

To Kill a Mockingbird Mocks Maycomb and Government (An informal essay)

Poor education. No healthcare. A useless police force. A prejudiced justice system. Predatory banking. Maycomb has nothing to offer. The government was only useful for making the rich richer at the expense of the poor. What did they have? Close to nothing. The people of the town are living their lives in almost a dystopian-like society.

The town of Maycomb has an atrocious education system. The school did not teach Scout and Jem morals. The school did not teach students about the dangerous people in the world. The school did not teach them how to survive during the Great Depression. The school did not teach them a proper diet. But, luckily, the school did teach students one thing: how to become easy prey for the predators of the world. Oh, and one more benefit: The school taught them not to think critically about America.

In addition, the police and fire services are nearly pointless. When told to shoot a dog that was rumoured to have rabies, the officer handed the gun to Atticus. What is the point of a force that is supposed to protect a town, but hands its tasks to the citizens? The firefighters are no better than the officers, either. They arrived in time to prevent the fire from spreading to other houses, but were too late to save Miss Maudie's. What is the point of the firefighters if the only time they are ever needed, they let the property burn to the ground?

Furthermore, the healthcare and justice system benefits Maycomb as much as they would if they didn't exist. Simply put, there are none. The justice system is equivalent to firefighters who start the fire. Justice is supposed to be blind, yet its eyes are filled with prejudice and bias. Even when shown evidence that proves the innocence of Tom Robinson, the system only wanted to announce him guilty because of his skin.

Although the town of Maycomb suffered from the Great Depression, what about those who suffered the worst? Despite being 4 to 5 years older than Scout, Walter Cunningham was shorter than Scout and was beat up multiple times by her. Why was he stunted and weak? Four words: malnutrition and predatory banking. The Cunningham family lives and works on a farm, yet cannot put a plate on their table. During the Depression, many families who worked in farms were not able to provide food for themselves because the banks charged them money for their land--money that they were not able to pay back. Ironically, one would believe that the government would be helping out the families who suffered from extreme poverty, yet the rich became even richer.

To Kill A Mockingbird has demonstrated the many problems that occurred during the Depression. The citizens are supporting banks and governments that are a detriment to their town. They are supporting systems that cannot even fulfill their intended purposes. They are supporting systems that take from them. Maycomb is truly a dystopia.