

Film Review

A Raisin in the Sun

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## **Historical Background**

Racial equality has been an issue for decades and it is still happening to this day. From the beginning, there has always been an issue with freedom for black people, but the racial issue has been a battle that is still being fought. Racism doesn't affect the black community only, but it affects mankind in some way or another. Racial equality is defined as an equal regard to all races. It can refer to a belief in biological equality of all human races, and it can also refer to social equality for people of different races. Racial equality is a stated goal of most current political movements. The divergence of any society from a state of racial equality is often contested by members of that society of different races.

Blacks have been looked upon as inferior to the white race and have been depicted as less than animals. Blacks in America have been fighting for freedom since the time that they came over in slave ships from Africa. Freedom was not only what was right, but it was something that had been taken from them and they wanted it back. We can go back farther before blacks were introduced to slavery in America, they were also fighting for freedom from other tribes in their own country, but the difference is that was their homeland and their battle to fight. Unlike fighting a battle for their freedom in their own homeland, they were uprooted from their country, brought to another land that was foreign to them, and forced to become slaves with an environment and culture that was different from the one that they had always known. Blacks had to become free before they could ever think about racial equality.

The Emancipation Proclamation, which was passed on January 1, 1863, by Abraham Lincoln was the start of slaves gaining their freedom. What the Proclamation did was set the path for the ending of slavery. Soon after this on January 31, 1865, the 13 Amendment was passed, it was finalized by the House abolishing slavery for good in America. This was only one part of the

battle leading up to racism in America. Blacks had gotten their freedom, but they faced another issue and that was segregation. Freedom had not only set into motion a nation at war with each other, but it caused division amongst people that are still seen to this day. White Americans still couldn't see blacks as equals or any other race as the same, and with everything, in them, they wanted to stay segregated. If they didn't get the response of the government to allow them to separate themselves from other races, mainly the black race they did everything in their power to enforce what they thought was right. It wasn't until the case of Brown vs Board of Education and the Civil rights movement that African Americans would finally see equality. This would be the end of segregation; but not the end of racism.

## **Plot**

You have five people living in harsh housing conditions in the 1950's. The mother, son and his wife work while the older daughter and the grandson attend school. They live in hard housing conditions in urban Chicago, where they all seem to have some of the same similar dreams of doing better for themselves. The father of the family dies and the insurance company pays the wife a lump sum of \$10,000. The son has a dream of opening a liquor store with his friends, with the hopes to own something of his own. The mother dream is to provide better living conditions for the family. The daughter-in-law is faced with having a second child, but she doesn't think she should bring another person into this world and she barely has room for the child she has now. The sister has her own dream of being a doctor, something that was uncommon for blacks to do, especially a black woman. The family gets the money and the mother does as she said and purchases a home, but the issue is the home is in a predominately white community and they want to keep it that way. She also gives control of the rest of the money to her son who loses it all in a gamble to make easy money. After losing all they had, the

family seems to think, that either they must stop aiming for better and settle or give into the gesture of the white community that says, they would rather pay them off; than allow them to ruin what they think is a perfect community. The family decides that no longer will they allow racism to dictate their livelihood at any cost.

### **Historical Accuracy**

The movie is accurate when it shows how living conditions were in the black community. The poor in the city lived in harsh conditions and family tend to live in housing that could not support the growing family. They were getting paid low wages and sometimes because of it, family members had to work two and three jobs, or any able bodies had to do something to support the family, and sometimes this still wasn't enough to make ends meet. They also showed how black families that did have a little wealth seen themselves as better than the blacks that didn't have as much. We can see accuracy in this as well amongst the wealthy black community in the modern day. The movie showed how racism was in those days and how the white still wanted segregation although it had been abolished.

### **Comments**

I think this was a well-written script and it showed so much accuracy to the black race in the 1950's dealing with racism. All the actors did such a great job portraying how it was in Chicago urban cities in the 1950's. Actors like Danny Glover and Esther Rolle did a wonderful job with all the emotions and heart they expressed in the movie. It made you connect with the story on a deeper level. The other actors did great as well, even the little boy seemed to have acted out his part with perfection.

Who better to have written this play than that of a black woman that not only seen it from her view, but she saw the pain of racism with the hard-working husband and the sadness through the eyes of the black child. This play did a great job of showing all the elements of racism and racial equality in the 50's in America.

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[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A\\_Raisin\\_in\\_the\\_Sun](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Raisin_in_the_Sun).