

# InsideOUT

PRODUCED BY THE DENVER CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

## TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD

By Christopher Sergel

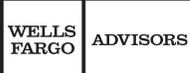
Based upon the novel by Harper Lee

Directed by Sabin Epstein

Denver Center  
Theatre   
Company

KENT THOMPSON  
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

2011/12  
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# InsideOUT

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## Synopsis

CALPURNIA: *Because mockingbirds don't eat people's gardens, don't nest in the corn-cribs; they don't do one thing but just sing their hearts out for us.*  
—*To Kill a Mockingbird*

Through the eyes of Jean Louise, a grown-up Scout, the play carries us on a journey through the fires of prejudice and injustice in 1932 Alabama. Presenting her tale as a reminiscence of events from her childhood, the narrator draws us in with stories of daring neighborhood exploits by her, her brother Jem and their friend Dill. Peopled with a cast of eccentrics, Maycomb, a closely knit small town, finds itself the venue of the trial of Tom Robinson, a black man falsely accused of raping a poor white woman, Mayella Ewell.

Atticus Finch, Scout and Jem's widowed father and a deeply principled man, is appointed to defend Tom for whom a guilty verdict from an all-white jury is a foregone conclusion. Juxtaposed against the story of the trial is the children's strange relationship with Boo Radley, a shut-in whom the children and Dill suspect of being some sort of recluse monster as no one has seen him in recent years. Cigar-box treasures, found in the knothole of a tree near the ramshackle Radley house, temper the children's judgment of Boo. "You never know someone until you step inside their skin and walk around a little," Atticus tells Scout. But fear keeps them at a distance until one night the children confront evil born out of ignorance and prejudice and must somehow find a safe way home. ■

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# THE NOVELIST

## HARPER LEE

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*In other words all I want to be is the Jane Austen of south Alabama.*

—Harper Lee

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The author was born on April 28, 1926 as Nelle Harper Lee in Monroeville, Alabama. During her childhood she read avidly; by the time she was a teenager she aspired to a writing career—a goal she shared with her childhood friend, author Truman Capote (*Dill* in the play).

At the University of Alabama Lee wrote reviews, editorials and satires for college publications. After graduating she studied for a law degree at the same university, but in 1949 withdrew and moved to New York City with the aim of becoming a writer. While working at other jobs, Lee submitted stories and essays to publishers but all were rejected. An agent, however, took an interest in one of her short stories and suggested she expand it into a novel. By 1957 she had finished a draft of *To Kill a Mockingbird*. She sent the novel to a publisher who saw its potential but suggested it needed work. Lee spent two and half years revising the manuscript with an editor. By 1960 the novel was published. It was an immediate and widespread success. Within a year the novel sold half a million copies and received the Pulitzer Prize for fiction. In 1962 it was turned into a highly acclaimed film, which won an Oscar for Gregory Peck for his portrayal of Atticus Finch.

Harper tried to write another novel, but never finished it. She helped her friend, Truman Capote, with *In Cold Blood*, taking notes and escorting him to Garden City, Kansas, the scene of the crime on which the novel was based. In 1965 she burned her right hand in a kitchen accident and was unable to use the typewriter. After a successful operation, she was able to use that hand again. In 1966 she was appointed to the National Council on the Arts by President Lyndon Johnson.

In 1969 her agent, Maurice Crain, was stricken with cancer and Harper nursed him in his final days in New York City. In 1974, her editor Tay Hohoff died; in 1978 Truman Capote died from an excess of alcohol and drugs.

She claimed to be inherently shy and was never comfortable in the limelight. Today she is 85 years old. ■

[www.McGrawHill](http://www.McGrawHill) Company, *To Kill a Mockingbird* study guide.

Shields, Charles J. *Mockingbird: a Portrait of Harper Lee*. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 2006.

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# THE PLAYWRIGHT CHRISTOPHER SERGEL

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*The meeting with Harper Lee, as I recall from 20 years ago, took place at the Hotel Pierre in New York City.... As we discussed the adaptation and the reasons for the choices being made, I had a sense that she felt the work was on the right track.*

—Christopher Sergel

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Christopher Sergel's interests and talents led him on many adventures throughout the world. As captain of the schooner *Chance*, he spent two years in the South Pacific; as a writer for *Sports Afield* magazine, he lived in the African bush for a year; as a lieutenant commander in World War II, he taught celestial navigation and, finally, as a playwright, his adaptation of Sherwood Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio* was seen on Broadway.

