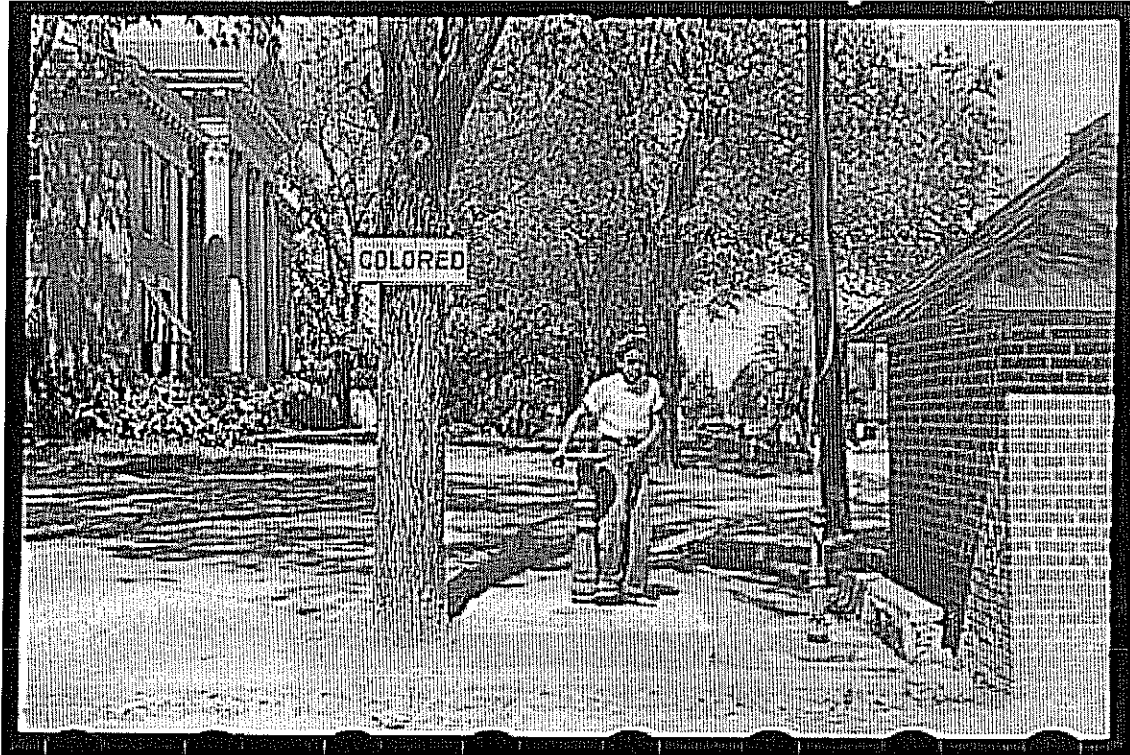


To Kill a Mockingbird



by

Harper Lee

"Sometimes there's a wind in the Georgia dusk
That cries and cries and cries
In lonely pity through the Georgia dusk
Veiling what the darkness hides."

- Langston Hughes

Alabama Releases Man Held On Death Row for Six Years

By PETER APPLEBOME

Special to The New York Times

BAY MINETTE, Ala., March 2 — Walter McMillian walked out of a courtroom here today a free man after prosecutors conceded that he had spent six years on Alabama's Death Row because of perjured testimony and evidence withheld from his lawyers.

Whether he was also put there for being a black man who violated the racial and sexual taboos of the small-town South is only one of the issues swirling around a case that has evoked not only distinctly Southern but also far broader questions of race and justice.

Almost everything about Mr. McMillian's conviction in 1988 for the shooting death of an 18-year-old white female store clerk now seems extraordinary. From the start, the case was enveloped in a volatile mixture of race and sex stemming from Mr. McMillian's involvement with a white woman. Mr. McMillian, who is 46 years old, was locked up on Death Row even before he was tried. The state built a case on suspect testimony and withheld crucial evidence that called that testimony into question.

Lessons to Learn

In the end, it was a decision by the trial judge, Robert E. Lee Key Jr., to treat Mr. McMillian as harshly as possible, that allowed Mr. McMillian to win his freedom. If the jury's sentence of life in prison without parole had been left in place, Mr. McMillian might have been another forgotten black inmate in an Alabama prison. But Judge Key overruled the jury and condemned Mr. McMillian to die in the electric chair. Because of the death sentence, Mr. McMillian's case was vigorously ap-



Associated Press

Walter McMillian being hugged
after he was released from prison.

pealed, and the truth came to light.

"I think everybody needs to understand what happened because what happened today could happen tomorrow if we don't learn some lessons from this," said his lawyer, Bryan Stevenson. "It was too easy for one person to come into court and frame a man for a murder he didn't commit. It was too easy for the state to convict someone for that crime and then have him sen-

Continued on Page A8, Column 1



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After 6 Years on Death Row, Inmate Is Freed

Continued From Page A1

tenced to death. And it was too hard in light of the evidence of his innocence to show this court that he should never have been here in the first place."

Mr. McMillian's case, which was given national attention last fall on the CBS News program "60 Minutes," played out in Monroeville, Ala., best known as the home of the Harper Lee, whose "To Kill a Mockingbird," told a painful story of race and justice in the small-town Jim Crow South.

To many of his defenders, Mr. McMillian's conviction for the killing seemed like an updated version of the book, in which a black man was accused of raping a white woman.

There were no immediate suspects after Ronda Morrison was murdered on the morning of Nov. 1, 1986, in a dry cleaning store. Eight months later the police, arrested Ralph Myers, a 30-year-old with a long criminal record, in connection with another killing in nearby Escambia County. After a week of grilling by police, Mr. Myers accused Mr. McMillian, a pulpwood worker, as Ms. Morrison's killer.

Mr. McMillian was arrested, and in an extraordinary move, was immediately sent to Alabama's Death Row, in Holman State Prison, Atmore, which is usually reserved for convicted murderers awaiting execution.

Mr. McMillian was convicted after a one-and-a-half-day trial on the testimony of three witnesses.

Testimony at Trial

Mr. Myers testified that Mr. McMillian asked him for a ride to the cleaning store. There, Mr. Myers said, he witnessed the murder. Another criminal suspect testified that he saw Mr. McMillian's "low rider" truck near the cleaner's, and a third man implicated Mr. McMillian.

