

Biography of shirley jackson essay sample

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Shirley Hardie Jackson is a prolific author, well known for her short stories and novels. During her time, she has written many award winning novels such as “ Louisa, Please Come Home” and “ The Possibility of Evil”. Provided that, she has establish herself as a significant figure in American literature. Although Shirley Jackson has suffered many psychological problems and has gone through many life changing experiences, her passion for writing continues to be her therapy, despite her negative criticism. In order to support this thesis, there are four main articles that can provide evidence. To begin with, “ Jackson, Shirley 1919-1965” contains various biographical facts on her life, written by Carolyn Alessio. More importantly, it discusses her experiences and struggles with psychological issues in relation with her writing. The article addresses the relationships with her parents, friends, and husband. Furthermore, it describes the emotional stages she went through during high school, college, and marriage life.

Secondly, “ Shirley Jackson American Short-Story Writers Since World War II” written by Dale Hrebik addresses critical information about Shirley Jackson’s themes, characters, and literary work. In addition, it give accurate details about her educational background, family life, and important events. Also, it gives reliable facts on the connections between her work and her life. In addition, according to the document “ Talk with Miss Jackson”, Joan Wylie Hall writes about Harvey Breit’s live interview with the controversial author, Shirley Jackson. During the interview, Jackson give her opinion on literature today comparing it to the past. Also, she credits her favorite authors. This essay emphasizes the passion Shirley Jackson has for writing. Finally, according to the article, Shirley Jackson from the Contemporary Literary

Criticism, Shirley Jackson had a rough childhood. From an early age, she was felt socially unaccepted by her parents and community. Moreover, the article gives a brief insight of her educational background. More importantly, it focuses on her awards and achievements. Despite her accomplishments, she received little recognition. Although Shirley Jackson has suffered through many mental issues in her life, however, writing continues to be an outlet for her. Jackson was born to an upper-class family in San Francisco, California.

As a child, Jackson was a rebellious child because she disagrees with her parents' social standards and expectations of her. She also did not feel comfortable in her contemptuous surroundings. Therefore, she spend a majority of time writing in her journal in complete isolation. Jackson felt alienated and socially outcasted by her family and community. Growing up, Jackson did not have a bonding relationship with her parents. However, her grandmother would often read her Edgar Allan Poe's stories and she became interested in literature. While attending Brighton High School in Rochester, Jackson tried to find her identity and wanted to fit in socially. Instead, she had gotten rejected from sororities but became acquainted with those who are peculiar like her. In addition, she attended the University of Rochester where she was introduced to a Russian pianist, by a mutual friend, whom she had developed deep feelings for.

Shortly after being brokenhearted, Jackson became delusional. In 1936, she withdrew from the University of Rochester without a degree because she was unable to keep up with her academic standards. Later, she suffered a mental breakdown and seek psychiatric help. However, her only therapy was

through writing. Due to Jackson versatility, she was not recognize enough as a great writer. Jackson's work do not fit easily in a single category. On one hand, she writes about gothic horror and the supernatural world. On the other, she writes about domestic family life and humorous stories. Shirley Jackson has various styles of writing, as her husband would explain, " she is a complex human being, confronting the world in different roles and moods, and expressing it in our work". In other words, as human beings we all go through many emotional conflicts and experiences, Jackson is no different and she expresses it through her writing. For example, " Life Among the Savages" and " Rising Demons" are some of the tittles based on her personal life experiences.

During the 1950, she became popular for writing about domestic family life. However, she is famous for her classic horror fiction " The Lottery". Although, " The Lottery" was her masterpiece, she also wrote " Louisa", " Please Come Home" (1961) and " The Possibility of Evil" (1965) in which she won the Edgar Allan Poe Award for each. Jackson continues to publish prolific amounts of stories including " We Have Always Lived in Castles" which was nominated for the National Book Award. Although, Jackson had a prolific career with many achievements, critics fail to overlook her versatility and give her the recognition she deserves. Shirley Jackson was often criticized for her creativity. For instance, she was criticized for using the same character, James Harris, who often plays the role of a sinister manipulator in " The Demon Lover" and " The Intoxicated". Some critics like Donald Barr of the New York Times would argue that Jackson's method fails in the attempt to connect the stories. Thus, making it difficult for readers to separate each

story. While other critics, such as Joan Wylie Hall, would agree that unifies it. However, Jackson's intention was to portray Harris as an evil conscience that people have no control over.

Jackson has been compared to Nathaniel Hawthorne for her ability to cover up plots and leave minor clues to reveal its true motive, which we witness in "The Lottery". Consequently, she has been labeled insensitive to write such horrible stories in the time of World War II. Nevertheless, Jackson continues to focus on the evil exposed in those who seems innocent. For example, she uses the sweet innocence of children in stories such as "The Witch", "The Renegade", and "The Lottery" to deceive readers. Jackson believes that there's evil within all of us which we tend to inflict it to those who seems weaker to us like children, animals, or minority (Hrebrik 5). Though, Jackson is generally criticized for her creativity, many would agree that characters, theme, and meaning behind each story make it enjoyably readable. In conclusion, many of Jackson's work transforms from her experiences into fiction. Furthermore, Jackson's devotion and passion for writing continues to be an inspiration to all writers today. Although she is not recognized and credited enough, she is one of the brilliant writers in the history of short stories.

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