

To Kill a Mockingbird

Harper Lee



Harper Lee

- Nelle Harper Lee was born on April 28, 1926
- grew up in Monroeville Alabama (pop. 7000)
- youngest of 4 children



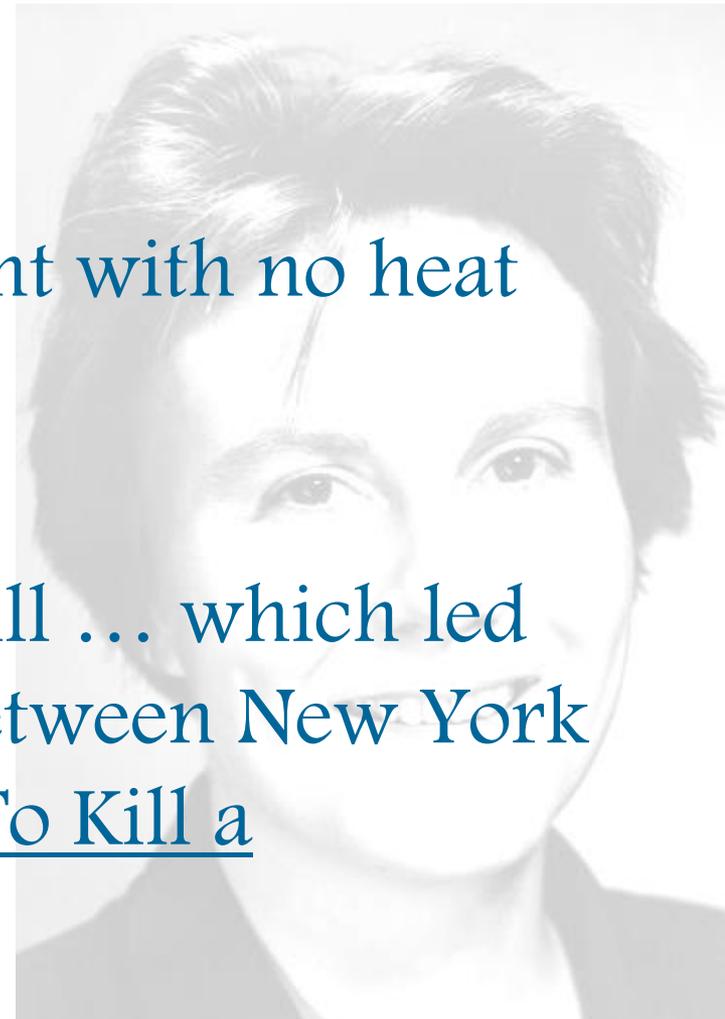
Harper Lee

- attended law school at the University of Alabama yet did not complete her degree
- studied one year at Oxford University in England
- in the 1950s, she worked as a reservation clerk with Eastern Air Lines in New York City



Harper Lee

- In order to concentrate her time on writing, she worked less hours
- moved into a cheap apartment with no heat and simple furniture
- her father suddenly became ill ... which led her to make several drives between New York and Alabama while writing To Kill a Mockingbird

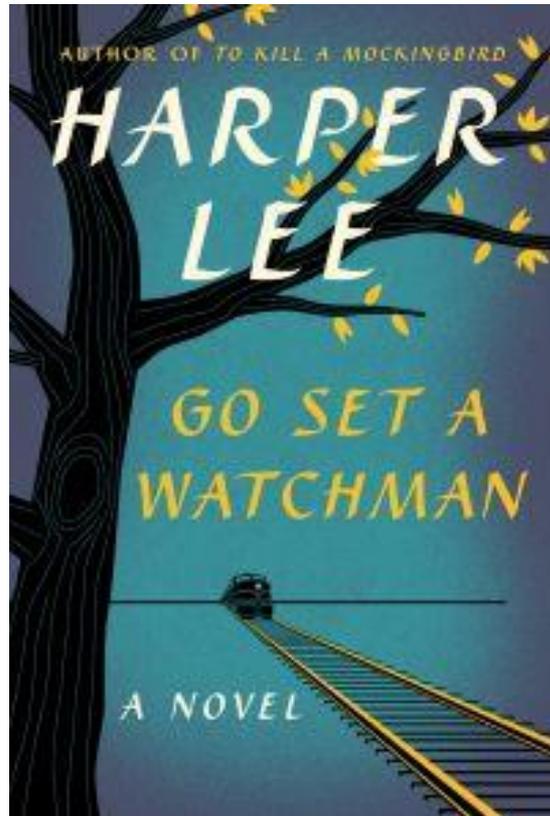


Harper Lee

- Because of the massive influence of TKAM she has won numerous awards, including a Pulitzer Prize (the highest award in literature)
- As of today, she has only published one book.