Mr. McMillian's lawyer called a dozen witnesses, who all testified he was at home the day of the murder taking part in a fish fry. But despite that testimony and the lack of physical evidence, he was found guilty.

Judge Key, citing the "vicious and brutal killing of a young lady in the first full flower of adulthood" changed the life sentence to death, as allowed under Alabama law.

Mr. McMillian, who had two jobs and no criminal record other than a misdemeanor charge stemming a barroom fight, did not have a history of violence, but he was well known in town. Mr. McMillian, who is married with three children from his current marriage and has nine children altogether, was dating a white woman named Karen Kelly. And one of his sons had married a white woman.

Roots of Suspicion

Both Mr. McMillian and his lawyer at the original trial, J. L. Chestnut, contended that Mr. McMillian's relationships along had made him a suspect.

"The only reason I'm here is because I had been messing around with a white lady and my son married a white



Alan S. Weiner for The New York Times

The current Monroe County District Attorney, Tommy Chapman, did not prosecute the original case, but he contended that there was no deliberate effort to frame Walter McMillian.

lady," he said last week in a prison interview.

Whatever the reason, inquiries by Mr. Stevenson and by Alabama Bureau of Investigation agents have since discredited every element of the prosecutions case. All three prosecution witnesses have recanted their testimony.

Mr. Myers has said that law officers prodded him into accusing Mr. McMillian. What's more, Mr. Stevenson's investigation turned up Mr. Myers's first response to police inquiries about Mr. McMillian, in which he said he had had no knowledge of Mr. McMillian's involvement in the crime. Mr. Stevenson also turned up statements from the time of the trial in which four doctors at a forensic hospital said Mr. Myers told them he was being pressured by law officers to lie about Mr. McMillian.

None of that material was turned over to the defense at the time, as required. Finally, the lawyer found that Mr. McMillian's truck was not turned into the low rider identified by his accusers until well after the murder.

After turning down four appeals, the Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals threw out Mr. McMillian's conviction last week 5 to 0, leading to today's hearing.

Prosecutor Joins Defense

The current Monroe County District Attorney, Tommy Chapman, who did not prosecute the original case, joined the defense in seeking to have the charges dismissed. But he contended there was no deliberate effort to frame Mr. McMillian.

"It just mushroomed into a horrible

Investigators overturn the prosecution's entire case.

mistake," he said in an interview last week. "I don't want to call it that. A horrible incident."

He contended that Mr. McMillian's release proved the the system worked. Neither he nor Circuit Court Judge Pamela W. Baschab offered any apology or comment on the case at the 10-minute hearing this morning.

But Mr. Stevenson said the case, coming at a time that the Supreme Court is increasingly cutting off avenues for Federal appeals, was a reminder how flawed the justice system could be. Since the case was resolved in the state courts, Mr. McMillian's case was not affected by recent decisions limiting appellants' access to the Federal courts.

Mr. Stevenson, who handles death row cases for the Alabama Capital Representation Resource Center in Montgomery, said only the death sentence allowed Mr. McMillian to receive adequate representation. And this case was unusual because the state's case proved not flimsy, but nonexistent, he said.

Innocence Is Clear

"The fortunate thing about Mr. McMillian's case is his innocence was demonstrable," he said. "It's clear he had nothing to do with this crime. There are other folks in prison who don't have the money or the resources or the good fortune to have folks come in and help them."

He said he would examine possible legal action on Mr. McMillian's behalf.

Mr. McMillian, who appeared in court this morning in a dark three-piece suit instead of the prison whites he has worn for six years, listened impassively as the charges were thrown out, then smiled and hugged his lawyers, Mr. Stevenson and Bernard Harcourt, before being greeted by throngs of family members and well wishers who overflowed the courtroom and waited in the halls. Outside they unfurled a makeshift banner, using his nickname, that read, "Welcome Home Johnnie D. God Never Fails."

Mr. McMillian said he had always expected this day to come, but when asked if the decision today restored his faith in the judicial system he said: "No. Not at all."

Mr. Stevenson added: "We told the court when we were here a year ago that truth crushed to earth shall rise again. It doesn't necessarily mean we believe in the judicial system."

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In Business Day

#11

Friday morning, February 3, 1984 - San Jose Mercury News

Judge sentences Klansman to death for killing black

MOBILE, Ala. (AP) — A circuit judge, breaking Alabama precedent, overruled his jury Thursday and sentenced a Ku Klux Klansman to death in the electric chair for killing a young black man and hanging the body from a camphor tree.

Judge Braxton Kittrell Jr. set an April 30 execution date for Henry Francis Hays, who, according to testimony, killed 19-year-old Michael Donald at random "to show Klan strength in Alabama." Hays repeatedly denied the killing. Appeal of a death sentence is automatic and execution dates are routinely set aside.

District Attorney Chris Galanos said "called the case a 'prime of racial hatred' and urged Kittrell to impose the death penalty despite conflicting Alabama case

A jury of 11 whites and one black convicted Hays of capital murder on Dec. 20 and recommended a sentence of life in prison without possibility of parole.

At the time of the killing, on March 21, 1981, the state death penalty law prohibited a judge from increasing a sentence to death if a jury recommended life.

The law was changed later in 1981. Ed Carnes, assistant Alabama attorney general, has said the earlier statute applied in the Hays case, but Kittrell said he thought the Legislature intended to allow "the court itself, and not the jury, to be the final sentencing authority."

Hays, 29, shook his head silently Thursday when asked whether he had any comment before sentencing.

#12

Whites accused of setting black man ablaze

The New York Times

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. — Nearly eight months after a black Brooklyn resident was doused with gasoline and set on fire while vacationing in Florida, two white drifters went on trial here Friday, charged with attempted murder, kidnapping and robbery in the racially motivated attack.

As the defendants, Mark Kohut and Charles Rourke, sat impassively, a prosecutor told a jury how Christopher Wilson, a 32-year-old clerk at a stockbrokerage, had been abducted at gunpoint early on New Year's Day after buying a newspaper at a shopping mall, beginning an "odyssey that led him to be turned into a human inferno" by what the prosecutor described as a pair of callous criminals.

"As he was exploding into fire, these two

'As he was exploding into fire, these two defendants were exploding into laughter.'

— *Harry Lee Coe III, prosecutor*

defendants were exploding into laughter," the Hillsborough County state attorney, Harry Lee Coe III, said in his opening statement. His voice rose in anger as he pointed to Kohut and Rourke. But, Coe vowed, "we will shortly see

who will have the last laugh."

