

Arabella Gutierrez

Ms.Luttrell

English 11

5 September 2017

Tackling the Storm of Life

Most people are who they are today because of an influential adult they had in their lives. In the memoirs *Crazy for The Storm* by Norman Ollestad and *The Color of Water* by James McBride, the writers both have a parent who influenced them greatly. Both books show how much their parents affected their lives, and the up and downs each author had during their childhood. The books also show how the view of their parents' change over time. Both men turned out the way they did thanks to the relationship they had with their parents.

McBride and Ollestad both had a parent that impacted their life significantly. McBride's mom, Ruth McBride did everything in her power to make sure all of her children got a proper education so they can do well in life. " She married two extraordinary men and raised twelve very creative and talented children, and I ought to list their names now. After all, that was part of the deal on my end, and her children's achievements are her life's work anyway" (Mcbride 274-275). McBride's mom did everything possible for her children to have a better life than she did. Thanks to her, all of her children became successful people. Ollestad's dad trained him to be his very best and pushed him to his fullest potential. "I spent my weekends on Topanga Beach surfing with the legends" (Ollestad 148). Ollestad's dad made sure that his son trained to be the best at every sport he played. Because of his father, he became a phenomenal surfer. Both McBride's and Ollestad's parents prepared them for the ups and downs of life.

McBride and Ollestad both had very interesting childhoods. McBride's mom was always there for him in his ups and downs in life. "You were left to your own devices or so you thought until you were at your very wits' end, at which time she would step in and rescue you" (Mcbride 10-11). His mom had different parenting styles compared to the other kids parents McBride knew. She would let her children sort things out on their own but if things start going south she would step in and help them. Ollestad may not have lived with his dad all the time but that didn't affect how involved his dad was in his life. "That was your dad. Yeah. He wants you to come with him to Grandma and Grandpa's" (Ollestad 46). Ollestad had a rough time at home with Nick, he would violent when he was mad. Ollestad's dad noticed that and though it would be best for his son to get out of the house to go with him to Mexico. McBride and Ollestad thought thought as child that their parents were very different from the rest and wished they were normal but as they grew older they realized thanks to the way they were raised they became respectable men.

Both authors' views of their parents changed when they grew up. As a child McBride thought his mother was strange and acted very different from the other people his his neighborhood. "It was Typical Mommy neurotic behavior, and I didn't fully understand it till I learned how far she had truly come. For her. Her Jewish side is gone" (Mcbride 269). As he grew older and learned more about his mom's past he started to understand why she is the way she is. When he looks back at his childhood he now sees why his mother raised him so differently. Ollestad never truly understood what his dad was trying to teach him all those years until he became an adult. "Somewhere in the oval

opening I grasped what Dad had always tried to make me see. There is more to life than just surviving it” (Ollestad 257). His dad always pushed him to do his best and at times he did he appreciate it. When he got older he realized that his dad was trying to teach him a lesson all those years. Both McBride and Ollestad learned why they were raised different from others.

Both authors wouldn't be who they are without their parents. Their parents played a big role in their lives. The theme shown in both books is that people can make a large impact in other people's lives. McBride became a well known author thanks to his mother always pushing him to get a higher education and do his best. Thanks to Ollestad's dad he became an extraordinary surfer and a respectable person. McBride and Ollestad both tackled the storm of life with the help of their parents.