

## DISCRIMINATION AS REFLECTED IN H.B. STOWE'S UNCLE TOM'S CABIN

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### ABSTRACT

This scientific writing analyzed discrimination as depicted in a novel “ Uncle’s Tom’s Cabin” written in 1852 by Harriet Beecher Stowe, an American novelist who fought against slavery in South America. By means of the scope the study, the writer consciously intended to analyze discrimination toward slavery as the black and also disclosed the life of the south American during the era of this novel written. The objective of the study was to trace and prove the elements of discrimination and disclosed the social, political and economical condition. In this scientific research, the researcher applied library research by collecting some related books on discrimination. the main data in analyzing this scientific writing is the novel itself. After all data were collected. They were scrutinized and matched in such way in order to get the best way in dealing with all matters. After having analyzed this scientific writing, it is concluded that slavery was a societal institution based on ownership, dominance, and explanation of the human being by another. The owner might exact work or other service without pay and virtually without restriction and could deny the slave freedom of activity and mobility. Generally the owner was responsible only for providing minimal food, shelter, and clothing. The dream of a slave was to get freedom in life and equal right.

**Keyword:** *Discrimination, Slavery, Equal Right*

### INTRODUCTION

Trough literature work, readers sometimes could understand the situation that they could not otherwise understand in real life. It has a very close relationship with the real – life that the writer experienced. It reflected on actual experience such as social, philosophy, and moral concerns, which are possible to be inescapable. The primary aim of literature is to give pleasure to entertain those who voluntarily attend to it. These are, of course, many different ways of giving pleasure or entertainment, ranging from the most trivial and sensational to the most philosophical and profound, but reader will soon discover. However, the literature that entertains best does not keep people for long in other worlds of fantasy or unreality. By reading a literary work, one can get the intention of the writers such as one will find knowledge of human affairs broadened and deepened, whether in individual, the social, racial or the international sphere; one will understand the ways on words which are open to him/ her, and one will perhaps be able to make right rather than wrong choice.

In a literary work, the author can directly comment on the action, which were being done by the characters of furthermore. The author could convey his ideas about whatever he liked concerning a particular social life. Harriet Beecher Stow

was an American novelist in 1850s. She mostly wrote novels on ante – bellum South America. Her works were very popular for the timeless of the themes and the anti – slavery actions. One of her popular novels was *Uncle's Tom's Cabin*. It was published in 1852. The animus of the novel was the result of a system of human endeavor oriented toward material ends rather than toward salvation. The novel was an exposure of discrimination of South America and The American Negro distracted only from the analytical depth and not from its emotive power or moral rightness.

Among moralistic fiction, The Novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, was unique in its general compassion and lack of personal hatred. The novel talked about an effort of a slave in searching his freedom. Furthermore the author occupied a position of marginal to the world who had politics and vested interests. This novel was written to criticize slavery in South America which was considered as a national sin. It was written in order to help bring slavery to an peaceful end. However, the novel increased the hostility of manu Northerners toward the South. Southerners considered Harriet Bacher Stowes' description of slavery and discrimination to be inaccurate. They called the novel was an insult and an injustice. Therefore, the writer was interested to analyze the discrimination as depicted in the novel. The writer wanted to disclose the discrimination and the life of American in the era of this novel published and compared to the history.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the readers the study of literature by applying some approaches. One of them is mimetic approach. According to this approach, there are four elements considered as basic to the whole make up of literary worked. Such as literary work, the author, the nature, and the reader. Since the study attempts to realte with literary works as an immitation of natural aspect. Another approach that applied is extrinsic approach. Rene Welleck and Austin Warren said in their book, *Theory of Literature* as follows:

*The extrinsic study may attempt to intrepret literature in the light of social context and its antecedents, in most case it became a casual explanation (1977;73).*

Casual explanation is the discussion of the aspect concerning sociology, history, politic, biography etc. as the examples of extrinsic approach are sociological approach, historical approach, psychological approach and political approach, economical approach and etc. In this scientific writing, the writer intentionally focused the analysis based on the mimetic and extrinsic approach that consist of economic, politic, social, and history.

