

“Non-intentional Systematic Injustice: Race, Epistemic Injustice, And Systematic Prejudices in
To Kill A Mockingbird”

It has been argued that Harper Lee's *To Kill A Mockingbird* has been well received for a long time in educational settings. However, it has also been criticized for evoking racist views. It has been said that because of its racist message, it is wrongly used to teach multiculturalism views. Thus, the objection against teaching TKAM suggests that the text not only lacks the multiculturalist message, but that it is used to teach multiculturalism when its message is in fact the opposite of a multiculturalist perspective. Some have proposed that one can think about the text in light of the distinction between 'new racism and old racism' so that students and educators can talk about the negative views depicted in the text. In this paper, I argue that banning TKAM from schools is not the best we can do. However, I also reject the distinction between old racism and new racism. Rather than arguing that there are old and new ways of racism, I argue that TKAM can be read through the lenses of epistemology. This reading of TKAM provides a new way of understanding how systemic injustices operate in the social context depicted in the novel. The novel illustrates how there is a conceptual gap in the social structure of Maycomb. This conceptual gap allows the enforcement of systematic non-intentional prejudices against Tom Robinson.

TKAM has been criticized for its sentimentality and de-emphasis on issues of race. Some of the concerns raised against Lee's novel have to do with the amount of attention that it has received among schools ever since the book was published in the 1960's. Particularly, critics are worried about how the novel is valued and how this value grants it a special place in the American educational cannon. In her essay, "Why it's time schools stopped teaching *To Kill a Mockingbird*," Naa Baako Ako-Adjei argues that the sentimentalism of novel can be

misunderstood as part of real history if the story is discussed and valued as historical account of how Southern American History came about. For Ako-Adjei, *TKAM* has been traditionally valued as a kind of ‘sacred scripture.’ When narrating the way her high-school teacher approached the book, Ako-Adjei says, “my teacher, who told us she had loved the novel's message of tolerance and respect since she had read it in school, had us approach the book with the sort of reverence usually reserved for the reading of holy books” (183). Ako-Adjei suggests that, right from the start, there is a problem in the way the book is presented in schools; there is a sense that traditional interpretations of the novel and its relations to American history are not to be questioned.

For Ako-Adjei, *TKAM* is regarded in schools as an important part of American history — as a story that tells us how things were in the past and what we can learn from it —, however, this appreciation of the story comes from its sentimentalism. *TKAM*, says Ako-Adjei, inaccurately depicts how things were in Alabama in the 1930's; the story replaces the actual historical account of violent racism with a sentimentalized depiction of its white characters and of Maycomb — a fictional town in Alabama. In making this point, Ako-Adjei makes two claims. First, the novel should absolutely be removed from school canons, and secondly, that it must be properly regarded as a fiction that distorts Southern American history. *TKAM*, in that sense, is not problematic merely for its sentimental emphasis, but “because it reimagines Southern history, American history, as something far more benign than its reality” (185). That is to say, not only is there an emphasis on the sentimentality of the fictional characters, but this sentimentality is employed to ‘cover up’ the injustice of violent racism since actual historical white dominant perpetrators of injustice were not as ‘sentimental’ as depicted in the novel. As Ako-Adjei puts it: “sentimentalism tries to disguise itself as realism” (197).

One might still wonder to what extent retelling history through the sentimental lenses of a fictional child represents an important problem. For one can notice the distortion of Southern history, but the objection could be raised that, anyhow, that is what literature is about — about retelling history — and that, in the process of reimagining, some historical aspects are told in non-historical ways. In Ako-Adjei's view, however, the suggestion that, in the novel, sentimentalism is more dominant than the appropriate historical account, is especially problematic because it does not challenge the negative historical injustices of racism in America — particularly those of lynching black people, where blacks were persecuted and murdered. For Ako-Adjei, the novel's central claim is that only white poor people are capable of cruel injustices towards black people and that this is depicted in how the evilness of Bob Ewell is caricatured as a member of the 'white poor' community of Maycomb Town. Similarly, Atticus Finch, is depicted as the white civilized hero who is highly admired by the black community and always says and does the kinds of things that no actual white person would have said or done in ninety-thirty-Alabama. Ako-Adjei suggests that by implying that racial injustices are exclusively the product of poor uneducated white people, Lee's novel misrepresents the history of violent racism towards blacks in which both poor and wealthy — and even children and the media — participated in the lynching of black people. Atticus is central in making this point since he is the white civilized moral character; the character that "[embodies] the moral center of the story" (Ako-Adjei 183). Considering the misrepresentation of historical events in *TKAM* through Atticus' character, Atticus is an "improbable character" (Ako-Adjei 183), and hence, the moral of the story is rather 'sentimentalized' as opposed to a good model of morality regarding racism.

To begin with, the question of the relevance of historical accuracy in literature can be reconsidered when responding to Ako-Adjei's thesis. Although the title of her essay suggests the

banning of *TKAM* in schools, Ako-Adjei cannot categorically maintain such a strong claim. One can understand the claim that history is distorted in the novel, and that the immediate implication is that it does not challenge negative practices of the past, but what does not follow, I must argue, is that the teaching of the book as a fiction — a reading that does recognize the aspects in which it may misrepresent history — are necessarily enforcing negative prejudices against black people, nor this can potentially lead students to learn how to be violent. Ako-Adjei would disagree with my objection. This is because she thinks that the teachings of anti-historical fiction — that is, the teachings of *TKAM* in her view — are equitable with the teachings of anti-historical ideologies. That is to say, ideologies that attempt to represent history, but fail to do so and, instead, offer sentimentalized statements, are equally ‘bad’ as literary fiction that misrepresents history and offers sentimentalized scenes, characters or speech instead. Ako-Adjei emphasizes this point in her final remarks: “[t]hat *Go Set a Watchman* reveals that *To Kill a Mockingbird* was apologia for prolonging white supremacy, will make no difference to those who teach *To Kill a Mockingbird* as gospel, rather than a mere work of fiction” (200). Ako-Adjei, identifies the teaching of gospel (ideologies) with the ideologies of *Go Set a Watchman*, and similarly, the fiction of *TKAM* with fiction. Thus, Ako-Adjei’s point is that if *TKAM* is taught in schools as a fiction, this would not make any difference from teaching it as a negative prejudicial ideology. Since Ako-Adjei considers that “*Go Set a Watchman*” is a text that more clearly depicts Atticus’ racist ideologies, then her argument concludes that the ideology of “*Go Set a Watchman*” is the same underlined in the more sentimentalized fictional character of Atticus in *TKAM*. As a result, both texts are equally prejudicial.

