Pearson] a happy confirmation of what they already faintly believe: namely, that the Negro is incapable of profiting by experience or of understanding the deeper mysteries of life."

Yet other critics celebrated Jonah's Gourd Vine for its faithful, if not telling, depiction of folkways, while criticizing its execution. One critic believed, "The framework of the book is less commendable than its fine, juicy and eminently natural humor, and its record of curious folkways" (Brickell, 1934). Another maintained that although Hurston "paints vivid pictures of Negro life, her

style often falls flat as she brings in new events for which the reader is unprepared" (Felton, 1934).

Still other critics, enamored by Hurston's candor and facility for writing dialect, characterized the novel as a great achievement. The Booklist reviewer found the novel to be about "real Negroes written without affectation" (1934). Martha Gruening observed that Hurston wrote the story of John Pearson with "freedom from sentimentality that is so frequently in writing about Negroes" (1934). Gruening concluded that, "candor like Miss Hurston's is sufficiently rare among Negro writers. It is only one of the excellences of this book." Margaret Wallace called Jonah's Gourd Vine "the most vital and original novel about the American negro that has yet been written...." (1934). Wallace praised Hurston's rendition of the Southern Negro dialect noting that "Its essence lies...in the rhythm and balance of the sentences, in the warm artlessness of the phrasing."

Many reviewers agreed that a notable feature of Jonah's Gourd Vine involved Hurston's use of dialect in the novel. One reviewer called John Pearson's sermon "simply magnificent" (Brickell, 1934). Mary White Ovington admired the fact that the material of the book was dressed in magnificent phraseology (1934), a stylistic feature that would continue to dominate Hurston's later works.

In one of her early essays, "Characteristics of Negro Expression," Hurston identified one of the key



characteristics of Negro style as the "will to adorn." She cited ways the American Negro has done wonders to the English language," through phrasing--introducing unusual figurative language, double-descriptive adjectives, and verbal nouns. In Hurston's second book, Mules and Men, this feature of the Southern (Florida and New Orleans) Negroes' speech is presented in depth. This collection of folklore and tales, unified by a narrator who guides the reader through her experience of collecting Southern folklore, was introduced by Dr. Franz Boas. Boas observed that the collection represented "the intimate setting in the social life of the Negro," a feature largely absent from previous folklore accounts.

In the main, response to Mules and Men heralded it as a milestone on counts of both execution and content. One critic believed that Hurston encouraged "her readers to listen in while her own people were being natural, something her people could never be in the company of outsiders" (Brock, 1935). Another critic called the book "a valuable picture of the life of the unsophisticated Negro in the small towns and backwoods of Florida" (Moon, 1935). Samuel G. Stoney said the book was "an excellent piece of reporting with an infectiously interesting style," although he warned readers not to let the first twenty pages of the book arrest them because "things are a great deal better from thenceforth" (1935). Additionally, Jonathan Daniels

believed Mules and Men to be "rich enough to withstand both skepticism and familiarity" (1935).

Poet and critic Sterling Brown, however, disagreed with Hurston's notion that the black story teller lacked bitterness. Brown objected to what he called her "socially unconscious characters" (1936). At the heart of Brown's criticism is the very real problem facing Black writers of the era: how Negro artists should depict Negro characters in their works, the question of the black writer's social and artistic responsibilities. The notion of the facile or superstitious Negro character was altogether distasteful to both Brown and Harold Preece who, although a white liberal, believed Hurston to have engaged in a type of professional colonialism. Preece dismissed Hurston as a literary climber, explaining that "The resentment of some Negro circles toward the work of Miss Hurston is easily explained.... For when a Negro author describes her race with such a servile term as "Mules and Men," critical members of the race must necessarily evaluate the author as a literary climber" (1936).

If Hurston's intent in Mules and Men was to provide a record of the big "lies" told by Southern black folk--the lies which explained the nature of the problems black people face as well as the lies told simply to entertain, thereby presenting a case for black American mythology--then, perhaps the reviewer who came closest to recognizing

Hurston's intention was B.C. McNeill. McNeill asserted that in Mules and Men, Hurston presented "something unique for a collection of folkways, the sort of running dialogue that would, in moderate use, form the local atmosphere of modern novels dealing with characters drawn from the milieu [the folk tradition of Negroes in the south]" (1936). Moreover, McNeill anticipated the problems Hurston might face due to the candid depiction of characters when he cautioned, "If she has not convinced all readers of the powers of Voodooism, [she] has offered new evidence of widespread ignorance and superstition."

Hurston used the local atmosphere of the characters drawn from the Mules and Men milieu for her third book, Their Eyes Were Watching God, the story of Janie Crawford's development into conscious personhood. The novel was largely misinterpreted by almost all of the novel's reviewers, for several reasons.

To begin, Their Eyes Were Watching God is not a protest novel in the tradition of James Weldon Johnson's, Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man, nor does it reflect the influence of the Communist party that was shaping the work of several black authors of the period. Richard Wright, in a New Masses review, objected to the minstrel images he felt Hurston was perpetuating, although he admitted that "her dialogue manages to catch the psychological movements of the Negro folk-mind in their pure simplicity" (1937). Wright

condemned Hurston's efforts because Their Eyes Were Watching God did not concern itself with "the race or class struggle or the revolutionary traditions of black people in America." Conversely, Ethel A. Forrest found that "every phase of the life of the Negro in the South, like self-segregation of the Negroes themselves and the race hatred displayed by the Southern white man, has been interwoven" in Their Eyes Were Watching God (1938). Forrest concluded that the novel "in many respects, [was] a historical novel."

Second, the idea of the questing woman character--Janie's quest for love among equals as well as for self-discovery--was at the time of the novel's appearance, a foreign concept. This important aspect of the novel--Janie's development--was either dismissed as frivolous or blatantly misinterpreted. One reviewer found Janie to be "an upstanding coffee-colored quadroon [who] outlasts all three of her men--the last only because she was quicker on the trigger than he was--goes back to her village to rest in peace and make her friends' eyes bug out at the tales of what she and life have done together" (Time, 1937). The same critic began the review with the suggestion that "Southerners would simply disregard the equalitarian groupings implicit in the novel, while Northerners might well find in it some indigestible food for thought."

Third, some black critics found unseemly that episode

in which Janie's vindication rests on the decision of 12 white men. It somehow spoke, they thought, of Hurston's supposed adoration of whites. W. A. Hunton believed that Hurston's using kind white folks to save Janie from the accusations of her own people "indicates an acceptance of the principle of racial isolation" because "the Negro environment is the only environment which will enable the Negro to be himself" (1938). Hunton added that if Hurston "desires to make the best use--the honest use--of her universally acknowledged mastery of the idiom, and imagery of Negro folklore, she must (likewise) change her point of view--and her audience."

Poet Sterling Brown discovered that Hurston "does not dwell upon the 'people ugly from ignorance and broken from being poor' who swarm upon the 'muck' for short-time jobs. But there is bitterness, sometimes oblique, in the enforced folk manner, and sometimes forthwright" (1937)--e.g. the mistress beats Nanny for having a grey-eyed child, and after the hurricane, whites were buried in pine coffins while the Negroes were sprinkled with quick-lime, then covered with dirt.

In short, then, reviewers who responded both favorably and unfavorably to Their Eyes Were Watching God seemed to have been arrested by isolated incidents. Yet, there was more informed criticism, criticism which examined and sought to unify all the elements of the text. One reviewer pointed

out that Hurston was not preoccupied with the then current fetish of the primitive. Rather she created "the perfect relationship of man and woman, whether they be black or white . . . there is a sense of triumph and glory when the tale is done" (Hibben, 1937). Lucy Tompkins echoed this sentiment when she wrote that Their Eyes Were Watching God is a novel "about everyone, or at least every one who isn't so civilized that he has lost the capacity for glory" (1937).

Early reviewers concerned with matters of style and execution agreed that "Their Eyes Were Watching God contained a number of technical flaws." One reviewer found the novel's execution "too complex and wordily pretty." Its breakdown in structure was traced to "the conflict between the true vision and its overliterary expression" (Ferguson, 1937). Another reviewer discovered that "the only weak spots in the novel are technical; it begins awkwardly with a confusing and unnecessary preview of the end" (Stevens, 1937).

Tell My Horse, Hurston's fourth book, is her personal account of inquiry into the Voodoo cults of Jamaica and Haiti. The three-part book includes sections on Jamaica culture, "Politics and Personalities of Haiti," and "Voodoo in Haiti." Tell My Horse also contains an appendix with Negro music, Voodoo formulae, conjure paraphernalia, and prescriptions from root doctors.

Hurston's contemporaries, unable to unearth a pattern to the materials she presented in the book, found it "disorganized but interesting" (New Yorker, 1938), or an unusual and intensely interesting book (New York Times, 1938). Harold Courlander described the book as "a curious mixture of remembrances, travelogue, sensationalism and anthropology. The remembrances are vivid, the travelogue tedious, the sensationalism reminiscent of Seabrook and the anthropology a melange of misinterpretation and exceedingly good folklore" (1938). The New York Times reviewer observed that Hurston writes of her experiences "with sympathy and level-headed balance, with no sensationalism, in a style which is vivid, sometimes lyrical, occasionally strikingly dramatic, yet simple and unstrained" (1938).

Other critics saw the book as an important contribution to the existing body of folklore on the West Indies. Historian Carter G. Woodson called Tell My Horse "an important chapter in the conflict and fusion of cultures," adding that the book is "entertaining and at the same time one of value which scholars must take into consideration in the study of the Negro in the Western Hemisphere" (1939). Similarly, Edgar T. Thomas considered the most important aspect of the book to be Hurston's exploration of Voodoo in Haiti, although he added that Herskovits' book, Life in a Haitian Valley, appeared "more systematic in its reporting, and his results more significantly interpreted than

Hurston's account" (1939).

Moses, Man of the Mountain, like Tell My Horse, did not receive a great deal of critical attention at the time of its initial publication in 1939. By the late 1930s, the modernist influence on American letters was firmly in place. Hurston however, remained largely untouched by the movement. Sympathetic to this fact, Shelia Hibben wrote, "Hurston writes with her head and her heart at a time when there seems to be some principle of physics set dead against the appearance of novelists who give out a cheerful warmth and at the same time write with intelligence" (1937). Ralph Ellison placed Hurston in a category of writers whose fiction was "chiefly lyrical and for the most part unaware of the direction being taken by American writing as the result of the work of such writers as Joyce, Stein, Anderson and Hemingway" (1941). Dismayed by what later critics were to call Hurston's affirmative literature, Ellison added that, Moses, Man of the Mountain did nothing for Negro fiction."

It is an understatement, then, to say that a great deal of critical and literary confusion was detectable by the time Moses, Man of the Mountain appeared. Hurston's account of Moses fused the Moses of the Old Testament and the Moses of Negro folk legend. Presented through a mixture of black dialect, colloquial English, and biblical rhetoric, Hurston achieved a dual level of narration in the novel. On the one



hand, she treated the Hebrew's escape from Egypt and movement to the promised land, and on the other, she explored the problems black Americans faced with emancipation.

Publications that had favorably reviewed Hurston's earlier works reviewed Moses, Man of the Mountain favorably, for the most part. One critic said that Hurston's approach to the character of Moses "is as arresting as it is fresh . . . the characters are convincing; the setting has the charm of a continually changing panorama, but the whole is less successful than the parts, and the total effect is that of unfulfilled expectation" (Untermeyer, 1939). The New Yorker reviewer called the book "the real thing, warm, humorous, poetic" (1939). Another critic maintained that the story of Moses is told with "humor and with a Negro folklore quality that is warm and human" (Booklist, 1939). The New York Times review was interesting in that it was condescending to the magic lore of "primitive peoples . . . and the African most of all" while it praised Hurston's "homespun book . . . [as] literature in every best sense of the word" (Hutchinson, 1939). In addition, this reviewer was early in noting Hurston's affinity for mixing folklore with literature and folklore with fact. He observed that "It is impossible to say to what extent Miss Hurston has woven many legends and interpretation into one and how often she is making verbatim use of given, but, presumably, only

orally extant, tradition."

The favorable criticism of the book continued with evaluations which were much less exacting in describing the elements which made Moses, Man of the Mountain the success that some reviewers believed it to be. Reviewer Carl Carmer characterized Moses, Man of the Mountain as "a fine Negro novel . . . [Hurstun] has made a prose tapestry that sparkles with characteristic Negro humor though it never loses dignity" (1939). Carmer added that Hurston's prose in the novel "teaches us to realize the contribution her race is making to American expression." The immediate question which comes to mind is did these critics consider Negro literature inferior to mainstream literature? The question is second only to the reaction Hurston must have had to learn that her intentions in writing the book were reduced to that of making a contribution to her racial group.

Perhaps the more objective reviews of the book spoke to Hurston's intentions. Philip Slomovitz found that Hurston's "distinctive contribution is her brilliant study of the problem of emancipation," while he criticized her interpretation of the ethical contributions of Moses and her treatment of the codes of law handed down by him (1939).

Dust Tracks on a Road, Hurston's 1942 autobiography, was largely dismissed as a fairytale or a goodwill novel. It was, however, the recipient of the Ainsfield Award in Racial Relations. Praise was far from universal: one

reviewer characterized the autobiography as "the tragedy of a gifted, sensitive mind, eaten up by an egocentrism fed on the patronizing admiration of the dominant white world" (Preece, 1943). Arna Bontemps wryly viewed Hurston's autobiography as fascinating, observing that she "deals very simply with the more serious aspects of Negro life in America--she ignores them . . . [adding that] She has done right well by herself in the kind of world she found" (1942). Another reviewer described the book as not a great autobiography, though worthwhile, with "interestingly presented [material], whether fact or fancy, and there is much of both in it" (Farrison, 1943).

Other reviewers favored the autobiography for a number of reasons. Ernestine Rose reported that Hurston presented a "good documentary film on the growth of a Negro intellectual" through Dust Tracks on a Road (1942). Rose added that the book was written "with little finish, but the literary crudity may have been chosen deliberately to heighten effect." Rebecca Chalmers described Dust Tracks on a Road as shooting off "bright sparks of personality," adding that Hurston's omissions could be attributed to the fact that Hurston did not want to be "caught in any pattern of thought which would cause her to conform to any school of writers/thought" (1948).

By 1948, Hurston had divorced herself totally from 'the Negro problem with the publication of

Seraph on the Suwanee, the story of a white Southern woman whose life is defined by her marriage. (This book is Hurston's only work that has not recently been reprinted.) Reviews of this novel were largely favorable although sparse. One reviewer applauded Hurston for knowing "her whites as she knows her Florida Negro . . . and she characterizes them with the same acumen, but she gives them no more attention than the plot demands" (Hedden, 1948). Additionally, Hedden contended, the "incompatible strains in the novel mirror the complexity of the author . . . [who] shuttles between the sexes, the professions, and the races as if she were man and woman, scientist and creative writer, white and Negro."