Wilson, who lives in Flatbush, was visiting his girlfriend near Tampa, when, prosecutors say, three white men forced him to drive to a remote field in an area called Fort Lonesome, taunted him with racial slurs and set him ablaze. Before they left, they scrawled a brief, misspelled note: "One les nigger, more to go. KKK."

Wilson, is still recovering from burns over 40 percent of his body.

Largely avoiding any mention of racial aspects of the case in his opening remarks, Coe, a former judge who has not personally prosecuted a case in more than 20 years, said that Wilson would be called to the stand to recount the attack on him. "I want him to tell you who he can identify and who he cannot," he said.

#3

Nov 1 83

38 ★★★★★

Night of Racial Tension At a Philadelphia Home

Philadelphia

Hundreds of angry whites gathered outside the home of a racially mixed couple last night, chanting "Beat it! Beat it!" in the second straight night of protests against blacks living in their neighborhood.

"It's a shame this happened, but this is a white block and should stay white," said 73-year-old Florence Kaige, who has lived 43 years in the lower-middle-class neighborhood in southwest Philadelphia.

The family, Gerald and Carol Fox and their two children, stayed behind locked doors during the protest, and mounted police cordoned off 2½ blocks on either side of the house. Occasionally someone inside would peer through the curtains, prompting an outburst of jeers from the crowd of about 300 whites.

A young mother said, "I went to school with them (blacks) and I worked with them, but I don't want them to live on my street and I don't want my kids playing with them."

"If they don't like us, fine," said

Carol Fox, 30, who moved in Sunday. "We bought this house, so we're here to stay," said Mrs. Fox, who is white. Her husband is black.

The racial tension also had surfaced Wednesday night, when about 400 whites gathered at the home of a black couple, Charles Williams and his wife, and their 7-year-old daughter. "I didn't expect it to be anything like this," said Williams, who moved in October 30.

Both properties were sold by the Veterans Administration, which acquired them after previous owners defaulted on GI mortgages.

The neighbors charged that there was a deliberate effort to seek out blacks and that white bids had been rejected. VA loan officer Ron Veltman said race was not an issue and each home went to the highest bidder — one for \$21,000, the other for \$20,000.

W. Wilson Goode, the city's first black mayor, said he would use the "full authority of his office" to protect the residents from harm.

U.P. & A.P.

Swastikas, Klan Epithets Are Found in Concord

SWASTIKAS are being found painted on houses, so are Ku Klux Klan slogans. Police report that there have been more racial incidents in the first two months of 1986 than in previous years combined, and some community leaders believe there is a racist conspiracy against black and Hispanic residents.

The place is not the South, it's Concord, in the Bay Area, where "Express" producer Scott Pearson recently took his cameras to record a special edition, "A Climate of Fear," airing Wednesday at 8 p.m. on Channel 2.

Pearson talked to black and Hispanic community leaders, among them members of the Black Family Association and the Mexican American Political Association, which believe there may be an organized Klan or other white supremacist movement at work in Concord.

City Police Chief George Straka disagrees. "I have never felt people were afraid to talk to us. There's no evidence of Ku Klux Klan in the community, in the police force or anywhere else."

Among the incidents that have affected the community recently have been the hanging death of a black youth, Timothy Lee, in November of last year at the Concord BART station. While police have ruled his death a suicide, many feel his death was a racially motivated slaying. Another incident involved "white-sheeted figures" who stabbed two black youths to death.



KQED producer Scott Pearson tracked the Concord race story

#4

Feb 1986

Timeline

Year	Time of year	Chapter	What happens
Part 1			
1933	Early summer	1	Introduction. Arrival of Dill. Children try to get Boo to come out.
	September	2	Scout starts school: Miss Caroline Fisher. Description of Cunningham family.
	September	3	Burriss Ewell upsets Miss Caroline. Ewells described.
1934	Late spring/ early summer	4	Boo leaves gifts in tree. Dill comes back to Mayvcomb.
	Late spring/ early summer	5	Children attempt to send Boo a letter.
	Late summer	6	Children try to spy on Boo.
	October/November	7	Boo leaves more gifts. Hole is filled with cement. Tom arrested for alleged rape (November 21st).
	Winter	8	Cold winter. Snow in Maycomb. Miss Maudie's house burnt.
	Christmas	9	Atticus agrees to defend Tom Robinson. Scout fights Cousin Francis.
1935	February	10	Atticus shoots Tim Johnson (a rabid dog).
	Spring	11	Jem beheads Mrs. Dubose's camellias and has to read to her. She overcomes her morphine addiction and dies.
Part 2			
	Summer	12	Children go to First Purchase church with Calpurnia. Aunt Alexandra arrives.
	Summer	13	Aunt Alexandra entertains Maycomb's ladies.
	Summer	14	Dill returns to Maycomb.
	Summer	15	The Old Sarum mob tries to lynch Tom. Scout intervenes and unwittingly saves him.
	Summer	16	The trial begins. The children sit in the black people's balcony.
	Summer	17	Heck Tate (sheriff) testifies, followed by Bob Ewell.
	Summer	18	Mayella Ewell testifies.
	Summer	19	Tom Robinson testifies. Dill cries at the cross-examination of Tom.
	Summer	20	Scout and Dill meet Dolphus Raymond outside. Atticus sums up for the defence. The children are found to be in the court.
	Summer	21	The jury returns a verdict of guilty on Tom..
	Summer	22	Jem cries at the verdict. Atticus receives presents from black community. Bob Ewell spits at Atticus and vows revenge.

