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## **Darkness Among the Moon and the Stars: Family Formation Under Poverty in Octavia E. Butler's Parable of the Sower**

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## Darkness Among the Moon and the Stars: Family Formation Under Poverty in *Octavia E. Butler's Parable of the Sower*

This paper focuses on how the characters in Octavia E. Butler's novel, *Parable of the Sower* (1993) are affected by the violence that occurs throughout the novel and how forming a new relationship helps give them hope in achieving their dreams. It analyzes how the novel represents poverty as inextricable from race and gender. It explores how properties such as houses, vehicles, pets, and clothing all play a role in forming one's identity as a citizen and how that identity gets stripped away and/or changed the poorer you become. This paper also examines how one's identity is made almost anew when being a part of a different family/community. This paper highlights how race and gender play a salient role and in the formation of poverty as well as building a better community based on how Butler's characters show us that the strongest communities form from groups that embrace diversity as well as working together to achieve similar goals as opposed to going separate routes. It analyzes how love flourishes even in the most violent and poorest neighborhoods. In doing so it illustrates how while children living poverty are more prone to getting involved in criminal activities and facing early trauma there is also a bond that forms within the community and or the love of a family. By looking at the film, *Shoplifters* (2018), this paper will examine how a non blood related family shoplifts in order to cope with their poor lives. While they are all not biologically related to each other, they are brought together by the same poverty stricken life they face and form a loving bond with one another. This paper compares the family from the film and the family that forms by the end of Butler's novel. This then supports the idea of how the components of families play a key role in what sort of communities are formed in which progressive ideas and actions can be made which help benefit each individual. It explains how the presence of infants and children not only help build new families and communities but also could also help bring diversity. This will tie into and critique how bringing others down in order to succeed is not amongst the change that people need for a community to flourish as well as how the presence and love for children and infants play a role in establishing it.