Lee’s Philosophy To Kill A Mockingbird Essay, Research Paper

Nelle Harper Lee s Philosophy on the Proper Treatment of Human Beings in To Kill A Mockingbird

The 1930 s were a time in which blacks faced many hardships. It was a time in which the Ku Klux Klan had its peak. However, most importantly, it was the time when Nelle Harper Lee, the writer of To Kill A Mockingbird, was being raised. She was raised in a world where niggers were the bottom class in one of the most powerful countries in the world. She was also being raised during the Great Depression, a time when the attacks on blacks were intensified, as they were the scapegoats of the immense downfall of the US economy. However, she was only a small, innocent child who believed in equality for all. Thus, Harper Lee expressed her disapproval over the treatment of blacks in her Award-Winning novel, To Kill A Mockingbird, through the eyes of a fictional character called Jean Louise Finch, better known as Scout .

Scout, the main character in the story, grew up in Maycomb County; a fictional town in Alabama inspired by the Monroe County, Harper Lee s hometown. Scout s father, Atticus Finch, was a defense attorney during the Great Depression. Just like everyone in Maycomb County, his economic conditions were very poor. Judge Taylor assigns him the task of defending Tom Robinson, a married black man accused of raping the eldest daughter of Bob Ewell, the head of a family that had been the disgrace of Maycomb for three generations.

As the story progresses, Scout slowly becomes introduced into the world of hatred, unfairness, and racism that the 1930 s exposed. Nevertheless, since Scout still had both her innocence and naivete, due to her premature age, she completely expressed total disapproval towards the treatment of blacks during the time of her childhood. The author portrays this disapproval through Dill and Jem, Scout s friend, and Scout s brother, respectively, as shown here by Dill, I don t care one speck. It ain t right to do em that way. Hasn t anybody got any business talkin like that it just makes me sick.

Various characters reactions to the verdict emphasize Lee s feelings toward racial injustice. During the Tom Robinson trial, Atticus could not have portrayed his evidence in a more professional and convincing manner. Unfortunately, Tom Robinson was found guilty by the jury and was sentenced to death. Atticus s son, Jem, expresses his rejection to the unfair treatment of blacks by stating, How could they do it, how could they? Atticus responds, I don t know, but they did it. They ve done it before and they did it tonight and they ll do it again and when they do it it seems that only children weep. Both Jem s development of maturity and disapproval of the verdict of the Tom Robinson case play an important role in the point that Lee is trying to prove through this story. Scout is far too young for her opinion to be considered valid. However, Jem, no longer a little boy at this stage of the story, can be listened to if he states an opinion for the simple fact that he is not a little kid . He also preserves his innocence due to his small age. Therefore, when he states that the verdict of the case was not only wrong, but irrelevant and unfair, it makes you inquire whether the case was a fair one or not.

To Kill A Mockingbird was published in 1960, a time when the Civil Rights Movement was at its peak. That is why it had such a big impact on American society. Throughout the entire book, the author makes an attempt to keep one particular fact (it s a sin to kill a mockingbird) in your mind. You may think to yourself, Why a mockingbird? Miss Maudie, Scout s 50 year-old friend, although diminutively racist, stated something that is worth thinking about: Mockingbirds don t do one thing but make music for us to enjoy. They don t eat up people s gardens, don t nest in corncribs, they don t do one thing but sing their hearts out for us. That s why it s a sin to kill a mockingbird. Not only is Lee opposed to racism, but her primary message in To Kill a Mockingbird is that racial injustice is a terrible sin. Just like killing a mockingbird.