Ako-Adjei’s main claim, however, is a historical claim. Making the connection between the negative ideologies of one text (*Go Set a Watchman*) with another (*TKAM*) is quite different

from saying that a literary fiction enforces negative prejudices of the past on its own. To be fair, that the teaching of the ‘fiction’ *TKAM* in relation to *Go Set a Watchman*, along with a high degree of fanatic veneration, can lead to teaching negative prejudices of historical context where both texts were written, does not suggest that the teaching with scrutinized and careful reading of *TKAM* alone can lead to the learning important lessons about such prejudices.

Without the connection between the distinct representations of Atticus in both *TKAM* and *Go Set a Watchman*, all that follows from Ako-Adjei’s claim is that when teaching *TKAM*, educators must acknowledge that the text does not properly represent the historical lynchings. Atticus’ representation in *TKAM*, however, can still be taught as fiction.

The emphasis on Atticus’ misrepresentation of the Southern white American men of the 1930’s rather suggests a kind of ‘sentimental’ interpretation of history. If the point about Atticus’ misrepresentative character is employed to argue that he is an “improbable character” (Ako-Adjei 182) this, almost immediately, raises the question of ‘what makes Atticus an impossible character?’ The answer proposed in Ako-Adjei’s essay does not seem sufficient when put into further consideration. As mentioned, her claim that civilized characters, like Atticus, were part of the mobs involved in the lynchings does not reject that some white men might as well have had Atticus’ moral sense — even if this was not expressed in the sentimentalized way Atticus does. The assumption underlying Ako-Adjei’s point about the misrepresentative nature of Atticus would be that all Southern white men in the 1930’s were ‘racist’ and ‘violent.’ Notice that this claim entails a conjunction. If one of the two conditions (racist and violent) does not hold, the entire claim fails. Atticus does not meet these two conditions; he is racist — more explicitly in *Go Set a Watchman* —, but he is clearly not violent, which is evident in his lack of skill when shooting a firearm. Unless Ako-Adjei wants to claim that Atticus is both racist and

violent, and not just racist, the assumption that holds her point about the impossibility of Atticus' character in ninety-thirty-Alabama fails. For it is not implausible to think that some white men were racist and yet did not participate in lynching. It appears that the only way to maintain the claim that 'all white men are racist and violent' in *TKAM*, is to appeal to history in a sentimentalized fashion. Ako-Adjei's appeal to the lynchings is a sentimental parameter that tells us that given what some white men have done, there cannot be at least one single person who did not wish to participate in violent racial injustices in the 1930's, and hence Atticus (a white man) cannot be exempt from this rule.

There is also an issue about literary theory at place regarding the assumption that 'all white men are racist and violent.' The claim about the misrepresentation of history in fiction — through Atticus' character — also entails that history has objective truths. This is a view that has been challenged by new historicism. A brief consideration of the new historicist's view can help one understand the kind of claim that Ako-Adjei is making. Among the diverse pool of opinions of what new historicism is about, Lois Tyson's view particularly challenges the notion that there is objectivity to the historical facts: "questions asked by traditional historians and by new historicists are quite different...traditional historians ask, 'What happened?' and 'What does the event tell us about history?'" In contrast, new historicists ask, 'How has the event been interpreted?' and 'What do the interpretations tell us about the interpreters?'" (278). For Tyson, new historicism is concerned with history as a matter of interpretation — a matter of a social construct — rather than with rendering an account of the actual fact or event. Literary works, which are concerned with the retelling of stories or history, must be interpreted, I would argue, primarily through the lenses of new historicism. However, my aim in bringing the new historicism view to the discussion is to suggest that Ako-Adjei citing of American history is not a

traditional historical claim, but rather a claim that appeals to the new historicist perspective. In discussing the lynchings in Southern America, historians do not imply the assumption that all white men that were racist were also violent towards black people. For instance, in describing the lynchings, Richard Piroff says, “[t]ypically, the victims were hung or burned to death by mobs of White vigilantes, frequently in front of thousands of spectators, many of whom would take pieces of the dead person's body as souvenirs to help remember the spectacular event” (318). When describing the worst injustices of the white mobs, the claim that there could not be at least one white man that did not engage in these mobs is not stated by historians. Ako-Adjei's appeal to history, as suggested, does imply the universal claim that all whites were racist and violent. Thus, Ako-Adjei's point rather than historical — an account of history as ‘is’ — is interpretative in nature. It is the retelling of how things might have been in relation to one's feelings towards the actual historical event. If my suggestion is correct, the point of Atticus' misrepresentation of history also fails in this respect, since the historical basis upon which is grounded, is not a traditional historical claim. Atticus' character in *TKAM*, in that sense, does not misrepresent history, since Ako-Adjei's grounding for making her point is anti-historical' (it appeals to new historicism); it is a sentimentalized interpretation of the historical fact, and so it does not apprehend historical objective truths of the events in the 1930's.

I have suggested that the historical appeal of Ako-Adjei's essay is not sufficient to make the stronger claim that *TKAM* must be banned. However, my aim is not to deny the racism implied in *TKAM*, nor to suggest that the novel must be taught in schools while ignoring — or worse enforcing — the racist aspects of the text. Rather, the view that I purpose is that, though prejudicial in the sense that it enforces a ‘white sided’ understanding of racism, *TKAM* can be taught in schools by addressing how systemic injustices take place in the text. By banning *TKAM*

from schools, in contrast, we miss the opportunity to address the same reasons that have granted *TKAM* a privileged place in the American educational system. Namely, systems of knowledge grounded upon negative prejudices. Furthermore, there are also practical reasons for supporting non-traditional ways of teaching *TKAM*. It is already part of our American canon. Like the Bible, it cannot simply be removed from culture. However, one can take this as an opportunity to address the problems with traditional views that enforce negative prejudices. The Bible's negative prejudices against women, for instance, are not sufficient reason to think that there is nothing to be said about such prejudices, nor can it be denied that addressing the problems with the Bible's teachings can be beneficial for our understanding as to why traditional prejudicial views have been ingrained in parts of our culture.

