

A Comparative Analysis: The Women of The House on Mango Street and Esperanza

The House on Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros and the character of Esperanza have become iconic in the world of literature. The novel explores the experiences of women living in a predominantly Latino neighborhood in Chicago. Through the eyes of Esperanza, we witness the struggles, hopes, and dreams of the women in her community. This essay will compare and contrast the experiences of the women in The House on Mango Street with the experiences of Esperanza as a woman in the same neighborhood. By examining these different perspectives, we can gain a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by women in society [6].

The experiences of women in The House on Mango Street are varied and complex. In her struggle to define her own femininity in a society that is often oppressive to women, Esperanza seeks new forms of feminine power – ones that will allow her to shape her own destiny and challenge the limitations placed upon her. Cisneros's stereotypical roles for the women in Esperanza's community are the homemaker, a man's plaything, and an isolated wife. These characters highlight the limited options available to women in the neighborhood and the ways in which they are defined by their relationships to men [1]. Additionally, gender is portrayed as a social construction in The House on Mango Street, something that people learn as they grow up rather than something they are born with. Men and women are assigned specific roles and behaviors based on their gender, and breaking free from these expectations becomes a central theme in the novel [2].

Esperanza's experiences as a woman in The House on Mango Street are deeply personal and shaped by her own journey of self-discovery. Her process of self-identification entails realizing that she is growing more mature, figuring out her sexuality, and understanding her culture as a Latina woman [3]. The House on Mango Street describes how Latina women face problems in their society, not allowing them to fit in and treating them as second-class citizens [4]. Esperanza's desire for independence and agency is evident in her fascination with high-heeled shoes. She relishes the power the shoes seem to give her and plays with the idea that physical beauty could help her escape the squalor of her surroundings [5]. Through Esperanza's experiences, we gain insight into the complexities of being a woman in her community and the ways in which she navigates her own path to find her voice and place in the world.

When comparing and contrasting the women in The House on Mango Street with Esperanza, we find both similarities and differences. Esperanza, as a fictional character created by Cisneros, serves as a vessel to bring about sensitive, alert, and rich literature. She is the protagonist in the novel and is used to convey the experiences and perspectives of the women in her community [6]. The novel itself serves as a coming-of-age story, illustrating how Esperanza's experiences on Mango Street play a significant role during her period of growth [7]. Both the women in The House on Mango Street and Esperanza face the challenges of societal expectations and gender roles, but their individual journeys and ways of finding empowerment differ.

1. *Gender Roles In The House On Mango Street*. (n.d.) Retrieved July 6, 2023, from www.ipl.org
2. *The House on Mango Street Gender*. (n.d.) Retrieved July 6, 2023, from www.shmoop.com
3. *Identity In Esperanza's House On Mango Street*. (n.d.) Retrieved July 6, 2023, from www.ipl.org
4. *Esperanza's Struggle In The House On Mango Street*. (n.d.) Retrieved July 6, 2023, from www.bartleby.com
5. *Esperanza - The House on Mango Street*. (n.d.) Retrieved July 6, 2023, from www.sparknotes.com/lit/mangostreet/character/esperanza/
6. *Compare And Contrast The House On Mango Street*. (n.d.) Retrieved July 6, 2023, from www.bartleby.com
7. *Compare And Contrast The Esperanza And The House On ...* (n.d.) Retrieved July 6, 2023, from www.ipl.org