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Harriet Ann Jacobs - Incidents in the Life of a slave girl

Theme of Slavery on American Culture and Literature

The theme of slavery has tremendously impacted towards American culture and literature. The book provides a documentation of Jacobs' slavery life and how she got freed from slavery and her family. Slavery is considered bad for all the parties engaged, not just the slaves themselves. As narrated from the story, laws do not protect the slaves and they are fully exposed to affliction and poverty (Campbell 22). Slavery is the major theme brought out from the book that has favored togetherness and consideration of others in the American culture and literature in modern times.



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The theme - slavery- has led to change in the overall perception of the lower and upper-class people upon each other. Slaves have been exposed to unfavorable conditions which led to suffering and other impacts being brought out by the slave system which adversely impacted upon their moral development. The slave system is linked with theft and adultery among the slaves since they have been left with no choice. “Few slaveholders seem to be aware of the widespread moral ruin occasioned by this wicked system... if you want to be fully convinced of the abominations of slavery, go on a southern plantation, and call yourself a negro trader” (Jacobs 43). In most parts of the American cultures, all individuals are treated equally with services being provided to each one of them with minimal or no priorities being given to their social class. However, some of the services are offered depending on the level of wealth of an individual.

Governmental laws and policies intensively advocate on the need to eliminate discrimination and slavery to offer protection to all individuals regardless of their position, gender or age. Slavery increase is a result of shortage of labor in European and American nations where most of individuals sought it as an alternative (Campbell 12). The education system, which highly affects culture and literature, has been shaped in ways that educate students on the importance of ensuring happiness among all through togetherness and offering help to the less fortunate. This has actively played a role towards the elimination of slavery in the modern world. Slavery expose the victims to harsh conditions. Women appear to encounter much horrible suffering such as mental torture as compared to men. “many and anxious were the thoughts I revolved in my mind. I was at a loss what to do.” (Jacobs 31) They are also exposed to sexual harassment and denial of freedom with their children; some even being taken away from them. Such experiences are regarded to be very difficult just like physical torture.

Laws considered as the slave codes require full submission of the slaves and total control by their masters (Campbell 22). Slavery appears to be more challenging when the victims are females. For this reason, it is considered essential to continually strive and fight for women's right in modern cultures and literature. In today's world, programs have been formulated to facilitate togetherness among women and to help men understand the needs and importance to treat women equally to them. The story ends after the enslaved woman and her children gain freedom. At this point, she appears happy and delighted to finally engage freely in her life just like any other free individual. Modern literature criticizes any sort of discrimination among individuals especially the blacks to ensure that they are treated equally.

Conclusively, this text has effectively brought about an understanding of the condition surrounding the practice of slavery. This is because it brings out the suffering of the slaves and the negativity associated with slavery upon all individuals. Through such messages, the current cultures and literature have adopted favorable mechanisms and practices in their governmental and social policies to ensure that everyone is treated equally to the other.

Works Cited

Campbell, Ciara, ed. *Slavery in America*. Encyclopedia Britannica, 2015.

Jacobs, Harriet Ann. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*. BoD—Books on Demand, 2018.