I Am My Mother’s Daughter: An Analysis of the Fictional Black Mother-Daughter Relationship and Its Effects on the Daughter’s Development into Adulthood
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Background
- **Black Feminist Thought** by Patricia Hill Collins — Theoretical interpretations of Black women’s reality by those who live it
- **Black Feminist Literary Criticism** by Barbara Smith and Barbara Christian — Embodies the realization that the politics of sex, race, and class are interlocking factors of Black women writers
- Black motherhood in the US generally has been portrayed negatively from a Eurocentric perspective

Research Question
How do Black women writers use their novels to define Black womanhood through the characterization of Black mothers and how they mother their daughters into adulthood? What effect do different types of mothering have on the daughters’ development? Are Black mothers successful or unsuccessful in raising strong, independent Black women?

Methodology

Discussion
Types of Black Mothers

- **The Damaged Mother**
  - *The Bluest Eye*
  - *Push*

- **The Absent Mother**
  - *Their Eyes Were Watching God*
  - *The Color Purple*

- **The Nurturing Mother**
  - *Song of Solomon*
  - *Brown Girl, Brownstones*

Significance
While mothers generally affect their daughter’s development, Black mothers either provide or neglect to arm their Black daughters with the tools to arm themselves in a white, patriarchal, oppressive society. Previous scholarship on motherhood only included white women and does not account for the intersection of race, gender, and class.

References

Conclusion
- Whether or not the daughter(s) of each is successful at the end, and this is based on if the mother was able to teach her daughter how to survive in an oppressive society.
- It is important for Black women writers to continue to explore this theme of the mother-daughter relationship because it is their story and their lives.

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