The Christian Science Monitor reviewer described the book as being "as earthly and wholesome as a vegetable garden" (1948). Yet, Frank G. Slaughter characterized the novel as "a textbook picture of a hysterical neurotic, right to the end on the novel" (1948). He concludes by describing Seraph on the Suwanee as "a curious mixture of excellent background drawing against which move a group of half-human puppets."

Seraph on the Suwanee marked not only Hurston's departure from Negro characters as subjects of her novels, it also marked her last major publication during her lifetime. The details of her life, in spite of or maybe because of her autobiography, were to remain shrouded in

controversy, even up to and including the present revival of her work. This controversy, in part, accounted for Hurston's fall into obscurity.

Beginning with Wallace Thurman's description of Hurston in his novel Infants of Spring--an autobiographical account of Thurman's disillusion with the Harlem writers--Hurston's behavior began to become more important than her work. Scantily masked as the character Sweetie Mae Carr, she was described by Thurman as being "more noted for her ribald wit and personal effervescence than for any actual literary work. She was a great favorite among those whites who went in for Negro prodigies. Mainly because she lived up to their conception of what a typical Negro should be" (1932). Similarly, in his autobiography The Big Sea, Langston Hughes noted that Hurston "was always getting scholarships and things from wealthy white people, some of whom simply paid her just to sit around and represent the Negro race for them, she did it in such a racy fashion" (1940).

Although both Thurman and Hughes conceded that Hurston was shrewd in her behavior and not simply a "happy darkie," as she was sometimes described, critic Darwin Turner found Hurston's behavior worthy of banishment from American letters. Turner described her as a "quick-tempered woman, arrogant toward her peers, obsequious toward her supposed superiors, desperate for recognition and reassurance to assuage her feelings of inferiority . . . . It is in

reference to this image that one must examine her novels, her folklore, and her views of the Southern scene" (1971).

In addition to her unpredictable behavior of the 1920s and 1930s, Hurston's views helped to indict her to obscurity. What critics now call Hurston's healthy regard for her race was largely misunderstood by her contemporaries. Civil rights activist Roy Wilkins responded to Hurston's assertion that the Jim Crow system worked by accusing her of being publicity seeker, selling out her people in order to promote her books (1943). As Bernice Johnson Reagon explained, "Hurston's occasional publications during the 1950s added greatly to the controversy revolving around her as a writer and political person. It may have been the Eatonville perspective that motivated her to write articles opposing the 1954 Supreme Court desegregation decision because she felt that black people did not need to be integrated in order to learn" (1982).

With the advent of the 1960s, however, in the midst of the civil rights and women's rights movements, opinion of Hurston's worth as an artist improved. Alice Walker recalled, "When I read Mules and Men I was delighted. Here was the perfect book . . . This was my first indication of the quality I feel is most characteristic of Zora's work: racial health--a sense of black people as complete, complex, undiminished human beings, a sense that is lacking in so much black writing and literature . . . Zora's pride in

black people was so pronounced in the ersatz black twenties that it made other blacks suspicious and perhaps uncomfortable . . . ." (1977).

The Hurston revival began, ironically enough, with sympathetic obituary written in 1960, the year of her death. Anthropologist Alan Lomax describes her as being "far ahead of her time" (1960). Theodore Pratt lamented the fact that Hurston "suffered literary obscurity" while pleading for the recognition that she deserved (1960).

The first of Hurston's works to be recalled from obscurity was Their Eyes Were Watching God. The 1965 reprint, published by Fawcett Publications, offered only a brief comment about the author's life and called the work Hurston's "more important novel." Critics who later reevaluated Hurston's works, presumably, had in their undergraduate work this reprint available to them to whet their appetites. Following the reprint of Their Eyes Were Watching God, critics began to consider Hurston in a new light. Their critical approaches became more biographical. The notion of Hurston's being a "happy darkie" needed to be dispelled so that a serious evaluation of her works could begin. Robert Bone suggested that the fact that Hurston was raised in an all-Negro town in Florida, "an experience with 'separate-but-equal' politics . . . deeply affected her outlook on racial issues as well as her approach to the Negro novel" (1966).

Langston Hughes included Hurston's "Gilded Six-bits" in his anthology of short fiction, The Best Short Stories of Negro Writers, and explained that her stories "would make delightful motion-picture, television, or radio comedies, much more human and real than 'Amos and Andy'" (1967). Another critic maintained that Hurston was good enough in her own right to justify public acclaim (Osofsky, 1968). A new image for Hurston was forming.

In 1977, Robert Hemenway answered the need for a biography of Hurston with his Zora Neale Hurston: A Literary Biography, an account which took eight years to research and write. The biography has been heralded as being the definitive Hurston. Rita B. Dandridge asserted that Hemenway's biography "will undoubtedly become the standard reference for information about Hurston's life and works" (1982). Equipped with a forward by Alice Walker entitled "Zora Neale Hurston: A Cautionary Tale and a Partisan View," the case for Hurston's resurrection gained national attention.

The posthumous publication of I Love Myself When I Am Laughing and Then Again When I am Looking Mean and Impressive (1979), edited by Alice Walker, marked a second stage of interest in Hurston. Published by the Feminist Press, this collection of Hurston's writings attracted the attention of feminist critics and contemporary black female writers. The Village Voice reviewer observed that "it is hard to see



on what Hurston's claim to enduring attention may rest--until one arrives at the excerpt from her 1937 novel Their Eyes Were Watching God. Those who love Hurston claim that with this book she achieved literature. It is, they say, her masterpiece, the work on which all else depends for affectionate interest. On the basis of the fifty pages her reprinted, I, for one, am willing to acknowledge that claim" (Gornick, 1979).

In 1978, another reprint of Their Eyes Were Watching God quickly followed the Hurston reader. This reprint contained a foreward by novelist Sherley Anne Williams who observed that "something of the questing quality that characterized Zora's own life informs the character of Janie . . . in their desire and eventual insistence that their men accord them treatment due equals, they are one" (1978).

By 1978 critics agreed that the character Janie Stark was the prototypical questing female character. One critic described her as "the exception to the usual female character who lacks depth . . . a woman of spirit moving steadily toward self-definition" (Berzon, 1978). Another celebrated her ability to "make dreams truth" (Brown, 1978). Ellen Cantrow found Janie's awakening preferable to that of Edna Pontellier's in The Awakening (Cantrow, 1978). Still another heralded Their Eyes Were Watching God as "an unusual work in black literature because it deals more with sexism

than racism" (Walker, 1974).

Also in 1978 Mules and Men was reprinted with an introduction by Robert Hemenway. Hemenway announced that the book "remains today as it was at the time of its publication, one of the most important collections of Afro-American folklore ever published" (Hemenway, 1978). In an article published the same year, Hemenway suggested a folkloric approach to the analysis of Hurston's materials. According to Hemenway, Hurston "adapts and transforms folklore for fictional purposes to a much greater extent than any other Afro-American writer" (1978). In a later article Hemenway advanced the notion that folktales have much to offer the present canon of literature, "just as Zora Neale Hurston has much to offer us as we step into the classroom of the future" (1982).

Another biography of Hurston, written by Lillie P. Howard, appeared in 1980. The book grew out of Howard's 1975 dissertation ("Zora Neale Hurston: A Non-Revolutionary Black Artist") at the University of New Mexico. By 1975, the number of papers on Hurston and dissertations treating Hurston alone or coupled with other female writers began to increase dramatically. The dissertations included such titles as "A Critical Investigation of Literary and Linguistic Structures in the Fiction of Zora Neale Hurston," "To Make a Woman Black: A Critical Analysis of the Women Characters in the Fiction and Folklore of Zora Neale

Hurston," and "The Ironic Vision of Four Black Women Novelists: A Study of the Novels of Jessie Fauset, Nella Larsen, Zora Neale Hurston, and Ann Petry." The 1970s, then, saw the beginning of a large scale resurrection of Hurston's works and the accompanying reevaluation of her worth as both artist and intellect.

The 1980s began with a burst of reprints of Hurston's works. In 1981, The Sanctified Church, a collection of Hurston's spiritual and voodoo accounts, was published with an introduction by Toni Cade Bambara. Bambara expressed the hope that "these essays will whet the reader's appetite and maybe even encourage some to pursue the task of collecting more of Zora and make it available in print" (1981). Tell My Horse was also reprinted in 1981 with an introduction by Bob Callahan who maintained that "The importance of Hurston's works, it now appears, will outlast us all" (1981).

Dust Tracks on a Road and Moses, Man of the Mountain were reprinted in 1985 and considered by the New York Times Book Review critic as "important to reassessing Hurston's standing" in American literature (Gates, 1985). Spunk: The Selected Short Stories of Zora Neale Hurston also appeared in 1985, with a foreward by Bob Callahan. The Christian Science Monitor reviewer called Spunk "the result of a writer discovering her subjects and learning to master her language" (Cornish, 1985).

In addition to the reprints of her books, there appeared a number of articles and essays which elevated Hurston herself to the status of literary mentor. Beginning in the late 1970s and extending into the 1980s, Hurston appeared a living spiritual entity for writers and critics alike. Mules and Men, for example, seems to have provided Alice Walker with the substance of her character Shug in her award-winning novel The Color Purple. Shug appears to be a composite of Big Sweet, Shug, and Ella Walla (all female characters in Mules and Men). All are nontraditional female characters: they carry knives, curse, participate in lying sessions, challenge men for the sport of it, and revel in their promiscuity. The following passage during which Big Sweet attempts to console Zora is reminiscent of the important dialogue between Shug and Celie during which God is demystified:

God loves uh plain sinner and he's married tuh de backslider. Ah got jus' as good uh chance at Heben as anybody else. So have yo' correct amount uh fun (ZNH, 1935).

There are other minor characters in The Color Purple who seem to be reminiscent of characters from Mules and Men. This revelation is not meant to detract from Alice Walker's accomplishment, but, rather, to show the important connection between the present black female writer's subject matter and that of her foremother.

The present love affair with Hurston has yielded interestingly original dialogues. Author Alice Walker

observed that what she discovered in Hurston was "A model, who, as it happened, provided more than voodoo for my story, more than one of the greatest novels America had produced . . . She had provided, as if she knew someday I would come along wandering in the wilderness, a nearly complete record of her life . . . I am eternally grateful for that life, warts and all" (1976). Feminist critic Ellen Cantarow said that Hurston "gives me not just vicarious strength, but also understanding" [of the historical bond between white and black women in this country] (1978), while Carole Gregory constructed an imaginary interview during which Hurston answers criticism. Gregory, in her preface to the interview, explained that "Hurston's ability to express our deepest feelings through the particular experience of Black women and men has made her writings a treasure" (1980).

In addition to inspiration and understanding, scholars have turned to Hurston's canon for confirmation of a black female literary tradition. Barbara Smith explained that the way Hurston and other black female writers incorporated the traditional black female activities "into the fabric of their stories is not mere coincidence, nor is their use of socifically Black female language to express their own and their characters' thoughts accidental. The use of Black women's language and cultural experience in books by Black women about Black women results in a miraculously rich

coalescing of form and content . . ." (1982). Lorraine Bethel echoed Smith's assertion in her essay, "'This Infinity of Conscious Pain': Zora Neale Hurston and the Black Female Literary Tradition," by asserting that Hurston's works form a major part of the "separable and identifiable tradition of Black women writers, simultaneously existing within and independent of the American, Afro-American, and American female tradition . . . and illustrates its unique simultaneity" (1982).

Other scholars have turned their attention to mainstream critical approaches to Hurston's works. Barbara Johnson provided a structuralist analysis of Their Eyes Were Watching God by exploring Hurston's acumen with figurative language, the opposition between an inside and an outside way of describing the nature of a rhetorical figure (1984). Cyrena N. Pondrom suggested that Hurston's "adoption of myth as a principle of meaning and order is Hurston's most important link to modernism . . . She shares with Eliot, Yeats, Joyce, Pound, and Crane the use of myth as 'a way of controlling or ordering, or giving a shape and a significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history'" (1986).

On the whole, Hurston's resurrection might best be described as arising from the need to fill a void in American literature, black folklore, the American literary traditions, and the climate of the 1960s which fostered such

a revival. That it has lasted as long as it has speaks to the quality of Hurston's amazing work. One cannot help but be intrigued by Alice Walker's assessment of Hurston's life. Walker explained "What is amazing is that Zora, who became an orphan at nine, a runaway at fourteen, a maid and manicurist (because of necessity and not from love of the work) before she was twenty, with one dress, managed to become Zora Neale Hurston, author and anthropologist, at all" (1977). What is even more amazing is that Hurston was more than likely in her late teens when her mother died, in her late twenties when she entered college, and in her late forties when she published her first novel. A resident of the welfare home of Saint Lucie County, Florida, Hurston died penniless in 1960.

My survey of the essays, reviews, articles, criticisms, and books written about Hurston in the last half-century, reveals a portrait of a driven black female writer. This portrait has historical importance for everyone involved with American letters. The annotated bibliography that follows documents Hurston's journey from Eatonville, Florida, to New York, through the South, to the West Indies, back to New York, and into the obscurity of a Florida welfare home. It also documents America's reactions to her findings.

Writings by Zora Neale Hurston

- 1934      Jonah's Gourd Vine.      Philadelphia:      J.B. Lippincott; London:      Duckworth Press.
- 1935      Mules and Men.      Philadelphia:      J.B. Lippencott. London:      Kegan Paul & Co., 1936.      Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1978.
- 1937      Their Eyes Were Watching God.      Philadelphia:      J.B. Lippincott; London:      J.M. Dent & Sons. Greenwich, CT:      Fawcett Publications, Inc., 1965.      Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1978.
- 1938      Tell My Horse.      Philadelphia:      J.B. Lippincott. London:      J.M. Dent & Sons, 1939; new edition as Voodoo Gods: an Inquiry into Native Myths and Magic in Jamaica and Haiti.      Berkeley, CA:      Turtle Island Foundation, 1981.
- 1939      Moses, Man of the Mountain.      Philadelphia:      J.B. Lippincott.      London:      J.M. Dent & Sons, 1941; reprinted as The Man of the Mountain.      Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1984.
- 1942      Dust Tracks on a Road.      Philadelphia:      J.B. Lippincott.      London:      Hutchinson & Co., 1944. Chicago:      University of Illinois Press, 1984.
- 1948      Seraph on the Suwanee.      New York:      Charles Scribner's Sons.
- 1979      I Love Myself When I Am Laughing and Then Again When I Am Looking Mean and Impressive.      Edited by Alice Walker.      Old Westbury, New York:      The Feminist Press.
- 1981      The Sanctified Church.      Berkeley, CA:      Turtle Island Foundation.
- 1984      Spunk: The Selected Short Stories of Zora Neale Hurston.      Berkeley, CA:      Turtle Island Foundation.



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- 1 CROMWELL, OTELIA; LORENZO DOW TURNER; and EVA B. DYKES. Readings from Negro Authors. NY: Harcourt, Brace and Company, p. 58.