Harper Lee



- Earlier this year, it was – surprisingly – announced that a sequel to *To Kill a Mockingbird* would be released this summer.
- Go Set a Watchman is set 20 years after the original novel, and it will be released on July 14th, 2015.

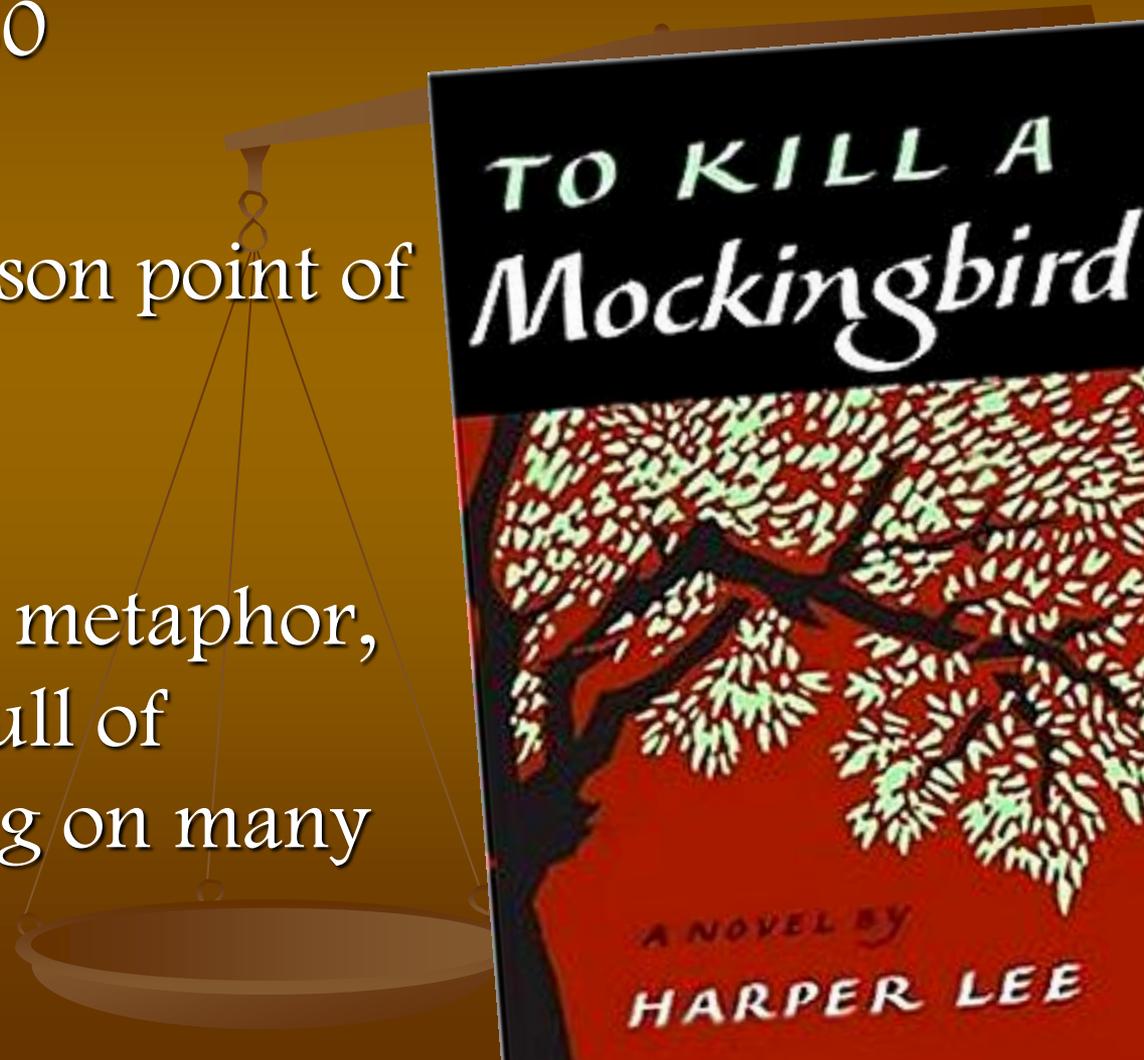




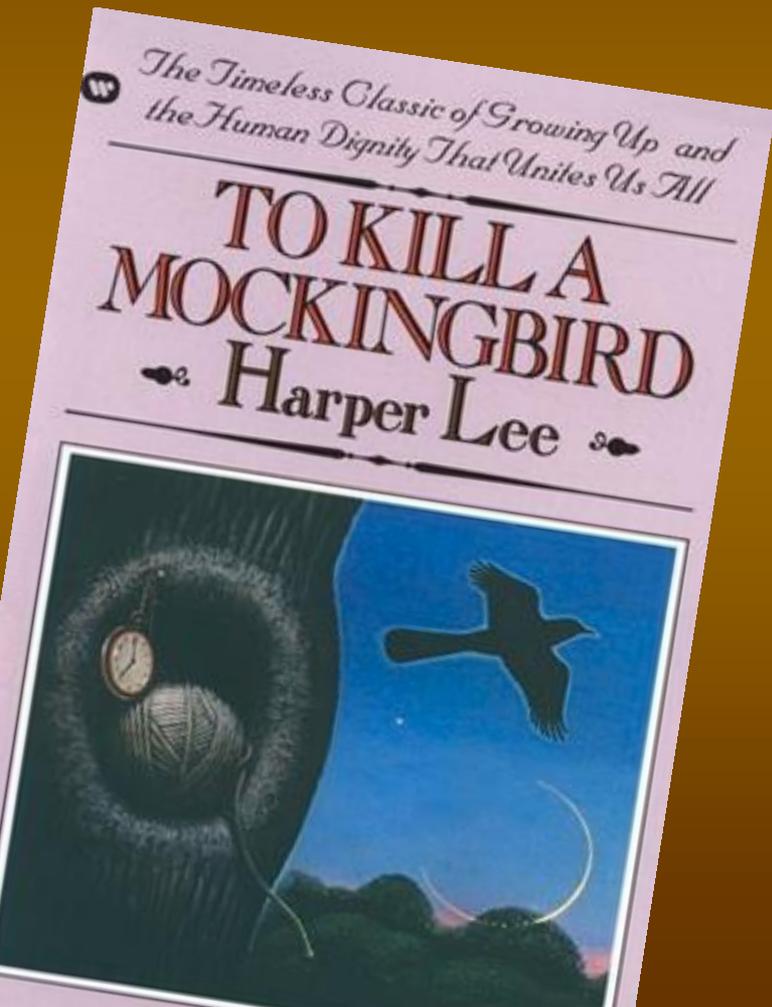


About the Novel

- published in 1960
- written in 1st person point of view
- the title itself is a metaphor, and the book is full of symbolic meaning on many levels