In his essay, "Teaching To Kill A Mockingbird today," Michael Macaluso makes the point that *TKAM* should be taught in schools through the lenses of the notions of 'old racism' and 'new racism.' In light of these two binary notions, Macaluso suggests that *TKAM* has been traditionally read through the lens of old racism without considering its contrasting view of new racism. Another issue with the traditional one-sided reading of *TKAM* through the lens of 'old racism' is that it has been taught as a reading of multiculturalism in schools. For Macaluso, the idea that *TKAM* is appropriate for teaching multiculturalism is problematic since the book itself is told through a white voice — a white dominant perspective that tells us what racism means to white people. As Macaluso puts it, the text "marginalizes its black characters to validate and tell a story by, about, and for its white protagonists (and intended readers)" (280). Similarly, this white dominant view is discussed through the lens of old racism. Thus, traditional ways of teaching *TKAM* render a reading of the text that is problematic not only for its exclusion of black perspectives, but also because the one-sided discussion of the text through the lens of old racism

creates the notion that “intentional racism, whether spoken (i.e., the use of the N word) or acted on through violence, is the only way racism can exist, in the novel and/or in our communities today” (qtd in Macaluso 283). In that sense, students and educators can get the misleading impression that that racism is a practice that has been overcome, and that perhaps — which Ako-Adjei rightly rejects — it has been overcome in virtue of our educational development. That is to say, that racism is nowhere to be found in our post-modern civilized society.

Macaluso provides five different aspects for defining the notions of ‘old racism’ and ‘new racism.’ In defining these views, I would focus on two aspects that are relevant to my project and which I suggest are central to understand the views in question. Old racism is defined as “a system of prejudice and supremacy [that] works when visible” (Macaluso 282). In contrast, new racism is defined as “a system of power and domination [that] works best when invisible” (Macaluso 282). The suggestion of this distinction is that there is a kind of racism that predominated the way racial injustices operated in the 1930’s (old racism), and similarly, a kind of racism that predominates in our current time’s racial injustices (new racism). This is not to imply, says Macaluso, that there is no ‘old racism’ in today’s society, nor that there was no new racism in the 1930’s, otherwise, Macaluso’s claim that literature historically situated in the 1930’s must be read through the lenses of new racism would fail. That is to say, if new racism were exclusive of our post-modern time, it would not be appropriate to contrast it with racial injustices of the 1930’s, in which case, old racism would be the only lens appropriate for interpreting the racial injustices of the 1930’s narrated in *TKAM*.

Another implication of the distinction between ‘old racism’ and ‘new racism’ has to do with the individual level through which it operates. According to the view discussed by Macaluso, old racism operates at the individual level. It operates through individuals who, for

instance, act upon black people violently by lynching them or calling them by the ‘N’ word. Prejudices are palpable and enforced by individuals. In that sense, ‘old racism’ is visible as it is directly instantiated through practical injustices of certain groups, such as white people of the 1930’s. In contrast, new racism, Macaluso would argue, is systematic and it operates through social institutions or social empowered groups, but it is non-agential — hence, this leads to the suggestion that it is invisible. It operates by concentrating the power, resources and knowledge into white segregated groups in virtue of their race. That is to say, the power, resources, and knowledge are distributed as the result of an unjustified privilege.

As recognized by Macaluso himself, the old-new racism distinction is problematic. As mentioned, Macaluso claims that the main issue with the distinction is that it can lead to notions of “overt racism” (Macaluso 282). I argue that the distinction is problematic in a different respect. The ‘old-new’ racism distinction is not a viable way for understanding ‘systemic injustices.’ Because of the way it is presented, it turns out that the notion of ‘old racism’ is more coherent than the notion of ‘new racism.’ The notion of ‘new racism’ presupposes that there is no prejudice being enforced by individuals; it assumes that, because it is a systematic problem of socially controlling power, knowledge and resources, there is no agency involved. New racism presents the injustice being done to black people as a purely systematic problem, where the system creates the injustice on its own, without any subject directly operating the injustice onto black people.

Removing the prejudice from the systematic injustice of new racism creates the impression that there is also no agent that is part of the problem as we tend to think of prejudices as something that belongs to individual agents and not to systems. Further, removing the prejudice from systemic injustices is problematic because it weakens any sense of injustice

regarding racial injustices. The weakened sense of injustice in the notion of new racism is evident in current scholarship. Macauloso points out that “[a]nalyzing *TKAM* from this perspective is difficult. First, it is just difficult to see the structural aspects of new racism in any instance” (283). Naming the “structural aspects of new racism” is certainly difficult if the suggestion is that new racism, when conceived as a kind of systematic structural power, is free of prejudice. This is clear in Macaluso’s discussion of new racism in *TKAM*. For instance, when explaining how new racism is a system of power and domination, Macaluso says that “Tom becomes an othered object and similarly pitied through the eyes of Atticus and Scout. The entire story is told through white eyes” (284). The point is not discussed in depth, but one can wonder to what extent this is an example of an injustice. It appears to me that, generally, the reason why people care about discussing racism is because it is ‘unjust,’ and not merely because it is a theoretical ‘structural problem.’ In saying that Tom Robinson (a black person) is objectified from a white standpoint, so that his story is told through a white perspective rather than a black perspective, one can see that Atticus and other white characters are not acting upon Tom’s agency in any significant way that can be considered an ‘injustice.’ The opposite might be the case. Atticus is Tom’s lawyer, and despite Atticus’ racism, he defends Tom in court. If Atticus had actually obtained Tom’s charges as absolved, he would be read as a lawyer that made justice. Saying that Atticus tells Tom’s life through a white perspective would not change the fact that Atticus acts justly. One is not sued for pitying other people through a white perspective; there is nothing problematic in doing so. In contrast, there is a problem in viewing races through negative prejudices, and conditioning our actions upon negative prejudices. People care about racism because in either agential or systematic cases of racism, there are negative prejudices in place. Racism, of any kind, is not “grounded in individualized, intentional displays or practices

of discrimination” (Macaluso 282). Rather, unjust racial displays and its operating structures are grounded upon negative prejudices.

For purposes of clarification, it might be worth addressing the notion of multiculturalism before further elaboration of the point about negative prejudices and racism. Clarifying the notion of multiculturalism illuminates our understanding of the role of *TKAM* in multiculturalist discussions. Roughly, *TKAM* is not a multiculturalist text. In making this point, I agree with Macaluso’s point that text excludes black perspectives. When thinking about multiculturalism, one thinks about inclusion. In other words, the point about why diversity of culture is relevant insofar as it ‘includes’ all cultures in some way, and avoids excluding any group from larger societies. Philosophically speaking, it is agreed that the way through which cultures, and so their ideas, are integrated must not be exclusive:

Proponents of multiculturalism find common ground in rejecting the ideal of the “melting pot” in which members of minority groups are expected to assimilate into the dominant culture. Instead, proponents of multiculturalism endorse an ideal in which members of minority groups can maintain their distinctive collective identities and practices. (Song)

Considering our proposed interpretation of *TKAM* that the text is told through a white dominant perspective, and that in doing so, the black perspective is integrated into the dominant white voice of the text, one can see that *TKAM* is not a multiculturalist text. Rather, it is a text, which in the best case scenario, tells a kind of ‘melting pot’ perspective of blackness — a non-exclusive black perspective. The old-new racism distinction, as suggested, does not help to read *TKAM* as a multiculturalist text. If anything, the implications of such distinction allow us to see how systematic injustice is grounded. Teaching *TKAM* is not important because it is a text about

multiculturalism; it is important because it shows what a society that lacks multiculturalism looks like, and how prejudices operate.