## Biographical Sketches of the Author

Harriet Elizabeth Beecher was born on June 14, 1811, in Litchfield, Connecticut. She was one of 13 children born to religious leader Lyman Beecher and his wife, Roxanna Foote Beecher, who died when Harriet was a child. Harriet's seven brothers grew up to be ministers, including the famous leader Henry Ward Beecher. Her sister Catharine Beecher was an author and a teacher who helped to shape Harriet's social views. Another sister, Isabella, became a leader of the cause of women's rights.

Harriet enrolled in a school run by Catharine, following the traditional course of classical learning usually reserved for young men. At the age of 21, she moved to Cincinnati, Ohio, where her father had become the head of the Lane Theological Seminary.

Lyman Beecher took a strong abolitionist stance following the pro-slavery Cincinnati Riots of 1836. His attitude reinforced the abolitionist beliefs of his children, including Stowe. Stowe found like-minded friends in a local literary association called the Semi-Colon Club. Here, she formed a friendship with fellow member and seminary teacher Calvin Ellis Stowe. They were married on January 6, 1836, and eventually moved to a cottage near in Brunswick, Maine, close to Bowdoin College.

Along with their interest in literature, Harriet and Calvin Stowe shared a strong belief in abolition. In 1850, Congress passed the Fugitive Slave Law, prompting distress and distress in abolitionist and free black communities of the North. Stowe decided to express her feelings through a literary representation of slavery, basing her work on the life of Josiah Henson and on her own observations. In 1851, the first installment of Stowe's novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, appeared in the *National Era*. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was published as a book the following year and quickly became a best seller.

Stowe's emotional portrayal of the impact of slavery, particularly on families and children, captured the nation's attention. Embraced in the North, the book and its author aroused hostility in the South. Enthusiasts staged theatrical performances based on the story, with the characters of Tom, Eva and Topsy achieving iconic status.

After the Civil War began, Stowe traveled to Washington, D.C., where she met with Abraham Lincoln. A possibly apocryphal but popular story credits Lincoln with the greeting, "So you are the little woman who wrote the book that started this great war." While little is known about the meeting, the persistence of this story captures the perceived significance of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in the split between North and South.

Stowe continued to write and to champion social and political causes for the rest of her life. She published stories, essays, textbooks and a long list of novels, including *Oldtown Folks* and *Dred*. While none of these matched *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in terms of popularity, Stowe remained well known and respected in the North, particularly in reform-minded communities. She was often asked to weigh in on political issues of the day, such as Mormon polygamy.

Despite the moral rectitude of the Beechers, the family was not immune to scandal. In 1872, charges of an adulterous affair between Henry Ward Beecher and a female parishioner brought national scandal. Stowe maintained that her brother was innocent throughout the subsequent trial.

While Stowe is closely associated with New England, she spent a considerable amount of time near Jacksonville, Florida. Among Stowe's many causes was the promotion of Florida as a vacation destination and a place for social and economic investment. The Stowe family spent winters in Mandarin, Florida. One of Stowe's books, *Palmetto Leaves*, takes place in northern Florida, describing both the land and the people of that region.

Stowe died on July 1, 1896, in Hartford, Connecticut. She was 85. Her body is buried at Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts, under the epitaph "Her Children Rise up and Call Her Blessed."

### **Summary of the Novel**

Having run up large debts, a Kentucky farmer named Arthur Shelby faces the prospect of losing everything he owns. Though he and his wife, Emily Shelby, have a kindhearted and affectionate relationship with their slaves, Shelby decides to raise money by selling two of his slaves to Mr. Haley, a coarse slave trader. The slaves in question are Uncle Tom, a middle-aged man with a wife and children on the farm, and Harry, the young son of Mrs. Shelby's maid Eliza. When Shelby tells his wife about his agreement with Haley, she is appalled because she has promised Eliza that Shelby would not sell her son.

