

## Loss of Innocence

"It's high time you were shown, that you really don't know all there is to be known." Said by Dr. Seuss. Most children want to grow up and know the most, but during that process they lose their purity. *To Kill A Mockingbird* by Harper Lee; is a historical fiction novel about how two children come of age through troubles of southern injustice. Their father attempts to prove the innocence of a black man who is accused of raping a white woman. *To Kill A Mockingbird* shows becoming older proceeds into the lack of purity by Jem understanding the racism of the town, Scout tripping over the root of an oak tree, and when Jem and Scout got their air rifles. Furthermore proving, with the growing of age comes with the loss of innocence.

Continuing, an example of a loss of innocence is when Jem understands the racism in Maycomb. Jem realized that it didn't matter if Tom Robinson was really innocent or not, or how great of a trial Atticus executed. Tom is going to be found guilty because the color of his skin. Along with this realization came the fact that Jem will never look at the world the same again. "I always thought Maycomb folks were the best folks around, least that's what they seemed like" (237). From this we see that he becomes angry and annoyed at the people in Maycomb and how they do not realize that skin color should not make a difference in a person. All in all, Jem's loss of innocence came with the price of having to grow up.

Additionally, an example of loss of innocence is when Scout tripped over the root of an oak tree. Thus symbolizing that she is losing her innocence. "...I tripped on a root growing on the road" (342). "We had slowed to a cautious gait, and were feeling our way forward so as not to bump into the tree. The tree was a single and ancient oak;..." (342). The archetype for tree is knowledge; to clarify, when Scout tripped over the tree's root, it was as if she was running into a, "wall of knowledge". "It occurred to me that in their own way, Tom Robinson's manners were as good as Atticus's" (260). When one learns more, they may be corrupted. In this instance, Scout

is growing up and has a better understanding of humanity, and that not everything is sugar and honey.

As well as Scout gaining knowledge, when Scout and Jem received air rifles they were warned not to shoot any mockingbirds. “ Shoot all the bluejays you want, if you can hit 'em, but remember it's a sin to kill a mockingbird” (119). It's a sin to kill a mockingbird, because they are innocent. They do not do any harm to the town and only by time will they be killed. Miss Maudie said, lecturing the kids (119). “ Mockingbirds don't do one thing but make music for us to enjoy. They don't eat up people's gardens, don't nest in corncribs, they don't do one thing but sing their hearts out for us” (119). Concluding that time destroys innocence, and a mockingbird embodies innocence.

In short, just as Scout and Jem had to accept the fact that their father was going to be snubbed by the town for supporting a colored man, they would no longer look at the town's folks the same again. Verifying that when Jem understood the racism of the town, Scout tripping over the root, and when Jem and Scout received their air rifles were example that the growing of age, comes with the loss of innocence. Dr. Seuss wrote many kid books and was quite successful. Even though his books may have given the appearance that he never grew up, he really did. The world does everything to try to appear younger, but in reality there is no going back. Whether a child touches the stove and gets burnt, a teen gets in their first car accident, or an adult loses their job, they will never be the same.