In light of the consideration that *TKAM* is not a text about multiculturalism, I argue that the text must be taught for discussing how negative prejudices operate as systemic injustices. I propose a different kind of distinction that takes the relevant aspects of Macaluso's discussion of racism. This should expand our understanding of prejudice and systemic injustices. There are two kinds of racism: intentional racism and non-intentional racism. The relevant assumption regarding 'new racism' is that there is a greater institution — in the form of social organizations, culture, set of beliefs, etc— which is the antecedent of certain social behaviors, and these behaviors are carried out by individuals who are members of the greater social group. Individuals and their institutions entail a dependent relationship. One cannot operate without the other in a social environment. Contrary to Macaluso's view that structural power is 'invisible,' I suggest that it is visible and instantiated through individuals who are part of greater social groups and their structures. The notion of intentional racism entails the kinds of racism that are acted upon by embracing negative prejudices. Non-intentional racism is acted upon without being aware of the enforced negative prejudice and its socio-systematic nature. In that sense, non-intentional is not the same as 'unintentional,' since the latter suggests that there is no intention from the subject, which can diminish her agency and responsibility. In contrast, non-intentional racism suggests that there is an agent who is responsible and aware of her unjust actions, though she is not aware of the negative prejudices being enforced. I will focus on discussing non-intentional racism as I think that that is the primary operative mode of racism in *TKAM*. To make this point, I rely on Miranda Fricker's views on epistemology and injustice, and I use Robin DiAngelo's

social theory of ‘white fragility’ to refine a theoretical issue in Fricker’s epistemological grounding.

In her book, *Epistemic Injustice*, Miranda Fricker addresses the issue of speaker credibility. The main concern of Fricker’s project underlines the idea that, in terms of testimony, when the hearer does not grant a fair degree of credibility to the speaker based upon a prejudice, “the speaker is wrongfully undermined in her capacity as a knower” (Fricker 17). In that sense, there are two main kinds of injustices that Fricker addresses: testimonial injustice, and hermeneutical injustice. Roughly, testimonial injustice refers to the notion that, in any testimonial exchange between a speaker and a hearer, the hearer has the task of granting a degree of credibility to the speaker, and this can result in either a credibility excess, or a credibility deficit. One of Fricker’s examples has to do with the student-professor relationship. For instance, a student (hearer) can give a credibility excess to the professor (speaker) and reserve her feedback to herself – not communicating her knowledge to the professor. By not communicating her knowledge, the student gives a credibility excess to the professor, and yet the professor is negatively affected as she misses out on new knowledge. Similarly, if the professor (hearer) gives a credibility deficit to the student (speaker), and does not ask the student questions that recognize her as an active capable carrier of knowledge, the credibility deficit given to the student results in a negative effect to the student as her capacity as a knower is undermined. Thus, credibility excess and deficit are not inheritably bad, but rather, they can have negative and even positive effects depending on the context. Fricker argues, then, that there can be a testimonial injustice when, in addition to the credibility deficit, the hearer employs the deficit in virtue of a negative identity prejudice. For instance, if the professor grants a credibility deficit to the student (speaker) because of the student’s race color. This constitutes, says Fricker, a testimonial

injustice in the strict sense as the credibility deficit is enforced through a “negative identity prejudice” (35).

Broadly, hermeneutical injustice is similar to the idea of testimonial injustice in the sense that there has to be a negative identity prejudice associated to the speaker, but hermeneutical injustice differs in that the injustice of the prejudice is not imposed by a hearer directly, but it is rather a societal construct—that is to say, it is systematic. Since the focus of hermeneutical injustice is not on the injustice caused by a certain person (hearer), Fricker suggests that the important point is that the system is grounded on a collective construct – a white male dominant construct, for instance –, then the problem lies in the lack of hermeneutical resources of speakers. In other words, in a given social systematic construct, certain undermined speakers lack the hermeneutical resources to fully conceptualize social injustices being employed against them. For instance, Fricker cites the example of Carmita Wood. Carmita was an employee at Cornell University in the 1970’s; she was harassed by a faculty member and quit her job after being denied a transfer to a new department at the school. When Carmita applied to unemployment benefits, she had to provide a reason for leaving her employment at Cornell in the application. The notion of ‘sexual harassment’ was not part of the collective pool of knowledge in the 1970’s. Carmita was embarrassed about describing her experience as, theoretically, her experience was not considered an injustice, nor a justified reason for leaving her job. Thus, her claim for unemployment was denied. With the assistance of Lin Farley — Cornell’s Professor who came up with the term ‘sexual harassment’ — Carmita became the first person to raise charges of sexual harassment against a man. One can notice how hermeneutical injustice operates through Carmita’s experience. There was a gap between her (a woman) and the social collective knowledge — a concept that was not fully elaborated to properly theorize Carmita’s injustice. In

the 1970's, the collective pool of knowledge lacked the hermeneutical resources so that both Carmita (the speaker) and her hearers (i.e., unemployment benefit reviewers), lacked the hermeneutical resources to explain Carmita's experience as an injustice. Further, one can notice how hermeneutical injustice, by creating a conceptual gap, operates systematically. For Carmita, the conceptual gap resulted in her having to quit her job, and in connection to that, it resulted in the denial of unemployment benefits. Thus, hermeneutical injustice has concrete impacts that can operate sequentially.

One problem that can easily be raised against Fricker's theory is that not all social conceptual gaps are cases of injustice. If that is the case, then the requirement of a conceptual gap is not necessary in the strict sense. In answering this objection, Fricker concedes that there are social conceptual gaps that are not cases of hermeneutical injustice, but she also makes the point that there is always hermeneutical injustice in the cases where the conceptual gap takes place in social conditions of marginalization or inequality. For instance, a person with an illness for which science provides no diagnostic lacks the hermeneutical resources to explain his illness, but this is not an injustice (Fricker 152). "They are unable to render their experiences intelligible by reference to the idea that they have a disorder, and may also suffer seriously negative consequences from others' non-comprehension of their condition. But they are not subject to hermeneutical injustice" (Fricker 152). In Carmita's example, we can clearly see that there is a harm that can be identified as an injustice. What is not so clear is if there is any harm done to Carmita's hearers.

