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The Victim Hood of Being colored

**Introduction**

Zora Neale’s “How it feels to be Colored Me” brings back the readers to the time of racial crisis and social depravity in America, in the 1920s. Being an African American woman, Neale has attempted to bring forth, the worst aspect of society, which the Black population of America was facing. She believes, that racial supremacy overrides each beautiful aspect of the cultural and societal life. For many of the Blacks living in America, there were the least options to progress and become part of a cooperative system (Hurston 24). Throughout her essay, she has reflected of how being a black person was considered inferior, and how through different political and communal strategies, these people were forced to live a deprived life. In her essay, she has used a mythological approach, when she describes people as different colored bags. She says that these colored bags are filled with little things, which adds to their color, and this makes life (Hurston 27). Based on her such assumptions, this essay will analyze, how Neale has rejected the notion of racial pride based on the sense of aggrieved victimhood.

**Discussion**

Being raised in an all-black community, Neale faced different circumstances, when she moved out of the town for a higher education. In her own town, she was no different, since she was surrounded by the people of the same community. Before moving to Jacksonville, she did not have much to worry about. There were people who used to take care of her, and there were many who made her feel extraordinary. At the age of thirteen, when she finally moved to Jacksonville, things were too different (Prashant 193). There was a class difference, or more particular, there was racial segregation. In Jacksonville, she had to obey the discriminatory laws, which made her realize that she is not “everybody’s Zora”. She lost her individuality since Jacksonville was more diverse and she was not a little girl anymore. She experienced incidents, where she had to accept the fact, which is that she was living in a class system, which is divergent, and has little space for Blacks (Prashant 197).

She rejects the identity based on victimhood, for different reasons. For example, she narrates the time, when she got a chance to listen to live jazz music in a club, with a White friend. At that particular moment, she felt that she had understood what her friend had and by no manner did her level of understanding remain stumpy, at least compared to other White people. Throughout her essay, she has written several other incidents, where she felt least different from her peers. She has not engaged herself in self-pity, and for her, there was much reason to look toward things in a different yet relative manner (Milne 224). At one more occasion, she uses the metamorphic ability when she mentions that people are like colored bags. These colored bags, she thinks depicts courage, hope, understanding, and life. She rejects the identity based on victimhood because she believed that victimhood is nothing, but an exit to a false world.

**Conclusion**

Though Zora Neale’s essay has some political and societal aspects as well, she has rejected the usual interpretation of the racial segregation. She believes that those who think otherwise, are living in a land, based on falsehood, and have little chances to get through, in this world. On the one hand, her essay takes a deep look into what was happening during her life, and on the other, provides a ray of hope to the readers, to look beyond the racial divisions. For her, these divisions were unnatural and based on artificial projections.

# Works Cited:

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