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Essay #6

The Slap Analysis

The Slap is a mini-series depicting the events and lives of a family of purposed content Greek family members and their friends in New York. I call their content lives purposed, because as the story progresses the individuals reveal a myriad of issues that would call into question their idea of family and content lives should these hidden issues be unveiled. The major theme of family is accompanied by themes of passion, loyalty, worth, and the idea of selfishness versus selflessness. Of the multiple characters throughout the runtime of the show, I will mainly focus on Harry and Rosie for the contending lives they live, and on Hector and Aisha for their hypocritical nature being so in tandem with one another.

I refer to Harry as the central character, even though the show depicts otherwise by having the first episode of the show feature Hector, as Harry is the main driving force behind the progress of the show with his contention with Rosie. Harry is the second contender for the character I call into question of their idea of the main theme of family. His displays of passion for his family shows in his climactic moment of his confrontation with Rosie’s son Hugo, but I believe that this is only partly true as his later actions suggest to me that this was more a show of his contention with Hugo’s parents and their idea of raising a family. Harry displays his love of family frequently through his caring nature and attempts to give them the trappings of a comfortable life, however these are undermined by his disloyalty to not only his marriage through infidelity with his workplace assistant, but also disloyalty to his own criticism of Rosie by assaulting his wife and inadvertently teaching his son to use violence. He often utilizes his anger to fuel his ambitions and assist him in difficult times, in which he is only further emboldened in it’s use by the initial court decision being heavily in his favor and causes Harry to forget the defense of his family and switch to legally attack Rosie. Despite this further developed passionate anger, it is revealed by Hector that Harry and the narrator still thinks of himself as having little worth, which I believe to be unreliable narration or information as his attempts to persuade Hector’s childhood friend Latham to help his case through bribery displays his viewpoint on how much he is worth and how that can solve problems. On the surface Harry says he is a selfless man, and it is directly because of this concern for others, mainly his own family and Greeks in general, that is the reason behind his actions, but I criticize this notion for his displays of infidelity, abuse, amoral decisions and relentless pursuit of slights during the trial process.

Rosie is the secondary character in the show, mainly brought so far up by her role in allowing the climactic moment involving her son Hugo to occur and worsening it through her actions following the event. For most of the show Rosie too shows a deep love for her family and the passion that her character follows is at first only in defense of her son, but she begins to mirror Harry’s displays of verisimilitude by undermining her own reasoning. She purports that she is only continuing this legal pursuit for her family’s sake, something I find to be a lie when she begins to berate and ignore her other family member Gary for not being as passionate about the pursuit of this case as her. Rosie’s most intense moments of passion are brought out through as anger towards Harry and are again reasoned as being from the love of her family, but I criticize this as being due more in part of her own trauma after it is revealed that she abandoned her son Hugo for a time and is now overcompensating as she knows she not worthy and deeply regrets these past transgressions. This treatment of her husband culminates in both of them choosing to involve Ritchie in the trial which nearly results in his demise, which tells the viewer of their true hideously selfish nature, whose blame is shared amongst both sides but is mainly upon Rosie.

Hector and Aisha are the tertiary characters that the story follows, as they are only the area for which the main conflict arises, but they are the main focus of the theme of family. It is the celebration with family, the conflict of Hector’s worth, and both selfish and selfless actions that help permit the climactic moment and ease it’s passing. Hector and Aisha display their love and selflessness for one another through the birthday celebration and effort that they’ve put through for others, even with Hector finding out that he won’t be promoted and causing him depression and stress. Hector has the mildest breach of loyalty out of the characters with his brief fling with his babysitter Connie, in contrast with his wife Aisha who very nearly practices infidelity with a former colleague but refuses at the last moment, showing a better love of family than the two prior characters. Their passion for those they love and how to treat family is brought into question during their bitter comments towards one another after they reveal their failings, showing to me that their self-centered nature wins out during what they feel is betrayal, hypocritically so. They are able to find some worth in one another and themselves by remaining together for their family’s sake and understanding each other’s flaws sync together when they admit to their own.

At the end of the series, portions of the story are called into question by the seemingly misleading information given by the narrator and some of the characters but is few enough to give confidence to the viewer that most of the story is genuine. While the characters only grasp the irony and hypocritical nature of their actions, the viewer is shown contrasting results and events from the character’s actions enough to give them a sense of how seriously to take each character’s purposed words and beliefs. In conclusion, the main theme of family is a wide and deep concept throughout the show and is displayed by each of the characters by how they view the idea as well as how they treat their own family’s through their actions and inaction, as well as the sub themes that are shown in each character’s unique way.