

Comparison of the mothers from everyday use by Alice Walker and Raisin in the Sun...

[Literature](#)



A Comparison Essay

'Everyday Use' is an interesting story by Alice Walker that revolves around family life and how the different characters deal with it. The women in this story are Mama, Dee and Maggie who have nothing much in common with each other except for their DNA. Although three of them are closely related to each other yet their perspectives on life and their concept of history remains quite diverse as each of them have led different lives.

Mama, who is the central protagonist of Walker's narrative, had been brought up in an atmosphere where colored people were differently treated. Being a colored person herself, Mama had very few civil liberties. For example, she tells us that "after second grade, the school was closed down," (745) and this is why she remained uneducated and could not read. On the other hand, Mama was used to hard work that she carried out with her "rough, man-working hands." (744) Even though she did not have an easy life, Mama had a strong and rich personality based on her spirituality. She had not accomplished much in life, but yet, she was proud of who she was and contented for what life had to offer her.

"Raisin in the Sun" by Lorraine Hansberry is another epic family story that pulls at our heart strings as it sheds light on a crisis that takes place in a family who dream of a better life for themselves. In comparison with Mama in Walker's story "Everyday Use", Mama in Hansberry's story is more aggressive and a bit ambitious as she tries to manipulate things in her family because she wants them to have a better life. She is not content to sit back and watch as the family drama unfolds with all its conflicts. Mama dreams of a good home and a better life for her family and tries to make this dream

come true by encouraging the other members in the family. Mama fully understands the ability of her children and tries to guide them accordingly. Her children try to pursue their dreams and when this is not achieved, they express their frustration and do things that usually they would not attempt to do. Beneatha, her daughter, educates herself and has many aspirations of leading a better life while Walter always tries to find the easy way out and prefers to make quick money. For example, when Mama tries to buy them a house in a White neighborhood, the White people want to return back their money because they do not favor having a Black family in their neighborhood and Walter wants to help them even at the cost of putting his family's dreams at stake.

The object which is a bone of contention in "Raisin in the Sun" by Lorraine Hansberry is the dream of a better life. To Mama it represents a good thing which she wants to achieve for her family at all costs and tries to manipulate the situation to make this dream come true. In comparison, Mama in Alice Walker's "Everyday Use" is happy and contented with what she has and takes pride in her memories by often speaking about them.

The Mama's in both these stories are very strong willed women who are proud of their strength and strong faith they have in themselves. While Mama in Hansberry's narrative is aggressive in her outlook, Mama in Walker's narrative prefers to live and bask in her past memories and is contented with what life has given her.

References

Hansberry, Lorraine, "A Raisin in the Sun" Analysis and Activity.

<https://www.theatrefolk.com/.../a-raisin-in-the-sun-by-lorraine-hansb>

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