

"house of sand and fog" analysis essay sample

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“ House of Sand and Fog” Analysis Essay Sample

The two main characters of this film are Kathy (Jennifer Connelly), a recovering alcoholic who is struggling to maintain her sobriety while being faced with losing the family's house that her recently deceased father had worked so hard for. Kathy had neglected the mail after her husband left and didn't get the warnings from the state that her home would be repossessed if she didn't pay off a delinquent business tax. Her home was put up for auction and sold, and now, Kathy has resorted to sleeping in the back seat of her car. Soon she becomes so obsessed with reclaiming the home that her father had left to her that she won't stop until the new family is gone, at any price.

The home is sold to a Masoud Behrani (Ben Kingsley) who was a former Iranian military colonel who fled to the United States to start a new life with his wife (Nadi) and son (Esmail) after the emergence of the Ayatollah. Colonel Behrani, once a member of the Shah elite, was exiled from his home when the Ayatollah came into power, and now was reduced to working two menial jobs - and hiding them from his family and community - to keep himself, his wife and son afloat. When a real-estate auction presented his family with the opportunity to buy the home at four times less than the market value, and with the prospect of again becoming financially secure, Behrani decides to invest the rest of their family's savings into the property. Kathy's home represented more to Behrani than just a roof over their heads - it was the key to recovering their family's opportunity to a better life.

The conflict in this film occurs when the two lives collide in their fight for the house, which for both of them represented the stability and the security of their future. For Kathy, the house was more than just a childhood sanctuary, for it literally was the only stable thing she had left in the remains of her self-destructed life. And for Colonel Behrani it represented the American Dream, the yearning for upward mobility of an immigrant who wants to escape the menial jobs he has had to take to survive in his new country of choice. Both Kathy and Colonel Behrani were so obscured in their notions that the house was the only means for them to acquire this security that they longed for in their lives. They were so consumed in their fight for the property's right-full owner that they were blind to the motives for the other's persistence, and both failed to see the significance of what that home had represented to the other individual.

Quite honestly - I really found this movie more of a chore to watch than anything else. The only bright spots in this movie are the acting of Ben Kingsley and Shohreh Aghdashloo (Behrani's wife). Meanwhile, Jennifer Connely makes a relatively good effort based on the awful character she was given. Maybe I missed something in the analyzing of this film's bigger meaning because much of the film's acclaim had gone for smearing the lines of right and wrong and for creating a conflict without an antagonist. "House of Sand and Fog" goes to great pains to impart a balanced portrayal..... Both sides are presented sympathetically, and the characters are developed as real people, with all the virtues and faults one might expect in these circumstances" (Berardinelli, 2003). First off, Kathy is an irrational,

irresponsible, moron who disregards everything and loses her house as a result of it.

Do I feel bad for her in the slightest? NO. Behrani in my eyes has done absolutely nothing wrong. He's a hard working man who looked at a piece of property and made a sound investment in the hopes of making a better life for him and his family. When Kathy confronts Behrani and asks him why he won't just sell the house back for the amount he bought it for and move on, he tells her it's more complicated than that and that, if the state made an error, she should sue the state and buy TEN houses with the money she will get. You know what - HE'S RIGHT! Why doesn't Kathy take this suggestion instead of harassing the poor family by trying to killing herself in their driveway? I don't know that I wouldn't have just turned her over to the state; if you enable someone to act stupidly - they generally will. Perhaps this is a generally harsh analysis.... but I think Kathy's character put up little to no fight for this house and yet she still moped over the loss of it for the entire movie.

Works Cited:

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