But throughout his life his greatest adventure and deepest love was his work with Dramatic Publishing, where he served as president from 1970-1993. During this time he wrote adaptations of *Cheaper by the Dozen*, *The Mouse that Roared*, *Up the Down Staircase*, *Fame*, *Black Elk Speaks* and, of course, *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

His love of theatre and his care for writers made him a generous and spirited mentor to many playwrights here and around the world. His inspiration and integrity attracted to the company such fine writers as C. P. Taylor, Timberlake Wertenbaker, Arthur Miller, Roald Dahl and E.B. White, among others. He once said he hoped to be remembered as E. B. White described Charlotte: "a true friend and a good writer." He died in 1993. ■

Biography from *Dramatic Publishing*

[www.montanarep.org](http://www.montanarep.org)

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# THEMES OF THE PLAY

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JEAN-LOUISE: *Atticus saw every occasion as an opportunity to teach us something.*  
—*To Kill a Mockingbird*

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One of the themes of the play/novel is the importance of a moral education. This theme is explored most potently in the relationship between Atticus and his children as he attempts to instill a social conscience in Jem and Scout. The moral voice of the play belongs to Atticus Finch who has experienced and understood both good and evil without losing faith in humanity. Atticus teaches his children to appreciate the good qualities and comprehend the bad qualities, but always treat others with sympathy and try to see life from their perspective. Thus, Scout and Jem make a transition from childhood innocence to a more adult viewpoint from which they have confronted evil and now must incorporate it into their understanding of the world.

Another theme is the existence of social inequality. Even though the play takes place during the Great Depression, when most people had little or no money, there is still a social hierarchy in Maycomb. The Finches are near the top along with Mrs. Dubose. The Radleys were once there but have fallen into disrespect. Next comes Heck Tate, the sheriff, followed by the Cunninghams and below them the Ewells, who represent white trash.

The black community of Maycomb, despite an abundance of admirable qualities, ranks lowest. Its station in Southern society encourages the hatred, prejudice and ignorance that enable Bob Ewell to compensate for his own lack of importance by accusing Tom Robinson of the rape of his daughter Mayella.

In Claudia Durst Johnson's book, *Understanding To Kill a Mockingbird*, she cites the universal theme of tolerance. "Equal rights for all, special privileges for none," as Scout says.<sup>1</sup> This theme involves having the insight and courage to value human differences. "Another element of this same theme...is the sympathetic bond that the children begin to acknowledge between themselves and the people who are different from them."<sup>2</sup>

According to Johnson, a second theme is that laws and codes people profess to live by are often complex and contradictory. Even though the law should protect us from evil and injustice, people like Tom Robinson and Boo Radley are victims because

“hidden social codes contradict their stated legal and religious principles.”<sup>3</sup> Out of such codes grew the Jim Crow laws that promoted the rationalization that Whites were superior to Blacks in all ways. This thinking led to the segregation of schools, buses, restrooms, hotels, drinking fountains, hospitals, etc., and regulated social interaction between the races. ■

1. Johnson, p. 1.

2. Ibid, p. 2.

3. Ibid, p. 8.

<http://www.sparknotes.com/lit/mocking/themes/html>

<http://www.ferris.edu/jimcrow/what.htm/>

Johnson, Claudia Durst. *Understanding To Kill a Mockingbird*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994.

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# HISTORICAL CONTEXT: THE DEPRESSION AND THE SCOTTSBORO TRIAL

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JEAN LOUISE: *There was nowhere to go, nothing to buy,  
no money to buy it with, and nothing to see outside  
the boundaries of Maycomb County.*  
—*To Kill a Mockingbird*

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The period of the play is the end of the Great Depression which had struck the rural South particularly hard. Crashing down were King Cotton, the banks and total economies of small towns in the South—places such as Monroeville, Harper’s home and the basis for the fictional Maycomb. There was intense competition for jobs between blacks and whites which only increased the bigotry and fear of the unemployed whites. Race relations were at such a low point that they led to a legal case that exploded in the press in the 1930s.

