

# Psychological analysis of boo radley – to kill a mockingbird essay sample

[Literature](#), [Novel](#)



I chose to do my psychological analysis on Arthur " Boo" Radley. In the beginning of the novel, he's portrayed as a frightening monster, locked up in his house to protect the citizens of Maycomb, Alabama. We are given a clear picture as to how the town of Maycomb views Book Radley. He is described as a monstrous creature, locked up in his house for years on end. We're told that he became acquainted with the wrong kind of people as a teenager and locked Mr. Conner in an outhouse to resist arrest for disturbing the peace. Instead of being sent to a state school, Mr. Radley takes him home; Boo was hidden away for 15 years.

We're then told that after those first 15 years, Boo Radley stabbed his father in the leg with a pair of scissors. This, to me, is the first inclination that Boo Radley may have been slightly mentally disabled because of the seclusion from the outside world imposed by his father. According to the novel, he randomly stabbed through his father's leg, wiped the scissors off on his pants, and resumed his activities. In order for someone to show such random fits of violence, I don't believe that he could have been completely lucid. Anyone under those kinds of conditions would most likely develop psychotic tendencies. This also demonstrates people's basic need for people.

In addition, I also believe that Boo became a recluse of his own volition. After his parents died, Boo could have left his home, as he did on few occasions. However, after the years he spent harbored in his home, I believe that he began to be almost afraid of other people after seeing the way society was outside. Innocent people were convicted of crimes; societal classes reigned supreme; men with grudges attacked innocent children. When seen through

this point of view, to someone who's been prejudiced against and gossiped about, the world is a terrifying place.

Boo Radley isn't the horribly grotesque character that the citizens of Maycomb view him as. Really, he's one of the "mockingbirds" in the story. Miss Maudie explains that mockingbirds don't do one thing but make music for people to enjoy. Loosely translated, this means that Boo Radley is a mockingbird. He is, in general, a kindhearted compassionate person, shown by the gifts he gave to Jem and Scout, and how much he obviously cared for them. But he was shot down by his community because he was a little different from the other people in society.

If my theory that he's mentally disabled is true, he has done nothing of his own consciousness to hurt anyone. He was nothing if not friendly to Jem and Scout, two of the only people that we're ever told that tries to contact him. Boo gave them gifts; he covered Scout up during the fire; he saved the children's lives from the real monster, Bob Ewell. But because of social intolerance and injustice of society, he was pegged as an evil creature and the topic of horror stories told to small children. As one of the mockingbirds in the story, along with Tom Robinson and Atticus Finch, he was gossiped about and mocked while he was only trying to reach out to someone, to have someone as a friend. He finds that in Scout, who sees him as a human being and not the creature that Maycomb paints him as.

In conclusion, Atticus says to get into someone's skin and walk around in it to try to understand where they're coming from. That's what I've tried to do

in this paper, putting myself in Boo Radley's shoes as if he was, as my theory says, mentally disabled. For a person to be shut up inside his entire life with no friends or inner contacts, society must have seemed frightening to Boo. People are afraid of what they don't know, so instead of trying to find the truth, they create their own truths. While the citizens of Maycomb fabricated their truths with fragments of stories and gossip, Scout was innocent enough to create her opinion based on moral values. That's how we can see that Boo was really a person, a human being, and not the cannibalistic creature we're shown.