Summer	23	Atticus is not frightened by Bob's threat.	
August	24	The missionary circle meets for tea. News comes of Tom's death.	
September	25	School starts again. Miss Gates teaches about Hitler and the Jews.	
September	26	B.B. Underwood writes an editorial on Tom's death.	
October	27	Bob Ewell attempts revenge on Judge Taylor and Helen Robinson. Atticus is not worried. A pageant is planned.	
October	28	Jem and Scout go to the pageant. Bob attacks them, but they are rescued. Bob is found dead at the scene.	
October	29	Scout describes the attack - Boo is revealed as the children's saviour.	
October	30	Atticus thinks Jem has killed Bob Ewell. Heck Tate proves that it was Boo.	
October	31	Boo and Scout go to see Jem. Scout takes Boo home.	
Year	Time of year	Chapter	What happens



Classic Notes on Harper Lee

Nelle Harper Lee was born on April 28, 1926, to Amasa Coleman Lee and Frances Cunningham Finch Lee. Harper Lee grew up in the small southwestern Alabama town of Monroeville. Her father, a former newspaper editor and proprietor, was a lawyer who also served on the state legislature (1926-38). As a child, Lee was a tomboy and a precocious reader and enjoyed the friendship of her schoolmate and neighbor, the young Truman Capote, who provided the basis of the character of Dill in her novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

Lee was only five years old in when the first trials began in April 1931 in the small Alabama town of Scottsboro surrounding the purported rapes of two white women by nine young black men. The defendants, who were nearly lynched before being brought to court, were not provided with the services of a lawyer until the first day of trial. Despite medical testimony that the women had not been raped, the all-white jury found the men guilty of the crime and sentenced all but the youngest, a twelve-year-old, to death. Six years of subsequent trials saw most of these convictions repealed and all but one of the men freed or paroled. The Scottsboro case left a deep impression on the young Lee, who would use it later as the rough basis for the events in *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

Lee studied first at Huntingdon College in Montgomery, Alabama (1944-45), then pursued a law degree at the University of Alabama (1945-49), including one year abroad at Oxford University, England. She worked as a reservation clerk for Eastern Airlines in New York City until the late 50s, when she resolved to devote herself to writing. Lee lived a frugal lifestyle, traveling between her cold-water apartment in New York to her family home in Alabama to care for her ailing father. She worked in Holcombe, Kansas, as a research assistant for Truman Capote's novel *In Cold Blood* in 1959.

Lee published her first and only novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, in 1960, after a two-year period of revising and rewriting under the guidance of her editor, Tay Hohoff, of the J. B. Lippincott Company. *To Kill a Mockingbird* won the 1961 Pulitzer Prize, despite mixed critical reviews. The novel was highly popular, selling more than fifteen million copies. Though she delved into her own experiences as a child in Monroeville, Lee intended for the book to impart the sense of any small Deep South town and the universal characteristics of people everywhere. The book was made into a successful movie in 1962, starring Gregory Peck as Atticus.

Lee was named to the National Council of Arts in June of 1966 by President Johnson, and has received numerous honorary doctorates since then. She continues to live in New York and Monroeville but prefers to live a relatively private existence, granting few interviews or and giving few speeches. She has published only a few short essays since her publishing debut ("*Love--In Other Words*" in *Vogue*, 1961; "*Christmas to Me*" in *McCalls*, 1961; and "*When Children Discover America*" in *McCalls*, 1965).

Spark Notes Context

Nelle Harper Lee was born on April 28, 1926, in Monroeville, Alabama, a sleepy small town similar in many ways to Maycomb, the setting of *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Like Atticus Finch, the father of Scout, the narrator and protagonist of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Lee's father was a lawyer. Among Lee's childhood friends was the future novelist and essayist Truman Capote, from whom she drew inspiration for the character Dill. These personal details notwithstanding, Lee maintains that *To Kill a Mockingbird* was intended to portray not her own childhood home but rather a nonspecific Southern town. "People are people anywhere you put them," she declared in a 1961 interview.

Yet the book's setting and characters are not the only aspects of the story shaped by events that occurred during Lee's childhood. In 1931, when Lee was five, nine young black men were accused of raping two white women near Scottsboro, Alabama. After a series of lengthy, highly publicized, and often bitter trials, five of the nine men were sentenced to long prison terms. Many prominent lawyers and other American citizens saw the sentences as spurious and motivated only by racial prejudice. It was also suspected that the women who had accused the men were lying, and in appeal after appeal, their claims became more dubious. There can be little doubt that the Scottsboro Case, as the trials of the nine men came to be called, served as a seed for the trial that stands at the heart of Lee's novel.

Lee began *To Kill a Mockingbird* in the mid-1950s, after moving to New York to become a writer. She completed the novel in 1957 and published it, with revisions, in 1960, just before the peak of the American civil rights movement.

Critical response to *To Kill a Mockingbird* was mixed: a number of critics found the narrative voice of a nine-year-old girl unconvincing and called the novel overly moralistic. Nevertheless, in the racially charged atmosphere of the early 1960s, the book became an enormous popular success, winning the Pulitzer Prize in 1961 and selling over fifteen million copies. Two years after the book's publication, an Academy Award-winning film version of the novel, starring Gregory Peck as Atticus Finch, was produced. Meanwhile, the author herself had retreated from the public eye: she avoided interviews, declined to write the screenplay for the film version, and published only a few short pieces after 1961. *To Kill a Mockingbird* remains her sole published novel. Lee eventually returned to Monroeville and continues to live there.

In 1993, Lee penned a brief foreword to her book. In it she asks that future editions of *To Kill a Mockingbird* be spared critical introductions. "*Mockingbird*," she writes, "still says what it has to say; it has managed to survive the years without preamble." The book remains a staple of high school and college reading lists, beloved by millions of readers worldwide for its appealing depiction of childhood innocence, its scathing moral condemnation of racial prejudice, and its affirmation that human goodness can withstand the assault of evil.

Key Facts

Full Title

- *To Kill a Mockingbird*

Author

- Harper Lee

Type of Work

- Novel

Genre

- Coming-of-age story; social drama; courtroom drama; Southern drama

Language

- English

Time and Place Written

- Mid-1950s; New York City

Date of First Publication

- 1960

Publisher

- J. B. Lippincott

Narrator

- Scout narrates the story herself, looking back in retrospect an unspecified number of years after the events of the novel take place.

Point of View

- Scout narrates in the first person, telling what she saw and heard at the time and augmenting this narration with thoughts and assessments of her experiences in retrospect. Although she is by no means an omniscient narrator, she has matured considerably over the intervening years and often implicitly and humorously comments on the naïveté she displayed in her thoughts and actions as a young girl. Scout mostly tells of her own thoughts but also devotes considerable time to recounting and analyzing Jem's thoughts and actions.

Tone

- Childlike, humorous, nostalgic, innocent; as the novel progresses, increasingly dark, foreboding, and critical of society

Tense

- Past

Setting (Time)

- 1933–1935

Setting (Place)

- The fictional town of Maycomb, Alabama

Protagonist

- Scout Finch

Major Conflict

- The childhood innocence with which Scout and Jem begin the novel is threatened by numerous incidents that expose the evil side of human nature, most notably the guilty verdict in Tom Robinson's trial and the vengefulness of Bob Ewell. As the novel progresses, Scout and Jem struggle to maintain faith in the human capacity for good in light of these recurring instances of human evil.