The Scottsboro case, like Tom Robinson’s, arose from charges of interracial rape. The incident occurred on March 25, 1931, when nine black boys were arrested as they left the cars of a freight train in a small town called Paint Rock in Alabama. They were charged with raping two white women who were also riding in the train cars.

“The central parallels between the trial in the novel and the Scottsboro trial are three: the threat of lynching; the issue of a Southern jury’s composition, and the intricate complications arising from the interweave of race and class where a lower class white woman wrongfully accuses a black man or men.”<sup>1</sup>

Of extreme importance is the composition of the jury in both the Scottsboro trial and the one in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. It was “a selection process that included no blacks and no women, and which allowed businessmen and professional people to have themselves excused from jury duty for any reason.”<sup>2</sup>

Such selection doomed the innocent black man in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Atticus did not challenge the jury choices in the play, but Samuel Leibowitz, the defense attorney for the Scottsboro boys, devised a new defense based on the injustice resulting from the exclusion of African-Americans from jury lists in Alabama. As a result the case went to the Supreme Court in 1935; the Court found in favor of the defense.

Maycomb, touched by the Depression, is a remote place which cannot expand. This small town is set apart, not only from other parts of the nation, but also from other places in Alabama. Maycomb has been bypassed by growth and seems closer to the 1880s than the 1930s. ■

1. Johnson, p. 5.

2. Ibid, p. 6.

Johnson, Claudia Durst. *To Kill a Mockingbird: Threatening Boundaries*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1994.

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# HISTORICAL CONTEXT: THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

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*I think there's just one kind of folks. Folks.*  
—Scout

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**A**s Harper Lee was writing this novel, the Civil Rights movement was just beginning. The following events impacted Lee's writing and the rest of the nation.

**1954**—The Supreme Court strikes down the Plessy vs. Ferguson decision which favored segregation. Instead they approve the integration of public schools in the Brown vs. the Board of Education case.

**1955**—Rosa Parks is arrested on December 1 for violating the bus segregation ordinance in Montgomery, Alabama. Four days later the famous bus boycott begins.

**Jan. 1956**—Martin Luther King, Jr.'s house is bombed.

**1955-56**—Arthurine Lucy, a black woman, attempts to enroll in the University of Alabama as a student. Following months of litigation, she is forced to withdraw after mobs of whites riot on the campus.

**Feb. 1956**—A petition started by a small group of students and professors asks for the return of Arthurine Lucy to campus.

**Feb. 22, 1956**—115 persons are indicted for taking part in the bus boycott.

**Feb. 24, 1956**—A massive rally is held by African Americans in Montgomery to plan a day of walking and praying.

**1956**—The bus boycott ends on December 21, and buses are integrated.

**1957**—Martin Luther King, Jr., Charles K. Steele and Fred Shuttlesworth establish the Southern Christian Leadership Conference which is instrumental in organizing the civil rights movement. ■

[www.infoplease.com/spot/civilrightstimeline/html-cached-similar](http://www.infoplease.com/spot/civilrightstimeline/html-cached-similar)

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# CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT: JURY SELECTION IN THE SOUTH

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In late April of 2010 in a courthouse in Madison County, Alabama, a prosecutor was interrogated as to why had had struck 11 of 14 black potential jurors in a capital murder case. The district attorney, Robert Broussard, answered that one had seemed “arrogant”, another was “pretty vocal” and in another he had “detected hostility.” Mr. Broussard also questioned the “sophistication of a former Army sergeant, a forklift operator with three years of college, a cafeteria manager, an assembly-line worker and a retired Department of Defense program analyst.”<sup>1</sup>

Arguments like these were used for many years to avoid using blacks in juries in the segregationist South, systematically denying justice to black defendants and victims. But in this century, the practice of excluding African Americans and other minorities from Southern juries remains intact, according to defense lawyers and a recent study by Equal Justice Initiative, a nonprofit human rights and legal services organization in Montgomery, Alabama. In addition, defense attorneys who argue that a jury selection is tainted by racial discrimination will find that claim is difficult to prove because prosecutors can claim any race-neutral reason, no matter how implausible, for dismissing a juror.

