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Book Review

**The Destruction of Innocence and Other Themes 'To kill a mockingbird'**

by Harper lee

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Language: English

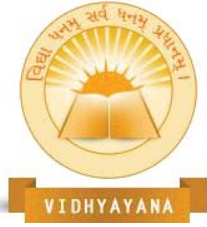
Genres: southern gothic and coming - of- age

Publication: 1960

Pages:281

Harper Lee was an American novelist. She won the Pulitzer Prize in 1961 for her novel 'To Kill a Mockingbird,' which has become a classic of modern American literature. The plot and characters are loosely based on the author's experiences and observations of her family and the society of Alabama. The novel also reflects childhood events near the author's hometown in 1936. 'To Kill a Mockingbird' addresses racism, immorality, irrationality, and adults' perspectives on race and class in the deep South of the 1930s, portrayed through the eyes of two children.

Harper Lee won several awards, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2007, which was awarded for her contributions to literature.



*Someone rare has written this very fine novel, a writer with the liveliest sense of life and the warmest, most authentic humour, a touching book; and so funny, so likeable. (Truman Capote)*

We can easily relate to the characters like Scout and Jem in this book, as it has a simple language, and Harper Lee demonstrates excellent exposition skills.

Is it a sin to kill a mockingbird? The book explains that this is because mockingbirds do not harm other living creatures, and mockingbirds bring joy to the world through their songs. The book deals with both the death of an innocent man and the loss of innocence experienced by the children.

The book review discusses some major themes of the novel, such as the destruction of innocence, courage, bravery, prejudice, childhood innocence, good and evil people, racism, moral education, small-town life, social inequality, and family life.

In this book, innocence is destroyed by evils, and the 'mockingbird' represents the innocent. So, the book 'To Kill a Mockingbird' explores the theme of destroying innocence.

We can understand this through an incident in the book. The first time, Tom was innocent, but he was falsely charged and became a criminal, ultimately being killed by them (Chapter 24).

Secondly, the kids witness their father, Atticus, facing off with a rabid dog on their street. Atticus shoots and kills the poor dog in one shot to save the innocents of Maycomb from a potential rabies outbreak, delivering a message (Chapter 10). In fact, Harper Lee's title of the book is a direct reference to something Atticus tells the children.

Mr. Underwood has the last word, writing an editorial in 'The Maycomb Tribune,' comparing Tom Robinson's killing to the senseless slaughter of songbirds by hunters and children.

The most important theme of 'To Kill A Mockingbird' is the book's exploration of the moral nature of human beings, questioning whether people are essentially good or essentially evil. The novel approaches this question by dramatizing Scout and Jem's transition from a perspective of childhood innocence, where they assume that people are good because they



have never seen evil, to a more adult perspective. In this new perspective, they confront evil and must incorporate it into their understanding of the world (society).

The result of this portrayal of the transition from innocence to experience is one of the book's important subthemes, involving the threats that hate, prejudice, and ignorance pose to innocent people like Tom Robinson and Boo Radley. They are not prepared for the evil they encounter, and as a result, they are destroyed.

We can see social inequality in this book in Chapter 3 when Atticus says to Scout and creates a deeper and more personal view on his topic. He tells her that you can never really understand a person until you consider things from their point of view. Tom Robinson deals with it when he is accused of a crime he didn't even commit, and no one trusts him because he is a black man over a white man. The Cunningham family even faces discrimination because of their lack of money.

One of the sub-themes of this book is courage. Scout is a courageous person, and in Chapter 15, we see how she says, "Don't you touch him!" and then tries to save her brother. Atticus is also that kind of character; he was against the old customs of society. Although he was a white man, he helped Tom Robinson against his own society, bravely seeking justice for the innocent Tom.

In that era, racism is prevalent all over America, with some of the most compelling and memorable scenes in the novel depicting racial conflict causing two dramatic deaths. On one level, it represents a simplistic and moralistic view of racial prejudice – white people who are racist are portrayed as bad, and those who are non-racist are seen as good. Atticus risks his reputation, his position, and his children's safety because he is not racist. Bob Ewell falsely accuses a black man of rape, spits on Atticus publicly, and attempts to murder a child because he is racist and bad. He harbors prejudice.

In Chapter 1, we can see how Lee has described Maycomb as a small-town life with all the stereotypical characteristics of small-town life in the 1930s.



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1. To Kill A Mockingbird by harper lee, William Heinemann Ltd.
2. <https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/mocking/summary>.