Rising Action

- Scout, Jem, and Dill become fascinated with their mysterious neighbor Boo Radley and have an escalating series of encounters with him. Meanwhile, Atticus is assigned to defend a black man, Tom Robinson against the spurious rape charges Bob Ewell has brought against him. Watching the trial, Scout, and especially Jem, cannot understand how a jury could possibly convict Tom Robinson based on the Ewells' clearly fabricated story.

Climax

- Despite Atticus's capable and impassioned defense, the jury finds Tom Robinson guilty. The verdict forces Scout and Jem to confront the fact that the morals Atticus has taught them cannot always be reconciled with the reality of the world and the evils of human nature.

Falling Action

- When word spreads that Tom Robinson has been shot while trying to escape from prison, Jem struggles to come to terms with the injustice of the trial and of Tom Robinson's fate. After making a variety of threats against Atticus and others connected with the trial, Bob Ewell assaults Scout and Jem as they walk home one night, but Boo Radley saves the children and fatally stabs Ewell. The sheriff, knowing that Boo, like Tom Robinson, would be misunderstood and likely convicted in a trial, protects Boo by saying that Ewell tripped and fell on his own knife. After sitting and talking with Scout briefly, Boo retreats into his house, and Scout never sees him again.

Themes

- The coexistence of good and evil; the importance of moral education; social class

Motifs

- Gothic details; small-town life

Symbols

- Mockingbirds; Boo Radley

Foreshadowing

- The Gothic elements of the novel (the fire, the mad dog) build tension that subtly foreshadows Tom Robinson's trial and tragic death; Burris Ewell's appearance in school foreshadows the nastiness of Bob Ewell; the presents Jem and Scout find in the oak tree foreshadow the eventual discovery of Boo Radley's good-heartedness; Bob Ewell's threats and suspicious behavior after the trial foreshadow his attack on the children.

Book Rags Major Characters

Scout Finch: Originally named Jean Louise Finch, Scout is the narrator. In the story she is looking back as an adult to the two years of her life when she learned about courage and kindness and the importance of doing what is right. She learned from her father and her neighbors that doing what is right isn't always rewarded, but it's the right thing to do and that protecting innocence is a large part of that.

Jem Finch: Scout's older brother, Jem is Scout's primary source of knowledge, and he takes responsibility for her in most instances. As Jem grows older, he finds it difficult to deal with the hypocrisy and cruelty of people, but Atticus helps him work through some of that disappointment.

Atticus Finch: Scout and Jem's father, Atticus is a lawyer in Maycomb County. When he undertakes to defend Tom Robinson, accused of rape, he unknowingly puts his children in danger. Atticus is a God-like father who teaches his children to be respectful and honest. He is ethical and fair in his work and his home, and his children respect him very much. He teaches them about courage and kindness through his own example and he is a well-respected member of the Maycomb community.

Dill Harris: Charles Baker Harris (Dill) is the little boy who spends the summers with his aunt next door to the Finch family. Dill is Scout and Jem's dearest friend and they spend the summers playing and trying to find ways to make Boo Radley come out. Dill asked Scout to marry him during his second Maycomb summer, and he returns to endure with them the most difficult summer of their lives -- the summer Tom Robinson's case goes to court. While they watch the trial, Dill gets upset about the way the prosecuting attorney treats Tom while he's on the stand. Dill can't understand why anyone would want to be so cruel to another human being.

Calpurnia: The colored woman who cooks for the Finch family, Calpurnia is the surrogate mother in the family because Scout's mother died when Scout was only two. She and Scout have a love-hate relationship that eases when Scout finally starts school. Calpurnia is the source of many arguments between Atticus and his sister, Alexandra, because Alexandra wants Atticus to let Cal go, but Atticus insists that she is part of the family and so she remains.

Boo Radley: Boo Radley (Arthur) is the object of fascination for Jem, Scout, and Dill. He is a recluse who has remained in the house down the street from the Finch house for years. When he was younger he got into some trouble when he became involved with a group of rowdy kids from Old Sarum. One night they resisted arrest by Maycomb County's beadle and locked him in the courthouse outhouse. After that, Arthur's father, Mr. Radley, took him home and he wasn't seen again for fifteen years. But it was said

that one day Boo Radley stabbed his father in the leg with a pair of scissors while cutting newspaper clippings for his scrapbook. For this he was locked in the courthouse basement for many years before he came home again. From these stories learned from gossiping neighbors, Jem, Scout, and Dill made ghost stories of Boo Radley, and the other children in town were afraid of him as well. They said that he only came out at night to eat cats and squirrels, and he was the local spook. Boo, however, begins to win Scout and Jem over by leaving gifts for them in the knothole of an oak tree until his brother, Nathan, cements the knothole. Boo even covers Scout with a blanket on a cold night she and Jem spent in front of the Radley house while Miss Maudie's house burned down. Boo was so quiet that Scout never even realized he'd covered her shoulders with the blanket until after the fact. After all the children's attempts to drag Boo Radley from his house, he ends up saving them from Bob Ewell.

Bob Ewell: Father of the bunch of Ewells who only attend school on the first day so the truancy lady will leave them alone. He is an alcoholic who poaches game to feed his family because he spends whatever money they have on booze. He accuses Tom Robinson of raping his daughter and has him thrown in jail, and although the whole town knows the Ewells are not to be trusted, Tom Robinson is convicted because he's black.

Tom Robinson: Tom is a respectable, humble, kind Negro whom Atticus is defending against the charge that he raped Mayella Ewell, daughter of Bob Ewell. Atticus knows he will lose because Tom is black, but he also knows that Tom is innocent and that he must defend him. Tom was only trying to help Mayella because no one else would, but she made advances that he refused and her father saw them. She claimed that Tom raped her and beat her, but there was no way he could have done it. All of her bruises were on the right side of her face, but Tom's left hand was a withered and useless appendage he'd caught in a cotton gin as a child. Tom was sent to a work prison after his conviction and Atticus was expecting a new trial soon, but Tom was shot trying to escape the prison before Atticus could get him out of jail.

