

## THE UNFAIRNESS OF LIFE

Life is tough enough without having barriers in one's way such as; being a social outcast, a victim of racism, or having to suffer due to poverty. Three of the characters from the novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* were born into facing versions of those barriers. The characters include Walter Cunningham, Boo Radley, and Tom Robinson. These less fortunate people in the novel are forced to deal with serious harsh realities of life, and the way they deal with them diversifies from victim to victim.

Walter Cunningham was without a doubt a kind, honest man with hopes and dreams just like most people. He, unfortunately had to deal with the problem of poverty. The Cunningham family was one of the poorest in Maycomb County. "Not exactly. The Cunninghams are country folks, farmers, and the crash hit them hardest." (Lee, 21) He, like others during this time period were suffering from The Great Depression, and unfortunately there was nothing he could do about it. Although the Cunninghams are poor, that doesn't mean they appreciate help from others. In fact they are embarrassed to take charity. The Cunninghams are too proud to take anything without paying or working for it. "Your shamin' him, Miss Caroline. Walter hasn't got a quarter at home to bring you, and you can't use any stovewood." (21) When Miss Caroline offers the money to Walter, Scout quickly steps in, trying to save her from an embarrassing moment. The Cunningham's financial situation is hard enough for Walter. He no doubt feels as if it's his fault, he has let the family down. "We brought him home for dinner one time..." (154) This quote may seem offensive to Walter, saying he can't provide enough food so his son has to go else where for dinner. All these things are difficult, and the only way Walter Cunningham knows how to deal with them is to keep on working hard.

Boo Radley's troubles are different. Different in the sense that they were linked to his teenage years—and his teenage attitude was bad. He lived a reckless living. "Nobody in Maycomb had the nerve to tell Mr. Radley that Boo was hanging outwith the wrong crowd." (10) This was the sad truth about Arthur Radley. No one really ever spoke out to help him. Eventually he paid for his lifestyle and was locked up for years. "Boo's transition from the basement back home..." (11) This would change Boo's life forever. After all that he went through, Boo Radley knew he could never be accepted back into society as a normal human being. Others viewed him as an animal. "Boo was about six and a half feet tall, judging from his tracks; he dined on raw squirrels..." (13) Having people think things like this about him was damaging and did not help one bit with his rehabilitation back into society. He would always have something there to stop him. The only time he could feel like an accepted human being, is when he was communicating with Jem, Scout, and Dill.

Throughout the plot, one personality was found to be on the losing end of things again and again. Tom Robinson could do nothing about his obstacle. He was a black man, and as such was looked down upon from most of Maycomb Alabama. Tom's first problem dealt with being used by a white woman. Mayella Ewell verbally treated Tom as a slave, and made him do odds and ends around the house. "She told me to come inside and bust up a chiffarobe for her..." (191) Tom discharged these things more than once, and then one day he was falsely impeached by her for something he did not do. He was accused and found guilty to maybe one of the worst offenses any man could have been accused for. He was arraigned of assaulting Mayella Ewell. "You testified that you turned around, and there he was. He choked you..." (186) Being falsely accused of such a thing is enough to give one the impression that there is no good in life, and unfortunately Tom Robinson would die thing that. When the Maycomb Police were taking him to jail, Robinson made an

attempt of escaping. During the ruckus, one of the officers shot his gun as a warning shot, and accidentally shot and killed Tom. "They shot him, he was running away and they shot him..." (235) A tragic end too a not so wonderful life. Tom died with not have had succeeding at anything except for being a nice person-but even that he got punished for in the end.

These less fortunate people in the story were forced to endure harsh aspects of life. This might of been their fate's, but none the less no one should have to go through that. Even today people have to suffer from related problems. Poverty, racism, and social outcasting still exists today, but unfortunately there is nothing that can be done about it-that is the unfairness of life.