

Statement of Purpose

Discrimination between minority groups in America occurred as society viewed those who were different as inferior. In this case, African Americans as well as Jews had faced prejudice in housing (Hansberry, 1959). In A Raisin in the Sun by Lorraine Hansberry, a family of African Americans is forced out/unable to buy a house and/or live in an all White neighborhood. Hansberry wrote this play to depict when her family was forced out of a White neighborhood in 1937 (Baraka). Housing discrimination did not solely apply to African Americans; “Jews and members of various ethnic groups were similarly affected” (Fine). Jews played an important role in the Civil Rights Movement. However, in the 1960s it was discovered that anti-Semitism began to grow within the African American community. Both groups have been persecuted so it was difficult for the Jewish people to comprehend the true nature of African American-Jewish relationships and the source of anti-Semitism in African American communities (Shapiro). Lorraine Hansberry’s ex husband, Robert Nemiroff, was Jewish thus she had an insight into the Jewish lens. Hansberry wrote “The Sign in Sidney Brustein’s Window” to depict anti-Semitism in America during the McCarthy era (Hansberry, 1972). Anti-Semitism in African American communities sprung up due to economic conflict and that Jews were White. The belief that the Jewish community was economically stable denoted that Jews ceased to be an oppressed American minority and that relationship with African Americans had never been marked by equality. Economic mobility and position between the two groups marked a relationship to a distrust in one another (Shapiro).