Minor Characters

Miss Caroline: Miss Caroline is Scout's young first-grade teacher who gets on Scout's bad side by telling her that she can't read with Atticus anymore because he doesn't know how to teach. She also whips Scout on the first day of school because she misunderstands when Scout tells her that Walter Cunningham is poor and that's why he doesn't have a lunch. Miss Caroline had a trying day that day because not only was Scout unintentionally causing her problems, but she also had a run-in with Burris Ewell who cursed her and made her cry before he left the school that afternoon.

Walter Cunningham: Walter is the son of a local farmer whom Atticus helped with a legal problem regarding his land. The Cunninghams are a poor family who pays their debts with the yield of their crops. Scout gets in trouble for explaining that Walter won't borrow any money for lunch from Miss Caroline because he can't pay her back. After Jem rescues Walter from Scout's abuse on the playground later that day, Walter goes home with them for lunch and gets Scout into trouble again because she questions him when he pours molasses all over his lunch.

Burris Ewell: Burris Ewell makes his appearance on Scout's first day of school. Miss Caroline notices a 'cootie' crawling in his hair, and when she sends the filthy child home to bathe and wash his hair, he curses her and tells her that he's done his time by coming to the first day of school. He has been to the first day of first grade for three years, and he never shows up again after that. All of the Ewell kids do this. He challenges Miss Caroline to make him stay and then reduces her to tears with all sorts of horrible insults when she sends him away. He comes from the wretched Ewell family of Maycomb County, which everyone leaves to their own filth and rancor.

Miss Stephanie Crawford: Miss Stephanie lives in the same neighborhood as the Finch family. She is a gossip and a busybody tattletale. Miss Stephanie is one of the main sources for stories about Boo Radley.

Miss Maudie Atkinson: Miss Maudie is a neighbor who allowed Jem and Scout free reign of her yard as long as they stayed out of the flowers she worked so hard to maintain. She was always out in her yard working during the daytime and looking like an elegant lady on her front porch in the evenings. She had grown up with Atticus and his brother, Jack, and she and Scout became close one summer when Jem and Dill often excluded Scout from their games. Miss Maudie's house burns down on the coldest night anyone can remember, and that's when Boo Radley sneaks up behind Scout and covers her with a blanket without her even knowing he is there.

Nathan Radley: Nathan Radley is Boo's older brother who moved back to Maycomb County from Pensacola when his father died.

Mr. Radley: Mr. Radley was Boo and Nathan's father, a very religious, strict man who walked to town and back home once a day and never spoke to anyone when they greeted him. He died when Jem and Scout were a few years younger, but Boo didn't even come out of the house then.

Mrs. Radley: Mrs. Radley is Boo and Nathan's mother, and her only visible function in the family is to come out onto the porch and sweep occasionally. Mrs. Radley dies just before the cold snap when Miss Maudie's house burns down.

Mr. Avery: Mr. Avery is a fat neighbor who tells Jem and Scout that the weather only changes because of bad children like them. So when it snows just a little, Jem (with Scout's help) constructs a snowman that looks just like Mr. Avery.

Aunt Alexandra: Alexandra is Atticus' sister who lives with her husband at Finch Landing, the old homestead. She is constantly nagging Atticus about how he raises Scout because she's a tomboy.

Uncle Jack: Jack is Atticus' younger brother who is a doctor in Boston. He comes to stay with Atticus, Jem, and Scout for a week every Christmas, and the kids love him. It is he who takes Scout aside when she's going through her cussing phase and convinces her to quit because he doesn't like to hear such words.

Miss Rachel: Miss Rachel lives next door to the Finch family, and her nephew, Dill, comes to stay with her every summer and becomes close friends with the Finch kids.

Simon Finch: Simon was the first Finch in the United States. He sailed across the Atlantic from his Cornwall home because of persecution against the Methodist church, and he ended up in Alabama making money as an apothecary. He built the family homestead known as Finch's Landing and began the Finch family line. He lived to an old age and died wealthy.

Francis Hancock: Francis is Scout and Jem's cousin. They see Francis at Christmas when they go visit their Aunt Alexandra at Finch's Landing, but they don't really like him very much. The Christmas after Atticus took on the Tom Robinson case, Scout beat Francis up for saying mean things about Atticus, and her Uncle Jack whipped her for it before he heard her side of things.

Mrs. Henry Lafayette Dubose: Mrs. Dubose is a sickly old neighbor two houses down from the Finches. She is a crotchety old woman who yells mean things at Scout and Jem about how they'll amount to nothing when they grow up. Jem takes her abuse until she says something mean about Atticus, and that finally gets to him. That afternoon on his way back from town Jem takes Scout's new baton and breaks off all the blossoms of Mrs. Dubose's camellia bush. Atticus sends him down to apologize to her and she insists that Jem read to her for two hours every afternoon for a month. He does it and hates every minute of it. Not long after his sentence ends, Mrs. Dubose dies and leaves Jem a perfect camellia blossom. Atticus explains that she was a morphine addict, and she died after freeing herself from her addiction. Atticus considers her one of the bravest people he knows and he wanted Jem to see that about her.

Mr. Link Deas: Mr. Link Deas owns the cotton fields that Tom Robinson worked in. He stood up in court after Atticus questioned Tom, and insisted that Tom was a good man who'd worked for him for eight years and never caused any trouble. His outburst,

although meant to help Tom, got Mr. Deas thrown out of the courtroom, and his words were stricken from the record.

Reverend Sykes: Reverend Sykes is the preacher at Calpurnia's church who goes out of his way to be kind to Scout and Jem. He makes them feel welcome when they accompany Cal to church. At the courthouse, he takes them up to the balcony where the colored people are sitting because all the seats on the first floor are taken.

Heck Tate: Heck is the Maycomb County sheriff who hands over his gun to Atticus when confronted with a rabid dog. He's also one of the men in the group who comes to talk to Atticus about the danger of having Tom Robinson locked up in the Maycomb County jail. He didn't want to be responsible if Tom got lynched.

Mr. Underwood: Mr. Underwood is the editor, writer, and printer for The Maycomb Tribune. Although he is a bigot, he hides in his office next to the jailhouse to protect Atticus and Tom Robinson from the Old Sarum mob that tries to take Tom from the jail to lynch him.

Mr. Cunningham: Mr. Cunningham was one of the men from Old Sarum who came to lynch Tom Robinson but was unsuccessful because of Scout, Jem, and Dill's interruption. He was also one of Atticus' clients when he needed legal help with a land problem. Scout and Jem had taken his son, Walter, home from school to have lunch with them on their first day of school. When Scout recognized him and began to talk to him on a personal level, he was convinced to lead the Old Sarum mob back home without hurting anyone.

