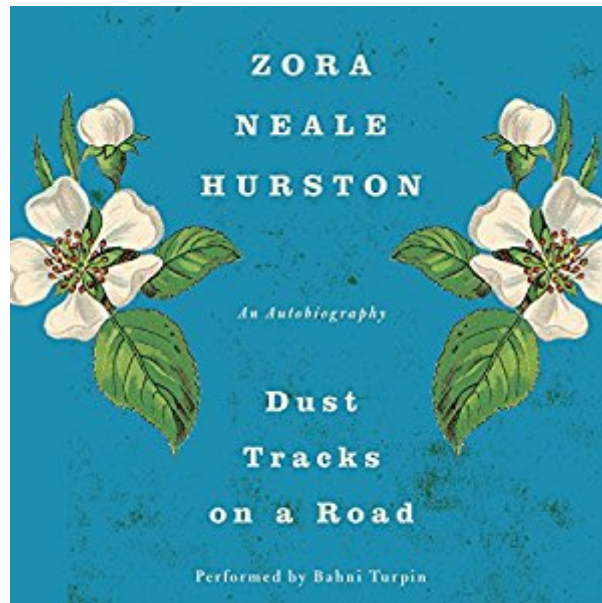




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# Dust Tracks On A Road: An Autobiography



## Synopsis

"Warm, witty, imaginative... This is a rich and winning book." (The New Yorker) *Dust Tracks on a Road* is the bold, poignant, and funny autobiography of novelist, folklorist, and anthropologist Zora Neale Hurston, one of American literature's most compelling and influential authors. Hurston's powerful novels of the South - including *Jonah's Gourd Vine* and, most famously, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* - continue to enthrall readers with their lyrical grace, sharp detail, and captivating emotionality. First published in 1942, *Dust Tracks on a Road* is Hurston's personal story, told in her own words. The Perennial Modern Classics Deluxe edition includes an all-new foreword by Maya Angelou, an extended biography by Valerie Boyd, and a special section featuring the contemporary reviews that greeted the book's original publication.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Nora Neale Hurston wrote an interesting autobiography which is basically a "rags to riches" book. Her book is a lesson about rising above one's circumstances. In fact Hurston described herself as "sassy and NEVER accepting apprehensively convention wisdom. In other words, Hurston's book is one of encouragement following one's desires dreams rather than the status quo. The book should be required reading for those who have intellectual dreams but are afraid to try. Robert Hemenway's introduction is useful. While Hemenway described the book as peculiar, he is wrong. Hurston's autobiography is one of inspiration and careful reflection. While Hurston was not necessarily a political activist, whatever that means, she was astute. She scathingly denounced President Truman's order to drop atomic bombs on innocent civilians in August, 1945 when the

Japanese were ready to surrender in February, 1945 per the MacArthur Memorandum in February, 1945. She also condemned the "war crimes" trials of Japanese leaders after WW II-whatever a war crime is. As Hurston commented. "...War is war."The introduction was followed Hurston's description of family life. Hurston's father migrated from Alabama to Florida where he became the mayor of the first incorporated black city in Eatonville, Florida. Hurston's description of the courtship between her parents was amusing. Hurston's father was a Baptist pastor who pestered Hurston's mother by writing notes in hymnals and flirtation. As Hurston wryly responded, her mother married "just to get rid of her father. What may surprise readers is that even among poor segregated blacks in the South, there was a "pecking order" and class distinctions. Hurston's father was of mixed race ancestry and was considered born out of wedlock.Hurston was consider "sassy" which relatives warned could lead to lynching or shooting. Hurston's father resented her being feisty, but her mother argued that such a feisty attitude was an asset since it could lead to independent thinking. Hurston's mother taught Huston grammar, reading, arithmetic/decimals, and whatever else the mother knew. This was rare among poor segregated blacks in the South.Hurston also described her childhood friends and the petty spats she had with her friends. For example, had a silly spat that the moon loved one girl more than the other. After an angry exchange, the two girls reconciled their silly spat. Hurston remarked that she liked to break curfew even if it meant a "whipping.As mentioned above, Hurston was "sassy." She was also very clever. Hurston got into a school in Maryland by lying about her age. She reported to be ten years young than she actually was. Hurston did well in school and was an eager student. In other words, Hurston realized that she was smarter than she was led to believe.As feisty and determined as Hurston was, she reported on her disappoints which NEVER led to fatalistic despair. When Hurston's mother died, her father remarried, and the second wife forced Hurston out of the house. Hurston had to reside with different family members and was starved for books. She got a break when she was hired as a maid in the North. She also worked as a waitress and got an acting "gig." She saved money and continued learning. She met two friends who were Fanny Hurst and Ethel waters who remained friends for the remainder of their lives.Hurston wrote a chapter title "My people! My people! which related the vestiges of US race relations. She also related that among blacks, she described them as "uncouth Negros and gentleman Negros. Yet, Hurston never let he success and fame interfere with her relations with others regard of wealth and reputation. Such an attitude influenced Hurston's religious views. She was an agnostic who considered that people were blessed by Father Sun, and that regardless of race, status, or wealth. As Hurston noted, we are part of the Cosmos, and such distinctions have little meaning "in the grand scheme of things."As stated above, this book should be required reading

for young students to inform them what "guts" and determination can achieve regardless of one's social status. Hurston's book is a reminder of that what people can achieve in spite of disappointments and criticism. Her book is a n inspiration and tribute to the human spirit. James E. Egolf February 24, 2016

I love Zora Neale Hurston. Her writings of life in the rural south gives me insight to how my ancestors lived and a sense of my roots. I now understand how my great grandparents lived and what they nad to endure living in the south after the Civil War. At the present time I am planning a family reunion and I have researched my family tree to rural Alabama. My great grandfather was a farmer and he married and had 12 children. I am one of over 500 great and great, great grandchildren. I am proud that my ancestors produced children that migrated from the red clay dirt of Alabama to the industrious cities of the North. Zora Neale Hurston is "The Black Experience". James Baldwin and Richard Wright only write about the hardships of Black America but Zora mixes racism and predjudice with a sense of humor. Even though she was educated and well written, when she was doing her anthropoligic studies she never lost her down home roots and mixed with her peers with a sense of appreciation not a sense of superiority. Through her writings I get a better understanding of Black History. She writes about love, religion, drinking and partying as a daily part of the Black Experience.

I just wanted to read her autobiography in her own words, I truly enjoyed reading it . I gained a better insight in the way she wrote her novels. Her opinions on race, individual character was interesting to me.

This started out great, but was just kind of rambling toward the end. You think you're done, but then it goes on for many, many more pages. She was an interesting woman and a talented fiction writer, but this was tedious to read.

I highly recommend this autobiography. Zora Neale is amazing, her insight. Wow. I think I texted/emailed my friends nearly half the book.

Read this to understand her huge influence on many contemporary writers, as well as to gain understanding of the turn of the 20th century south. I never get tired of Hurston, I've read and reread everything she's written. She's a philosopher, a mystic, a breath of fresh air, a pragmatist, and an

excellent writer. I can't imagine any serious reader would fail to enjoy this or any other book she's written. Check out *Their Eyes Were Watching God* as well.

My favorite book. I read it annually. Zora was such an amazing woman that led an incredible life. She in no way gets the amount of love, credit, or recognition that she deserves. It's not the standard "Christian" or coming-of-age tale. You may be surprised if that is what you expect. But, there are so many amazing gems, it would do you good to read it.

Zora in her own words. A wonderful, readable life story of this famous author.

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