However, Eliza overhears the conversation between Shelby and his wife and, after warning Uncle Tom and his wife, Aunt Chloe, she takes Harry and flees to the North, hoping to find freedom with her husband George in Canada. Haley pursues her, but two other Shelby slaves alert Eliza to the danger. She miraculously evades capture by crossing the half-frozen Ohio River, the boundary separating Kentucky from the North. Haley hires a slave hunter named Loker and his gang to bring Eliza and Harry back to Kentucky. Eliza and Harry make their way to a Quaker settlement, where the Quakers agree to help transport them to safety. They are joined at the settlement by George, who reunites joyously with his family for the trip to Canada.

Meanwhile, Uncle Tom sadly leaves his family and Mas'r George, Shelby's young son and Tom's friend, as Haley takes him to a boat on the Mississippi to be transported to a slave market. On the boat, Tom meets an angelic little white girl named Eva, who quickly befriends him. When Eva falls into the river, Tom dives in to save her, and her father, Augustine St. Clare, gratefully agrees to buy Tom from Haley. Tom travels with the St. Clares to their home in New Orleans, where he grows increasingly invaluable to the St. Clare household and increasingly close to Eva, with whom he shares a devout Christianity.

Up North, George and Eliza remain in flight from Loker and his men. When Loker attempts to capture them, George shoots him in the side, and the other slave hunters retreat. Eliza convinces George and the Quakers to bring Loker to the next settlement, where he can be healed. Meanwhile, in New Orleans, St. Clare discusses slavery with his cousin Ophelia, who opposes slavery as an institution but harbors deep prejudices against blacks. St. Clare, by contrast, feels no hostility against blacks but tolerates slavery because he feels powerless to change it. To help Ophelia overcome her bigotry, he buys Topsy, a young black girl who was abused by her past master and arranges for Ophelia to begin educating her.

After Tom has lived with the St. Clares for two years, Eva grows very ill. She slowly weakens, then dies, with a vision of heaven before her. Her death has a profound effect on everyone who knew her: Ophelia resolves to love the slaves, Topsy learns to trust and feel attached to others, and St. Clare decides to set Tom free. However, before he can act on his decision, St. Clare is stabbed to death while trying to settle a brawl. As he dies, he at last finds God and goes to be reunited with his mother in heaven.

St. Clare's cruel wife, Marie, sells Tom to a vicious plantation owner named Simon Legree. Tom is taken to rural Louisiana with a group of new slaves, including Emmeline, whom the demonic Legree has purchased to use as a sex slave, replacing his previous sex slave Cassy. Legree takes a strong dislike to Tom when Tom refuses to whip a fellow slave as ordered. Tom receives a severe beating, and Legree resolves to crush his faith in God. Tom meets Cassy, and hears her story. Separated from her daughter by slavery, she became pregnant again but killed the child because she could not stand to have another child taken from her.

Around this time, with the help of Tom Loker—now a changed man after being healed by the Quakers—George, Eliza, and Harry at last cross over into Canada from Lake Erie and obtain their freedom. In Louisiana, Tom's faith is sorely tested by his hardships, and he nearly ceases to believe. He has two visions, however—one of Christ and one of Eva—which renew his spiritual strength and give him the courage to withstand Legree's torments. He encourages Cassy to escape. She does so, taking Emmeline with her, after she devises a ruse in which she and Emmeline pretend to be ghosts. When Tom refuses to tell Legree where Cassy and Emmeline have gone, Legree orders his overseers to beat him. When Tom is near death, he forgives Legree and the overseers. George Shelby arrives with money in hand to buy Tom's freedom, but he is too late. He can only watch as Tom dies a martyr's death.

Taking a boat toward freedom, Cassy and Emmeline meet George Harris's sister and travel with her to Canada, where Cassy realizes that Eliza is her long-lost daughter. The newly reunited family travels to France and decides to move to Liberia, the African nation created for former American slaves. George Shelby returns to the Kentucky farm, where, after his father's death, he sets all the slaves free in honor of Tom's memory. He urges them to think on Tom's sacrifice every time they look at his cabin and to lead a pious Christian life, just as Tom did.

