Incident In The Life Of A Slave Girl As An Autobiography Of Harriet Jacob

Harriet Jacobs's Incident in the Life of a Slave Girl deals with autobiography that connects with her character, Linda, and helps the story move along by telling a slave's girl story in order to bring awareness of race and slavery throughout her whole life. This event impacted how she viewed things then and now. Thus, bringing "the life of a slave girl" into perspective and her journey with other characters. As well as what it means to be trapped in a society where you are treated differently because of your race and where you grew up. Although her upbringing was different than she realized, "I was born a slave; but I never knew it till six years of happy childhood has passed away" (Jacobs 9). This passage is significant because Linda's perspective went from happy childhood to a not so good one and from there that is when her whole life's view changed. Nevertheless, she learned to be strong because of her family's teachings. For instance, "I had not lived fourteen years in slavery for nothing. I had felt, seen and heard enough, to read the characters, and question the motives, of those around me. The war of my life had begun; and though one of God's most powerless creatures, I resolved never to be conquered. Alas, for me!" (Jacobs 19). The evidence points out that Brent's way of thinking permitted her to never receive a defeat in existence even in the worst of times. Because her parents and Aunt Martha taught her to respect herself and that she can make something out of her life. Brent never gave in to Dr. Flint and was able to plan a way out of slavery. Brent had dreams of having an education, freedom, and a family, and this incident shows how fixed on she was to not let anyone especially Dr. Flint to stand in her way of attaining those dreams.

Linda Brent's, life is Harriet Jacobs autobiography of her life. Jacobs gives full details of her life to show others the life of slavery as the character of Linda. For example, "READER, be assured this narrative is no fiction. I am aware that some of my adventures may seem incredible; but they are, nevertheless, strictly true. I have not exaggerated the wrongs inflicted by Slavery; on the contrary, my descriptions fall far short of the facts" (Jacobs 5). In this passage, Jacobs is starting off with her autobiography with this bold statement to her white audience. It is aimed at slave narratives by proslavery that think it's been exaggerated and has been criticized. But Jacobs assures them that it is all true that it isn't fabricated that the events aren't exaggerated. She is setting up an up and running confident narrative voice. Also, Jacobs makes her sexual transgressions public, and she cannot trust the confined readers to be sympathetic. As a result, she lets her audience know that their interpretation of her story is that she will remain securely in control of it. Jacobs has created a bond with her audience by addressing the issue had on and having power over them. This event is an important plan, given the sexually direct and politically controversial basic characteristics of her text. In which by making her narrator seem like a real person with whom readers can identify, she makes them less likely to automatically reject her story as unbelievable or immoral.

Jacobs's subject on slavery and how it is differs men and women. Although both are terrible things it affects them differently. In other words, "Slavery is terrible for men; but it is far more terrible for women. Superadded to the burden common to all, they have wrongs, and sufferings, and mortifications peculiarly their own." (Jacobs 66) This passage is significant because it underlines Jacobs's most important reading matter to the literature of slavery and her portrayal

of the emotional suffering of slave women. As well as the significance of her autobiography for African Americans. Despite being several important African American slave narratives published up to the time Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl in which was released in 1861, the utmost enduring of all was Fredrick Douglass' Narrative in the Life of a Slave none of these books gave readers a first-person female slave perspective. Harriet Jacobs' narrative did, and this line sums up the reality that it was much harder to be a female slave than a male slave which was something most of the American public eye was unaware of at that time. Basically, at that time, most slave narratives were written by men and it followed a standard rule that placed great emphasis on actual pain and physical endurance. It also contained vivid details of beatings and other physical assaults that deprived the slave of his masculinity. In which to regain his manliness, the slave had to confront his master by fighting him. The male slave then suffered more physical pain during his escape to the North. For a female slave it was very different story to tell, Jacobs created a new type of slave narrative. She emphasized whether they are beaten, starved, or made to work in the fields, all female slaves suffered disturbing deranged torments along the lines of sexual harassment and the loss of their children. Jacobs vision was to portrays the emotional agony of mothers whose children were taken from them, as well as the shame of slave girls who are sexually victimized by white men. In addition, for these women, such experiences were just as difficult as any physical punishment, if not more so. The novel is spent showing how slavery is worse for women due to the constant threat of rape and sexual harassment. To illustrate, "Pity me, and pardon me, O virtuous reader! You never knew what it is to be a slave; to be entirely unprotected by law or custom; to have the laws reduce you to the condition of a chattel, entirely subject to the will of another" (Jacobs 47-48). In this passage, Linda is emphasizing what it's like to be a slave and not to be protected by law. Jacobs makes one of her most powerful claims as a narrator in which that no other women has right to condemned her for her overwhelming disclosure about her sexual history unless they have been in a similar situation. In the Preface, she used a direct tone and took charge of the reader at a controversial moment and asserting her right to interpret her own life story. Jacobs argues, if you have never been defenseless in the face of sexual harassment and abuse then you cannot possibly understand what she has been through. The conclusion is that slaves should not be judged for moral and legal standards of the free world. Because slaves have no control over their bodies they cannot be convicted of immoral or outlawed actions. Somewhere in the book, Jacobs makes similar disputes about slaves' relationships to transgression and the system, as well as defending the right of a slave to take from his master alleging all slaves are owed a lifetime of unaccounted payment. Subsequently, Linda is trying to get her readers on her side to see that she only behaved badly according to their standards just to escape a worse fate.

