

Free their eyes were
watching god by zora
neale hurston
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[Philosophy](#), [Freedom](#)



Other

In his essay, ' Discourse on the Origin of Inequality,' Rousseau considers how man seeks freedom in the discourse and the social contract. However, the realization of liberty is hindered by supremacy of inequality and property, characteristic of capitalism as expressed by Karl Marx in the Communist Manifesto. The freedom expressed by Rousseau is not entirely political but also freedom from the need and psychological. In the novel, Their Eyes were Watching God, by Zora Neale Hurston, the character Janie is in the journey to achieve freedom from male domination, true love and self-independence in a world of racism and female subordination. The two pieces of literature align the themes of freedom/ liberty that are extensively covered and clearly shown how one can achieve freedom from the social contract. This path can involve freedom through love and/ or property. They show how other factors, especially fellow men, can stand on the way to the realization of this dream of freedom

Janie's granny lived in a confined life of slavery where there was no freedom, as the slave owners owned them as his property. A life characterized by hardship and constant rape makes her slave both physically and psychologically. It is with no surprise that her ultimate formula of liberating her granddaughter is through marriage to a wealthy man who will give the material freedom to her. However, this move only puts Janie in bondage as the man she marries, Logan Killick, an old farmer is unromantic and has no love relation with her and treats her as a slave. Janie finds herself in the quest to find true love. This is a new journey she takes in the quest to liberate herself from male domination over her life. Similar to political

freedom that requires the society to change governments, Jennie sees her chance of liberating herself from Logan lies in a young, ambitious man who is smooth-tongued, Joe Stark. The success of Joe in politics, however, results in more subordination and the goal to achieve freedom is not realized. As Rousseau argues, the main purpose of any government is to provide freedom to its citizens, Jennies sees marriage and love as her avenue to a similar goal. However, as most governments fail to deliver this human necessity so does her first and second marriage.

The perception of liberation through love and marriage is abstract and seems to be unachievable. Her hope and the hope of her grandmother is that the slavery they went through would end through marrying wealthy persons. However, this proves to be a major setback and unrealistic assumption as it only delays her freedom. As capitalism creates inequality in the society, her role as a woman and her social responsibility to take care of men overshadow her desire to freedom. She finds herself in a series of bondage marriages from her first marriage to Logan, then Joe. However, her desire to be liberated is fulfilled when she meets Tea. Though this freedom is not ultimate as she fears when Tea takes her money and runs away, in the end, when he dies, she looks back and sees that indeed, with Tea, she had realized a peace inside her when she was with him.

As Rousseau argues that the state should and must give freedom to its citizens, these human right is curtailed by bad system of governments. Social contract that struggles to provide this essential human right of freedom and equality and, on the other hand, discourse describes social circumstances in which no one can be free. People are bound by many

factors that are the source of inequality in the society. For example, the domination of one person by another proves that the freedom of every individual is unattainable. Other factors such as ownership of property and legislation also hinder freedom. Rousseau says that for freedom to exist, in a state of inequality, only in a state of nature would liberty be in existence. As in the novel by Zora, slavery was common where the whites enslaved majorly black Americans. In such a society, the achievement of freedom is difficult. Janie does her best to liberate herself only to find that there are many other that are trapped in the same search for freedom. Despite her acquisition of wealth after her marriage to a wealthy tycoon Logan, and later Joe, it is until the death of her husband Tea that she eventually becomes free. This shows that there are structural and cultural inequalities propagated through patriarchy that inhibits women from realizing their freedom. Armed with material prosperity and freedom from male domination, Jennie finally acquires her freedom of love, property and law. Jennie's freedom is a rough and dreary path that involved making major decision some of which ended her top face trial. In her search for freedom, she makes difficult decisions to move from one marriage to another and face social ridicule and malicious gossip about her behavior. She lands in the wrong side of the law when she murders her rabies-infected husband. However, this marks the beginning of her freedom as she is armed with property and fulfillment from love and the male jury finds her innocent of the murder case. Though it does not confirm that she is finally free in all aspect of life, she is free from the major bondage that had enslaved her generation.