Lists Hurston among the best-known Negro writers of the short story in America. Includes the short story "Drenched in Light" as a selection. Cites the short story "Judgment" by Hurston for collateral reading. [Although "Judgment" is mentioned in this text, no record of its existence has been found.]

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- 1 BRICKELL, HERSCHEL. North American Review 238, no. 1 (July): 95-96.

Reviews Jonah's Gourd Vine. Calls it "A remarkably good Negro novel." Adds that "The framework of the book is less commendable than its fine, juicy and eminently natural humor, and its record of curious folkways." Concludes that, with the exception of Langston Hughes' Not Without Laughter, the book is easily the best piece of fiction from a member

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of her race.

- 2 BURRIS, ANDREW. Crisis 41, no. 6 (June): 166-167.

Reviews Jonah's Gourd Vine. Says that it is disappointing and a failure as a novel. Believes that Hurston "used her characters and the various situations created for them as mere pegs upon which to hang their dialect and their folkways." Adds that in the character John Buddy Pearson, Hurston had "the possibility of developing a character that might have stamped himself upon American life more idelibly than either John Henry or Black Ulysses." Concedes that Hurston has amassed in the book, a rich store of folklore.

- 3 FELTON, ESTELL. Opportunity 612, no. 8 (Aug.): 252-253.

Reviews Jonah's Gourd Vine. Says Hurston's "Detailed understanding of the customs and traditions of her people is an invaluable aid in winning for this book the praise some critics have given it." Maintains that although Hurston paints vivid pictures of Negro life, her style often falls flat as she

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brings in new events for which the reader is unprepared. Believes that Hurston "rises to great heights when she writes in poetic form the last sermon of John Pearson with such power and emotion that one can almost hear the sermon." Adds that plot construction and characterization are disappointing.

- 4 GRUENING, MARTHA. "Darktown Strutter."  
New Republic 79, no. 11 (July): 244-245.

Reviews Jonah's Gourd Vine. Asserts that because Hurston hails from an all-black town, she handles the story of John Pearson with zest and naturalness, and "freedom from sentimentality that is so frequently in writing about Negroes." Concludes that "Candor like Miss Hurston's is sufficiently rare among Negro writers. It is only one of the excellences of this book."

- 5 OVINGTON, MARY WHITE. New York Age 48, no. 35 (6 May): 6.

Reviews Jonah's Gourd Vine. Says the material of the novel is dressed in magnificent phrasology. Believes that a happy ending for John Pearson would be sacrilege,

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"just as an unhappy one would have been in the past." Adds that John Pearson's death gives the reader a chance to read of a grand funeral.

- 6 PINCKNEY, JOSEPHINE. "A Pungent, Poetic Novel About Negroes." New York Herald Tribune Books 10, no. 35 (6 May): 7.

Reviews Jonah's Gourd Vine. Asserts that Hurston "writes as a Negro whose intelligence is firmly in the saddle, who recognizes the value of an objective style in writing, and who is able to use the wealth of material available to her with detachment and with a full grasp of its dramatic qualities." Contends that Hurston writes of blacks with honesty, sympathy, and without extenuation. Notes that whites in the novel are portrayed "but little and without bitterness." Adds that Hurston reveals some uncertainty in the handling of the narrative--"Quarrels, trial proceedings, conflicts occur which are never resolved." Applauds Hurston's treatment of the character John Pearson, although adds that the character Lucy Pearson "is not equally

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convincing."

- 7 \*R.E.M.J. Boston Chronicle 5 May. [Found in Hemenway's Zora Neale Hurston, A Literary Biography (1977), p. 194 and 216.]

Reviews Jonah's Gourd Vine. Says the novel "presents openly the greatest problem of the Negro in all its universality: the utterly inescapable interrelation of sex, success, and society."

- 8 Review of Jonah's Gourd Vine. Booklist 30, no. 11 (July): 351.

Says Jonah's Gourd Vine is about real Negroes written without affectation by a young Negro college woman.

- 9 Review of Jonah's Gourd Vine. Nation 138 (13 June): 638.

Notes faults in the construction of the novel; finds much, however, to praise.

- 10 Review of Jonah's Gourd Vine. Times Literary Supplement 1, no. 707 (18 Oct.): 716-717.

Calls Jonah's Gourd Vine a lively and well-written story. Says the married life of Lucy Ann Potts and John Buddy Pearson is

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described with a delicacy not often encountered in Negro fiction. Concludes that "the tone of the novel is grave and gay by turns and all through is free from the violence of many novels of Negro life."

- 11 WALLACE, MARGARET. "Real Negro People." New York Times Book Review 83, no. 27, 681 (6 May): 6-7.

Reviews Jonah's Gourd Vine. Calls it "the most vital and original novel about the American Negro that has yet been written...." Praises Hurston's rendition of the southern Negro dialect noting that "Its essence lies...in the rhythm and balance of the sentences, in the warm artlessness of the phrasing." Believes Hurston created, in the characters of John Pearson and Lucy Potts, "characters who are intensely real and human and whose outlines will remain in the reader's memory long after the book has been laid aside....They appeal to us first of all as human beings, confronting a complex of human problems with whatever grace and humor, intelligence and steadfastness they can

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muster." Describes the story as "an extraordinarily absorbing and credible tale."

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- 1 BOAS, FRANZ. Preface to Mules and Men by Zora Neale Hurston. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, x.

Celebrates Hurston's achievement in entering the "intimate setting in the social life of the Negro....to penetrate through that affected demeanor by which the Negro excludes the white observer effectively from participating in his true inner life." Calls Mules and Men "an unusual contribution to our knowledge of the true inner life of the Negro," by virtue of Hurston's loveable personality and revealing style.

- 2 BROCK, H.I. "The Full, True Flavor of Life in a Negro Community." New York Times Book Review 85, no. 28, 414 (10 Nov.): 4.

Reviews Mules and Men. Says the book "is packed with tall tales rich with flavor and alive with characteristic turns of speech." Notes that "a very tricky dialect has been rendered with rare simplicity and fidelity

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into symbols so little adequate to convey its true values that the achievement is remarkable."

- 3 DANIELS, JONATHAN. "Black Magic and Dark Laughter." Saturday Review of Literature 22, no. 25 (19 Oct.):

Reviews Mules and Men. Says "Only an ability to write, a rare conjunction of the sense of the ridiculous and the sense of the dramatic, could have produced this remarkable collection of Negro folktales and folk customs." Believes the book to be rich enough to withstand both skepticism and familiarity. Concludes that it is "an altogether satisfying book."

- 4 MOON, HENRY LEE. "Big Old Lies." New Republic 85, no. 1097 (11 Dec.): 142.

Reviews Mules and Men. Says Hurston did more than collect and record tales from Florida, "Alert and keenly observant, she studied the mores, folkways and superstitions, the social and economic life of these people as an essential background for her book." Calls Mules and Men "a valuable picture of the



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life of the unsophisticated Negro in the small towns and backwoods of Florida."

- 5 STONEY, SAMUEL GAILLARD. "Wit, Wisdom and Folklore." New York Herald Tribune Books 12, no. 6 (13 Oct.): 7.

Reviews Mules and Men. Describes Hurston's efforts as "an excellent piece of reporting with an infectiously interesting style." Warns readers not to let the first twenty pages of the book arrest them because "things are a great deal better from thenceforth." Believes the book is a milestone of Negro literature "for the author has taken her people as neither better nor worse than any other race; but different as of their own right."

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- 1 \*BROWN, STERLING. Unidentified clipping. (25 Feb.) [Found in Hemenway's Zora Neale Hurston, A Literary Biography (1977), p. 219].

Reviews Mules and Men. Praises Hurston's rendering of the tales. Disputes Hurston's implicit claim that the Negro story teller

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lacks bitterness, adding that in his searches he often found expressions of anger and animosity. Objects to Hurston's socially unconscious characters. Concludes that Mules and Men should be more bitter.

- 2 FORD, NICK AARON. The Contemporary Negro Novel. Boston: Meador, pp. 99-100.

Reviews Jonah's Gourd Vine. Believes Hurston failed "from lack of vision....[The hero, John Buddy] could have been another Ben Hur, bursting the unjust shackles that had bound him to a rotten social order and winning the applause even of his enemies." Finds John Buddy Pearson's inability to understand the mysteries which surround him "a phenomenon, although not intended by Miss Hurston as a type of all Negro manhood, is seized upon by thoughtless readers of other races as a happy confirmation of what they already faintly believe: namely that the Negro is incapable of profiting by experience or of understanding the deeper mysteries of life."

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- 3 MCNEILL, B. C. Journal of Negro History 21, No. 2 (April): 223-225.

Reviews Mules and Men. Believes that Hurston presents, in Mules and Men, "something unique for a collection of folkways, the sort of running dialogue that would, in moderate use, form the local atmosphere of modern novels dealing with characters drawn from this milieu [the folk tradition of Negroes in the south]. Maintains that Hurston, "if she has not convinced all readers of the powers of Voodooism, has offered new evidence of widespread ignorance and superstition."

- 4 PREECE, HAROLD. "The Negro Folk Cult." Crisis 43, no. 12 (Dec.): 364, 367.

Says Hurston "was devoting her literary abilities to recording the legendary amours of terrapins." Suggests that "The resentment of some Negro circles toward the work of Miss Hurston is easily explained....For when a Negro author describes her race with such a servile term as 'Mules and Men,' critical members of the race must necessarily evaluate the author as a literary climber."

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- 1 BRAWLEY, BENJAMIN. The Negro Genius. NY: Dodd, Mead & Co., Inc., pp. 257-259.

Reviews Jonah's Gourd Vine. Says "The story is not well integrated, and any merit the book possesses is largely in such a detached episode as Pearson's sermon on creation."

Believes that Hurston "struck her true vein with Mules and Men." Adds that Hurston "has not escaped criticism at the hands of those who frowned upon her broad humor and the lowly nature of her material." Asserts that her interest, however, "is not in solving problems, the chief concern being with individuals."

- 2 BROWN, STERLING A. "Luck is a Fortune." Nation 145, no. 16 (16 Oct.): 409-410.

Reviews Their Eyes Were Watching God. Says "Many incidents are unusual, and there are some narrative gaps in need of building up." Believes that Hurston's forte is the recording and creation of folk speech. Thinks the book "is chock-full of earthy and touching

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poetry." Maintains that Hurston "does not dwell upon the 'people ugly from ignorance and broken from being poor' who swarm upon the 'muck' for short-time jobs. But there is bitterness, sometimes oblique, in the enforced folk manner, and sometimes forthright...."

- 3 FERGUSON, OTIS. "You Can't Hear Their Voices." New Republic 92, no. 1193 (13 Oct.): 276.

Reviews Their Eyes Were Watching God. Says the novel deserves to be better. Believes that "Its execution is too complex and wordily pretty, yet its conception, that of the life of simple Florida Negroes, is unaffected and beautiful." Asserts that the breakdown comes "in the conflict between the true vision and its overliterary expression. Crises of feeling are rushed over too quickly for them to catch hold....action is described and characters are talked about, and everything is more heard than seen." Criticizes Hurston's work with dialect, calling it sloppy and characterized by "the delicate tampering with an occasional main word."

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- 4 HIBBEN, SHEILA. "Vibrant Book Full of Nature and Salt." New York Herald Tribune Books 14, no. 4 (26 Sept.): 2.

Reviews Their Eyes Were Watching God. Believes that Hurston was not preoccupied with the then current fetish of the primitive. Asserts that Hurston created "the perfect relationship of man and woman, whether they be black or white" in the liason of Tea Cake and Janie. Concludes that the book contains life, and "in spite of Tea Cake's tragic end and the crumbling of Janie's happiness, there is a sense of triumph and glory when the tale is done."

- 5 Review of Their Eyes Were Watching God. Booklist 34, no. 4 (15 Oct.): 71.

Says "The life of a Negro village and of workers in the Everglades are a natural part of the warm, human story." Adds that the Negro speech is easy to read.

- 6 Review of Their Eyes Were Watching God. Time 30, no. 12 (20 Sept.): 71.

Says Southerners would simply disregard the "equalitarian groupings implicit in the

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novel, while Northerners might well find in it some indigestible food for thought." Provides the following synopsis: "an upstanding coffee-colored quadroon out lasts all three of her men--the last only because she was quicker on the trigger than he was--goes back to her village to rest in peace and to make her friends' eyes bug out at the tales of what she and life have done together."

- 7 STEVENS, GEORGE. "Negroes by Themselves." Saturday Review of Literature 26, no. 21 (18 Sept.): 3.

Reviews Their Eyes Were Watching God. Says "the only weak spots in the novel are technical; it begins awkwardly with a confusing and unnecessary preview of the end; and the dramatic action, as in the story of the hurricane, is sometimes hurriedly and clumsily handled. Otherwise the narration is exactly right, because most of it is in dialogue, and the dialogue gives us a constant sense of character in action." Believes that Hurston reports the speech of Negroes with an accurate ear for its raciness. Concludes by

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calling the story "simple and unpretentious."

- 8 TOMPKINS, LUCY. "In the Florida Glades." New York Times Book Review 87, no. 29, 1000 (26 Sept.): 29.

Reviews Their Eyes Were Watching God. Says the novel is "about every one, or at least every one who isn't so civilized that he has lost the capacity for glory." Calls the section of the novel in which Janie Stark lives down on the muck of the Florida Glades "a little epic all by itself." Describes the novel as "a well-nigh perfect story--a little sententious at the start, but the rest is simple and beautiful and shining with humor." Adds that "the dialect here is very easy to follow, and the images it carries are irresistible."

- 9 WRIGHT, RICHARD. "Between Laughter and Tears." New Masses (5 Oct.): 22, 25.

Reviews Their Eyes Were Watching God. Disagrees with the minstrel image he felt Hurston was perpetuating in the novel. Says the novel is not concerned with the race or class struggle or the revolutionary traditions



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of black people in America. Admits that "her dialogue manages to catch the psychological movements of the Negro folk-mind in their pure simplicity."

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- 1 COURLANDER, HAROLD. "Witchcraft in the Caribbean Islands." Saturday Review of Literature 18, no. 25 (15 Oct.): 6-7.

Reviews Tell My Horse. Says Hurston exposes voodoo after the fashions of Seabrook, "in sensational, wishful terms," and Dr. Herskovits' "in its coldest mathematical terms." Believes that "To an extent she is successful..." [because] "Miss Hurston has an immense ability for catching the idiom of dialogue, of seeing the funniness of exaggeration, of recognizing the essence of a story. And yet, though these qualities do carry through at all times, there is a constant conflict between anthropological truth and tale-telling, between the obligation she feels to give the facts honestly and the attraction of (as one of her characters says in Mules and Men) the 'big old lies we tell

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when we're jus' sittin' around here on the store porch doin' nothin'.'" Concludes by suggesting "That Miss Hurston loves Haiti is obivous, but there is a general feeling that the material was not completely digested.

- 2 FORREST, ETHEL A. Journal of Negro History 23, no. 1 (Jan.): 106-107.

