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### Research Paper Proposal

#### Research Topic:

For my research project and paper I intend to investigate the influence of Zora Neale Hurston on American culture, in regards to her books and film.

#### Thesis (Working):

Zora Neale Hurston was completely overlooked and underrated for her works portraying the African-American experience. Her spiritualism and political views were bridged with her volumes of published works, including her books, poetry and song. Her Efforts in film making were ground breaking for her time. Although she has been challenged for her wishy washy politics and attacks of plagiarism, Zora has risen to greater notoriety after significant acknowledgement from Alice Walker gaining praise as a pathfinder in Feminism. She became well known for her work in the Harlem Renaissance as well as her philanthropic efforts with the Caribbean community.

#### Thesis Road Map:

- Zora's portrayal of life for the black woman.- Harlem Renaissance
- Zora's impact on the testimonial text- Baracoon- Lewis- Film
- The Alice Walker Affect- the Color Purple

#### What I know about this topic and why I am interested:

When given this assignment I was truly at a loss. When I want to know about something I find a documentary. I stared at my laptop irritated. Then I found something else to do in silent protest. A few minutes later I picked up my phone and googled "Important American Women in History." I put women in there for obvious reasons, we are awesome. Google gave me an article of 15 super well known women. Boring. A few more clicks and I had a new list of 100 women. Near the end of the list there were some obscure names that I did not know. This was more like it. I am sad to admit Zora is strikingly BEAUTIFUL. I was drawn to her immediately. I did not know who she was and had never heard of her, not once. I was reading her entire bio and then clicking my way down the rabbit hole of the internet. 30 minutes later I had decided she was the one. I did not know a single thing about her. And, I had only stumbled upon her because she was so stunning. I know now that she is a force to be reckoned with. Her courage and intelligence is unmatched, her tenacity is unnerving. Clearly, there was no other choice but to do my research on this woman right here.

#### What I want to learn:

I would like to learn more about her life and education that enabled her to be in the position she

was in to make these films and write these books. I would like to know if there was backlash from the accusations of plagiarism in her works. I also would like to understand the effects of her politics on her notoriety. What effects did the racism of her time have on her as she was writing as well as collecting all the data she went to the deep south to collect. I would like to know if she faced opposition as she attempted to film. I think it would be interesting to know why she left her stable career to write. I would like to understand how I have never heard of her.

Questions:

1. Who?
2. What?
3. When?
4. Where?
5. How come- Why was she writing? Why was she making film?
6. What was her education and background?
7. What was her subject matter?
8. What made Zora unique in this field?
9. Who was her target audience?
10. Why was she overlooked during the times of her release and publication?
11. What were Zora's contributions to her community? To the Harlem Renaissance? For Caribbean culture?
12. What were Zora's contributions for the Black female?
13. How did Alice Walker renew interest in Zora and her material?
14. Why were her politics considered unfavorable to the black community?
15. Were her works plagiarism or literary genius?