Fricker claims that hermeneutical injustice is "a kind of structural discrimination(Fricker 161)." For Fricker, there is a general "impoverishment" in the collective social structure. This general need is satisfied, but the resources fulfilling the need are distributed in a way that

“significantly disadvantage[s] some group(s) and not others, so that the way in which the collective impoverishment plays out in practice is effectively discriminatory” (Fricker 162). In cases of Hermeneutical injustice, there is an “asymmetry” (Fricker 161) in the formal (theoretical) equality, where the resources can be meant to be distributed equally, but in the practical examples — such as in Carmita’s case or cases of poverty—, it brings about social inequality. For instance, the melting pot scenario is a case of hermeneutical injustice. As discussed, it is a social scenario that excludes multicultural views by replacing them with a single dominant perspective. Formally, the melting pot scenario distributes its pool of ‘knowledge’ equally, but practically, it excludes all views that do not agree with the dominant ideas in the pool of knowledge. Lois Tyson’s discussion of how systemic injustices occur provides an example of how Fricker’s hermeneutical injustice takes place in racism:

Point 1—Racist beliefs tell us that black Americans are inferior to white Americans.

Point 2—These beliefs put black Americans in situations that are inferior to those of white Americans (for example, inferior housing, inferior schools, inferior jobs, and as we just saw, inferior legal status).

Point 1 (again)—The inferior situations of black Americans are used to justify racist beliefs. (280)

In terms of Fricker’s hermeneutical injustice, Tyson’s example suggests that, at least in the 1930’s, if the concept of ‘racism’ and its forms was not a part of the pool of knowledge at the time, there was a conceptual gap. This conceptual gap allowed the enforcement of negative prejudices against black Americans, which in turn resulted in sequential or systematic unequal distribution of economical, and educational resources. Formally, black people and white people

were ‘equal’ under the concept of ‘Americanness,’ but ‘concretely,’ the inequality was not instantiated in the distribution of resources. Hence, there was an asymmetry between the formal ideal and its concrete realization that was grounded in the enforcement of conceptual gaps and the enforcement of negative prejudices. In *TKAM*, Tom Robinson is viewed through the lenses of racism. The people of Maycomb, however, have a conceptual gap; they do not have the concept of ‘racism.’ They enforce a negative prejudice against Tom without being aware of their racism. As a result, Maycomb’s law system does not equally enforce the law for all people — not for black people. Although all people are formally equal as citizens of Maycomb, this is not reflected, concretely, in their law system. This has systematic implications in Tom’s life. He is sent to jail, and consequently dies. I have now shown how hermeneutical injustice provides a better grounding for explaining systemic injustices than the notion of ‘new racism.’ Hermeneutical injustice explains how the systematic injustice operates, and it recognizes that there is a prejudice taking place in its operating structure.

One issue that Fricker does not address in her book is to what extent her notion of the ‘good informant’ is a plausible candidate for grounding her notion of ‘testimonial injustice.’ Since, in considering Fricker’s ideas, my project focuses on the ‘epistemic injustice’ in *TKAM* — both systematic and practical —, I see it as an important point for clarification. Although testimonial injustice is not as active as the lynchings of the 1930’s — since testimonial injustice is a matter of credibility of discourse and not a matter of active violence — it is true, I would argue, that it is one of the primary modes through which injustice operates systematically in today’s society. I do argue, however, that the primary operative mode of ‘racial’ injustices in the 1930’s was systematic since the concept of racism was not part of their collective pool of knowledge. Here, I am implying that the systematic aspect of injustice — the conceptual gap,

and the enforcement of prejudices as a result of the conceptual gap — can be the ground for both injustices that are more discursive (testimonial injustice), and injustices that are more active (i.e., shootings and lynchings). This, I think, is one of the points where I would agree with ‘old-new’ racism theorists, but, as mentioned, the ways through which injustices towards black people have been carried out only serves as a categorization in my view, and not as a suggestion that this is a mark for old and new ways of racism if what is meant by the ‘old-new’ distinction is that there is no prejudices in today’s social structures. Ultimately, I will argue that the primary ways through which racism is employed in 2020 seems to be non-systematic, whereas the primary operative mode of racism in the 1930’s was systematic. Further, active and discursive cases of injustices do not discriminate between systematic and non-systematic. Both active cases, like the lynchings, and discursive cases, like Tom Robinson’s case, were instantiated in the 1930’s and are still present in today’s social structures.

Fricker’s view of the good informant is not a good basis for her view of epistemic injustice. I propose Robin DiAngelo’s notion of ‘white fragility’ provides a better grounding for identifying cases of testimonial injustice. This is important as Fricker’s epistemological ground does not help in distinguishing good informants from bad informants in cases of testimony such as Tom Robinson’s and Carmita Wood’s case. Fricker’s epistemology relies on Edward Craig’s notion of the good informant. Craig’s project concerns a discussion about the nature of knowledge. For Craig, the concept of knowledge arises from the core concept of the good informant. The core concept of the ‘good informant’ is built upon the most basic human needs; it grows out of basic epistemic needs. These epistemic needs refer to the practical ways in which we search for information. Craig says that “[h]uman beings need true beliefs about their environment, beliefs that can serve to guide their actions to a successful outcome” (10). In that

sense, the only fundamental requirement for the core concept of the good informant is that she must be a person who holds a true belief. That is to say, even in the most primitive conditions, human beings have one fundamental epistemic need when they search for informants in practice; we search for beliefs because “we want to be brought to believe them” (Craig 13). In contrast, the concept of ‘knowledge’ adds on additional conditions “to flag approved sources of information” (Craig 11). The additional conditions required in the concept of the knowledge are also practical. Ultimately, Crag wants to claim that there is nothing fundamental in the concept of knowledge, and that the additional indicator properties associated with it are constructed upon the most fundamental need of having a true belief. Craig is concerned with the fundamental role of the true-belief requirement because there can be ‘knowers’ who are not good informants. For instance, a person who ‘knows’ the truth and yet lies. In such a case, any conditions added to the condition that the liar ‘holds a false’ belief are not essential since this could lead us to mistakenly think the liars tell us the truth. Thus, when answering the question of ‘who is a good informant,’ Craig would say that the core concept of the good informant tells us that anyone who is “likely to be right about p [,where ‘p’ is a proposition or belief]” (Craig 85). In contrast, our constructed concept of knowledge, or knower, adds the requirements that we assign to the informant as these vary from person to person in every context where we require to identify informants as knowers or knowers as good informants.