Reviews Their Eyes Were Watching God. Finds that "Every phase of the life of the Negro in the South, like self-segregation of the Negroes themselves and the race hatred displayed by the Southern white man, has been interwoven" in the novel. Calls it a "gripping story" with a natural and easy style. Applauds Hurston for "the skill and effectiveness shown in the writing of this book." Adds that the book is, in many respects, a historical novel, reflecting the tenor of the time.

- 3 HUNTON, W.A. "The Adventures of the Brown Girl in Her Search for Life." Journal of Negro Education 7, no. 1 (Jan.): 71-72.

Reviews Their Eyes Were Watching God. Believes the story reveals that Hurston "has a

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healthy scorn for the Negro's endeavor to pattern his life according to white bourgeois standards." Says that Hurston "is at her best when she presents her story through her characters, whether in direct or indirect discourse." Objects to Hurston's characterization saying "the characters have their being on a two-dimensional racial plane." Believes that the image of the happy Negro as presented through the novel has much in common with novelists who present the Negro preoccupied with the problem of race. Identifies the common concern as the theme of the "Negro's self-justification through escape from the prison of color." Explains, "The concern is explicit in the study of the race-conscious introvert; it is implicit in the depiction of the magnificently uninhibited extrovert."

- 4 "Lore of Haiti." New York Times Book Review 88, no. 29, 492 (23 Oct.):

Reviews Tell My Horse. Believes Hurston writes of her experiences in Haiti "with sympathy and level-headed balance, with no sensationalism, in a style which is vivid,

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sometimes lyrical, occasionally strikingly dramatic, yet simple and unstrained." Calls Tell My Horse "an unusual and intensely interesting book, richly packed with strange information."

- 5 Review of Tell My Horse. New Yorker 14, no. 35 (15 Oct.): 71.

Calls the novel "Disorganized but interesting account of Miss Hurston's visit to Jamaica and Haiti." Describes the books as "a witches' brew bubbling in the stewpot of a transplanted African culture."

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- 1 ALSTERLUND, B. "Zora Neale Hurston." Wilson Bulletin 13, no. 9 (May): 586.

Provides biographical information on Hurston. Calls Jonah's Gourd Vine "an able piece of Negro portraiture." Applauds Hurston's findings in Mules and Men. Regards Their Eyes Were Watching God as "an unaffected story of life among Florida Negroes." Provides something of a synopsis of Tell My Horse. Mentions Hurston's disheartened

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response "to a concert of genuine spirituals and work songs which she herself supervised at the John Golden Theater in New York (1932)," and Hurston's hopes of one day bringing African faculty to America to teach Negro music and dancing.

- 2 CARMER, CARL. "Biblical Story in Negro Rhythm." New York Herald Tribune Books 16, no. 13 (26 Nov.): 5.

Reviews Moses, Man of the Mountain. Says the biblical story of Moses lends itself so aptly to Hurston's treatment that "it has become a fine Negro novel." Contends that Hurston "has made a prose tapestry that sparkles with characteristic Negro humor though it never loses dignity." Believes that the most exciting element of the novel is "its serious use of Negro speech rhythms to tell the story." Adds that Hurston's prose, "teaches us to realize the contribution her race is making to American expression." Applauds Hurston's characterization as sure and her use of suspense as admirable. Concludes that Hurston, equipped with the

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folklore materials gathered in America and Haiti, is able "to give us novels of her race such as few of her contemporaries are capable of writing."

- 3 HUTCHINSON, PERCY. "Led His People Free." New York Times Book Review 89, no. 29, 884 (19 Nov.): 24.

Reviews Moses, Man of the Mountain. Describes the novel as "the story of Moses as the Negro sees and interprets the 'Man of the Mountain'." Believes "It is impossible to say to what extent Miss Hurston has woven many legends and interpretation into one and how often she is making verbatim use of given, but, presumably, only orally extant, tradition." Says Hurston "has done an exceptionally fine piece of work far off the beaten tracks of literature." Adds that "Her homespun book is literature in every best sense of the word."

- 4 LOCKE, ALAIN. "The Negro: New or Newer." Opportunity 17 (Feb.): 38.

Reviews Tell My Horse. Says the book contains "piquant thrills" and

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"anthropological gossip."

- 5     Review of Moses, Man of the Mountain.   Booklist.  
36, no. 7 (15 Dec.): 150.

Says the story is told "with humor and with a Negro folklore quality that is warm and human."

- 6     Review of Moses, Man of the Mountain.   New Yorker  
15, no. 39 (11 Nov.): 91.

Calls the novel "the real thing, warm, humorous, poetic."

- 7     SLOMOVITZ, PHILIP.   "The Negro Moses."  
Christian Century 56, no. 49 (6 Dec.): 1504.

Reviews Moses, Man of the Mountain   Calls Hurston's rendering of Moses "a magnificent story, but it is weak in its interpretation of the ethical contributions of the prophet and in its treatment of the code of laws handed down by him." Adds that "Her distinctive contribution is her brilliant study of the problem of emancipation, done as perhaps only a Negro could do it."

- 8     THOMPSON, EDGAR T.   Rural Sociology 4, no. 2:  
261.

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Reviews Tell My Horse. Considers the most important aspect in the book to be the report on Voodoo in Haiti, but views Dr. Herskovits' book Life in a Haitian Valley "more systematic in its reporting, and his results more significantly interpreted" than Hurston's account.

- 9 UNTERMEYER, LOUIS. "Old Testament Voodoo." Saturday Review of Literature 21, no. 3 (11 Nov.): 11.

Reviews Moses: Man of the Mountains. Says that Hurston's approach to the novel "is as arresting as it is fresh." Maintains that the characters are convincing; the setting has the charm of a continually changing panorama, but "the whole is less successful than the parts, and the total effect is that of unfulfilled expectation." Finds the major disappointments in the characterization of Moses, and compromises Hurston makes in idiom.

- 10 WOODSON, CARTER G. Journal of Negro History 24, no. 1 (Jan.): 116-118.

Reviews Tell My Horse. Calls the book "an important chapter in the conflict and fusion of cultures." Believes that the book is



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"entertaining and at the same time one of value which scholars must take into consideration in the study of the Negro in the Western Hemisphere." Says Hurston, as a writer, is "almost sui generis."

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- 1 HUGHES, LANGSTON. The Big Sea. NY: Hill and Wang, pp. 238-9.

Contains a reprint of the article "Harlem Literati in the Twenties", Hughes 1940.2.

- 2 HUGHES, LANGSTON. "Harlem Literati in the Twenties." Saturday Review of Literature 22, no. 9 (22 June): 13-14.

Relates anecdotes of Hurston's activity in Harlem. Says of the "Niggerati" Hurston was the most amusing. Maintains "Only to reach a wider audience, need she ever write books--because she is a perfect book of entertainment in herself." Adds, "but Miss Hurston was clever, too--a student who didn't let college give her a broad 'a' and who had great scorn for all pretensions, academic or otherwise."

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- 1     ELLISON, RALPH.   "Recent Negro Fiction."  
        New Masses 40, no. 6 (5 Aug.): 22-26.

Places Hurston in a group of postwar writers including Countee Cullen, Rudolph Fisher, Wallace Thurman, and Jessie Fauset, describing them as expressing certain general ideas and tendencies which grew out of the period's prosperity and the rise of a self-conscious Negro middle class. Says, "the fiction of this group was chiefly lyrical and for the most part unaware of the technical experimentation and direction being taken by American writing as the result of the work...of such writers as Joyce, Stein, Anderson, and Hemingway." Adds that their literature "was not addressed to Negro readers, but to a white audience that had recently 'discovered' the Negro in its quest to make spiritual readjustments to a world in transition."

Says Their Eyes Were Watching God "retains the blight of calculated burlesque that has marred" most of Hurston's writing. Faults it

1941

for being "the story of a Southern Negro woman's love-life against the background of an all-Negro town into which the casual brutalities of the South seldom intrude."

Believes that "Moses, Man of the Mountain did nothing for Negro fiction."

- 2 HOUGHTON, NORRIS. Advance from Broadway. NY: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1922.

Describes the principal problem of the Gilpin Players (a group of Negro actors in Cleveland who performed at the Karamu House) as the lack of good scripts, dependent "almost entirely on the output and promise of four playwrights: Zora Neale Hurston, Shirley Graham, Owen Dodson and Langston Hughes."

1942

- 1 BONTEMPS, ARNA. "From Eatonville, Fla. to Harlem: Zora Hurston Has Always Had What It Takes, and Lots of It." New York Herald Tribune Books 19, no. 13 (22 Nov.): 3.

Reviews Dust Tracks on a Road. Calls the autobiography fascinating. Believes that Hurston "deals very simply with the more

1942

serious aspects of Negro life in America--she ignores them." Adds, "She has done right well by herself in the kind of world she found."

- 2     Review of Dust Tracks on a Road. The New Yorker 18 no. 39 (14 Nov.): 79.

      Calls the autobiography "Warm, witty, imaginative, and down-to-earth by turns, this is a rich and winning book by one of our few genuine, grade A folk writers. Seems naive here and there, but it probably isn't."

- 3     ROSE, ERNESTINE. Literary Journal 67, no. 19 (1 Nov.): 950.

      Reviews Dust Tracks on a Road. Believes Hurston "presents a good documentary film on the growth of a Negro intellectual" through Dust Tracks on a Road. Says the book is written "with little finish, but the literary crudity may have been chosen deliberately to heighten effect."

- 4     STRONG, PHIL. "Zora Hurston Sums Up." Saturday Review of Literature 25, no. 48 (28 Nov.): 6-7.

      Reviews Dust Tracks on a Road. Says the

1942

book is "more a summary than the autobiography it advertises itself as being." Believes "The race-consciousness that spoils so much Negro literature is completely absent" from the book. Concludes that, "it is a fine, rich autobiography, and heartening to anyone, white, black or tan."

1943

- 1 "Ainsfield Award to Hurston and Pierson."  
Publishers' Weekly 27 (Feb.): 1023.

Reports that the editors of the Saturday Review of Literature announced the winners of the 1943 John Anisfield Awards in Racial Relations, sponsored by the magazine. Says Hurston received \$1,000 for the best book of the preceeding year (Dust Tracks on a Road) concerned with racial problems in the field of creative literature.

- 2 FARRISON, W. EDWARD. Journal of Negro History 28, no. 3 (July): 352-355.

Reviews Dust Tracks on a Road. Says it is a worthwhile book. Maintains that the material is "interestingly presented, whether

1943

fact or fancy, and there is much of both of it." Mentions that the book is as long as it is because Hurston did "a noticeable amount of hash-warming," having extracted materials for the autobiography from Jonah's Gourd Vine and Mules and Men. Sees many matters of usage as objectionable, outside of racy folk idioms and figures. Concedes that Hurston's style of intentional familiarity and her simple, fresh and vigorous narrative compensate for the matter of usage.

- 3 GLOSTER, HUGH M. "Zora Neale Hurston: Novelist and Folklorist." Phylon 3(April-June): 153-156.

Asserts that Hurston's work was greatly influenced by her interest and training in anthropology. Believes that the literature she created was "rich in the language and folkways of the rural South."

- 4 \*PREECE, HAROLD. Tomorrow. (Feb.) [Found in Hemenway's Zora Neale Hurston, A Literary Biography (1977), p. 289].

Reviews Dust Tracks on a Road. Calls the autobiography, "the tragedy of a gifted mind,

1943

eaten up by an egocentrism fed on the patronizing admiration of the dominant white world."

1947

- 1 LOMAX, JOHN A. and ALAN LOMAX. The 111 Best American Ballads, Folk Song U.S.A. NY: Duell, Sloan, and Pearce, pp. 6-7.

Includes the tale, from Mules and Men, of Brer Rabbit's reliance on his speed and his "syscaustiousness." Calls Hurston's Mules and Men a fine book of Negro folklore.

1948

- 1 BARTON, REBECCA CHALMERS. Witnesses for Freedom: Negro Americans in Autobiography. NY: Harper & Brothers Publishers, pp. 101-114.

Reviews Dust Tracks on a Road. Says Hurston's autobiography shoots off bright sparks of personality. Believes that Hurston is well qualified as a poet to communicate her life story in telling phrases. Considers it significant that the autobiography does not evaluate the role Hurston played in the Harlem Renaissance. Attributes the omission to Hurston's disdain of being caught in any

1948

pattern of thought which would cause her to conform to any school of writers/thought.

- 2 GLOSTER, HUGH M. Negro Voices in American Fiction  
Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 235-237 passim.

Reviews Jonah's Gourd Vine and Their Eyes Were Watching God. Believes Hurston displayed competency in the handling of the idiom of folk speech in Jonah's Gourd Vine, but finds her "less convincing...[in] the development of character and the analysis of social problems." Maintains that she "displays not only a gift for handling folk material but also a better grasp of character and setting" in Their Eyes Were Watching God. Adds that "Their Eyes Were Watching God mirrors more effectively than does Jonah's Gourd Vine the social tension of the Southern Scene." Points to the Lake Okechobee hurricane episode as proof "that prejudice thrives in times of disaster."

- 3 HEDDEN, WORTH TUTTLE. "Turpentine and Moonshine: Love Conquers Caste Between Florida Crackers and Aristocrats." New York Herald Tribune



1948

Weekly Book Review 25, no. 8 (10 Oct.): 2.

Reviews Seraph on the Suwanee. Says "the divergent lines of Miss Hurston's astonishing, bewildering talent meet to give us a reconciliation scene between a middle-aged man and a middle-aged woman that is erotically exciting and a description of the technique of shrimping that is meticulously exact." Adds, "Emotional, expository; meandering, unified; naive, sophisticated; sympathetic, caustic; comic, tragic; lewd, chaste--one could go on indefinitely reiterating this novel's contradictions and still end helplessly with the adjective unique." Contends that the incompatible strains in the novel mirror the complexity of the author. Believes Hurston, "shuttles between the sexes, the professions, and the races as if she were man and woman, scientist and creative writer, white and Negro."

- 4 "More or Less Regional." Common Ground 8, no. 2 (Winter): 109.

Provides a review of Ben C. Clough's The American Imagination at Work. Mentions

1948

that Clough asserts, in his work, that Joel Chandler Harris's mantle has fallen on Hurston.

- 5     Review of Seraph on the Suwanee. Christian Science Monitor 23 Dec. 1948, p. 11.

Says "The background is indisputably the most impressive element in this novel about Florida Crackers, and next to that the way in which Miss Hurston uses the vernacular of the region, not merely in the character's own speech but in the substance of her writing." Maintains that the book is "as wholesome as a vegetable garden."

- 6     SLAUGHTER, FRANK G. "Freud in Turpentine." New York Times Book Review 158, no. 33, 153 (31 Oct.): 24.

