

The Maycomb Tribune

Editorials

Robinson Verdict Decided Before Trial



Tom Robinson, who was tried for raping Mayella Ewell yesterday.

Yesterday, Tom Robinson was convicted for raping Mayella Ewell in one of the most attended trials in Maycomb County history. The evidence put forth by Atticus Finch, who lawed for Robinson, made it plain that Tom was innocent. Tom's conviction was unjust and based on things unrelated to the trial.

The evidence presented by Atticus Finch made it obvious who had beaten Mayella. Tom had only one good arm, his right, and Mayella was beaten by a left-handed man. Tom's story had nothing wrong with it except that it was socially unacceptable - a white woman kissed a black man. Mayella contradicted herself and sounded unsure. Mr. Ewell got angry whenever Atticus touched a sensitive subject - a sign of guilt. Tom did not waver in his story at all. The jury was out for several hours because of Atticus' fantastic job, yet, when it was over, Tom was in handcuffs.

Tom was convicted because he was a Negro. He was guilty because, in the minds of most Maycomb citizens, all Negroes are evil and deserve to be executed. To them, it didn't matter that Tom Robinson had never harmed anyone in anyway, only that he was black. A person's skin color, ancestry, or history should not make them better than others, and certainly should not make them guilty or innocent. This trial has shown us, this town, that we would rather protect the most disgraced white man in favor of a black one.

In the minds and hearts of the Maycomb's citizens, Tom Robinson was guilty a soon as Mayella Ewell screamed. Because of a prejudice put in them at an early age and nurtured by their environment, they knew that Tom was guilty before they knew anything about the case itself. It did not matter to them that Tom just might be a good person, that he might just have a shred of innocence in him. He was black, therefore he was guilty of all he was ever accused of.

Some think that Negroes are naturally evil and inferior. When Americans started transporting slaves from Africa, they were met with hostility and anger, and whites responded with such. This has continued long past slavery, with each side still angry with the other. It is like this today - much hostility remains between the two sides, and whites, who have power at the moment, take every opportunity to exercise that power and remind blacks who is in charge. This is exactly why Tom was decided guilty and why, when it comes down to a white vs. black case, the Negro is always guilty .

This prejudice should never decide a trial! A man's race does not make him innocent or guilty. We might as well make the very essence of being Negro a crime! The basis of good and evil does not discriminate. The court, the one place where whites and blacks are (or should be) equal, has provided a verdict on a basis that whites are superior.

This court case must be reviewed or appealed. There is no way Tom Robinson is guilty of this accusation. The verdict provided by the gentlemen of the jury is because of something that should not exist in the court of law - American discrimination. Such conviction is like the senseless killing of songbirds, who have done nothing bad to us--in fact we enjoy their music--when we hunt them for nothing but the satisfaction of killing something that cannot defend itself. It is one of the most common faults of humankind - blaming someone else for something you did.

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<http://www.glogster.com/fullofsweetness/to-kill-a-mockingbird-project/g-6memt6i3oomakhhp931quao>