As mentioned, the end of Craig’s projects is not to argue about credibility in cases of testimonial injustice; his goal is primarily to state the practical conditions that constitute the concept of knowledge — or its carrier, a knower. However, if we are to truly connect his work to that of Fricker, the implication of Craig’s point is that we are to trust any person that tells us “whether p” — being open to the possibility that they are to be right about what they tell us—,

this does not help us solve cases of epistemic injustice. In the Tom Robinson's case, for instance, we are not told that there has been a fact in the first place— it's never stated as a fact in the novel— , but in case that Tom never abused Mayella, so that Tom Robinson is telling us the actual true of the fact, in Craig's account, we are to also regard Mayella's testimony as highly likely to be true. Saying that Tom and Mayell are both likely to be tell us the truth does not help us to identify who is a good informant, but we want to make sure about who is the good informant so that we can prevent testimonial injustices. This raises the question: Can Craig hold his theory and tell us how we should think about two testimonies that speak about the same fact, and yet are contradictory? If not, then Craig's account, I argue, is not compatible with Fricker's project.

Considering the theoretical issue in Fricker's notion of the 'good informant,' I argue that Robin DiAngelo's theory of 'white fragility' provides a better grounding for cases of testimony. Going along the lines of our discussion of systemic injustices, in her essay "White Fragility," DiAngelo subscribes to the idea that America's social world is unequally distributed: "[w]hiteness scholars define racism as encompassing economic, political, social, and cultural structures, actions, and beliefs that systematize and perpetuate an unequal distribution of privileges, resources and power between white people and people of color" (56). DiAngelo, however, focuses on the way in which American social structures unequally benefit whites in terms of protecting them from stressful situations where negative prejudices are challenged. Thus, DiAngelo names this stress — caused to certain white people who hold negative prejudices — as white fragility. For DiAngelo, "[w]hite Fragility is a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves" (57). When people hold or enforce negative prejudices, and they are challenged in ways that

target a ‘racial stress,’ they respond with certain defensive moves to justify their not being racist. As mentioned, my aim with discussing the notions of ‘epistemic injustice’ and ‘white fragility’ is to outline the way systemic injustices operate. Thus, the consideration of those who hold negative racial prejudices and, when challenged, respond by rationalizing them — as we might expect from radical hateful groups—, is not relevant to my discussion. This is because I am interested in using Fricker’s and Diangelo’s views to identify systematic non-intentional prejudices, where the enforcers of prejudices are not aware of their having prejudicial beliefs, but can be aware of their concrete actions. Radical groups who intentionally hold and enforce prejudices may fall into a different category — non-systematic intentional prejudices. In either case, intentional cases of prejudice need not much work to be identified, as their definition implies, they are intentional, and hence, palpable and easy to point out by their concrete intentional actions.

I have now presented the philosophical grounding for defining my refined account of intentional and non-intentional systematic injustice. To be clear, I reject the distinction of ‘old and new’ racism, though I agree with old-new racism theorists in their suggestion that racism operates in different ways historically. Similarly, I agree with the suggestion that racism operates at the individual and systemic levels. Aside, from that, I have rejected all aspects of the distinction. Thus, I suggest that the main takeaway of the ‘old-new’ distinction is that there are individual and systemic racial injustices. However, this is not to say that when racism is enforced by an individual it is not systematic. Fricker’s views align with the point about the individual and systematic kinds of injustices. While testimonial injustice clearly refers to cases of individual injustices, hermeneutical injustice requires a social structure that goes above the individual perpetrator. However, I emphasize the point that systemic injustices do not operate on their own

— that is, without a person enforcing the prejudices ingrained in the social structure. Thus, from Fricker’s discussion, I derive the assumption that (1) all systemic injustices employed against an agent’s personhood — such as racial injustices— enforce a prejudice and that (2) such prejudices are always systematic. Systematic prejudices do not originate in the individual, but they are rather learned from the social environment in which individuals are situated. This suggestion might create the impression that there is a contradiction since I argue that prejudices are learned by individuals from a system, but that the system (the social structure) does not operate without individuals. I am not concerned with the origin of systematic prejudices — they might be the result of the unequal distribution of resources, or the result of larger groups favoring prejudicial views—, but what it follows necessarily from this consideration, and from Fricker’s views, is that the systemic injustices are there, and have real impacts on social disadvantaged individuals. What follows from Fricker’s views, I argue, is that regardless of their systematic mode of operation, injustices are necessarily agential in practice; that is, enforced by people and not just carried out by social structures on their own. This leads to the need for a new categorization of prejudices and their injustices. This is what I call systematic intentional prejudice and systematic non-intentional prejudice, and their equivalent injustices: systematic intentional and non-intentional injustice. I will focus on discussing systematic non-intentional prejudices, and in doing so I will briefly address how the non-systematic prejudices take place in social structures.

Lastly, I reject Fricker’s epistemological notion of the ‘good informant’ because it ultimately has no use in actual cases of testimony, such as Tom Robinson’s and Carmita Wood’s case. The notion of the good informant does not help us to indicate how is the ‘trusted’ informant to be identified in cases of testimony where two people provide opposed renditions of the same state of affairs. I suggest that DiAngelo’s view of white fragility provides the indicator property

that helps us identify holders of reliable information in trial cases such as that of Robinson's and Wood's case. More importantly, it helps us identify cases of intentional and non-intentional systematic prejudices. In light of the notion of white fragility, we can identify unrecognized systematic prejudice when a person responds with defensive moves that challenge a negative prejudice. Since the main goal of my project is to show how *TKAM* can be interpreted, and taught in schools through these views, I shall now proceed to show how the notions of intentional and non-intentional prejudices are depicted in the *TKAM*.