While jury makeup varies widely by jurisdiction, the organization studied eight Southern states including Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina and Tennessee; they discovered significant problems in all of them. In Alabama, “courts have found racially discriminatory jury selection in 25 death penalty cases since 1987, and there are counties where more than 75 percent of black jury pool members have been struck in death penalty cases.”<sup>2</sup> Other examples include North Carolina, where at least 26 current death row inmates were sentenced by all-white juries. In South Carolina, a prosecutor dismissed a black potential juror because he “shucked and jived” when he walked.

“Studies have shown that racially diverse juries deliberate longer, consider a wider variety of perspectives and make fewer factual errors than all-white juries, and that predominately black juries are less likely to impose the death penalty.”<sup>3</sup> Excluding jurors based on race has been illegal since 1875, but after Reconstruction and Jim Crow laws, all-white juries remained the norm in the South.

The Equal Justice Initiative study argues that jury diversity “is especially critical because the other decision-making roles in the criminal justice system are held mostly by people who are white.”<sup>4</sup> In the eight Southern states studied, more than 93% of the district attorneys are white; in Arkansas and Tennessee, 100% of them are white. ■

1. [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com)

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

<http://nytimes.com/2010/06/02/us/02jury.html>

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# THE IMPORTANCE OF NAMES, PHILOSOPHIES AND THE PAST IN *TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD*

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*Anger takes possession of the mind before reason has been able to prevent its being so possessed.*

—Cicero, *Letters to Quintas*, c. 59 B.C.

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Harper Lee named Atticus after a Roman, Cicero's closest friend who was a humanist. Calpurnia, the housekeeper, was named after Caesar's wife, an oracle of wisdom. And in addition to Finch being her mother's maiden name, a finch is small songbird related to the mockingbird.

Atticus' moral stance stems from Stoicism, which attracted Cicero and is the subject of many of his essays. Stoicism is "an emphasis on personal courage and endurance; the control or suppression of emotions; the curbing of sexual and other bodily appetites; indifference to pain, suffering and death; restraint in acting; acknowledgement of the kinship of men and the will to selfless action."<sup>1</sup>

Thus, the Stoic conception was in direct opposition to the South's ancient code of honor. The code revered public reputation above anything else and preferred the stability of social class, privilege and power. If that social order was violated in any manner, "men were free to resort to personal, physical force."<sup>2</sup>

Atticus acts with restraint when Bob Ewell curses and spits at him. Atticus emerges as a hero who triumphs over a questionable social code. In addition, he tries to teach Scout about restraint, the kinship of men, and the natural rights of all people that must be respected. "She must become a member of the community of citizens who live in a moral climate conducive to the recognition of their fellow citizens' rights and needs."<sup>3</sup>

According to Charles J. Shields, author of *Mockingbird: a Portrait of Harper Lee*, Atticus was based on her own father, A.C. Lee. As a young attorney, he had defended two African-Americans accused of murder. He did his best but lost and both his clients were hanged. He ultimately became editor and publisher of the *Monroe Journal*, a director of the Monroe County Bank and an elected representative from Monroeville. Like most of his generation he believed that "segregation was natural and created harmony between the races."<sup>5</sup> But he changed his views about race relations during the 1950s. In 1954 two white men murdered Emmett Till, a 14-year-old black youth visiting Alabama from

Chicago, for whistling at a white woman. The killers were acquitted and later boasted about their crime to the media. When Autherine Lucy met with violence on the University of Alabama campus and was forced to flee, A. C. had misgivings. By the time *To Kill a Mockingbird* was published, A. C. Lee had become an activist in defending the rights of African Americans.

Shields also writes that the Ewell-Robinson confrontation was based on an actual case. In 1933 a white woman, Naomi Lowery, told authorities that Walter Lett, a black man, had raped her near a brick factory south of Monroeville. Lett was captured and taken to a jail in Greenville to prevent any attempt at lynching. Though Lett had done some prison time, he protested that he did not know his accuser and was working somewhere else during the time of the assault. But Naomi was white and her word mattered more than his. When Lett appeared in court, he entered a plea of “not guilty.” But he was found guilty by a jury of twelve white men on March 30, 1934 and sentenced to death by electrocution.

