

“A STUDY OF STRUGGLE FOR SELF-DEFINITION IN PAULE MARSHALL’S *DAUGHTERS*”

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ABSTRACT

Paule Marshall was a prolific American author. She was a poet, novelist, professor and librarian. She published her first novel in 1959, *Brown Girl, Brownstones*, which received a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1960. Her collection of four novellas, *Soul Clap Hands and Sing*, won the National Institute of Arts Award. She published her powerful and promising novel *Daughters* in 1991. *Daughters* was a novel about the main character, Ursa McKenzie whose parental dependency suppressed her identity, freedom and independence. This novel was about the impact of her familial and cultural surrounding on her struggle for self-definition. Ursa was a well educated and honest black woman who is struggling to make a career and life for herself in New York. She faced many obstacles like in her life. She passed through the abortion, a break up with her boyfriend, the start of a new job, and finally, the need to come to terms with her family back home. Throughout the novel, she was struggling to understand herself her parents back home in the West Indies. *Daughters* was highly focused the struggle for self-definition in this novel.

KEYWORDS: Paule Marshall, African American Literature, Self-definition, Homeland