

Gordon and Ingle: a comparative analysis of their critiques on a raisin in the re...

[Experience](#), [Belief](#)



While Michelle Gordon analyses the themes presented in Lorraine Hansberry's "A Raisin in the Sun", Zachary emphasizes on the setting of the play and how it is presented to the audience. Both critiques have a common ground that although "A Raisin in the Sun" has a racism dimension, its success as a play which presents the prevailing Chicago conditions at that point in history. In the setting of a Chicago ghetto where a black family resides, the play reveals the level of poverty and suffering experienced by the large family with Beneatha's shortage of school fees among other issues that unfold in the course of the play. There are also some fundamental differences between the works of both critiques such as the concentration on themes by Gordon and the concentration on the setting and performance of the play by Zachary who goes to the extent of describing the cut-out scenes in the subsequent film and the reasons as to why they were cut out.

Michelle Gordon is of the view that A Raisin in the Sun insists on having a revolution of the black populace on a worldwide magnitude and that civil disobedience, economic and ideological transformation, armed struggle are all instrumental for the achievement of social justice. Zachary also reveals the need for a revolution by consistently describing the residence and poor living conditions of the blacks in Chicago (Ingle, 184). In his view, Hansberry gives specific attention to the designing of the area of residence throughout the screenplay which passes the message that the family background is poor. Gordon, in her analysis and critique, argues that the book directly engages many racist discourses mostly in the North whose main purpose was to lobby and defend residential segregation by threatening misconception, violence, financial ruin and venereal disease (Gordon, 124).

Both Gordon and Ingle recognize Pan-Africanism in the play. Gordon is of the view that Hansberry reflects her sense of reality and her personal inner belief of a political world where political power eventually is the ultimate key that is needed for the liberation of blacks throughout the world. Ingle is of the view that change for blacks would eventually culminate in the change of the black majority all over the world (Ingle, 187). Both critiques have a firm belief of the change that should start from within the black community which in this case is concentrated in Africa and from there the change can be spontaneous for the community throughout the world. A sense of Pan-Africanism and a tinge of Neo-colonialism are evident in the analysis “ Despite her Pan-Africanism and belief that changes for Blacks in Africa could also lead to changes for Blacks in America” (Ingle, 187) such as the case where blacks continue to serve the whites in their houses in Chicago “ As expected, the neighborhood “ improvement association” sought an injunction against Hansberry’s on the grounds that blacks legally could not occupy any residence in any neighborhood covered by a “ race restrictive covenant”” (Gordon, 121) , their restriction to building in neighborhoods that are specifically for the whites and finally the different treatment that they received in public institutions such as schools (Ingle, 191). They do not side with segregation and hold the work of Lorraine Hansberry in high regard as one of the initial plays written that clearly depicted the plight of a black American family. Ingle assumes that whatever happens to the black community in America is the same elsewhere in the world.

Gordon and Ingle both reveal the injustices present in the work of Lorraine Hansberry. The fact that the family is not welcome in the white

neighborhood where they manage to pay a down payment for a new house resonates with the treatment of the blacks throughout the country. In a bid to restore peace and tranquility in multi-racial neighborhoods with black residents, both (Ingle, 187) "Despite her Pan-Africanism and belief that changes for Blacks in Africa could also lead to changes for Blacks in America" and (Gordon, 123) "her firm belief that the world is political and that political power, in one form or another, would be the ultimate key to the liberation of American Negroes and indeed the Black folk throughout the world" argue for empowerment and a revolution for the black community so that they can reduce the reliance on the white. Servitude is expressed in the play where blacks work as maids in the houses of the whites (Gordon, 128).

According to Gordon, Hansberry decodes the secret language of the United States social order and is among the first proponents that alternative possibilities and realities exist. The United States is supposedly divided into social classes in the context of where the play is set (Chicago) and at that time it is set. The divisions are mainly in terms of power and wealth and where blacks have the least wealth and least political power due to the social stratification. As for (Ingle, 191) "The notion of "white fear" (at least in this instance) is further invalidated when considering the abortion issue, a topic far more controversial at the time than any racial issues Hansberry brings up in her original screenplay", there is the invalidation of the notion regarding white fear on such matters such as abortion that would normally generate a lot of reaction from the public.

Gordon states that a majority of the black audiences and some critics quickly recognized Lorraine Hansberry's use of ghettoization in Chicago and can be

used as a yardstick of a democracy that has failed. According to her, both the black and white critics ignored that play's gendered and racialized class politics. In Ingle's view, there was some form of negative criticism that emanated from the black community who regarded the play as being too bourgeois. They may have indeed motivated her into revising her script. The critics were not entirely against Lorraine's work but they found the need for improvement.

Works Cited

Ingle, Zachary. "White Fear" And The Studio System: A Re-Evaluation Of Hansberry's Original Screenplay Of "A Raisin In The Sun." *Literature Film Quarterly* 37. 3 (2009): 184-193. Academic Search Premier. Web. 15 Dec. 2013.

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