“The verdict, however, did not sit well with some of the leading citizens in Monroeville and the county at large.”<sup>6</sup> Their petitions reached the governor and he granted a stay of execution to allow Lett’s attorney to file a new brief. A second reprieve moved the execution date to July 20. While Lett waited for his day of doom, he suffered a mental breakdown. He exhibited symptoms of schizophrenia and lay in a state of catalepsy. He was transferred to a mental hospital in Mt. Vernon, Alabama, and died there of tuberculosis in 1937. ■

1. Seidel in Petry, p. 84.
2. Ibid, p. 85.
3. Ibid, p. 85.
4. Ibid, p. 86.
5. Shields, p. 121.
6. Ibid, p. 119.

Petry, Alice Hall. *On Harper Lee: Essays and Reflections*. Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2007.

Seidel, Kathryn Lee. “Growing Up Southern: Resisting the Code for Southerners in *To Kill a Mockingbird*.”

Shields, Charles J. *Mockingbird: a Portrait of Harper Lee*. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 2006.

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# GOTHIC TRADITIONS IN *TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD*

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JEAN LOUISE: *We didn't know it yet, but a nightmare was upon us.  
Without our being aware, things changed.*

—*To Kill a Mockingbird*

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Jean Louise's words are a premonition, a foreboding of things to come. This element is part of the definition of Gothic: "an emphasis on portraying the terrifying, a common insistence on archaic settings, a prominent use of the supernatural, the presence of highly stereotyped characters and the attempt to develop and perfect techniques of literary suspense."<sup>1</sup> Other characteristics include ghosts, witches, monsters, imprisonment, deformity, fantasies and themes of decay and degeneration. Many of these components are in the play.

There are forebodings of evil such as the mad dog in the street and the children's perception of Boo Radley as a ghost or vampire. The children concoct stories about him and hear of his wanderings at night when he would peep into the windows of Southern ladies. Decay and degeneration are part of the architecture of the play. The Radley house is described as rotting and decomposing while Mrs. Dubose's house, equally ominous, is linked to the haunted Radley house. The Maycomb County courthouse is portrayed as having "hodge-podge architecture... emblematic of the system of justice it houses, where vestiges of antebellum legal inequality remain as surely as the Greek revival pillars."<sup>2</sup> ■

1. Johnson, p. 40.

2. Ibid, p. 44.

Johnson, Claudia Durst. *To Kill a Mockingbird: Threatening Boundaries*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1994.

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# THE CENSORSHIP ISSUE

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Objections to *To Kill a Mockingbird* (the novel) have been raised by parents, teachers and school administrators who believe students can be harmed by reading the book. They contend that certain elements in the book are censorable. These include: references to the sex act, slang and ungrammatical speech, curse and obscene words, racial slurs, challenges to authority and unfavorable portrayals of establishment including organized religion and government. Most of all, the objectors resented “the questioning of absolutes and imposition of values.”<sup>2</sup>

The most highly publicized case over the novel occurred in Hanover County, Virginia, in 1966. The school board decided that the book would not be on the approved book list; the reason given was that *To Kill a Mockingbird* was immoral. Readers on both sides of the issue peppered the *Richmond News-Leader*. Eventually the book was returned to library shelves and approved. ■

1. Shields, p. 254.

2. Johnson, p. 197.

Johnson, Claudia Durst. *Understanding To Kill a Mockingbird*. London: Greenwood Press, 1994.

Shields, Charles J. *Mockingbird: a Portrait of Harper Lee*. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 2006.

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# A FEW FACTS ABOUT MOCKINGBIRDS

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**T**he mockingbird is used as a metaphor for Tom Robinson and Boo Radley and is portrayed as a peaceful songbird. But while mockingbirds are mimics and reproduce the songs of other birds, they are aggressive, attacking other birds, sometimes humans and their own reflections. Mockingbirds chase other birds away from their feeders and nests, as they want the best resting places for themselves. ■

Petry, Alice Hall. *On Harper Lee: Essays and Reflections*. Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2007.

Tavernier-Courbin, Jaqueline. "Humor and Humanity in *To Kill a Mockingbird*."

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# RACIALLY CHARGED LANGUAGE

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There are several occasions in the play and the novel when the word “nigger” is used. This is a powerful if controversial way to indicate racist attitudes of various characters. Harper Lee also uses the term “colored” to refer to African Americans in a more neutral way.

By the 1900s “nigger” had become a pejorative word; instead, the term “colored” became the mainstream alternative. Established as proper American English usage, the word “colored” is featured in the title of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), which was founded in 1909.