Mayella Ewell: The girl Tom Robinson is accused of raping.

Judge Taylor: Judge Taylor is the Maycomb County judge who presided over the Tom Robinson trial. He is an informal man who runs his court with ease.

Mr. Gilmer: Mr. Gilmer is the solicitor from Abbottsville who comes to town when court is in session. He is the prosecutor in the case against Tom Robinson, and he and Atticus are friends. The way that he questions Tom Robinson in his cross-examination upsets Dill because Dill thinks he's being mean to him. Scout thinks that Mr. Gilmer wasn't really trying very hard in this case because she'd seen him be a lot rougher on other defendants, but it still bothered Dill nonetheless.

Mr. Dolphus Raymond: Mr. Raymond is understood to be a chronic alcoholic. He comes through town bobbing and weaving and drinks from a brown paper bag. He is wealthy, owns one whole side of the riverbank and is from an old family, but lives by himself with his colored woman and their mixed children. When Scout and Dill leave the courtroom because Dill is so upset, they meet Mr. Raymond and discover that he

doesn't drink whiskey from a paper sack -- it's Coke. He does it so that people will believe that alcoholism is why he lives the way he does rather than face the fact that he lives with colored people because he wants to.

Mrs. Merriweather: A pious old church member who attends one of Alexandra's missionary teas and proceeds to humiliate Alexandra by going on and on about people who do things thinking they're right when really they're just stirring up trouble in relation to Atticus defending Tom Robinson in court. Miss Maudie, the Finch's neighbor and long-time friend, summarily hushes Mrs. Merriweather.

Cecil Jacobs: Cecil Jacobs is Scout's classmate who scares her and Jem as they're walking to the high school pageant on Halloween. On their way home, Scout and Jem believe that Cecil is following them again in an attempt to repeat his prank, but it's really Bob Ewell preparing to kill them to get revenge against Atticus for making him look like an idiot and a liar in court.

Miss Gates: Miss Gates was the teacher Scout discovered to be a hypocrite. Miss Gates preached to her class the evilness of Hitler's prejudice but didn't realize the same error in her own heart. Scout remembered that after the trial she'd overheard Miss Gates talking about how right the jury was to put black people back into their place because they'd been getting too high and mighty lately.

Classic Notes Character List

Scout (Jean Louise Finch): The narrator and main character of the book who begins her story from the age of nearly six. A rebellious tomboy, Scout has a fierce disposition toward any who challenge her, but at heart she believes in the goodness in people and reacts to the terrible events of the book without losing hope.

Jem (Jeremy Finch): Scout's older brother, who is nearly ten at the beginning of the story. Jem is quieter and more reserved than his sister, and has very high standards and expectations for people. When these expectations are not met, he has a difficult time resolving his feelings.

Dill (Charles Baker Harris): A friend of the Finch children, a little older than Scout, who has an active imagination and a sense for adventure. He initiates the first expeditions toward the Radley house, and is Scout's best friend. His family life is less than ideal, and he tends to resort to escapism when confronted with difficult situations.

Atticus Finch: The father of Scout and Jem, Atticus is a lawyer and an extremely morally upright man who strives to deal with everyone in the greatest fairness. Atticus has an inclination to be a little overly optimistic sometimes, but his unshakable hope and his self-created role as the town do-gooder sustain him. His wife died when Scout was a baby.

Boo Radley: A recluse who never emerges from his house. As a young boy, he was in trouble with the police, and his strictly religious, also reclusive parents kept him inside. One day he stabbed his father with scissors, and has never been heard of since. The town has created a myth around him of monstrous proportions. He lives with his brother throughout much of the book.

Tom Robinson: A black man who stands falsely accused of raping Mayella Ewell. Atticus agrees to take up his case, even though he knows it is probably a hopeless one, if only to show the white community its own moral degeneracy.

Calpurnia: A black woman who works as the Finches' cook and housekeeper. She is one of the many motherly figures in Scout's life. She can negotiate between the very separate black and white worlds of Maycomb.

Aunt Alexandra: Atticus's sister, who has strict, traditional ideas of how society works and the role for a Southern woman within it, which she tries to enforce upon Scout. She is concerned with raising Atticus's children "properly," and thus shows up during the summer of Tom's trial to stay with them.

Maudie Atkinson: A kind, cheerful, and witty neighbor to the Finches and a trusted friend of Scout's, who also upholds a strong moral code and helps the children gain perspective on the events surrounding the trial. She also loves gardening.

Bob Ewell: An evil, ignorant man who belongs to the lowest substratum of Maycomb society, living with his nine motherless children in a shack near the town dump. Evidence

from the trial suggests that he caught his daughter kissing Tom and proceeded to beat her. He drinks heavily and spends his relief checks on whiskey rather than food for his family.

Mayella Ewell: The oldest of the many Ewell children, at nineteen. She lives a miserable and lonely existence, despised by whites and prohibited from befriending blacks. However, she breaks the social taboo by trying to seduce Tom, then reacts with cowardice by accusing him of rape and perjuring against him in court.

Heck Tate: Maycomb County's trusty sheriff, who is on the whole an honest and upstanding man.

Reverend Sykes: The reverend for the all-black congregation, First Purchase African M.E. church, where Scout and Jem visit one day with Calpurnia.

Judge Taylor: The judge for Tom's trial; a good, sensible judge with a sense of humor.

Mr. Gilmer: The solicitor for the Ewells in Tom Robinson's case.

Mrs. Dubose: A mean, sick, very old woman who lives near the Finches. Her heroic attempt to conquer her morphine addiction wins her Atticus's highest praises.

Walter Cunningham: A poor farmer who is among the "Sarum bunch," a crowd which assembles near the town jail the night before Tom's trial in order to start a lynching. He is deeply moved by Scout's words, however, and respects the Finches greatly afterwards.

Walter Cunningham (Jr.): Son of the other Walter, who attends first grade with Scout.

Adolphus Raymond: A white man who chose to marry a black woman and have "mixed" children, and who pretends to be a drunk so that the townspeople will have a way to explain his behavior.

Helen Robinson: Wife of Tom.

Uncle Jack: Atticus's brother, a doctor of whom the children are very fond.

Francis: One of Aunt Alexandra's grandchildren, who spends Christmas with the Finches and annoys Scout by being both boring and cruel.