### **Theme of the Novel**

In her work "*Uncle Tom's Cabin*": *Evil, Affliction and Redemptive Love*, critic Josephine Donovan says that the main theme of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is "the problem of evil [shown on] several levels: theological, moral, economic, political, and practical." Almost certainly, Harriet Beecher Stowe, in writing the novel, set out to show not "the problem of evil" but the problem of a *specific* evil: the enslavement and use of human beings as the property of other human beings. In order to accomplish this goal in an effectively dramatic fashion, she could not merely present slavery as a monstrous wrong, chewing people up and spitting out what remained of them, physically and spiritually; she had to show it *in conflict with* a force that she knew to be more than equally powerful: the love of Christ. The theme of the novel then (not a simple theme, either, because of the levels Donovan enumerates) is this conflict.

Slavery is a powerful wrong. It is *said* to be wrong — in all cases, notwithstanding fair individual treatment of slaves — throughout the novel, first by George Harris, later and at length by Augustine St. Clare, and always by the narrator, directly as well as indirectly through the use of irony. It is *shown* to be wrong from the beginning of the book, despite the relatively benign setting of

Shelby's Kentucky farm; again, individual slaves in individual cases may be well treated and even happy in their situations (as Eliza apparently has been), but the institution not only allows but is entirely based on the objectification of *all* slaves as commodities. Such objectification is evil, in the kind of actions it permits and supports and in the spiritual damage it does to individuals.

The theme of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, then, is the conflict between the evil of slavery and the *good* of Christian love. Eva, symbolic of this sort of love, is killed (mythically) by slavery, but like Tom, she triumphs over death and thus over evil. If Tom were willing to hate Legree, to deny him Christian love, still he would not necessarily be willing to kill the man, as Cassy asks, or to allow Cassy to kill him, or to run away along with Cassy and Emmeline and leave Legree's other slaves to face the consequences — nor, of course, would he necessarily be willing to give up Cassy and Emmeline's hiding place to Legree; the difference, however, would be one of degree, not of kind. Tom too, then, dies but triumphs over death — as, we are meant to understand, do the two men who have carried out Legree's orders to kill him, saved from evil by Tom's dying love and forgiveness. Legree does not so triumph; in spite of Tom's prayers, we are told that he continues to choose evil and at last dies in it, physically as he has spiritually — and no doubt luckily for the popularity of the novel, whose readers might have protested had the villain been allowed to escape his just punishment in the afterlife.

## RESEARCH METHOD

In this scientific writing, the writer used library research by collecting some related books in collecting data to support the writing of the research. The main source of the analysis was Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel entitled *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Next, the writer applied mimetic and extrinsic approaches to support this analysis through related reference such as history, social condition and economic and politic condition. At last, after all the data had been collected, they were scrutinized and matched in such a way, in order to get the best way in dealing with all matters analyzed.

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

### The Potrait of South America in 1850s

During the early 1850s, Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Stowe became an abolitionist during the 1830s when she lived in Cincinnati, Ohio. Cincinnati is located on the Ohio River, just north of Kentucky, a slave state. Thousands of freedom seekers passed through Cincinnati as they traveled to freedom along the Underground Railroad. She also became friends with several Ohio abolitionists, including John Rankin, whose home in Ripley, Ohio, served as a stop on the Underground Railroad. The stories that she heard from freedom seekers and Underground Railroad conductors while she lived in Cincinnati served as the basis for her book, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

In 1850, Stowe and her husband, Calvin, moved to Brunswick, Maine. While living in Maine, she wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. The Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 inspired her to write the novel. She objected to the federal government actively assisting slave holders in reclaiming freedom seekers in the North. William Lloyd Garrison, an abolitionist editor, published a newspaper called *The Liberator*. Like

Garrison, Stowe realized that most Northerners had never witnessed slavery firsthand. Most Northern whites had no idea of how brutal slavery could be. Through *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Stowe sought to personalize slavery for her readers. She wanted to educate them about the brutalities of the institution. She hoped that her readers would rise up against slavery if they understood the beatings, the rapes, and the division of families that often occurred.