Enormous controversy has surrounded many schools assigning the reading of *Huckleberry Finn* which uses the N word 215 times mostly to refer to Jim, Huck’s escaped slave raft-mate. The book was written in 1885 and uses the vernacular of the time. However, many parents and school administrators dislike the word so much that a 2011 rewrite edited out the N word and replaced it with “slave.” The change sparked outrage in critics and scholars.

But still the word persists with the African American community divided over its use. Some activists argue that deleting the N word robs younger generations of a full sense of black history. The other side protests that the word perpetuates self-hatred and ugly stereotypes. ■

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nigger>

<http://abolishtheword.com/homepage.htm>

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# CONNECT

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A series of free discussions providing a catalyst for discussion, learning and appreciation of the productions

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**Perspectives** - Denver Center Theatre Company's own "Creative Team" and community experts host interactive, topical discussions with attendees that provide a unique perspective on the production. This provides an in-depth connection that makes the stage experience even more rewarding.

Sep 30, 6pm, Jones Theatre

**Student Nights** – College students will enjoy a cheap night out including a Perspective, theatre ticket and a post-show mixer. \$10 with promo code STUDENT.

Sep 30

**Town Hall Meeting** – National and local leaders, authorities and academia unite in conversation with the Denver community. Join fellow citizens and be a part of the discussion.

*To Kill a Mockingbird* – Oct 1

Status Report: Race in America

Check [denvercenter.org](http://denvercenter.org) for more information.

**Higher Education Advisory Discussions** - Audience members gain scholarly insight into the productions through discussions, facilitated by faculty members from regional colleges and universities.

Oct 9, Post-show

**DCTC@The TC: The Art of Making Art** – Discover the secrets behind the art and the artist at the DCTC. Gain deeper insight into the artist's journey to the creation and development of their work. Gregory Smith, Director of Audience Development for the Denver Center for the Performing arts, hosts these lively and engaging discussions with directors, writers or cast members of the current DCTC productions.

Oct 11, noon at the Tattered Cover LoDo (1628 16th St.)

**Talkbacks** - Perhaps the best way to fully appreciate a production is by engaging in a stimulating dialogue with your fellow audience members and the actors who bring it to life.

Oct 16, Post-show

**Theatre & Theology** - In our continued partnership with Pastor Dan Bollman with the Rocky Mountain Evangelical Lutheran Synod and cast members, this discussion examines the relevant connections to the productions through a theological lens.

Oct 18, Post-show

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# TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD

## QUESTIONS

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### **PRE PERFORMANCE DISCUSSIONS**

1. Do you think hard economic times (like the Great Depression or our current Recession) affect people who live in small towns more than those who live in cities? Is there a difference between hard times and poverty?
2. Do you think small towns and big cities have different community values or are they similar? Does the size of where you live change your personal values?
3. How reliable are our personal memories, our personal stories? Do we alter them over time to fit what we believe or what we wanted to have happen? Do we retell them in a different light to make ourselves the hero or to appear better? Are we selective in what we remember? When your friends or family talk about an event does each have a different memory of what happened? Why?

### **POST PERFORMANCE QUESTIONS**

1. How are design elements (set, costumes, lights and sound) used to show the size of Maycomb? How does the set create a sense of time that is fluid, moving from past to present and back again?
2. How would you describe Atticus Finch? What does Scout learn about her father as the play unfolds?
3. Why do you think the writer created Boo Radley as a character in the story? Is he a plot device or something more? Why do the children describe him differently than the adults? What happened in his past to make him reclusive? Why do you think he watches the children and leave them gifts?
4. How would you describe the relationships of the children to one another and with the other characters in the play? How do they interact with the different characters?
5. What do we learn about Atticus when he shoots the rabid dog? What do Scout and Jem learn about their father? How does this moment change Jem's feelings about his father?
6. Why does Atticus defend Tom Robinson? What are the reasons he gives to Scout? Do you think Atticus should have handled the situation another way? Would it have made a difference in the outcome?

7. What stops the lynch mob from what they set out to do?
8. Why did the jurors come to the verdict that they did? What were the shared values or beliefs that produced that verdict? Did you ever think they would rule in favor of Tom's innocence? What do you think would have happened if they absolved Tom of any wrongdoing? What was the reaction in the town to the verdict?
9. What does the title, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, refer to or imply?
10. Do you agree with the decision that Heck Tate makes at the end of the play in regards to Boo Radley? Why do you believe Tate makes his decision?
11. If you have read the novel by Harper Lee, what are the changes in the stage adaptation? Do they help or hinder the telling of the story?

