



Lorraine Hansberry: A Research and Production Sourcebook (Modern Dramatists Research and Production Sourcebooks)

Richard Leeson

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Born in the Southside of Chicago in 1930, Lorraine Hansberry and her family moved to a large house in a white neighborhood in 1938. In order to live there, her father had to fight a civil rights case in the Supreme Court against segregationists. Her experiences with racial discrimination fueled her strong commitment to social justice and inspired her works. In 1959, her first-produced play, *A Raisin in the Sun*, met the enthusiastic praise of Broadway critics and audiences alike. It was the first and longest running play by an African-American woman to be produced on Broadway. When it won the New York Drama Circle Award for the best new drama that year, Hansberry became the first black woman and the youngest recipient to earn that honor. She died just a few years later, in 1965, without ever fully realizing her potential. This reference book is a guide to her career.

The volume begins with a chronology that recounts the major events in Hansberry's brief but influential life. Entries are then listed for her plays, including *A Raisin in the Sun* (1959), *The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window* (1964), *To Be Young, Gifted and Black* (1969), *Les Blancs* (1970), *The Drinking Gourd* (1972), *What Use Are Flowers* (1972), and the unfinished *Toussaint* (1986). Each entry includes a plot summary, critical commentary, and production information, when available. An annotated bibliography of works by and about Hansberry, along with a list of unpublished material and archival sources, complete the volume.

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