Spark Notes Character List

Jean Louise "Scout" Finch -

The narrator and protagonist of the story. Scout lives with her father, Atticus, her brother, Jem, and their black cook, Calpurnia, in Maycomb. She is intelligent and, by the standards of her time and place, a tomboy. Scout has a combative streak and a basic faith in the goodness of the people in her community. As the novel progresses, this faith is tested by the hatred and prejudice that emerge during Tom Robinson's trial. Scout eventually develops a more grown-up perspective that enables her to appreciate human goodness without ignoring human evil.

Atticus Finch -

Scout and Jem's father, a lawyer in Maycomb descended from an old local family. A widower with a dry sense of humor, Atticus has instilled in his children his strong sense of morality and justice. He is one of the few residents of Maycomb committed to racial equality. When he agrees to defend Tom Robinson, a black man charged with raping a white woman, he exposes himself and his family to the anger of the white community. With his strongly held convictions, wisdom, and empathy, Atticus functions as the novel's moral backbone.

Jeremy Atticus "Jem" Finch -

Scout's brother and constant playmate at the beginning of the story. Jem is something of a typical American boy, refusing to back down from dares and fantasizing about playing football. Four years older than Scout, he gradually separates himself from her games, but he remains her close companion and protector throughout the novel. Jem moves into adolescence during the story, and his ideals are shaken badly by the evil and injustice that he perceives during the trial of Tom Robinson.

Arthur "Boo" Radley -

A recluse who never sets foot outside his house, Boo dominates the imaginations of Jem, Scout, and Dill. He is a powerful symbol of goodness swathed in an initial shroud of creepiness, leaving little presents for Scout and Jem and emerging at an opportune moment to save the children. An intelligent child emotionally damaged by his cruel father, Boo provides an example of the threat that evil poses to innocence and goodness. He is one of the novel's "mockingbirds," a good person injured by the evil of mankind.

Bob Ewell -

A drunken, mostly unemployed member of Maycomb's poorest family. In his knowingly wrongful accusation that Tom Robinson raped his daughter, Ewell

represents the dark side of the South: ignorance, poverty, squalor, and hate-filled racial prejudice.

Charles Baker "Dill" Harris -

Jem and Scout's summer neighbor and friend. Dill is a diminutive, confident boy with an active imagination. He becomes fascinated with Boo Radley and represents the perspective of childhood innocence throughout the novel.

Miss Maudie Atkinson -

The Finches' neighbor, a sharp-tongued widow, and an old friend of the family. Miss Maudie is almost the same age as Atticus's younger brother, Jack. She shares Atticus's passion for justice and is the children's best friend among Maycomb's adults.

Calpurnia -

The Finches' black cook. Calpurnia is a stern disciplinarian and the children's bridge between the white world and her own black community.

Aunt Alexandra -

Atticus's sister, a strong-willed woman with a fierce devotion to her family. Alexandra is the perfect Southern lady, and her commitment to propriety and tradition often leads her to clash with Scout.

Mayella Ewell -

Bob Ewell's abused, lonely, unhappy daughter. Though one can pity Mayella because of her overbearing father, one cannot pardon her for her shameful indictment of Tom Robinson.

Tom Robinson -

The black field hand accused of rape. Tom is one of the novel's "mockingbirds," an important symbol of innocence destroyed by evil.

Link Deas -

Tom Robinson's employer. In his willingness to look past race and praise the integrity of Tom's character, Deas epitomizes the opposite of prejudice.

Mrs. Henry Lafayette Dubose -

An elderly, ill-tempered, racist woman who lives near the Finches. Although Jem believes that Mrs. Dubose is a thoroughly bad woman, Atticus admires her for the courage with which she battles her morphine addiction.

Nathan Radley -

Boo Radley's older brother. Scout thinks that Nathan is similar to the deceased Mr. Radley, Boo and Nathan's father. Nathan cruelly cuts off an important element of Boo's relationship with Jem and Scout when he plugs up the knothole in which Boo leaves presents for the children.

Heck Tate -

The sheriff of Maycomb and a major witness at Tom Robinson's trial. Heck is a decent man who tries to protect the innocent from danger.

Mr. Underwood -

The publisher of Maycomb's newspaper. Mr. Underwood respects Atticus and proves his ally.

Mr. Dolphu Raymond -

A wealthy white man who lives with his black mistress and mulatto children. Raymond pretends to be a drunk so that the citizens of Maycomb will have an explanation for his behavior. In reality, he is simply jaded by the hypocrisy of white society and prefers living among blacks.

Mr. Walter Cunningham -

A poor farmer and part of the mob that seeks to lynch Tom Robinson at the jail. Mr. Walter Cunningham displays his human goodness when Scout's politeness compels him to disperse the men at the jail.

Walter Cunningham -

Son of Mr. Walter Cunningham and classmate of Scout. Walter cannot afford lunch one day at school and accidentally gets Scout in trouble.

Language and Dialect/ Local Color

The following commentary on the novel comes from a teacher study guide created by a teacher in the United Kingdom –

The narrative contains some distinctively American lexis (vocabulary) so, to take one chapter (11) as a random example, we find *sassiest*, *mutts* and *playing hooky*. But the USA is a vast country, and Harper Lee makes use of many regional expressions, local to the southern (former Confederate) states or to Alabama more specifically, like *cootie*, *haint*, *scuppernongs* and *whistled bob-white*. In some cases you will find a form which is standard in both UK and US English, but with a different meaning. So when Jem leaves his “*pants*” (trousers) on the Radley fence, this is not as alarming as it might seem to English readers. On the other hand, when he stands “*in his shorts* (underpants or boxer shorts) *before God and everybody*”, this is perhaps more alarming.

Internet Sites

for

To Kill a Mockingbird and Related Topics

www.lausd.k12.ca.us/Belmont_HS/tkm/

***Please note: above site is a good place to check for clues to making a map.

www.mockingbird.chebucto.org/

www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/score/tokil/bird1.htm

[/www.holoweb.com/cannon/northergn.htm](http://www.holoweb.com/cannon/northergn.htm)

www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/score/tokil/bird3.htm

www.quotationspage.com or www.starlingtech.com/quotes/search.html

www.memory.loc.gov/learn/lessons/98/mock/intro.html

www.jimcrowhistory.org/home.htm

www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/FTrials/scottsboro/scottsb.htm