Reviews Seraph on the Suwanee. Describes the heroine, Arvay Henson, as "a textbook picture of a hysterical neurotic, right to the end of the novel." Says Hurston "knows her people, the Florida cracker of the swamp and turpentine camps intimately, and she knows the locale." Adds that "One gets the impression that she took a textbook on Freudian

1948

psychology and adapted it to her needs, perhaps with tongue in cheek while doing so." Concludes that the novel "is a curious mixture of excellent background drawing against which move a group of half-human puppets."

1949

- 1 HAMILTON, EDWARD. America 80, no. 13 (1 Jan.): 354-355.

Reviews Seraph on the Suwanee. Says "The first two-thirds of this novel is an incredibly good job. The author has caught the idiom of backwoods-Florida whites beautifully, and she presents the relationship between an insecure woman and her adequate and resourceful husband with fidelity and delicacy that I think excels anything that other writers have achieved." Believes that the novel does not end as well as it began principally because Hurston "neglects motivations and assigns uncharacteristic actions to her other people," shifts her point of view, offers "a highly distasteful bit melodrama." Adds that the novel "shows promise if ever a book did. The author

1949

deserves credit for portraying a man's man successfully--something that I don't recall a woman's having done before. She shows great sensitivity in tracing emotional sequences and reasoning processes, and high skill in setting scenes, utilizing regional phraseology, phrasing sprightly conversation."

1950

- 1 BROWN, STERLING A. "Negro Folk Expression."  
Phylon 21, no. 4 (Fourth Quarter): 318-327.

Believes, "Enthusiasts like Roark Bradford and Zora Hurston overpraise Negro folk speech at the expense of the speech of white Americans."

- 2 FLEMING, G. JAMES and CHRISTIAN E. BURCKEL (Eds.)  
Who's Who in Colored America. Yonkers, NY:  
Christian E. Burckel & Associates, p. 238.

Contains inaccurate professional and literary information on Hurston. Cites her as author of Voice of the Land (1945). Lists "Reconstruction" (American Legion, July, 1950) as one of Hurston's publications. Says that she "wrote radio script for her own sustaining 13-week broadcast over WLW, Cincinnati, 1935).

1950

- 3 GLOSTER, HUGH M. "Race and the Negro Writer."

Phylon 21, no. 4 (Fourth Quarter): 369-371.

Lists Hurston as one of a number of black writers "who loosened the shackles that held the black writer in mental bondage." Says Hurston followed Frank Yerby into the mainstream but not approaching his financial success with the publication of Seraph on the Suwanee.

1953

- 1 HUGHES, CARL MILTON. The Negro Novelist, NY: Citadel Press, 172-178.

Reviews Seraph on the Suwanee. Says the novel "places Hurston at once among the many American writers who have paid homage to Sigmund Freud....Hurston gives a study of the hysterical woman." Provides a Freudian analysis of the character Arvay Henson. Asserts that Hurston "is of the avant-garde in Freudian literature among Negro authors." Applauds Hurston as a meticulous writer, saying that "she develops episodes and corresponding actions--all related--and finally she resolves the conflict in a

1953

satisfactory ending."

- 2 JACKSON, BLYDEN. "Some Negroes in the Land of Goshen." Tennessee Folklore Society Bulletin 19, no. 4 (Dec.): 103-107.

Reviews Moses, Man of the Mountain. Says it is a novel by a Negro which refers to Negro life with a pleasing indirection. Believes that through Moses, Hurston "desired to show that the Negro folk experience of life is the reliable counterpart of every other human being's experience."

1955

- 1 BYRD, JAMES W. "Zora Neale Hurston: A Negro Folklorist." Tennessee Folklore Society Bulletin 21, no. 2 (June): 37-41.

Provides a brief literary biography of Hurston. Says Hurston has an unusual capacity for appropriating folklore to the purposes of fiction. Believes that Hurston has a keen ear for expressions used by whites as evidenced in her novel Seraph on the Suwanee. Finds that it is the "Matter of idiom and her intimate knowledge of Negro folk sayings and dialect

1955

that sometimes betray Miss Hurston in her latest novel [Seraph on the Suwanee]. Sometimes she has a white character use an expression or pronunciation which, I believe, is used only by Negroes; indeed, some of them she had earlier recorded as Negro sayings in the treasury of Negro folklore, Mules and Men.

1958

- 1 BONE, ROBERT. The Negro Novel in America. New Haven: Yale University Press, pp. 117, 123, 126-132, 133, 217.

Provides biographical information on Hurston. Describes Jonah's Gourd Vine as having "style without structure, a rich verbal texture without dramatic form, 'atmosphere' without real characterization."

Calls Their Eyes Were Watching God "possibly the best novel of the period, excepting Native Son."

1960

- 1 HURST, FANNIE. "Zora Neale Hurston, A Personality Sketch." Yale University Library Gazette 35, no. 1 (1960): 17-22.

1960

Observes that Hurston "seemed to have very little indignation for the imposed status of her race."

Says Moses, Man of the Mountain "was written out of race memory, if such a thing there be; her autobiography, Dust Tracks on a Road, was the result of experiences conditioned by race. But she herself was a gift both to her race and the human race."

- 2 \*LOMAX, ALAN. "Zora Neale Hurston: A Life of Negro Folklore." Sing Out (Oct.-Nov.). [Found in Hemenway's Zora Neale Hurston, A Literary Biography (1977)].

Recalls his experiences with Hurston in their quest for folklore. Laments the lack of recognition she received suggesting that Hurston "was far ahead of her time." Calls Mules and Men "the most engaging, genuine, and skillfully written book in the field of American folklore."

1961

- 1 \*PRATT, THEODORE. "Zora Neale Hurston." FHQ (July). [Found in Hemenway's Zora Neale



1961

Hurston, A Literary Biography (1977)].

Laments the fact that Florida's only "first-class native-born" author suffered literary obscurity, while pleading for the recognition that she deserves.

1963

1 WHO WAS WHO IN AMERICA (1951-1960). Volume 3.

Chicago: The A.N. Marquis Co., pp. 432-433.

Provides inaccurate information on Hurston's professional and literary activities. Says that Hurston wrote a novel entitled The Voice of the Land (1945).

1966

1 BLAKE, EMMA L. "Zora Neale Hurston: Author and Folklorist." Negro History Bulletin 29(April): 149-150, 164.

Recounts Hurston's life and writings. Alludes to Hurston's economic and physical struggles.

2 BONE, ROBERT A. The Negro Novel in America. New Haven: Yale University Press, 126-132.

Says the fact that Hurston was raised in an all-Negro town in Florida, "an experience

1966

with 'separate-but-equal' politics...deeply affected her outlook on racial issues, as well as her approach to the Negro novel." Believes that "Jonah's Gourd Vine has style without structure, a rich verbal texture without dramatic form, 'atmosphere' without real characterization." Says Hurston's use of folk sayings in the novel "are too nonfunctional, too anthropological, and in the end merely exotic." Concludes that Hurston had not yet mastered the form of the novel, but her style held the promise of more substantial accomplishments. Maintains that Hurston outclassed herself in the novel Their Eyes Were Watching God. Calls it Hurston's "best novel, and possibly the best novel of the period, excepting Native Son."

- 3 BRAWLEY, BENJAMIN. The Negro Genius. NY: Biblo and Tannen, pp. 257-259.

Reprint of the 1937 book, Brawley 1937.1.

- 4 CLARKE, JOHN HENRIK. American Negro Short Stories. NY: Hill and Wang, xvi.

Calls Mules and Men "a collection of folk tales and sketches that showed the close

1966

relationship of humor and tragedy in Negro life." Includes "The Gilded Six-Bits."

- 5 DAVIS, JOHN P. The American Negro Reference Book. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 874.

Says the Great Depression and the death of Thurman and Fisher had the effect of scattering the Harlem group of writers causing Hurston to return to Florida to write.

- 6 GLOSTER, HUGH M. Negro Voices in American Fiction. NY: Russell & Russell, pp. 235-237, passim.  
Reprint of the 1948 book, Gloster 1948.2.

1967

- 1 CLARKE, JOHN HENRIK. "The Origin and Growth of Afro-American Literature." Negro Digest (Dec., 1967).

Says in Mules and Men Hurston "fulfilled the first requirement of all books--to entertain and guide the reader through an interesting experience that is worth the time and attention it takes to absorb it."

- 2 HUGHES, LANGSTON (Ed.). The Best Short Stories by Negro Writers. Boston: Little, Brown and

1967

Company, xi.

Says Zora Neale Hurston's short stories "would make delightful motion-picture, television, or radio comedies, much more human and real than Amos and Andy." Includes "The Gilded Six-Bits".

- 3 ROBINSON, WILHELMENA S. Historical Negro Biographies. NY: Publishers Co., Inc., pp. 208-209.

Provides brief biographical sketch of Hurston. Calls Their Eyes Were Watching God "a startling story of Southern Negroes, which may be classified as an historical novel, since it covers such delineations of life as poverty, race hate, segregation and the economic struggles of the Negro."

1968

- 1 FORD, NICK AARON. The Contemporary Negro Novel. College Park, Maryland: McGarth Publishing Co.

Reprint of the 1936 book, Ford 1936.2.

- 2 OSOFSKY, GILBERT. Harlem, The Making of a Ghetto. NY: Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc.

1968

Mentions, in passing, that Hurston was good enough in her own right to justify public acclaim.

1969

- 1 BROWN, STERLING A. "Negro Folk Expression." In Black Expression. Addison Gayle, Jr. (Ed.). NY: Weybright & Talley, passim.

Reprint of the 1950 article "Negro Folk Expression", Brown 1950.1.

- 2 GAYLE, ADDISON, JR. (Ed.) Black Expression. NY: Weybright & Talley, 3,5,8,11,12,36,242,254-258,278.

Reprints from Sterling Brown's essay "Negro Folk Expression" Brown 1950.1, and Hugh M. Gloster's essay "Race and the Negro Writer," Gloster 1950.3. Mentions Hurston in passing.

- 3 GLOSTER, HUGH M. "Race and the Negro Writer." In Black Expressions Addison Gayle (ed.). NY: Weybright & Talley, 278.

Reprint of the 1950 article "Race and the Negro Writer," Gloster 1950.3.

1970

1970

HEMENWAY, ROBERT. The Black Novelist. Columbus:  
Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., pp. 55-61.

Contains a collection of essays by or  
about Black American novelists. Includes the  
reprint "Zora Neale Hurston" from The Negro  
Novel in America, Bone 1958.1 (Robert Bone,  
1958). Suggests that Hurston was "interested  
in the loves, joys, frustrations, and  
tragedies which attend the female condition."

2 HUGHES, CARL MILTON. The Negro Novelist. NY:  
The Citadel Press.

Reprint of the 1953 publication, Hughes  
1951.1.

1971

STARKE, CATHERINE JUANITA. Black Portraiture in  
American Fiction. NY: Basic Books, Inc.

Discusses Janie Crawford, in passing, as  
an example of a "youthful female seeker for  
identity and fulfillment."

1971

- 2     TURNER, DARWIN.   In a Minor Chord: Three Afro-American Writers and Their Search for Identity  
Carbondale:   Southern Illinois University  
Press, passim.

Describes Hurston as a "quick-tempered woman, arrogant toward her peers, obsequious toward her supposed superiors, desperate for recognition and reassurance to assuage her feelings of inferiority...." Asserts that "It is in reference to this image that one must examine her novels, her folklore, and her view of the Southern scene." Says Moses, Man of the Mountain is Hurston's "most accomplished achievement in fiction," explaining that "If she had written nothing else, Miss Hurston would deserve recognition for this book. For once, her material and her talent fused perfectly." Calls Seraph on the Suwanee "a work so stylistically different from her earlier efforts that it reveals her conscious adjustment to the tastes of a new generation of readers."

- 3     WASHINGTON, MARY HELEN.   Black Eyed Susans, Classic Stories by and About Black Women.

1971

Garden City, NY: Doubleday, introduction.

Says Their Eyes Were Watching God "is probably the most beautiful love story of a black man and woman in literature."

1972

- 1 "AUTHOR ZORA HURSTON'S BOOKS INCLUDED IN FLORIDA COLLECTION." Tallahassee Democrat (17 May): 12. [Found in Hurston Collection Schomburg Center].

Announces the inclusion of Hurston's books to the Florida Collection in the Leon County Public Library. Notes that Hurston's works have "something to offer for generations to come."

- 2 BARKSDALE, RICHARD AND KENETH KINNAMON. Black Writers of America. NY: The Macmillan Company, 1972, pp. 611-618.

Provides biographical information on Hurston. Calls Their Eyes Were Watching God "a sensitive, poetic story of a Black woman's search for fulfillment through love."

Says Moses, Man of the Mountain "combines fiction, folklore, and religion in an unusual amalgam."



1972

Reprints "The Gilded Six-Bits".

- 3 BONTEMPS, ARNA. The Harlem Renaissance Remembered.

NY: Dodd, Mead, & Company, pp. 190-214 and  
passim.

Contains a collection of essays on the  
Harlem Renaissance edited by Bontemps who also  
provides a memoir. Includes essays by Robert  
Hemenway, George Kent, and Hiroko Sato.

- 4 GILES, JAMES R. "The Significance of Time in Zora  
Neale Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God."  
Negro American Literary Forum 6, no. 2  
(Summer): 52-53.

Considers the varying views of time in the  
novel, and concludes that readers who view  
time in a rational, materialistic way will  
lose out in the novel to those who view time  
"emotionally and hedonistically."

- 5 HEMENWAY, ROBERT. "Zora Neale Hurston and the  
Eatonville Anthropology". In The Harlem  
Renaissance Remembered Arna Bontemps (ed).

NY: Dodd, Mead & Company.

Discusses Hurston's development and  
preoccupation with the Eatonville aesthetic

1972

and her later abandonment of the issue. Suggests that the best of Hurston's writing during the Renaissance era dealt with Eatonville. Believes that she was an important contributor to the Harlem Renaissance in that "she helped to remind the Renaissance--especially its more bourgeois members--of the richness in the racial heritage."

- 6 HOUSEMAN, JOHN. Run-Through. NY: Simon and Schuster, pp. 182, 205.

Mentions "Zorah Hurston" as having been a member of the Negro Theater of the WPA. Believes that in 1936, he had found a suitable script for production in a new play by "Zorah Hurston, our most talented writer on the project, who had come up with a Negro Lysistrata updated and located in a Florida fishing community, where the men's wives refused them intercourse until they won their fight with the canning company for a living wage." Concedes that both the left and right members of the project were scandalized by the play's saltiness, finding it injurious to the

1972

serious Negro image, both groups wanted to create.

- 6 KENT, GEORGE E. "Patterns of the Harlem Renaissance." In The Harlem Renaissance Remembered Arna Bontemps (ed.). NY: Dodd, Mead, & Company, p. 46.

Contends that although Hurston's short stories, published during the Harlem Renaissance era "reflected a close engagement with the folk tradition her best works were to come after that period." Believes that "she still awaits the thoroughgoing critical analysis that will properly place her in the pattern of American fiction."

- 7 KILSON, MARION. "The Transformation of Eatonville's Ethnographer." Phylon 33, no. 2 (Summer): 112-119.