Like in Fricker's notion of hermeneutical injustice, *TKAM* illustrates the notion of conceptual gaps within social structures. Francis' use of the N-word suggests that there is a conceptual gap in Maycomb's collective pool of information. Scout and Francis have a dispute that ends up with Scout punching her cousin in the face. Francis provokes Scout by calling her father a "Nigger-lover" (Lee 93). Not surprisingly, Scout dislikes Francis' expression even though she completely ignores its meanings: "[a] nigger-lover I ain't very sure what it means, but the way Francis said it..." (Lee 98). However, Scout is not the only one who does not understand the expression. No one in her family defines it clearly. Atticus tells Scout not to use the N-word: "don't say nigger, Scout. That's common." (Lee 85). However, Atticus prohibits the expression only because it is not proper of 'civilized' people, not because he thinks it ethically wrong, or prejudicial. Since it is meant to provoke Scout, Francis clearly employs it with a negative connotation. Francis' employment of the N-word suggests two things. First, black people are bad, and second, it is bad to love them because they are bad. However, none of the characters is able to point out what aspect of black people is that which they consider negative; let alone on what grounds. Hence, Francis' employment of the N-word is an expression that shows a

conceptual gap in their understanding—a conceptual gap that is expressed in the enforcement of a prejudice.

The primary operative mode of prejudices in *TKAM* is systematic and non-intentional. In my proposed view, systematic non-intentional prejudices have three conditions. First, there is a conceptual gap in the collective pool of information. Second, a negative prejudice is enforced by a perpetrator against a victim. Third, the perpetrator is not aware of the prejudice being enforced as it is the result of a conceptual gap for which she does not yet have the hermeneutical resources. This notion is depicted through Scout's school teacher. In her first day of teaching in Maycomb, Miss Caroline hits Scout with her ruler for trying to explain Walter Cunningham's economic situation. Miss Caroline is introduced as a character who comes from a town that is economically superior to Maycomb: "North Alabama was full of Liquor Interests, Big Mules, steel companies, Republicans, professors..." (Lee 17). Maycomb is rather a town where financial stability was difficult for all habitants despite their educational background: "professional people were poor because the farmers were poor. As Maycomb County was farm country, nickels and dimes were hard to come by for doctors and dentists and lawyers" (Lee 22). In the context of the text, the segregating conditions that settle social inequality are settled — the conditions that, according to Fricker, go in place with the enforcement of prejudices against disadvantaged social agents. In that sense, there is a social gap in the collective pool of information in Alabama. This conceptual gap is, I think, the theoretical framework that most likely defines Walter Cunningham's economical status. Let's call it 'marginalization.' Marginalization is a good candidate for defining Walter's family status since the word does not appear in the entire book. Neither Scout, nor Misses Caroline are able to define Walter's economical status. In Alabama, there are people like Miss Caroline who come from a town with steel factories, and professors.

Although there might be poor people in Miss Caroline's town, the text suggests people are not as poor in North Alabama. Similarly, within Maycomb itself, there is a wider diversity of economic status. For instance, there are the 'educated' people, the farmers, and the poorest group within the white group, the Cunninghams. Without knowing, Miss Caroline enforces a prejudice against Walter: 'all poor whites are equally poor.' Another prejudice that Miss Caroline might enforce against Walter is that 'no white poor is as poor as black people;' therefore, Walter can pay back a nickel. Miss Caroline punishes Scout for not letting her 'lend' a nickel to Walter, but the suggestion is that Walter is an exception to the prejudice—he is a white child who is much poorer than the average white children in Maycomb, and so in North Alabama. Miss Caroline and her students lack the hermeneutical resources to explain Walter's social status. When Scout tries to explain it, she says, "Miss Caroline, he's a Cunningham" (Lee 22), but surely, 'Cunninghamness' is not the appropriate concept to explain Walter's situation.

Let's address the central case of my paper. Tom Robinson's trial shows how systematic non-intentional prejudices operate. As mentioned, all that I mean by 'systematic' is that there must be a conceptual gap in the collective pool of information, and that a prejudice is enforced against a victimary in virtue of the conceptual gap. Similarly, when a prejudice is 'non-intentional,' all I mean is that the holder of the prejudice cannot possibly be aware of her enforcement of the prejudice because there is a conceptual gap in her social environment, which inhibits her from identifying it theoretically — I have referred elsewhere in this paper to this as the lack of hermeneutical resources. In that sense, the conceptual gap regarding the prejudices enforced against Tom Robison is the lack of the concept of racism. As I have implied in my discussion, the concept of racism is never explicated in the novel. From that, I infer that there are a number of racial unjust practices that are tolerated and employed in Maycomb. For instance,

the use of the N-word. The negative associations with Tom's skin-color, however, are never expressed rationally, nor are they addressed as negative prejudices. Even when Atticus' gives his final speech in defense to Tom, he points out the false belief that 'all black people are liars,' Atticus ends his remark by saying "we know is in itself a lie as black as Tom Robinson's skin" (Lee 232). Thus, even in defending Tom, Atticus shows his lack of theoretical resources to point out his lack of understanding on the most fundamental issue in his racial prejudices—that is, the negative prejudice that skin color is an indicator of inferiority. The idea that there is a conceptual gap regarding racism in Maycomb is also suggested in the jury not including any person of color. As Fricker points out: "that things would have gone differently at Tom Robinson's trial if the members of the jury had been black goes without saying" (Fricker 91). An appeal to history might be used as the objection that there could not have been black people in the jury because it was not legally possible in the 1930's, but my point is not to picture how things might have been had historical facts gone differently. Rather, I argue that if we are indeed committed to say that the novel depicts the historical context of the 1930's, then the historical fact that black people were not part of the juries evidences that there was a systematic non-intentional prejudice ingrained in the social structure of the 1930's.

Tom Robinson's trial depicts the negative prejudice that 'black people are liars,' or that 'no black person is to be trusted.' By contrasting the way the lawyers from those parties defend their cases, we can appreciate that Tom is condemned on the basis of the prejudicial belief that all black people are liars. In the trial, there are two sides of the story. Mayella Ewell accuses Tom Robinson of both physical and sexual abuse. Tom Robinson claims that Mayella attempted to kiss him, and he ran away. The narrator describes how Atticus builds his case by recreating an image of his opponents' social conditions: "Atticus was quietly building up before the jury a picture of

the Ewells' home life. The jury learned the following things: their relief check was far from enough to feed the family, and there was strong suspicion that Papa drank it up anyway" (Lee 208). Atticus' questions are meant to reveal the most intimate aspects of Mayella's life at home, which, ultimately, is the greatest part of her social life as she rarely goes outside the boundaries of her own house: "Mayella Ewell must have been the loneliest person in the world...white people wouldn't have anything to do with her because she lived among pigs; Negroes wouldn't have anything to do with her because she was white. She couldn't live like Mr. Dolphus Raymond, who preferred the company of Negroes" (Lee 218). By pointing out the Ewells' social conditions, Mayella's isolation, and her father's alcoholism, Atticus attempts to show that Bob Ewell was the most likely to abuse Mayella physically. Atticus' case is not built upon the assumption that 'all poor whites are bad parents.' Rather, his case shows that one person, Bob Ewell, is more likely to abuse his daughter because of his alcoholism issues and the empirical evidence that a left-handed person was more likely to beat Mayella in her right eye. In doing so, Atticus does not ask questions that entail an accusation, but rather, he asks questions that state the facts. Even the judge is annoyed by Atticus asking the same questions repeatedly: "He's answered the question three times, Atticus. He didn't call a doctor" (218). In that sense, Atticus' case against Bob works from the facts to the subject as opposed to from the personhood to the systematic prejudice.

