

Tkam essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Racism, the root of many problems in times such as the 1930s, helped shape America into the country it has become.

Many small, but deafening cries were made, and it was very unfortunate that Tom Robinson (from *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee) lived in a time in which the cries were not quite loud enough. Atticus Finch, a well-known and widely respected lawyer, was obligated to undertake the difficult duty of defending a black man, Tom Robinson, against the word of two white people, Bob and Mayella Ewell. He was known to never give up and was credited to be a very good lawyer with a different approach to almost everything. Many times throughout the pre-trial period, Atticus wanted to give up and leave the hole he was digging to somebody else, but he knew if he did quit he would not be able to live with that on his conscience.

He was constantly criticized because he was defending a black man; however, he continued to endure the pain and suffering of his entire family until the trial. He went into the courtroom with every intention of serving justice, but his goal was not to acquit. Atticus Finch wanted to jar the jury and have a chance at appeal. During the most vital part of the entire case (the closing statement,) Atticus argued many different points that should have impacted the jury enough to have them doubting society's beliefs. One of the most common types of arguments that Atticus used to persuade the jury was by using shared cultural beliefs (nomos.

) He told the jury that Mayella broke an honored code of society by tempting a Negro. Atticus knew the jury could concur with him because they all believed the same that society believed, and tempting a Negro was not

acceptable. He also indicated to the jury that they should not follow the general public's assumptions about black people: they always lie, they are immortal, and they should not be trusted around women in any circumstances - because color was not important. Everybody could lie, be dishonest, and not be trusted at various points in their lives. Atticus wanted them to realize that skin tone does not determine anything and that black people were human too.

Atticus also flattered the jury by telling them that " a court is no better than each of you sitting before me on this jury. He wanted them to agree and know that they represented much more than they realized. By using this type of persuasion, Atticus was able to " jar the jury a bit" and continued on with other facts, emotions, and known experience to attain the response he was hoping to receive. Testimonies, facts, and statistics are all examples of a persuasive appeal, called logos, which Atticus used extremely well in his closing argument. The state had presented no evidence and was relying on the Ewells' false and contradicting testimonies to persuade.

Atticus wanted the jury to realize what the situation was and how it was completely unfair. There was no evidence of a black man raping a white woman, but there were two white people's testimonies against one black man's. Also, nobody called a doctor at any point in time. How could what Mayella testified be true and nobody called a doctor? Atticus was reminding the jury of how he " caught" Bob and Mayella in at least one lie.

Last but not least, Mr. Finch gave the jury an extremely significant fact: Mayella was beaten by somebody that led with their left hand. Tom's left

hand was completely disabled, but Bob Ewell was indeed left-handed. Atticus let this rest in the jury's mind and made sure they understood the importance of that fact. " The defendant is not guilty, but somebody in this courtroom is. " Atticus knew what he was talking about when he informed the jury of this.

The jury would believe him because of his previous record of finding who was guilty in any given situation (example of ethos. ) He knew that they knew who was really guilty. Atticus Finch was believable and the jury became hooked. After he began with that sentence, he delivered a remarkable set of arguments which startled the jury and people of Maycomb for quite some time. Using emotion to persuade (pathos) almost always prevails. It is an interesting feat that always has a strong effect.

For example, when Atticus told the jury that all men are created equal, he explained to them how following this statement would cause them to become more of a patriot. He also approached the jury by using guilt to make them feel horrible for the way they had treated black people and he was telling them that the time had come to end that treatment and follow the principles that America were founded on. He also ended his statement by saying, "' In the name of God, do your duty. ' Atticus was appealing to religion and asking them to do what they knew was right in order to save the life of an innocent man. Tom Robinson was innocent and every last person in the courtroom knew it. The jury believed Atticus and wanted desperately to acquit Tom, but they were too nervous about being embarrassed.

They did not want to look bad in front of their community. The jury deliberated for four hours. Four hours was an incredible amount of time and there was hope in the air for all of those who were on Tom's side. Atticus knew he had had the effect he had hoped to achieve although in the end Tom was found guilty. The fact that the jury had slight doubt and had truly deliberated was a ripple in the water. Soon, other cases would come along and extreme racism would exist for a long time, but one little ripple in the water would change the world.

Atticus' goal was to have a chance at appeal, not to acquit Tom. He knew the jury would be jarred, but not jarred enough to acquit. He only hoped that the jury would make it's own decision, and not coincide with society's. Atticus had a plan for after the trial to save the innocent soul, but all was ruined in the end. The case of Tom Robinson was "...One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.

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