Asserts that midway in Hurston's career, "the primary focus of her writing shifted and in form from fiction to essay, in perspective from relativism to critical commitment, and in content from an avoidance of racial ambiguities to a confrontation of the complexities of race in American society."

1972

Says that despite alterations in literary form and in perspective, "two fundamental value orientations underlay all of Hurston's writing." An emphasis on individualism and an orientation towards achievement." Suggests that "with the exception of the explicitly autobiographical narratives . . . the content of Zora Neale Hurston's fiction resolved [sic] around a dialectic between certain puritanical bourgeois ideals and an acceptance of the rarity of their attainment in human experience."

Provides a chronology of Hurston's writing with distinguishing rubrics including "Ethnographic Experimenter" (1924-1931), "Ethnographic Artist" (1933-1942), and "Critical Ethnographer" (1943-1951).

- 9 SATO, HIROKO. "Under the Shadow: A Study of Jessie Fauset and Nella Larsen." In the Harlem Renaissance Remembered Arna Bontemps (ed.). NY: Dodd, Mead, & Company, p. 81.

Cites Hurston's article "What White Publishers Won't Print" to lend credence to his argument that Fauset's novels represent sound "judgment on racial situations in this

1972

country."

- 10 WASHINGTON, MARY HELEN. "Zora Neale Hurston: The Black Woman's Search for Identity." Black World 21 (Aug.): 68-75.

Discusses Nanny's attitude toward love and her aspirations for Janie. Explains how Janie's quest for freedom and identity lead her away from the white-inspired values of Nanny, Jody Starks, and Mrs. Turner.

- 11 DUNDES, ALAN. "Negro Folk Cult." In Mother Wit From the Laughing Barrel. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, p. 37.

Refutes Harold Preece's assumptions drawn from the 1936 article "The Negro Folk Cult" during which Preece denigrates Hurston for describing "her race with a servile term as 'Mules and Men'," calling it the defensive creation of a psychologically captive and economically deprived people. Dundes maintains that the folkloric process sometimes operates with a reverse anthropomorphism.

1973

- 1 SCHRAUFNAGEL, NOEL. From Apology to Protest, The

1972

Black American Novel. Deland, FL: Everett/Edwards, Inc., pp. 16-17, 65-66.

Calls Hurston's two novels of the thirties "conspicuous for the absence of whites." Believes Hurston "vividly depicts certain phases of Negro life in Alabama and Florida" in Jonah's Gourd Vine. Contends that "Social problems are not stressed as the blacks are resigned to their inferior status." Suggests that "Racial discrimination is simply taken for granted in Their Eyes Were Watching God." Believes Seraph on the Suwanee to be "more concerned with the psychological development of an individual [Arvey Henson's rather than social implications]....the author deals primarily with the sexual complexes of a woman who cannot face reality." Calls Hurston's technique in Seraph on the Suwanee contrived and melodramatic while "The general tranquility between blacks and whites is comparable to that displayed in the plantation tradition." Concludes that Hurston "in her attempt to portray racial harmony, [in Seraph on the Suwanee] strays from her major theme to present a rather distorted and contradictory

1973

view of the relationship between the races. This is a fault that Hurston avoided in her two earlier novels."

- 2 WHITLOW, ROGER. Black American Literature, A Critical History. Chicago, IL: Nelson-Hall Company, pp. 3-5, 103-106, and passim.

Provides a brief biography based on Hurston's autobiography. Believes that her "pride in black heritage and her intense interest in black folklore, dominated both the subject choice and style of virtually everything that she wrote." Considers Their Eyes Were Watching God as possibly, "The finest dialect novel yet written by an American author."

- 3 YOUNG, JAMES O. Black Writers of the Thirties. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1973, pp. 219-23 and passim.

Believes that Hurston and Richard Wright were unlike the middle-class writers of the twenties in that they did not think they had to escape their blackness in order to dramatize themes of genuinely universal significance." Says that Hurston

1973

"demonstrated a fine skill at transcribing the folk idiom and an intelligent understanding of folk life" in Jonah's Gourd Vine. Adds that the novel, however, suffers from "a lack of plot and faulty structure." Believes that Hurston "skillfully wove the romantic elements into a pattern of protest, not race or class protest, but feminine and individual protest" in her novel Their Eyes Were Watching God.

1974

- 1 DAVIS, ARTHUR P. From the Dark Tower. Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, pp. 113-121.

Says Hurston's "skillful use of folk customs, folk superstitions, and above all else, folk speech helps make Jonah's Gourd Vine and unusual and fascinating work. Adds that because of the lack of protest in the novel, "we see here the kind of good-will attitude which will characterize all of Miss Hurston's fiction dealing with Negroes. She simply ignored most of the unpleasant racial aspects of Southern life--aspects that have to be recognized if a full



1973

picture is to be given."

Suggests that Hurston tended to overwrite in her novel Their Eyes Were Watching God. Calls the novel "another good-will novel dramatizing the racial philosophy of Zora Neale Hurston--a racial philosophy which present-day black writers would consider incredible."

Says "Moses, Man of the Mountain, in spite of its racy folk dialogue, and in spite of its unusual approach, does not quite come through as a novel." Adds that "Except for Moses, the characters are not fully developed."

Contends that Seraph on the Suwanee seems more highly contrived than her other works. Believes Hurston's autobiography "in its digressions, in its important omissions, its slighting of persons whom Zora Neale did not like, its slurring over episodes in her own life, and in its emphasis on white rather than Negro friends, reminds me of Claude McKay's autobiography," adding that they have like personalities.

Applauds Hurston's two folklore collections Mules and Men and Tell My Horse

1974

calling them fascinating works. Concludes that Hurston has probably never received the credit she deserves from Negro critics, "whereas white critics have occasionally overpraised her work."

- 2 JORDAN, JUNE. "On Richard Wright and Zora Neale Hurston, Notes Toward a Balance of Love and Hatred." Black World 23, no. 10 (Aug.): 4-8.

Asserts that "Hurston's affirmative work is profoundly defiant, just as Wright's protest unmistakably asserts our need for an alternative benign environment." Maintains that "unquestionably, Their Eyes Were Watching God is the prototypical Black novel of affirmation; it is the most successful, convincing, and exemplary novel of Blacklove that we have."

- 3 ROSENBLATT, ROGER. Black Fiction. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 84-90 and passim.

Conceives of Their Eyes Were Watching God as opposing "various forms of repression which are more generally human, and sometimes self-manufactured, as distinct from its being a reaction to external white forces." Describes

1974

Janie Crawford as "a true heroine in the Charlotte Brontë mold because she endures well, holds on to her decency and sense in spite of the fakery about her and triumphs over apparent defeat. Includes considerations of Hurston use of sea imagery at the beginning and end of the novel and the absence of evil in her husbands.

- 4 WALKER, ALICE. "In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens." MS 2, no. 64 (May): 70.

Calls Dust Tracks on a Road "oddly false-sounding."

- 5 WALKER, S. JAY. "Zora Neale Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God, Black Novel of Sexism." Modern Fiction Studies 20 (Winter): 519-527.

Believes Their Eyes Were Watching God is an unusual work in black literature because it deals more with sexism than racism. Traces Janie Crawford's fight against male domination until she reaches independence--a relationship where there are no sex roles or places.

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- 1 \*DAVIDSON, COLLEEN TIGHE. "Beyond the Sentimental

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Heroine: The Feminist Character in American Novels, 1899-1937." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota.

- 2 DOYLE, SISTER MARY ELLEN. "The Heroines of Black Novels." In Perspectives on Afro-American Women Willa D. Johnson (ed.). Washington, D.C.: ECCA Publications, pp. 112-125.

Believes that Their Eyes Were Watching God is "a sensitive study . . . of the ideal man/woman relationship."

- 3 GAYLE, ADDISON, JR. The Way of the New World. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, pp. 143-144.

Reviews Jonah's Gourd Vine. Believes this novel to be "most important for its depiction of the character of the black woman." Adds that "Miss Hurston, in her portrayal of Lucy, has begun early to deal with the conflict between black men and women." Suggests that Hurston's characterization of John Pearson stems from her "distorted conception" of black men. Allows that "the chances are . . . that she was less interested in John Parson than in Lucy, less interested in the men of her novels than in the women, who receive more multi-

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dimensional treatment."

- 4 GIDDINGS, PAULA. "A Special Vision, a Common Goal." Encore 4, no. 12 (23 June-4 July): 44, 46, 48.

Says "The character Janie in Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God will not let her search for love and personal fulfillment be deterred either by the vestiges of racism, her cynical neighbors, or the myopia of her family. She listens to her own mind, and even the elements of floods and swamps cannot stop her."

- 5 \*HOWARD, LILLIE P. "Zora Neale Hurston, a Non-Revolutionary Black Artist." Ph.D. dissertation, University of New Mexico.

- 6 RAYSON, ANN. "Dust Tracks on a Road: Zora Neale Hurston and the Form of Black Autobiography." Negro American Literature Forum (Summer).

Says Hurston "portrays herself as a reincarnation of the Melvillian isolate on a continual search for an unknown king of holy grail . . . and a kind of black female Ben Franklin." Concludes that Hurston "succeeds in portraying her real self, which is all that

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any autobiographer can hope to do."

- 7 \*ROYSTER, BEATRICE HORN. "The Ironic Vision of Four Black Women Novelists: A Study of the Novels of Jessie Fauset, Nella Larsen, Zora Neale Hurston, and Ann Petry." Ph.D. dissertation, Emory University, 219 pp.

Annotation. See Dissertation Abstracts International 36 (1975): 8051A.

- 8 RUSH, THERESSA GUNNELS, CAROL FAIRBANKS MYERS, and ESTHER SPRING ARATA. Black American Writers Past and Present, A Biographical and Bibliographical Dictionary. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press.

Traces Hurston's education/professional life from enrollment in the Negro Public Schools in Eatonville to receipt of a post-graduate award from Howard University in 1943. Contains a selected primary and secondary bibliography.

1976

- 1 \*BROWN, MARTHA HURSEY. "Images of Black Women, Family Roles in Harlem Renaissance Literature." Ph.D. dissertation, Carnegie-

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Mellon University, 279 pp.

Annotation. Dissertation Abstracts International 37 (1976): 2836A.

- 2 HEMENWAY, ROBERT. "Folklore Field Notes from Zora Neale Hurston." Black Scholar 7, no. 7: 39-46.

Believes that because Hurston did not pursue a doctorate in anthropology, she was able to approach her study of black culture without preconceived theories.

- 3 PERRY, MARGARET. Silence to the Drums, A Survey of the Literature of the Harlem Renaissance. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1976 (Contributions in Afro-American and African Studies, Number 18). 16, 59, 91, 110, 111, 121-124, 130.

Provides analyses of "Drenched in Light," "Spunk," and "John Redding Goes to Sea." Says, "Hurston's black characters do not suffer from the sort of alternative black self-hatred/prideful self-love/hate-envy of white and black that characterize many other Harlem Renaissance fictional creations." Adds that "Hurston successfully handled the

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important elements of the short story form--plot, diction, narration, and especially, mood."

- 4 SCHWALBENBERG, PETER. "Time as Point of View in Zora Neale Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God." Negro American Literature Forum 10, no. 3 (Fall): 104, 107, 108, 115

Argues that "There is, in fact, a progress from one type of time to others, which carries along the development of the novel and the changing life experience of Janie."

- 5 SHEFFEY, RUTHE T. "Zora Neale Hurston, The Morgan Connection." Morgan Magazine (Winter).

Says Hurston brought back the crucial message from hundreds of "Aunt Shady Annes of ancestral High Johns," and to her lasting credit she set down these legends, these long racial memories." Adds that Hurston served her people's creative and preserving functions as novelist and folklorist.

- 6 SINGH, AMRITJIT. The Novels of the Harlem Renaissance, Twelve Black Writers 1923-1933. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, passim.



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**Calls Their Eyes Were Watching God** a detailed study of a different kind of black woman. Believes Hurston "was interested not in social problems but in problems of individuals, black or white."

- 7     \*WALL, CHERYL A. "Three Novelists: Jessie Fauset, Nella Larsen, and Zora Neale Hurston." Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University.

1977

- 1     BRUCK, PETER (ed.). The Black American Short Story in the 20th Century, A Collection of Critical Essays. Amsterdam: B.R. Gruner Publishing Co., pp. 2, 3.

      Mentions Hurston in passing. Quotes from her article "What White Publishers Won't Print."

- 2     BURKE, VIRGINIA M. "Zora Neale Hurston and Fannie Hurst as They Saw Each Other." College Language Association Journal 20, no. 4 (June): 435-447.

      Discusses the two-year relationship during which Hurston worked for Hurst. Asserts that Hurst's influence on Hurston was greater than

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the converse.

- 3 HEMENWAY, ROBERT. Zora Neale Hurston, A Literary Biography. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, xi-xviii.

Explores Hurston's writings and personality from her arrival in New York to her death in Florida. Provides an extensive bibliography of Hurstons primary work.

- 4 WALKER, ALICE. "Zora Neale Hurston, A Cautionary Tale and a Partisan View." Foreward to Zora Neale Hurston, A Literary Biography by Robert Hemenway. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Believes that Hurston's works are characterized by "racial health--a sense of black people as complete, complex, undiminished human beings . . . ." Says of Their Eyes Were Watching God, "There is no book more important to me than this one." Asserts that "Zora was before her time--in intellectual circles--in the lifestyle she chose."

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- 1 ARATA, ESTHER SPRING. More Black American Playwrights, A Bibliography. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, Inc.

Lists selected plays by Hurston and their criticism.

- 2 BERZON, JUDITH R. Neither White Nor Black, The Mulatto Character in American Fiction. NY: New York University Press.

Cites Janie Crawford as an exception to the usual female character who lacks depth, describing her as a woman of spirit moving steadily toward self-definition.

- 3 BROWN, LLOYD W. "Zora Neale Hurston and the Nature of the Female Perceptions." Obsidian, Black Literature in Review 4, no. 3: 39-45.

Discusses Hurston's presentation of the difference between the male and female modes of perceiving reality by tracing Janie Crawford's ability to transcend her adversities by living her dreams. Concludes that Janie's ability to "make dreams truth" emerges as an intrinsic part of her limited

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experiences as a woman.

- 4 CANTROW, ELLEN. "Sex, Race, and Criticism: Thoughts of a White Feminist on Kate Chopin and Zora Neale Hurston." Radical Teacher 9 (Sept.): 30-33.

Compares Janie Crawford's awakening to that of Edna Pontelliers's in Chopin's The Awakening. Finds Janie's awakening preferable to suicide. Adds that "For counterparts to Janie in white literature, I must, then, turn perhaps not to Chopin's The Awakening, but to Colette's The Vagabond, or to Doris Lessing's The Golden Notebook."

- 5 HEMENWAY, ROBERT. Introduction to Mules and Men by Zora Neale Hurston. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, xi-xxviii.

