

I think there's just one
kind of folks



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

" Racism: It is social, not 'natural'; it is general, not 'personal'; and it is tragically effective. Racism is a social pathology- a cultural disease that prevails because it allows one segment of society to empower itself at the expense of another," -Racism by Albert Memmi. All " ism's" are the result of an inferiority complex, and a desire for some form of dominance. It is sometimes a learned behavior passed down from parent to child. Most-likely, those learned " ism's" are outgrown, while those caused by some form of feeling inferior become worst as failures to succeed in life. If one lacks the skills or confidence to better themselves, their only alternative is to attack someone else or some other group of people, to make themselves appear better than they truly are. In *To Kill A Mockingbird* by Harper Lee, the subject of racism is very prevalent throughout the novel, as it occurs through the early 1900's in southern America. Racism was the norm for townsfolk of Maycomb, and children were raised and taught to be prejudice. Atticus Finch, a lawyer and a single father to Jem and Scout Finch, was the " one percent" that had a different outlook regarding blacks. Under the influence of Atticus, Jem and Scout adopted that outlook of their father, but their views are conflicted by other town's folk of Maycomb. Throughout the narrative, Jem and Scout go through various instances regarding racism and discrimination. Therefore, those instances shape and develop their views and morals. Prime instances of racism are best demonstrated through the characters and events of Calpurnia, Dolpus Raymond, and Tom Robinson. Prior to the Tom Robinson case, Atticus had to go out of town on business, leaving Calpurnia to take Jem and Scout to church with her. When they attend the colored church named First Purchase, Calpurnia get criticized by a lady named Lula saying "You ain't got no business bringin' white chillun here - they got their

church, we got our'n. It is our church, ain't it, Miss Cal?' Calpurnia said, 'It's the same God, ain't it?' Jem said, 'Let's go home, Cal, they don't want us here'-(Page 158). From Calpurnia bringing the children to First purchase, there is a bit of discrimination coming from the other side. Just like whites not wanting blacks coming into their church, Lula did not want white people coming into First purchase. This event is significant because it shows that racism is not only done by whites, but by blacks too. Additionally, discrimination is presented through the relationship of Calpurnia and Aunt Alexandra. When Aunt Alexandra arrived at the Finches house she abruptly said, " Put my bag in the front bedroom, Calpurnia"-(Page 169). The first time Aunt Alexandra appears in the novel, we instantly see the lack of respect she has for Calpurnia. It was not a request, but an order and it was not preceded by any recognition of Calpurnia as a person without greeting. Aunt Alexandra was not treating Calpurnia like a person, but merely like a servant/slave. Dolphus was a notorious character in the novel, and seemed to enjoy the notoriety of his reputation in Maycomb. When Scout and Dill meet up with him outside the courthouse on the day of the trial, Dolphus exposes his big secret to them. When Dolphus offers Dill a sip to calm his stomach, Dill releases the straws and grinned " Scout, it's nothing but Coca-Cola,"-(Page 267). Dolphus Raymond cons the whole town by believing that the bottle inside the paper bag he carries is whisky. Therefore, by doing that, he makes the whole town believe that he is a drunk. Dolphus explains to the children why he does this by saying, " I try to give 'em a reason, you see. It helps folks if they can latch onto a reason. When I come to town, which is seldom, if I weave a little and drink out of this sack, folks can say Dolphus Raymond's in the clutches of whiskey-that's why he won't change his ways. He can't

help himself, that's why he lives the way he does." - (Page 268). Mr. Raymond lives a double life to cover his feelings for black women. He goes head first against society with his choices in regards to his personal life. Within a racist and segregated society, he has chosen to be with and have children with a black woman. Mr. Raymond pretends to drink so that others will avoid him, rather than causing uproar in the town. Believing him to be a drunk, they assume that his verboten "ludicrous poor choice" in his relationship is a result of his drunkenness. He comes from a very good white family, but he has to go so low to find desire and fulfillment from his black mistress. His white mistress even got pregnant and gives birth to children, so it is right to say that she is his second wife. In fact, his white wife hadn't made an official divorce with him, so he was still legally married. So, Dolphus Raymond had actually committed bigamy, which is a serious offense and against the law of conduct. A man trapped in a system that won't let a man make his own choices. He simply prefers black people to whites. The town leaves him alone and this is how he wants it. Tom Robinson was in a very unfortunate position. He was a black man, yet here is a white woman who was coming on to him, expressing her loneliness and her desire to be with him. As Tom Robinson gave his testimony, Scout thought to herself, "It came to me that Mayella Ewell must have been the loneliest person in the world," - (Page 256). So Tom, no matter what, is in a bad situation. If he accepts her advances, he is being unfaithful to his wife, breaking social norms. Mayella probably thought that it was an easy situation; she might have thought that because Tom was a black man, that he would be flattered at her attentions, and be all for it. There was no possible way a black man would reject her. So, when he rejects her, she is doubly offended. Mayella Ewell kissing Tom

Robinson was a serious offense as a white woman, which had tempted a black man. Likewise to Dolphus Raymond, being or having a relation with strictly forbidden in Maycomb. It was known that " Tom was a dead man the minute Mayella Ewell opened her mouth and screamed,"-(Page 232).

Correspondingly, even though Tom had a solid defense, he did not even have a chance. Atticus advised his children by telling them, " The one place where a man ought to get a square deal is in a courtroom, be he any color of the rainbow, but people have a way of carrying their resentments right into a jury box. As you grow older, you'll see white men cheat black men every day of your life, but let me tell you something and don't you forget it - whenever a white man does that to a black man, no matter who he is, how rich he is, or how fine a family he comes from, that white man is trash," -(Page 295).

Atticus based his defense of Tom Robinson primarily on the fact that Mayella Ewell must have been beaten by a man who used his left hand, and Tom's crippled left arm and hand ruled him out. Tom's left arm, was injured in a cotton gin accident when he was younger. Sheriff Tate had testified that Mayella's bruises were on the right side of her face, meaning she must have been struck by a left fist; and bruises were found all the way around her neck, undoubtedly caused by the use of two good hands. Atticus further proved that Bob Ewell wrote with his left hand, leaving him, in Atticus's mind, as the prime suspect. Though the case was in Tom's favor he had no chance at all. A white man's word was always taking over a black man. No matter how low class or trashy a white man was, blacks were on the low of the social hierarchy. Calpurnia, Dolphus Raymond, and Tom Robinson tremendously presented preeminent representations of racism and discrimination through their characters and predicaments. Calpurnia brought

Jem and Scout to First Purchase only to be shunned by Lula. Furthermore, Calpurnia is treated to be a slave by Aunt Alexandra. In like manner, Dolphus Raymond deceived the whole town to believe that he was a drunk, due to dissent, so to live his double life with a black woman was made possible. Comparatively to Dolphus Raymond, Mayella's lust for Tom Robinson was not acceptable, which led to the beating of her by her father. Although Atticus had a strong defense, Bob Ewell's word was taken over a black man's word; no matter how trashy Bob was. By Jem and Scout living through those various experiences concerning racism and discrimination, those instances shaped and developed their views and morals. From the start of children, these cultural diseases will not prevail and will not, at the expense of another, allow one segment of society empower itself.