

Scottsboro boys in "to kill a mockingbird" by harper lee

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" To Kill a Mockingbird" by Harper Lee inspired by the Scottsboro Boys The trial of the Scottsboro Boys is one of the most significant moments in American history. Back in 1931 a group of nine black teenage boys, also named Scottsboro Boys, were accused of raping two white women in Alabama. A fight broke out in a train and a group of white men reported they had been attacked by black teenagers. The train stopped in Scottsboro, Alabama, where the black boys were arrested by a local sheriff after two white women also accused them of rape. The two females were prostitutes and, in order to protect themselves, they claimed the boys had taken advantage of them. Although the jury had no real evidence to demonstrate the truth about the crime, the group was found guilty in a one-day trial. They were poorly defended and in the first trial, which took place in the hard years of the Great Depression, the jury convicted and sentenced eight out of nine black boys to death. This case deals with the racism and discrimination the people had at that time against the black community. The novel " To Kill a Mockingbird", written by the American author Harper Lee, takes places during the same time as the Scottsboro trial. It's said that the author got inspired by this case and created a fictional trial involving a black men, named Tom Robinson, who was accused of allegedly raping a white woman and then died trying to escape prison after being declared guilty by jury. He is defended by a very successful lawyer and father of the protagonist, Atticus Finch, who tries everything to prove Tom Robinsons innocence in front of the jury, but sadly fails in his attempt to show the truth. The history also deals with issues like prejudice, discrimination and racism against black people. There are many parallels between these two cases. First of all, they both

take place in Alabama during the great Depression, which affected most of the people in the USA. The fictional small town, in which Tom Robinson is accused and sentenced, is called Maycomb, Alabama. The group of teenagers was also arrested in a small town named Scottsboro in Alabama. At that time rape was sentenced with death or a life in prison. Another similar aspect is that the accusations are made by white women who claimed they have been raped by them. In the Scottsboro trial, two white women charged the nine boys with rape, which was a fake declaration they made only to protect themselves. As in the Tom Robinson case, he was accused by a poor white girl named Mayella Ewell. She also charged him with rape in an attempt to protect herself from the towns prejudice, because she was the one initiating the whole situation and was embarrassed about it. Therefore she made a false statement, sentencing him to a lifetime in prison or, in this case, death. Both accusations lacked of evidence to support them, but still manage to convict and sentence the black men because of the racism impregnate in people's minds at that time in the USA. It's also known that even the evidence showed that it wasn't possible or the men couldn't have been able to rape these women. Both cases are clear statements of racial injustice and prejudice against the black community. Harper Lee challenged these topics in " To Kill a Mockingbird" and was able to show the ugly truth about the people from the south, by showing that not all of the black men are bad. Most important is the difference that she creates an ideal figure of a man that truly believes in equal rights and fights for his believes. Atticus Finch, father of the protagonists, is the role model of a perfect justice system. With him the author also describes an ideal of what should be a real

or "normal" human being, one that doesn't judge without knowing both sides of the story. With these similarities we can see that Harper Lee was inspired by this case and managed to capture the essence of the significance behind the case.