

Relationships Between Mothers and Daughters in Tan's The Joy Luck Club

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Relationships Between Mothers and Daughters in Tan's The Joy Luck Club

“Now the woman was old. And she had a daughter who grew up speaking only English and swallowing more Coca-Cola than sorrow. For a long time now the woman had wanted to give her daughter the single swan feather and tell her, “This feather may look worthless, but it comes from afar and carries with it all my good intentions.” And she waited, year after year, for the day she could tell her daughter this in perfect American English (Tan 3).”

The American culture focuses more on the individual. Typical Americans always want to be independent. Traditionally, they never appreciate anything that they have, are selfish, and ignorant to other cultures. On the other hand, the Chinese culture has many strong beliefs concerning the family. Chinese women value their parents, especially their [mothers](#). It is expected that their daughters also do the same. “Women from Asia value family. Family is all important. Husband, children, parents, relatives come first. Husband and children never take second place to her career ([China](#) Bride).” The Joy [Luck](#) Club emphasizes family values by explaining how each mother, Suyuan Woo, An-Mei Hsu,

Lindo Jong, and Ying-ying St. Clair, came to America so that their daughters could have better lives and everything that they didn't have. Because the daughters in The Joy Luck Club were born in America, they wanted to be more Americanized than to recognize their true Chinese culture. In particular, Waverly Jong was less successful than her mother, Lindo, in finding her true identity. Lindo honors family and self. Waverly has a hard time finding her true identity. She builds a wall between her and her mother and tries to be he...

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... when she "let's her mother in". Waverly lets her mother in when they are at the salon. Lindo tells her daughter about her childhood and how she ended up in America. She tells Waverly that she named her after the street they lived on so that when she grew up and left, that she would take a piece of her with her. Waverly finally understands her mother. "Her mother has been waiting for Waverly to let her in, to accept her Chinese heritage so that she can accept Waverly's Chinese-American future (49)."

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