Calls Mules and Men "a storehouse of historical, cultural, and psychological revelations . . . a repository of coded cultural messages preserved and passed by word of mouth from generation to generation." Adds that the book "creates a black communal perspective in order to emphasize the independent cultural creation of black

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people."

- 6 \*HOLLOWAY, KARLA FRANCESCA CLAPP. "A Critical Investigation of Literary and Linguistic Structures in the Fiction of Zora Neale Hurston." Ph.D. dissertation, Michigan State University.

Annotation. See Dissertation Abstracts International 39 (1978): 6131A.

- 7 \*JENKINS, JOYCE ODESSA. "To Make a Woman Black: A Critical Analysis of the Women Characters in the Fiction and Folklore of Zora Neale Hurston." Ph.D. dissertation, Bowling Green State University, 228 pp.

Annotation. See Dissertation Abstracts International 39 (1978): 4257A.

- 8 \*JOHNSON, GLORIA J. "Hurston's Folk, The Critical Significance of Afro-American Folk Tradition in Three Novels and the Autobiography." Ph.D. dissertation, University of California at Irvine.

- 9 WILLIAMS, SHERLEY ANNE. Foreward to Their Eyes Were Watching God. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, v-xv.

Says Hurston's "evocations of the lifestyles of rural blacks have not been equaled." Adds that "Her fidelity to diction, metaphor, and syntax . . . rings . . . with an aching familiarity that is testament to Hurston's skill and to the durability of black speech." Believes that "Something of the questing quality that characterized Zora's own life informs the character of Janie." Although, "the character is more conventional than the author." Concludes that "in their desire and eventual insistence that their men accord them treatment due equals, they are one."

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- 1 FISHER, DEXTER and ROBERT B. STEPTO (Eds.) Afro-American Literature, The Reconstruction of Instruction. NY: The Modern Language Association of America, pp. 122-152.

Includes essay "Are You a Flying Lark or a Setting Dove" by Robert Hemenway, 1979.3.

- 2 GORNICK, VIVIAN. "Catching Up with Hurston." Village Voice 24 (31 Dec.): 34-35.

Reviews I Love Myself. . . . Observes that

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"many of the essays in this collection . . . as well as the excerpts from books of reportage and autobiography, feel either heavy-handed in their irony or incomplete in their powers of description, and it is hard to see on what Hurston's claim to enduring attention may rest until one arrives at the excerpt from her 1937 novel Their Eyes Were Watching God. Those who love Hurston claim that with this book she achieved literature. It is, they say, her masterpiece, the work on which all else depends for affectionate interest . . . I, for one, am willing to acknowledge that claim." Believes that Hurston "was endowed with a tremendous amount of unself-conscious feminist perception."

- 3 HEMENWAY, ROBERT. "Are You a Flying Lark or a Setting Dove." In Afro-American Literature, Dexter Fisher and Robert B. Stepto (eds.). NY: The Modern Language Association of America, pp. 131-136.

Uses Jonah's Gourd Vine to illustrate his approach to analysis of folkloric material. Suggests that Hurston "adopts and transforms

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folklore for fictional purposes to much greater extent than any other Afro-American writer." Examines the jay bird passage in the courtship of John and Lucy. Concludes that Hurston's "representation apparently refers to a learned social behavior between black men and black women, a communication process that enables the woman to negotiate her own respect, an action with important thematic implications for Jonah's Gourd Vine."

- 4 MCDOWELL-DEBORAH EDITH. "Women on Women: The Black Woman Writer of the Harlem Renaissance." Ph.D. dissertation, Purdue University, 222 pp.

Provides a feminist reading of the novels of Jessie Fauset, Nella Larsen, and Hurston while focusing on "the myriad shadings of womanhood." Finds that Hurston's works "transcend the particulars of the woman question to embrace more universal and humanistic concerns." Calls Fauset, Larsen, and Hurston "pioneers in the development of a black female literary tradition" connecting them with contemporary black women writers "whose fectional preoccupation is also the sensitive exploration of the dynamics of black



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womanhood."

Annotation. See Dissertation Abstracts International 42(1979): 215A.

- 5 STETSON, ERLINE. "Their Eyes Were Watching God: A Woman's Story." Reagionalism and the Female Imagination.

Calls the novel a work about "surviving motions, the survival of one black woman." Describes Janie Crawford as an "anti-romantic symbol of the mulatto 'type'."

- 6 WALKER, ALICE. "On Refusing to Be Humbled by Second Place in a Contest You Did Not Design: A Tradition by Now." Dedication to I Love Myself When I am Laughing, A Zora Neale Hurston Reader by Zora Neale Hurston. Old Westbury: The Feminist Press, pp. 1-5.

Believes that Their Eyes Were Watching God contains "enough self-love . . . to restore a world. Or create a new one." Adds that "we are better off if we think of Zora Neale Hurston as an artist, period--rather than as the artist/politician most black writers have been required to be."

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- 7 WASHINGTON, MARY HELEN. "Zora Neale Hurston, A Woman Half in Shadow." Introduction to I Love Myself When I Am Laughing, A Zora Neale Hurston Reader. Old Westbury: The Feminist Press, 1979, pp. 7-25.

Calls Mules and Men "A classic in form and style . . . [which] goes far beyond the mere reproduction of the tales; it introduces the reader to the whole world of jook joints, lying contests, and tall-tale sessions that make up the drama of the folk life of black people in the rural South."

Says Their Eyes Were Watching God is "the novel which Hurston triumphed in the art of taking the imagery, imagination, and experiences of black folk and making literature."

Believes that in spite of the pressures on black writers during the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, to write protest literature, or "to create respectable black characters that would be 'a credit to the race,'" Hurston "simply could not depict blacks as defeated, humiliated, degraded, or victimized, because she did not experience black people or herself

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in that way." Says Dust Tracks on a Road at all times deftly avoids self-revelation. Adds that "The mask Hurston assumed in Dust Tracks was a sign of the growing evisceration of her work."

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- 1 CHRISTIAN, BARBARA. Black Women Novelists, The Development of a Tradition, 1892-1976.

Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, pp. 56-61.

Asserts that "Hurston revised the mulatta images that had preceded her and led the way toward the presentation of more varied and complex women characters." Cites the character Janie Starks as a new black female character who allows the reader the experience of feeling "the growing up of a black girl, not from without but from within." Believes that Janie Stark's story informs the reader "that self-fulfillment rather than security and status is the gift of life . . . ." Adds that the character "not only revised the previously drawn images of the mulatta, the author's rendition of her major characters beautifully revealed the many dimensions of

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the black woman's soul as well as the restrictions imposed upon her by her own community--that she, like all others, seeks not only security but fulfillment."

- 2 FISHER, DEXTER (ed.). The Third Woman. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, passim.

Includes the introduction to Mules and Men prefaced by a brief essay, "Saving the Life that is Your Own: The Importance of Models in the Artist's Life", Walker 1980.7. Contains passing references to Hurston.

- 3 GREGORY, CAROLE E. "Hurston Revisted." Freedomways 20, no. 4: 305-307.

Reviews I Love Myself . . .. Believes the reader "is tastefully done and reasonably priced." Calls part three, the fiction section of the reader, "the core . . . for Hurston's efforts to record black culture are readily apparent." Suggests that through Their Eyes Were Watching God Hurston "was focusing on how some Afro-Americans worshipped Caucasian features with a religious zeal." Concludes that "I Love Myself... gives readers a taste of Hurston's genius in combining the

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anthropomorphic style of storytelling, derived from African tradition, with the black idiom inherited from the oral tradition, with humor and with elements of folklore and the poetic novel."

- 4 GREGORY, CAROLE. "A Likely Possibility: Conversation Between Zora Neale Hurston and Carole Gregory." Black Collegian 10, no. 5 (April-May): 146-150.

Provides a brief social and literary biography of Hurston. Maintains that Hurston is the object of honor "because she produced writings that revealed the heart of black women." Composes a mock interview with Hurston during which Gregory permits Hurston to respond to some of the negative criticism on her life and work.

- 5 HOWARD, LILLIE P. Zora Neale Hurston. Boston: Twayne Publishers.

Provides a literary biography of Hurston. Addresses the morals charges brought against Hurston in New York City in 1948. Defends Hurston as "staunchly pro-Black."

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- 6 INGRAM, ELWANDA DELORIS. "Black Women, Literary Self-Portraits." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oregon, 196 pp.

Asserts that "black women writers have created black women characters who are full-dimensional and more realistically drawn than other writers have done." Uses selected works of a number of Afro-Americans, including Hurston, to prove the assertion. Identifies four categories for classifying black women as literary characters: "suspended, Color-Conscious, Assimilated, and Emergent-Assertive."

Annotation. See Dissertation Abstracts International 41 (1980): 3573A.

- 7 WALKER, ALICE. "Saving the Life that is Your Own, The Importance of Models in the Artist's Life." In The Third Woman, Dexter Fisher (ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, passim.

Calls Their Eyes Were Watching God indispensable to her growth and life.

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- 1     \*BABB, VALERIE MELISSA.   "The Evolution of  
          American Literary Language."   Ph.D.  
          dissertation, State University of New York at  
          Buffalo.

- 2     BAMBARA, TONI CADE.   Foreward to The Sanctified  
          Church by Zora Neale Hurston.   Berkeley:  
          Turtle Island Foundation, pp. 7-11.

          Believes that Hurston "had a mission, knew  
          what her work in this world was.   Pursued it."  
          Adds the wish that the "essays will whet the  
          reader's appetite and maybe even encourage  
          some to pursue the task aforementioned--to  
          collect more of Zora and make it available."

- 3     CALLAHAN, BOB.   Introduction to Tell My Horse by  
          Zora Neale Hurston.   Berkeley:   Turtle Island  
          Foundation, ix-xiv.

          Believes that "In the character of Janie  
          Croawford, Hurston found a vehicle to express  
          her own story, really, of the struggle of a  
          most independent woman to find a secure and  
          creative personal ground amidst the ceaseless  
          pressures of societal, racial, and sexual

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norms."

Says that the section of Tell My Horse entitled "Voodoo in Haiti" "is without a doubt both the heart and the secret core of this book."

- 4 IKONNE, CHIDI. From Dubois to Van Vechten, The Early Negro Literature, 1903-1926. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Provides biographical information on Hurston. Believes that Hurston held "contempt for the Negro race and . . . respect for the white race whose feeling of superiority she gratified by acting out demeaning stereotyped traits attributed to the Negro." Adds that Dust Tracks on a Road exemplifies his point, "especially the chapter entitled 'My People! My People!'"--does not hide her contempt for the black race." Believes her short story "Spunk" is strengthened by "the authenticity of the life portrayed, verifiable folk beliefs are used to support the psychological motivation." Contends that the character John in "John Redding Goes to Sea" is "more or less a rough male version of Janie of Their Eyes



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Were Watching God."

Provides a synopsis of "Sweat." Believes the play "Color Struck" "could have been stronger if more attention had been paid to the last scene which seems to anticipate the chapter "My People! My People!" in the author's autobiography." Calls "Mutttsy" "artistically weak. The plot is overburdened with irrevelances whose main merit is that they demonstrate the narrator's intimate knowledge of black folkways."

- 5 JORDAN, JUNE. Civil Wars. Boston: Beacon Press, 1981, pp. 84-89.

Reprints the 1974 essay "Notes Towards a Black Balancing of Love and Hatred", Jordan 1974.2. Contains a preface which admonishes a pressing "need to honor both Hurston and Wright."

- 6 LEWIS, DAVID LEVERING. When Harlem Was in Vogue. NY: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., passim.

Reviews Hurston's contributions to the 1926 periodical Fire!!. Describes "Sweat" as a short story in which "idea and craft were marvellously wedded." Notes that Hurston's

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"guilty die innocently, her innocent persecute, and the combat of jobless black manhood versus its working women is everlasting." Describes the one-act play Color Struck as possessing "an idea of searing complex irony."

Discusses conflict over ownership of play Mule Bone. Describes the play as "an almost perfect union of the talents of [Langston] Hughes and Hurston."

Rates Hurston's Jonah's Gourd Vine as at least equal to Jean Toomer's Cane as an account of "the vices and virtues of ordinary Afro-Americans and the truths governing their lives."

- 7 LEWIS, VASHTI CRUTCHER. "The Mulatto Woman as Major Female Character in Novels by Black Women, 1892-1937." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Iowa, 187 pp.

Examines the presentation of major female characters in thirteen novels by the best-known black female novelists beginning with Frances Ellen Harper's Iola Leroy (1892) and ending with Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God (1937). Finds that Hurston focused on

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heroines who are historically representative of the masses of black women. Calls Hurston "a forerunner of subsequent female novelists who do not feel constrained to depict black women as imitations of white women."

Annotation. See Dissertation Abstracts International 42(1981): 4827A.

- 8 O'BANNER, BESSIE MARIE. "A Study of Black Heroines in Four Selected Novels (1929-1959) by Four Black American Women Novelists, Zora Neale Hurston, Nella Larsen, Paule Marshall, Ann Lane Petry." Ph.D. dissertation, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, 107 pp.

Demonstrates how black women characters in the novels of Larsen, Hurston, Marshall, and Petry "attempt to reconcile two worlds--Black and White--in pursuit of security for themselves, their children, their lovers and their husbands." Says Hurston replaced the preoccupation with 'making it' as demonstrated in Larsen's Passing with the "concern for the self-fulfillment of the Black woman as Black."

Annotation. See Dissertation Abstracts International 43(1981): 0447A.

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- 9 PRATT, ANNIS. Archetypal Patterns in Women's Fiction. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, p. 33

Says the episode during which the grandmother urges Janie Crawford into an early and unhappy marriage in the novel Their Eyes Were Watching God demonstrates that the arrival of puberty for the black heroine is a "curse."

- 10 \*SCHREIBER, SHEILA ORTEGO. "Art and Life, The Novels of Black Women." Ph.D. dissertation, University of New Mexico, 310 pp.

Annotation. See Dissertation Abstracts International 42 (1981): 3603A.

- 11 VARGA, COLEY BARBARA-JEAN. "The Novels of Black American Women." Ph.D. dissertation, State University of New York at Stony Brook, 229 pp.

Discusses "the black experience" in the novels of black women: color, domestic work, the black church, friendship, and sexuality. Suggests that Hurston "is the first black American writer to use irony and humor when she describes the psychological effects of white standards of beauty on Negroes."

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Contents that "Hurstun provides [in Their Eyes Were Watching God] the first examination of the conditions that made domestic work outside [the homes of black women] an inevitability for large numbers of black women [rather than a status issue/control]." Believes Hurston "focuses on the beauty of the sermon itself [in her fiction]. In doing so, she resembles Ralph Ellison and James Baldwin who incorporate the sermon into their novels."

Contents that "The friendship in Their Eyes Were Watching God serves a structural purpose. It frames the story of Janie's discovery of emotional fulfillment . . . [In addition, Hurston uses friendship] to show how women learn from each other." Believes Janie Stark's "sexual experience represents . . . an experience of growth into knowledge about the world."