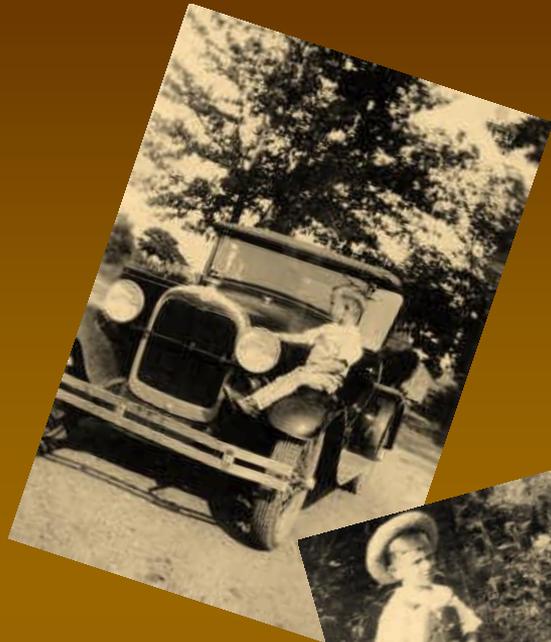
About the Novel



- Lee has said that TKAM is *not* an autobiography, but rather an example of how an author "should write about what she knows"
- Lee was a lifelong friend of author Truman Capote and based the novel's character Dill off of him

About the Novel

- takes place in fictional Maycomb County, Alabama
- takes place during the Great Depression (1930s) about 60 years after the end of the Civil War and about 30 years before the height of the Civil Rights Movement