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# ACTIVITIES

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## **ADAPTING *TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD* – STAGE TO PAGE**

1. Start by picking a scene from the play *To Kill a Mockingbird*. After reading the scene, find some key themes and character choices that you can adapt from the script to a narrative paragraph.
2. From this scene, transform what transpires on stage into a couple of paragraphs describing what happens and what the characters do actively on the stage. If you have seen the play, describe what the actors did on stage.
3. Once the first draft is written, find some areas that you can embellish. Look for moments where you can expound upon what each character is feeling or thinking in your adaptation. Are there other areas from the play that you could build upon?
4. Discuss how it was to adapt what you read or saw in the play to paragraphs. What were some of the obstacles that you faced? Why do you think it would be easier or more difficult to adapt the novel into a play?

**New Colorado Writing PG: Effectively use content-specific language, style, tone and text structure to compose or adapt writing for different audiences and purposes.**

**New Colorado Writing PG: Write with clear focus, coherent organization, sufficient elaboration, and detail.**

**New Colorado Drama and Theatre Arts PG: Employ drama and theatre skills, and articulate the aesthetics of a variety of characters and roles.**

## **PERSPECTIVE WRITING – PERSONAL NARRATIVES**

1. Take a moment from a typical day at your school; right before the morning bell rings, the morning announcements, a school wide assembly, the cafeteria at lunch, the final bell, or a football game. This should be a moment that has more than one person in attendance.
2. Have each person write a short monologue describing the moment from their perspective of the experience. Make sure the moment is appropriate for school and that you are willing to share with the rest of the class.
3. Select one of the monologues that has the most potential or detail to be the scaffolding for the rest of the class to add elements from their monologues to make it richer or more evocative.

4. Discuss the similarities and differences that arose during the process. Was there general agreement or marked differences? If they were different why? Were they subtle or obvious variations? Did the class agree on what was important to include and why? If not how would the elimination of some elements change the way the story would be understood when read?

**New Colorado Writing PG: Articulate the position of self and others using experiential and material logic.**

**New Colorado Writing PG: Write with clear focus, coherent organization, sufficient elaboration, and detail.**

## **CHANGE THREE THINGS**

1. Students line up in two lines facing each other so that each person has a partner who is standing across from them. One row is A and the other is B.
2. Tell the group that they will have 30 seconds to observe their partners. At the signal, they will turn their backs to each other.
3. While their backs are turned, each person must change three things about their appearance. All changes must be visible. This can be simple; taking off a shoe, switching their hair style or, more difficult yet, removing an earring.
4. At the signal, the two rows turn back and face each other. They have two minutes to figure out what their partner changed.
5. Discuss which were easy changes to spot and which were more difficult. How many people caught all three changes?
6. Discuss how the perceptions of some of the characters in *To Kill a Mockingbird* change from their first impressions.

**New Colorado Drama and Theatre Arts PG: Employ drama and theatre skills, and articulate the aesthetics of a variety of characters and roles.**

## **COLUMBIAN HYPNOSIS**

1. Have the students pair up and stand two feet from each other. Student A places the palm of his/her hand six to eight inches from Student B's face. **THE STUDENTS ARE NOT TO TOUCH AT ANY TIME** and the exercise should be performed in total silence. The students are to pretend that a string runs from the palm of Student A to the nose of Student B.
2. Student A explores the space with his/her palm by moving it back and forth or up and down and around and B must follow so that imaginary string will not break. Start by having students mirror each other but then encourage movement in the space without collisions. Have a Student A manipulate Student B into grotesque shapes and images.

3. After the initial exploration, switch positions. Student B now leads Student A.
4. Discussion Questions: How did it make you feel when you were the person leading or the person following? What do you think would happen if you add another person and had to follow and lead at the same time? Where are some of the places that we see a power struggle take place in *To Kill a Mockingbird*? Where else do we see a power dynamic?

**New Colorado History PG: Analyze and practice rights, roles and responsibilities of citizens.**

**New Colorado History PG: Analyze the origins, structure, and functions of governments and their impacts on societies and citizens.**