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In our society, people are always being treated unfairly whether it is or is not intentional. In the book “ To Kill a Mockingbird” by Harper Lee, the character Tom Robinson was a hardworking crippled Black man living in 1930’s America. He was convicted for raping a White young woman named Mayella Ewell. Throughout the course of the book, Robinson was consistently victimized by the citizens of his predominantly White town of Maycomb, Alabama. Tommy Lee Hines is a 26-year-old mentally retarded citizen of Decatur, Alabama living in America in 1978. He was convicted for the rape of a White woman.

Hines is an unaware victim in the struggle for civil rights. Tom Robinson and Tommy Lee Hines are good examples of people who have been judged unfairly over things they could not control. Their race, ability to express themselves, and verdicts in their trials are reasons why they are targets of unfair judgement. Being a Black man in Maycomb, Alabama was difficult; Maycomb was a racist town with people who did not want the Blacks to be equal to the Whites. People discriminated Robinson’s race to the point where his race was what defined his character. The Whites in Maycomb had a mentality that all blacks were not to be trusted.

This affected Tom Robinson because during his rape trial his lawyer, Atticus Finch states “. . . You know the truth, and the truth is this: some Negroes lie, some Negroes are immoral; some Negro men are not to be trusted around women—black or white. But this is a truth that applies to the human race and to no particular race of men. ” [Lee, 48] Atticus was trying to say that we need to judge people as individuals rather than by their race. Robinson’s race caused him to be discriminated against by the Whites in Maycomb, in

particular Bob Ewell. Bob Ewell had seen that his daughter had kissed a Black man and was very upset.

He said " I seen that black nigger yonder ruttin' on my Mayella! " [Lee, 84] Because Robinson was Black, his race made the issue all the more serious than if she had been caught with a White man. Robinson's race affected his rights in the court. " To Kill a Mockingbird" was set in the 30s, which meant African Americans would not get full civil rights until thirty years later. This made things harder for Robinson because in an all-White court, he did not stand a chance. Like Tom Robinson, Tommy Lee Hines is also discriminated because of his race. In Hines' case, there is not a clear description of the suspect who raped the woman.

Other than the fact that he is Black, there is rather vague description. Hines is arrested in a case where it is a White woman's word over a Black man's. He happens to be at the wrong place at the wrong time. Similar to Robinson, Hines is also discriminated by the people in his town because of his race. In Decatur, there were people who do not want the freedom of Tommy Lee Hines or any Blacks in general. The Ku Klux Klan threatened Hines' church with bombs and make things harder for the Black community during the trial. They burn crosses in front of the church and yell threats.

Hines unlike Robinson has people protesting for his freedom. Although Hines is discriminated because of his race, the Black community was very supportive of him; about 25 Blacks marched from Decatur to Cullman--a 35-mile journey--while 3, 000 Whites stood on the side of the road, teasing and shouting at them. Both Robinson and Hines are to men who endure injustice they do not deserve because of their race. Tom Robinson could not express

himself freely because the jury in his trial was full of prejudice people. Only one person testified that he saw the act and that was Bob Ewell, Mayella Ewell's father.

Ewell wanted Robinson imprisoned and made up a story to "teach the Blacks a lesson". "It's time somebody taught 'em a lesson, they were gettin' way above themselves, an' the next thing they think they can do is marry us" [Lee, 187] So he couldn't see what he wanted when everyone was against him. Like Robinson, Hines is also unable to voice his options freely because he's mentally disabled. Hines has an IQ of 39 which is about the same as a 6 year old. Naturally, he wouldn't be able to explain himself in the way that could have helped him in the case. In Tom Robinson's trial, he was proven guilty; Robinson was innocent.

In the trial it was said that Mayella Ewell had a bruise on the right side of her face, meaning that she had to be struck by someone left handed. "His left arm was fully 12 inches shorter than his right, and hung dead at his side. It ended in a small shriveled hand, and from as far away as the balcony I could see that it was no use to him. 'Scout' breathed Jem. 'Scout, look! Reverend, he's crippled!'" [Lee, 186] This quote shows his innocence because Mayella testified that Tom Robinson had punched her with his left fist to her right eye, but he clearly couldn't have: because his whole arm was crippled.

In the story, Robinson explains the events that happened on the day of the supposed rape with the most details he can and there were no holes in his story that might suggest he is lying. This shows Mayella Ewell in a deceitful person, further proving Robinson's innocence. Tom Robinson said in his testimony, "She reached up and kissed me on the side of my face. She says

she never kissed a grown man before and she might as well kissed a nigger. She says 'kiss me back nigger. ' I say Miss Mayella lemme outa here and I tried to run but she got her back to the door and I'd had to push her.

I didn't wanta harm her Mr. Finch and I say lemme pass, but just when I say it Mr. Ewell yonder hollered though the window. " This shows that Tom wanted to leave Ewell's house but Ewell did not allow Tom Robinson to do so. It also shows that Robinson had no intention of doing anything sexual with Mayella. Like Tom Robinson, Tommy Lee Hines also has an unfair trial. In Hines' case, the jury found Hines guilty and the judge sentenced him to 30 years of imprisonment. In the rapes, the suspect drove a car, returned the woman to her home, backed the car up and abandoned it.

Steve Wynn, a friend of Hines, said " He can't even steer a bicycle. " Tom Robinson and Tommy Lee Hines are good examples of people who have been judged unfairly over things they could not control. Their race, inability to express themselves, and verdicts in their trails are reasons why they are targets of unfair judgement. The fact that people pick on those who cannot defend themselves is shallow and mean. Our world can be a much better place if we put aside the differences of others and embraced them as human beings. God intended for us to live harmoniously together on this earth.