Because *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was a work of fiction, Stowe was criticized for her allegedly inaccurate portrayal of slavery. Stowe's novel was based on extensive research with former slaves and with active participants, white and African American, in the Underground Railroad. Despite the criticism, the book became a bestseller. An abolitionist newspaper, *The National Era*, originally published the book as a serial in 1851 and 1852. In 1852, the story was published in book form and sold more than 500,000 copies in its first five years in print. It brought slavery to life for many Northerners. It did not necessarily make these people devoted abolitionists, but the book began to move more and more Northerners to consider ending the institution of slavery. In 1862, Stowe met President Abraham Lincoln while she was visiting Washington, DC. Lincoln purportedly stated, "So you're the little woman who wrote the book that started this Great War!" While Stowe did not start the war, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* did emphasize the differences between the North and the South. Many Northerners realized how unjust slavery was for the first time. With increasing opposition to slavery, southern slave holders worked even harder to defend the institution. The stage was set for the American Civil War.

### **The Existence of Slavery**

The word slavery is derived from the word "slave". It is the proverty of his or her owner. Fithzer (1988: 502) stated that slavery is a practice in which people owned other people. A slave is the property of his or her owner and works without pay. The owner, who is called a master or mistress, provides the slaves with food, sheter, and clothing. Meanwhile Morehead (1958: 304) stated that slavery is a social condition where a human being treated as personal property that can be bought or sold. An owner can treat him as he would; a machine or a horse, using him as long as he is useful and then killing him or letting him dies.

Slavery in America started in 1619, when the privateer The White Lion brought 20 African slaves ashore in the British colony of Jamestown, Virginia. The crew had seized the Africans from the Portugese slave ship Sao Jao Bautista.

Throughout the 17th century, European settlers in North America turned to African slaves as a cheaper, more plentiful labor source than indentured servants, who were mostly poor Europeans.

Though it is impossible to give accurate figures, some historians have estimated that 6 to 7 million black slaves were imported to the New World during the 18th century alone, depriving the African continent of some of its healthiest and ablest men and women.

In the 17th and 18th centuries, black slaves worked mainly on the tobacco, rice and indigo plantations of the southern coast, from the Chesapeake Bay colonies of Maryland and Virginia south to Georgia.

After the American Revolution, many colonists—particularly in the North, where slavery was relatively unimportant to the agricultural economy—began to

link the oppression of black slaves to their own oppression by the British, and to call for slavery's abolition.

But after the Revolutionary War, the new U.S. Constitution tacitly acknowledged the institution of slavery, counting each slave as three-fifths of a person for the purposes of taxation and representation in Congress and guaranteeing the right to repossess any "person held to service or labor" (an obvious euphemism for slavery).

In the late 18th century, with the land used to grow tobacco nearly exhausted, the South faced an economic crisis, and the continued growth of slavery in America seemed in doubt.

Around the same time, the mechanization of the textile industry in England led to a huge demand for American cotton, a southern crop whose production was unfortunately limited by the difficulty of removing the seeds from raw cotton fibers by hand.

But in 1793, a young Yankee schoolteacher named Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin, a simple mechanized device that efficiently removed the seeds. His device was widely copied, and within a few years the South would transition from the large-scale production of tobacco to that of cotton, a switch that reinforced the region's dependence on slave labor.

### **Politic & Economic Condition**

Slavery became a major issue in the United States [residential election in 1850. Many democrats in the South favored it. Each group nominated its own candidate for president, thereby splitting their party. Most Republicans opposed the expansion of slavery. They chose Abraham Lincoln of Illinois as their presidential candidate. In November 1860, he was elected president (Grolier: 361).

