



E-Newsletter | March 2016

Authors

The recent passing of Harper Lee brings to mind authors whose writing addresses Southern culture. This month's e-newsletter pays homage to Harper Lee and profiles another significant author as well, Zora Neale Hurston.

Harper Lee was 34 years old when her novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, was published. Today regarded as a classic of modern literature, the novel won the 1961 Pulitzer Prize and was made into an Academy Award-winning movie starring Gregory Peck. Lee's book has been translated into more than 40 languages and continues to sell more than a million copies per year. The novel is a coming-of-age story set in a small Alabama town. The lead character is a young girl, Scout, whose father (Atticus Finch) is an attorney who endeavors to get a fair trial for a black man who has been accused of raping a white woman.



Harper Lee

Like Scout, Lee grew up in a small Alabama town with a father who was an attorney. She studied English literature in college and entered law school, intent on becoming an attorney. Deciding that her calling was not in law, she went to New York to establish herself as a writer. Lee collaborated with Truman Capote in doing the research for what would become his book, *In Cold Blood*. The success of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, however, soon consumed all of her attention. Lee then preferred to live a more private life. She received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2007 and a second novel, *Go Set a Watchman*, was published in 2015, shortly before her death.

Although Zora Neale Hurston was also born in Alabama, she grew up in Eatonville, Florida, the nation's first incorporated black township. Her somewhat idyllic childhood came to an abrupt end with her mother's death when Hurston was 13. A series of odd jobs followed and then she re-entered high school at age 26 (posing as 16 years of age) in order to graduate. Involved in the Harlem Renaissance movement of the 1920s, Hurston graduated from Barnard College in 1928. By 1935 she had published short stories, a novel, articles, and a collection of southern folklore.



Zora Neal Hurston

Hurston's masterpiece, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, was published in 1937. Her autobiography, *Dust Tracks on a Road*, was published in 1942 to great acclaim. Hurston died in 1960 and was buried in an unmarked grave. In 1973, writer Alice Walker, whose own work had been significantly influenced by Hurston, found the grave and marked it. With that, Walker was determined to help others to rediscover Hurston. As a result, we are now aware of Hurston's anthropological research and resulting publications that provide insight into the oral cultures of African Americans. Hurston has been inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame.

Lee and Hurston are among the more than 850 women profiled in our book *Her Story: A Timeline of the Women Who Changed America*. We acknowledge their contributions to our culture and we are proud to continue telling their stories.

Follow Her Story on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Her-Story/237876923036693>

Her Story: A Timeline of the Women Who Changed America
Charlotte S. Waisman and Jill S. Tietjen
www.herstoryatimeline.com

8547 E. Arapahoe Rd, PMB J189

Greenwood Villiage, Colorado 80112



Her Story A Timeline, 8547 E. Arapahoe Rd, PMB J189, Greenwood Villiage, CO 80112

[SafeUnsubscribe™ jill.s.tietjen@colorado.edu](#)

[Forward email](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [About our service provider](#)

Sent by jill@herstoryatimeline.com in collaboration with

Constant Contact 

[Try it free today](#)