Annotation. See Dissertation Abstracts International 42 (1981): 707A

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- 1 BETHEL, LORRAINE. "This Infinity of Conscious Pain: Zora Neale Hurston and the Black Female Literary Tradition." In But Some of Us Are Brave Gloria T. Hull, Patricia Bell-Scott, and Barbara Smith (eds.). Old Westbury, NY: The Feminist Press, pp. 176-188.

Argues that "there is a separable and identifiable tradition of Black Women writers, simultaneously existing within and independent of the American, Afro-American, and American female literary traditions . . . [where] Hurston's work forms a major part of this tradition and illustrates its unique simultaneity." Says Hurston's best works, "especially her novel Their Eyes Were Watching God, is the product of a Black female folk aesthetic and cultural sensibility that emerged from the best revolutionary ideas of the period."

- 2 HEMENWAY, ROBERT. "The Sacred Canon and Brazzle's Mule." Association of Departments of English Bulletin 73 (Winter): 26-32.

Argues that "we press forward in our

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efforts to expand the canon, that we open the door even wider than before by including black writers in our standard English curriculum at every level . . . ." Uses Hurston's account of Matthew Brazzle's mule to show that folktakes have much to offer "as we step into the classroom of the future."

- 3 HULL, GLORIA T., PATRICIA BELL-SCOTT, AND BARBARA SMITH (eds.). But Some of Us Are Brave. Old Westbury, NY: The Feminist Press, passim.

Contains widespread references to Hurston and an essay, "This Infinity of Conscious Pain: Zora Neale Hurston and the Black Female Literary Tradition," by Lorraine Bethel, 1982.1

- 4 REAGON, BERNICE JOHNSON. "Hurston, Zora Neale." in Dictionary of American Negro Biography, Edited by Logan W. Rayford and Michael R. Winston. NY: W.W. Norton & Co., pp. 340-341.

Believes that the fact that Hurston permitted her articles to be published in ultra-conservative magazines "indicate Hurston willingness to allow her views to be used by forces opposing the struggle of Negroes of

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equality and justice."

- 5     SHEFFEY, RUTHE T. (ed.) "A Rainbow on Her Shoulder", The Zora Neale Hurston Symposium Papers. Baltimore: Morgan State University Press.

Includes the essays "Zora Neale Hurston: The Morgan Connection" by Ruthe T. Sheffey, which considers the heroism of Hurston's personal survival; "Zora Neale Hurston: The Politics of Freedom" by Addison Gale, which outlines Hurston's pursuit of a freedom beyond the American value system; "Zora Neale Hurston: Hurston's Buzzards and Elijah's Ravens" by Robert Hemenway, which analyzes the buzzard scene in the novel Their Eyes Were Watching God; "A Novel for an Oral Tradition: Zora Neale Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God" by Dick Kuyk, Jr., and "Janie's Blues: The Blues Motif in Their Eyes Were Watching God" by James A. Miller, both of which treat significant aspects of the novel; "Zora Neale Hurston: Change, Chance, and God in Zora Neale Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God" by Joyce Ann Joyce, which expands Hurston's persona to include the influence of Franz Boas



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and Hurston's training as a behavioral scientist; "From Coon Hide to Mink Skin: Understand an Afro-American 'Sense of Place' which explores the nature of Janie Crawford's quest; "Historian, Too" by Gossie Harold Hudson, which speaks to Hurston's literature as historical in scope; "Zora Neale Hurston in the Caribbean: Women in Religion and Society" by Mary Beth Brown, which analyzes both Hurston and the women in the Caribbean; and "When Horses Talk: Reflections on Zora Neale Hurston's Haitian Anthropology" by Gwendolyn Mikell-Remy, which defines Hurston as one of the emicists.

- 6 WILSON, MARGARET F. "Zora Neale Hurston, Author and Folklorist." Negro History Bulletin 45, no. 4 (Oct., Nov., Dec.): 109-110.

Provides biographical information on Hurston based, in part, on her autobiography.

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- 1 BRANZBURG, JUDITH VIVIAN. "Women Novelists of the Harlem Renaissance: A Study of Marginality." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Massachusetts, 179 pp.

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Asserts that the fictional representation of black women's lives contribute to the "understanding of the link between the creative, psychological, and sociological phenomena of marginality and the incongruous relationship between mind and body." Believes the novels of Jessie Fauset, Nella Larsen, and Zora Neale Hurston "reveal an acceptance of some kind of encounter between the mind and body, rationality and non-rationality, and self and other as fundamental to human existence."

Annotation. See Dissertation Abstracts International 44(1983): 3063A.

- 2 TATE, CLAUDIA (ed.) "Alice Walker" [an interview]. Black Women Writers at Work. NY: Continuum Publishing Co., p. 183.

Says Hurston was the victim of the black community's failure to support its own writers, "throwing away this one and that one and never hearing or using what is being said."

- 3 Weiss, Nancy. Farewell to the Party of Lincoln, Black Politics in the Age of FDR. Princeton:

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Princeton University Press, 1983, p. 240.

Discusses the employment opportunity black artists and writers found in the Federal Theatre and the Federal Writers' Project. Says writers such as Hurston "found the means, psychological support, and creative strength to develop their art."

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- 1 COOKE, MICHAEL G. Afro-American Literature in the Twentieth Century. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984, passim.

Discusses the "kinship," social bonding, between Alice Walker and Hurston. Believes "Alice Walker remains compatible with Zora Neale Hurston as a woman writer working in a realistic vein, blending domestic and political interests, and equally sensitive to tragedy and to ecasty."

Describes Richard Wright's Bigger Thomas and Hurston's Janie Crawford as "antithesis of self cancellation" because both figures kill to preserve their "selves."

Explores the emergence of solitude in the writings of Hurston, Richard Wright, and Ralph

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Ellison. Calls the story of Janie Crawford in Their Eyes Were Watching God "the record of black development from materialism and passivity . . . to self-respect, self-reliance, and . . . self-realization."

- 2 EVANS, MARI (ed.) Black Women Writers (1950-1980). Garden City, NY: Anchor Press, passim.

Contains essays on black women writers. Solomon Edwards, in his essay "Affirmation in the Works of Mari Evans," mentions that Mari Evans composed music and lyrics for 13 songs in "Eyes" her stage adaptation of Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God.

Barbara Christian in her essay "Alice Walker: The Black Woman Artist as Wayward" believes that "few writers since Zora Neale Hurston have so successfully expressed the essence of the folk's speech as Walker does in The Color Purple."

- 3 GATES, HENRY LOUIS, JR. (ed.) "The Blackness of Blackness, A Critique of the Sign and the Signifying Monkey." In Black Literature and Literary Theory. Edited by Henry

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Louis Gales, Jr. NY: Methven, Inc., pp. 285-321.

Discusses "signifying" as it appears in the works of selected Afro-American writers. Identifies Hurston as one of the first to define signifying in linguistic literature. Calls Their Eyes Were Watching God "a paradigmatic signifying text, for this novel resolves that implicit tension between the literal and the figurative contained in standard English usages of the term 'signifying'." Adds that "Their Eyes" represents the black trope of signifying both as thematic matter and as a rhetorical strategy of the novel itself."

- 5 HARRIS, ROBERT. "The Afro-American Classics, An Essential Library." Black Enterprise 14, no. 11 (June): 33, 34, 36, 38.

Provides a review of Afro-American classics based on input from black writers, scholars, administrators, and public figures who recommended books that have influenced their lives. Describes Their Eyes Were Watching God as a tale of "one black woman's search for self-determination, making her own

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life choices rather than having them imposed on her."

- 6 HEMENWAY, ROBERT. Introduction to Dust Tracks on a Road. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, ix-xxxix.

Believes Hurston saw "her autobiographical role as that of a cultural knowledge." Says Hurston's style never disappoints readers in that it "dazzles, capturing the subtlety, energy, and rhythm of Southern black idiom." Adds that the style, however, "becomes a kind of camouflage, an escape from articulating the paradoxes of her personality." Concludes that "Dust Tracks fails as autobiography because it is a text deliberately less than its author's talents, a text diminished by her refusal to provide a second or third dimension to the flat surfaces of her adult image."

- 7 JACKSON, BLYDEN. Introduction to Moses, Man of the Mountain. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, vii-xix.

Calls Moses, Man of the Mountain "Hurston's most ambitious work." Says it is possible to interpret the novel as a protest

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novel because "in the context of black culture Moses himself is inseparable from protest . . . so that merely to write a novel about Moses is to initiate a double train of thought and emotion associated with the Negro's struggles in America to be free." Concludes that "In Moses Hurston rises to an occasion decidedly rare in Afro-American literature...."

- 8 JOHNSON, BARBARA. "Metaphor, Metonymy and Voice in Their Eyes Were Watching God." In Black Literature and Literary Theory. Edited by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. NY: Methuen, Inc., pp. 205-219.

Provides a structuralist's reading of approach Their Eyes Were Watching God. Believes Hurston was "acutely conscious of, and superbly skilled in, the seductiveness and complexity of metaphor as privileged trope and trope of privilege." Asserts that through a "strategic description of the folkloric heat of scientific law, Hurston dramatizes the predicament not only of the anthropologist but also of the novelist: both are caught between the (metaphorical) urge to universalize or

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totalize and the knowledge that it is precisely 'the near and the obvious' that will never be grasped once and for all but will only be (metonymically) named and renamed, as different things successively strike different heads."

- 9 KELLNER, BRUCE (ed.) The Harlem Renaissance, A Historical Dictionary. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, pp. 180-181.

Provides a brief literary biography of Hurston's activities. Says the novels she wrote during the 1930s "are deepened expressions of the folk consciousness she fashioned into art in the previous decade." Believes Hurston's autobiography to be not entirely reliable.

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- 1 BERNSTEIN, DENNIS AND CONNIE BLITT. "Our Eyes Are Watching Zora Neale Hurston." In These Times 9, no. 23 (8-14 May): 18-19.

Review Dust Tracks on a Road, Moses: Man of the Mountain, and Spunk: The Selected Short Stories of Zora Neale Hurston. Believe



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Mules and Men and Tell My Horse were landmark works which "formed an early antidote to racist theories in the social sciences, such as the notion that blacks are 'culturally deprived.'" Say in Spunk "Hurstun confronts the major issues of today--racism and class bias--through stories of love and daily life." Believe it is fortunate that the new release of Dust Tracks on a Road "contains over 50 pages of the original manuscript that had previously been censored." Describe Moses: Man of the Mountain as "a unique combination of anthropology, folklore and fiction."

- 2 CALLAHAN, BOB. Foreward to Spunk by Zora Neale Hurston. Berkeley: Turtle Island Foundation, ix-xiii.

Believes that "with a writer like Hurston, the line between folklore and fiction simply does not exist; literature is continually returning to its aboriginal and folk culture roots . . . ."

- 3 CORNISH, SAM. "Hurstun's Tales Illuminate Rural Black Culture." Christian Science Monitor (31

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May): 23-24.

Reviews Spunk: the Selected Short Stories of Zora Neale Hurston. Believes "The stories in Spunk dramatize the struggles of a young black woman caught between the beginning of the modern world and the oppressive, Victorian atmosphere of the 19th-century black and white America." Maintains that because Hurston was part of a generation of young, college-educated blacks who learned to write by reading white writers, "she therefore retained a strong attachment to values now defined as 'conservative.'" Suggests that in her "desire for an almost pastoral simplicity, Hurston is not far removed from Henry David Thoreau...."

- 4 CRABTREE, CLAIRE. "The Confluence of Folklore, Feminism and Black Self-Determination in Zora Neale Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God." The Southern Literary Journal 17, no. 2 (Spring): 54-66.

Delineates four aspects of the transformation of folk material into the body of the tale of Janie Crawford's journey through three marriages to a final position of self-realization. Asserts that folklore is

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"so thoroughly integrated into the fabric of the novel as to be inextricably bound to the themes of feminism and Black self-determination which Hurston is exploring."

- 5 GATES, HENRY LOUIS, JR. "A Negro Way of Saying." New York Times Book Review, 21 April 1985, 1,43.

Reviews Dust Tracks on a Road and Moses, Man of the Mountain. Considers the new editions of each to be "important to reassessing Hurston's standing [in American literature]." Believes that in Dust Tracks on a Road, Hurston provides the life of a writer rather than an account of "the Negro Problem." Further asserts that Hurston "clearly saw herself as a black woman writer and thinker first and as a specimen of Negro progress last."

Asserts that "the myth and allegory in 'Moses' protect her from reductoin to propaganda, just as her disguise in 'Dust' shields her life from the same fate." Believes that Hurston's source for Moses: Man of the Mountain was Francis E.W. Harper's "Mose: A Story of the Nile" published in

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1869. Says "both works are allegories, both stress Moses' identity as a conjurer, and both utilize multiple voices."

- 6 PRYSE, MAJORIE and HORTENSE J. SPILLERS (eds.)  
Conjuring, Black Women, Fiction, and Literary Tradition. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, passim.

Contains the introduction "Zora Neale Hurston, Alice Walker, and the 'Ancient Power' of Black Women" written by Pryse. Says the development of artistic "self-consciousness" began to characterize black women's fiction with the advent of Hurston. Asserts that "by writing down black folklore in a form that made it accessible for the first time to general readers, Hurston in Mules and Men (1935) called an abrupt halt to the cultural attitude that excluded black women from literature because it excluded them from other kinds of power."

Says Hurston gave Walker "the authority to tell stories because in the act of writing down the old 'lies,' Hurston created a bridge between the 'primitive' authority of folk life

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and the literary power of written texts."

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- 1 CHRISTIAN, BARBARA. Black Feminist Criticism, Perspectives on Black Women Writers, passim.

Views Hurston's works as transitional from the image of the tragic mulatto to a complex view of black womanhood. Suggests that "Woman, viewing and viewed, is part of the theme of Their Eyes Were Watching God, as if the writer were illuminating one part of a canvas in order to give meaning to the entire painting." Concludes that Hurston "move the image of the black woman beyond stereotype . . . . She grafted onto the 19th century mode a new way of looking at the mulatto and the Southern black woman."

- 2 PONDROM, CYRENA N. "The Role of Myth in Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God. American Literature 58, no. 2, (May): 181-202.

Calls Their Eyes Were Watching God "a modern reinterpretation of the ancient Babylonian myth of Ishtar and Tammuz, with syncretic allusion to its analogues, the Greek story of Aphrodite and Adonis and the Egyptian

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tale of Isis and Osiris." Reconsiders the novel in light of these myths to clarify Hurston's use of folklore, manipulation of narrative viewpoint, attitude toward Western religious values, and perspective on black and white relations. Adds that such an approach "offers new evidence concerning Hurston's relationship to the modernist movement." Suggests that Hurston's "adoption of myth as a principle of meaning and order is Hurston's most important link to modernism . . . . She shares with Eliot, Yeats, Joyce, Pound, and Crane the use of myth as 'a way of controlling, or ordering, of giving a shape and a significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history.'"

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