Linda's goal was to be free and to live a life with her family. Harriet Jacobs's autobiography connects with her big journey in her freedom and to live a life where she is free of all those who stood in her way of freedom. For example, "Reader, my story ends with freedom; not in the usual way, with marriage. I and my children are now free! We are as free from the power of slave holders as are the white people of the north; and though that, according to my ideas, is not saying a great deal, it is a vast improvement in my condition." (Jacobs 156). This passage, Linda speaking to the audience saying that the story ends with freedom and that her family is free, they are free to leave and to not be in the hands of the white slave owners. Although it is not a great deal, they are now are able to do want they want without the approval of anyone. Jacobs does not reference the romantic novels of the 18th century because most of those stories ended with heroine marrying her prince charming in, her in case she didn't. However, before Jacobs wrote her autobiography she did attainted out of this world by surviving and breaking free of slavery. This is a much better improvement rather than where should could

have been, to put in another way, as Dr. Flint's slave and wife. Although Jacobs hadn't yet reached her dream of having her home when she wrote this book, but she has made a big name for herself and for all African American slave women by writing this autobiography and as well as breaking the silent power of the master narrative. Basically, the master narrative is most effective when invisible and by shifting it into the public eye with Jacob's autobiography we see that Jacobs has made it visible. And because of that visibility, the master narrative has been deteriorated. Jacobs also refers to the characteristics of a novel gatherings in which she has used to shape her autobiography. Additionally, Incidents resembles much from dramatic novels and the sentimental fiction that features alluring maidens attempting to maintain their virtue, indecent villains, in despair mothers, and hardworking young men. Although Jacobs tells a true story, she uses familiar writing style that is popular to help the readers understand and accept her story. But despite that, Incident in the life of a Slave Girl furthermore leaves from that sentimental fiction in so many important ways that the reference recalls for us. As you can see the heroine, Linda, does not preserve her virtue. She has no male savior, and the villain dies quietly at home rather than receiving his deserved punishment. Jacob's vision of the story does not end with a wedding. Because not only is Jacobs not married, but she still doesn't have a home of her own which she points out after her speech. Therefore, although her writing captured the interest of the audience it is still challenging to convey at that time. As well as to identify with her story and recognize the potential of her autobiography. Jacobs's connection about the narratives that makes a point that slaves cannot be judged on the word to the laws and morals of the free world. Correspondingly, she hints here, the "life of a slave girl" cannot be written as stated in to the everyday story line patterns.

Overall, Jacob's autobiography shows the concerns of slavery and race. As well from childhood to adulthood and the journey from escaping slavery. Jacobs created Linda as her other persona to tell her story and to get a point of view from an African American woman. At that time there wasn't a lot of female slave writers or female writers in general and to be able to explore the life of young black slave woman who suffered a lot and has overcome it. Additionally, to let the general public know that her words were true and that it wasn't exaggerated but to get the message across. Although some parts were a bit more personal she went into detail about sexual harassment, violence, deaths, slavery, race etc. throughout the novel.

Works Cited

1. Jacobs, Harriet. Incidents in The Life of a Slave Girl. A Norton Critical Edition. W.W. Norton & Company. New York. London. 2001