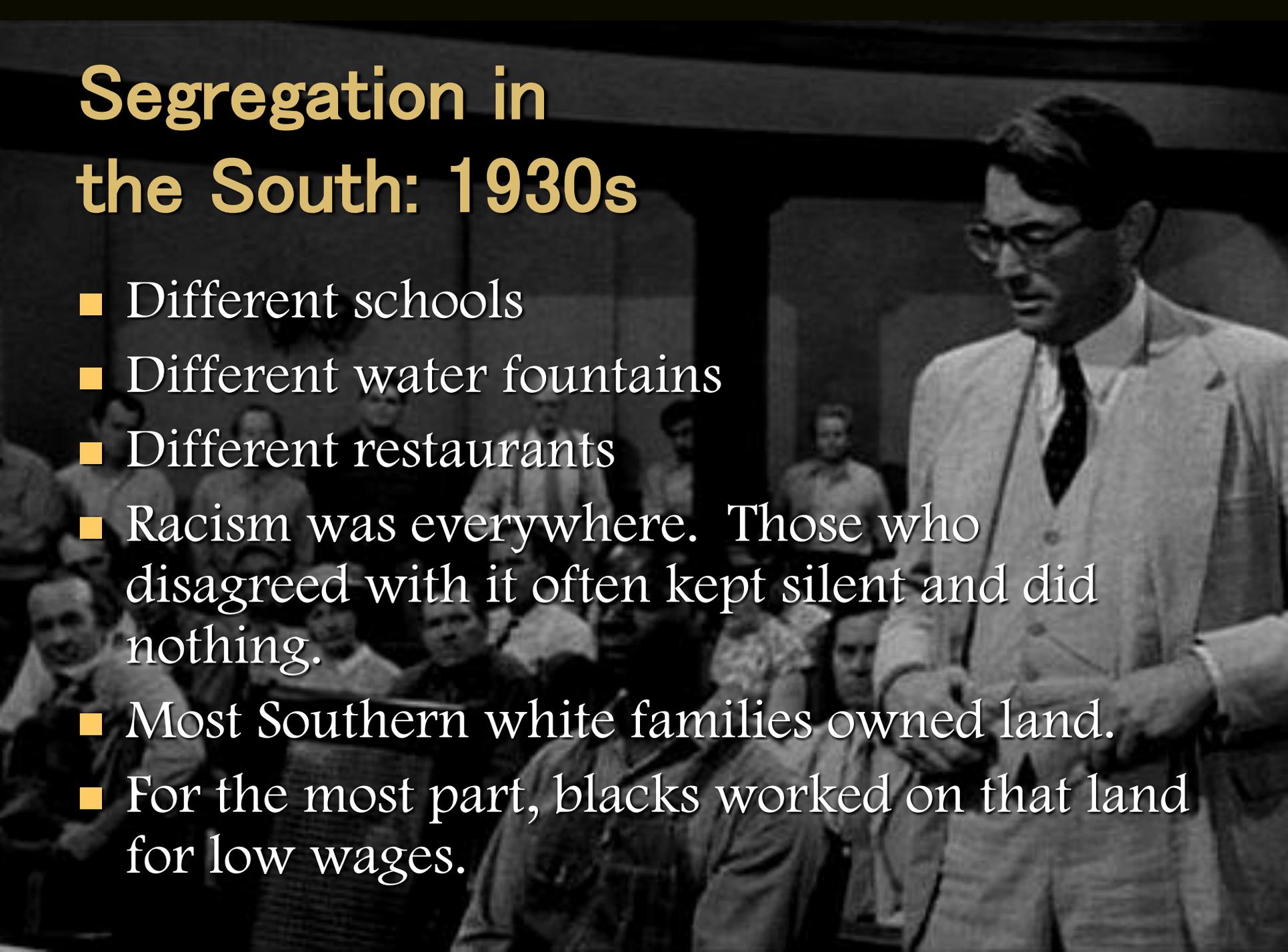
About the Novel

- TKAM has been banned many times from numerous school systems because of its racial slurs, profanity, and honest discussion of rape
- the book has been adapted into an Oscar-winning film and a play



Segregation in the South: 1930s

- Different schools
- Different water fountains
- Different restaurants
- Racism was everywhere. Those who disagreed with it often kept silent and did nothing.
- Most Southern white families owned land.
- For the most part, blacks worked on that land for low wages.



Characters



Characters

Scout is the novel's narrator. Her mother died when she was two. She is six as the story begins. She's very intelligent but impulsive.



Characters

Jem is Scout's older brother. He is ten as the story begins and thirteen at its conclusion. He matures a great deal throughout the novel.



Characters

Atticus Finch is Scout and Jem's father. He is a well-respected lawyer in town and is involved in politics. He sets a moral standard for the story with his bravery, reason, and tolerance.



Characters



Calpurnia is the trusted servant/nanny of the Finch family. She is strict but loving towards Scout and Jem. Her life is divided between two worlds. She is one of the few black people in town who can read/write, but she disguises her education when with other blacks.

Characters



Dill is neighbor kid who is only in Maycomb in the summer.

He is very sensitive, creative, and insecure. Dill has no father in his life.

Characters

- The **Cunninghams** are a very poor, stereotypically Southern family.
- The **Ewells** are another very poor, uneducated family and are social outcasts.
- **Miss Maudie Atkinson** is one of the few people in town who actively believes in equality of the races.



Themes of the Novel

- the nature of prejudice
- parents & children
- understanding others
- the meaning of courage
- growing up / maturity
- true justice and the law
- life in the South