In contrast, Mr. Gilmer's case against Tom is grounded on Tom's personality. Mr. Gilmer points out traits associated with Tom's identity. Tom's personal traits are, then, used to support the negative identity prejudice against Tom. Namely, Mr. Gilmer appeals to the prejudice that black people are criminals. In doing so, Mr. Gilmer also implies another prejudice. For Mr. Gilmer, it cannot be otherwise, because 'black people are liars.' For instance, Mr. Gilmer makes

an emphasis on Tom's criminal record. Despite Tom being convicted, also unjustly, for having been beaten in public — which by in Maycom apparently amounted to Tom being guilty of disorderly conduct— Mr. Gilmer emphasizes that the important point, whether guilty or not is that “[Tom was] convicted” (Lee 222). Clearly, Mr. Gilmer's assertions entail the prejudice that criminality is to be associated with people of color. Mr. Gilmer accuses Tom of “[being] strong enough” (Lee 223), “[running] off the place” (224), and being scared. None of these accusations would be sufficient to declare Tom guilty categorically in the eyes of a jury conformed by people without prejudice. That is, people that have a collective understanding that criminalizing someone for his skin color is not right. Nor would it be a problem to see that strength is not only employed to commit a crime, or that people can also run to escape from injustices, or that the scariest thing for negatively stereotyped groups is to be in court and “ hafta face up to what [they] didn't do” (224). Mr. Gilmer's assertions are the equivalent to saying that black people that are strong are highly likely to be criminals, that black people cannot run unless they have committed a crime, and that black people's sights of terror indicate that they are guilty of some crime. Tom, however, is ultimately recommended by everyone for suggesting that he feels sorry for Mayella. For the white prejudiced jury, Tom cannot possibly feel sorry for a white girl, and therefore, he lies. The narrator tells us that “the damage was done...nobody liked Tom Robinson's answer” (223 Lee). Mr. Guilmer questioning Tom's sincerity enforces the prejudice that Tom is a liar because of his skin-color. For the white audience, a black man cannot feel sorry for a white; this implies a kind of superiority. Tom's pity is interpreted as a joke; black people cannot feel sorry for white people because white people are superior. Tom's sincerity, however, would not be viewed as a joke if the white audience did not take for granted that he is a liar. For if the white audience can appreciate that Tom is telling the truth, there is no joke, nor a challenge

to the white supremacy. The white audience is not aware of the prejudices that they enforce against Tom. There is a conceptual gap in their collective understanding, and therefore, their prejudice is non-intentional and systematic.

For Robin DiAngelo, there are emotionally palpable ways in which prejudiced people reveal that they enforce systematic prejudices. Such defensive moves provide the indicator properties that help us detect negative prejudices. For DiAngelo, “[these moves include the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation” (57). In *TKAM*, we can appreciate this in Mayella’s strong emotional display. The narrator tells us that “Mayella’s face was a mixture of terror and fury” (Lee 212). Mayella’s last speech expresses her fury verbally and also through her crying: “you’re all yellow stinkin’ cowards, stinkin’ cowards, the lot of you. Your fancy airs don’t come to nothin’— your ma’amin’ and Miss Mayellerin’ don’t come to nothin’, Mr. Finch—” Then she burst into real tears” (Lee 212). Thus, Mayella brings out her white fragility publicly. Although we cannot always pick up the theoretical concept that defines our prejudices properly, I argue that, as DiAngelo suggests, there is always a kind of emotional stress. DiAngelo’s theory only goes so far as to claim that prejudices are revealed in the perpetrators through their white fragility. However, I suggest that there is also an emotional response from both the prejudiced, and those free of prejudice. When there is a prejudice that is systematic, so that it has a conceptual gap that has not been theoretically identified in the collective pool of information, most people feel that there is something wrong. Like little Dill who “For some reason had started crying and couldn’t stop” (Lee 224), there is a kind of remorse that indicates to us that something is wrong. Simultaneously, those who enforce the prejudice display their emotional fragility. Thus, I argue that the property indicator of systematic non-intentional

prejudices is this: for every instance where the systematic non-intentional prejudice is challenged, there is an correlative emotional response in the audience, where the perpetrator makes a display of emotional fragility while the victim or those who do not embrace the prejudice emotionally perceive the injustice.

In his discussion of old and new racism, Macaluso points out that his students concluded that *TKAM* was perhaps a text that had something important to add regarding views of multiculturalism. The students also concluded that it is not so clear that it is a multicultural text today. Macaluso's students' conclusion comes from the assumption that racism was practiced in brutal ways that are no longer the main way through which racists beliefs are enforced in today's social context. However, what really bothers us about *TKAM* in terms of being ineffective as a depiction of today's forms of racism is that it was non-intentional and systematic. It bothers us that the concept of racism is never condemned. It is never condemned because it is never introduced in the novel. Hence, it cannot be condemned and the message of the text is that the residents of Maycomb are not aware of the prejudice they enforce. However, we can argue that they are aware of their actions and this could be condemned should the concept of racism be introduced in their collective pool of information. They are guilty of non-intentional systematic injustice. What bothers us is that, in *TKAM*, racism is explained in terms of the to-kill-a-mockingbird metaphor, rather than being explained for what it is — a negative prejudice and the cause of injustices.

The main lesson in *TKAM*, I think, is that today's racial prejudices are primarily non-systematic. This is because we no longer have the conceptual gaps of the 1930's. We now have concepts such as racism — and so their respective theoretical framework — that properly define racial injustices. Further, *TKAM* provides us with the context, as I hope I have shown,

necessary to discuss how systematic prejudices take place. This is important material to class-discussion as it can expand our understanding in theorizing other systematic prejudices that still exist in today's social structures. Lastly, since we no longer lack the concept of racism, it cannot be said that it is non-intentional — as it was in the 1930's or in the context of *TKAM*. Rather, racial prejudices, though non-systematic, are most likely intentional. This puts more weight on the responsibility of those who still enforce them.

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