By the time of Lincoln's inauguration in March 1861, seven states had seceded from the Union. L to Fort Saunter in Charleston harbor. The fort was a symbol of federal authority—conspicuous in the state that had seceded, and it would soon have had to be evacuated for lack of supplies. On April 12, 1861 the South fired on the fort, and the civil war began (Fitzher: 349).

Politics viewed with was as Lincoln's major preoccupation in the presidency. The war required the development of huge quantities of material, for administrative, therefore, Lincoln turned to the large organization available for his use, the Republican Party, with some rare but important exceptions. Lincoln tried throughout the war to keep the Republican Party, together and never consistently favored one faction in the party over another. Military appointments were divided between Republicans and Democrats (Fitzher: 350).

In the 1850s were years of prosperity, with remarkable achievement in the agriculture. Commercial agriculture by a booming manufacturing sector in the North. The outstanding symbol of the agriculture was the plantation (Lee: 52)

By the turn of the century, however, the economic return for the use of black slaves had increased. In part of this may have been related to greater competition and the growth of slavery many also reflected the increasing cost of obtaining white contract labor, because wages in the North were probably rising as a result of industrialization (Lee: 24). Some of these descriptions can be seen in the following quotation:



*“No; I mean, really, Tom is a good, steady, sensible, pious fellow. He got religion at a camp meeting, four years ago; and I believe he really did get it. I’ve trusted him, since then, with everything I have, ... money, house, horses, ... and let him come and go round the country; and I always found him true and square in everthing (Stowe: 4)*

The quotation above proves that the slave is a condiditon a human being treated as a perosnal property that can be bought and sold anytime the master wants it. And also it shows uas that there is a gap between the Landlord and their slaves.

In fact, in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, cotton could be considered as a serious competition for lanlords or labors in the South a variety of cotton was grown along the Southern. The culvitation of cotton, or most of the any other crops, however, made the sol vulnerable to wind and water erasing by the natural vegetation cover (Grolier: 156)

With or without slaves, economics and botany determined the rhythm of work life on cotton farms. As might be expected, plantations devoted a higher percentage of available land an labor to the production og the market—cotton (Grilier: 160)

The invention of the spinning machine by Whitney supported the growth of economic condiditon in the South America, expecially to supply the demand for cotton (Beard: 2).

The situation above can be seen on the following quotation:

*This young man had been hired out by his master to work in a bagging factory, where his adroitness and ingenuity cuased him to be considered the first hand in the hemp, which, considenting the education and circustances of the inventor, displayed quite as mcuh mechanical genius as Whitney’s cotton-gin (Stowe: 13).*

The quotation above proves that there had progressed in prpducing goods by using machinery. Ofcourse it influenced the growth of economic in the South America.

## CONCLUSION & SUGGESTION

### Conclusion

After having analyzed discrimination as depicted in Harriet Beecher Stowe’s novel entitled *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, especially on slavery and also the condition of South America at the era of the novel published through extrinsic and mimetic approaches, it could be concluded that:

1. Slavery in the novel was potrayed as a social institution based on ownership, dominance, and explanation of one human being by another. the owner may exact work or other service without pay and virtually without restriction and can deny the slave freedom of activity and mobility generally the owner is responsible only for providing minimal food, shelter, and clothing. The dream for a slave it to get a freedom in life and equal right together another people in this term, the White who had discriminated the Black.
2. The description in the novel showed some of descrimination values to Blacks in South America around 1850s. the novel potrayed the slavery as a form discrimination to the Blacks. In the late of 18<sup>th</sup> century, group of

abolition acted vigorously and effectively, protesting slavery and exposed the horror of the African slave trade. Meanwhile around 1850 – 1860, America was in the great booming of prosperity.

### SUGGESTION

It is note worthy for the readers reading the novel “Uncle Tom’s Cabin”. It provides richly moral lesson to be absorbed such as discrimination that lies in this story especially discrimination Black to White skin. It is not human if the readers want to understand this moral lesson, the writer absolutely sure that our country will be in peace.

In the frame of mastering English, reading novel is one way of enriching vocabulary, more familiar with English expression and adding enlarging knowledge in literature.

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