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Janie and her Experience in Life

Their Eyes Were Watching God is a novel by Zora Neale Hurston, an African American novelist. Zora N. Hurston was born in 1891, and she was associated with the Harlem Renaissance, also she died on 1960. This novel was published in 1937. Also, it tells about an experience of Janie the main character. The secondary characters are Tea Cake and Jody. She focused her life to seek true love since she did not have good experiences in her childhood and youth. Jody is the second husband for whom Janie leaves her first husband, with whom her grandmother (Nanny) wanted her to marry. Tea Cake (third husband) was the person with whom Janie knew love and had new experiences.This novel shows us the importance of the African American culture as well as the relevance of gender and the experiences of Africans.

 At the beginning of the novel, we can see how Janie suffered discrimination because she lived with white people, and the people of her color did not want her because she dressed better than them. Also, her grandmother Nanny made a decision that Janie married very young with Mr. Killicks since Janie would have a good social position. Later, Janie left her husband for Jody because her husband was old and Janie did not feel anything for him. Janie at the beginning of their relationship was very happy with Jody but due to jealousy problems she was forced to have another behavior with the community. Afterwards, Jody hit Janie, and it was when they distanced themselves more. A short time later, Jody passed away, and Janie had to continue with the store. She felt free and happy. In the next six months after Jody's death,Janie meet Tea Cake in the store and when she meet him, he was very kind. Jenie did not mind the gossip to start another relationship. Janie felt comfortable with Tea Cake because Tea Cake treated Janie like anybody, and he did not make her less than him. Janie had very good experiences with him although the end of their relationship was not as good as Janie ended up killing Tea Cake, in self defense since he was going to kill her. Janie was tried, and the jury found her innocent. After all this experience she returned to Eatonville Town. Janie always loved Tea Cake, and she had him in her memories. Janie lived a part of her life with many experiences which she learned from these.

 In the novel we can see discrimination or racism. People of color did not want white people because most white people were very bad for blacks. In chapter two is quoted, “So de white man throw down de load and tell de nigger man tuh pick it up”. This shows that, the treatment that people of color receive and that White people see less important to black people, while whites feel much superior. Also, the people of color did the work of the whites since they were forced. In the chapter sixteen Mrs. Turner said, “ Ah can’t stand black niggers. Ah don’t blame de white folks from hatin’ ’em ’cause Ah can’t stand ’em mahself”. This shows that this woman despite being colored, does not want people of her color because they are discriminated against and are very badly treated by the whites as they are also of lower class. Moreover, She does not want the colored race because she looks at them as a problem to the white community. The discrimination was relevant when the two white people with a rifle were looking for people to force them to bury the dead. Forcing people of color to search for the bodies after the disaster left by the hurricane and having to bury and clean up the rubble. African Americans had several experiences of discrimination, but they knew that they survived with the mistreatment that white people gave them.

 Zora Neales Huston create a separated black world. The author has created a world for black people to create social equality and reflects the freedom. For instance, Zora N. Hurston represents in chapter five where the main character had move to a new community and all the people from the community was black. Moreover, the community is growing because of Janie's second husband (Jody) wants to build a store and also put a lamp so they have lighting during the night on the streets. The arrival of Janie and her husband was very beneficial to the community. In the second city where Janie moved with Tea Cake, it could be seen that it was also a black community. In this community, people of color were hardworking and humble. This demonstrates, the black communities are around the cities and not in the cities and they build their small town. In addition. “A huge ditch was dug across the white cemetery and a big ditch was opened across the black graveyard”. This illustrate, Blacks and Whites had a line in between not to mix each other neither in death. They do not want to be on the side of the whites because they were badly treated and they were growing as a community with the passage of time and their great work. In addition to this, African American do not forget their culture, and they showed it to make it known to also Americans and they were proud of their roots.

 The culture of the black community is basic with their lifestyle. In Their Eyes Were Watching God, some of the characteristics of color people that it show are that they were very nice, smiling, hardworking, dreamers and others good quality. They had an African-American dialect and they were located in rural places. Something that is very important is that they would sing very old songs. In chapter eighteen it states , “So they began to hold dances night after night in the quarters, usually behind Tea Cake’s house”. It is important because some of their traditions were dancing and when they saw that the Americans did not laugh at them, they did it in any place when anyone could see them, until the Americans learned a few steps from the African Americans. In addition, in the culture of people of color it was not very accepted that an older woman had a relationship with a young man while the older men could marry a girl. The woman was not of major importance and that they only had to be submissive to their husbands. Moreover, “She saw all of the colored people standing up in the back of the courtroom. Packed tight like a case of celery, only much darker than that. They were all against her”. This reveal, the black community did not look well for a woman to defend herself against men, they looked at her very badly and as an act of rebellion.The black community did not accept that women would defend themselves and make decisions for themselves.

 The novel has part of feminism because Janie tries to challenge men on few occasions. For example, when she abandoned her first husband because she did not want him. Moreover, when she made the decision to get away from Jody because he mistreated her. Feminism was highlighted when she made the decision to defend herself from Tea Cake. Another example of feminism is when Nanny worked and provided everything necessary to her house as well as when she made decisions for jenie. On the other hand, At the beginning of the novel, men predominate because they are the ones who make the decisions for women. Additionally, Jody ordered Janie to cover her hair, which it meant that they made decisions about how women dressed. Furthermore, Jody did not allow Janie to speak when the community asked her a few words, he said that she was just for house and she did not know how to speak in public. So it shows that he looked at woman for the domestic duties of the home. As well as they noticed that they manipulated them as in the case of Tea Cake that manipulated Janie because he saw that she was in love with him. In chapter seventeen is written that, “Before the week was over he (Tea Cake) had whipped Janie... able to whip her reassured him in possession”. In this case, Tea Cake did it to let the community know that he was the one who was in charge and if anyone wanted to take Janie away. After his cruel action, the men of the town admired him for his act. Although Janie knew how to survive on her own, she always obeyed their paws and respected them although they did not treat her very well.

In Conclusion, Their Eyes Were Watching God tells a story of a young girl where they get many experiences during the course of her life. It is a very interesting novel because it uses very important themes such as the search for the love true and respect. In this novel, the experiences of the African Americans were applied as well as what the people of color thought for the whites. Also, the novel demonstrates the way of thinking of blacks and it shows the culture that they had.