

To Kill A Mockingbird

Point of View

Week 5: October 15, 2013



F404: TA-1

Tuesday 11:50-1:15

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Week 5: Point of View

Agenda

1. Announcements: Class Liaison
 - A word about symbol/literary allusion in Mockingbird
 - A word about discussion groups
 - Handout: Voting Rights/Poll Tax - 1930's & Questions
2. Icebreaker: Part 1: Chapter 11: Mrs. Dubose
Reader Response ?'s
3. Instructor Notes: Chapter 11-15
 - Literary Techniques:** First Person Limited Point of View
 - Critical Response:** Wally Lamb (Hey Boo Video)
4. Small Group Discussion Chapters 11-15
5. Viewing: Film To Kill A Mockingbird
6. Wrap-Up



Reader Response

Chapter 11

Mrs. Dubose



“When we were small, Jem and I confined our activities to the southern neighborhood, but when I was well into the second grade at school and tormenting Boo Radley became passe, the business section of Maycomb drew us frequently up the street past the property of Mrs. Henry Lafayette Dubose. It was impossible to go to town without passing her house unless we wished to walk a mile out of the way. Previous minor encounters with her left me with no desire for more but Jem said I had to grow up sometime.”



Reader Response: Chapter 11



“Jem and I hated her. If she was on the porch when we passed, we would be raked by her wrathful gaze, subjected to ruthless interrogation regarding our behavior, and given a melancholy prediction on what we would amount to when we grew up which was always nothing. We had long ago given up the idea of walking past her house on the opposite side of the street; that only made her raise her voice and let the whole neighborhood in on it.”

Reader Response ?'s

1. What causes Jem to strike out against Mrs. Dubose?
2. What is learned about Mrs. Dubose's character as the nature of her affliction is discovered?
3. What does Jem gain from his experience with Mrs. Dubose?
4. Why does Lee choose to use this incident as the final chapter in Part I?

Notes on Chapters 12-15

Part II begins with Jem distancing himself from Scout

“Jem was 12; he was difficult to live with, inconsistent, moody....he told me so many times to stop pestering him I consulted Atticus:

“Reckon he’s got a tapeworm?”

Atticus said no, Jem was growing. I must be patient with him and disturb him as little as possible.”

Part II also begins with Dill’s absence:

“Summer came and Dill was not there. I received a letter and a snapshot from him. The letter said he had a new father and he would have to stay in Meridian because they planned to build a fishing boat. Dill concluded by saying he would love me forever and not to worry, he would come get me and marry me as soon as he got enough money together. “

Notes on Chapters 12-15

With Jem and Dill's absence Scout is left to look for direction and advice from female role models i.e.,

- **Calpurnia represents “bridge between two worlds” (Chapter 12)**

Cal, I [Scout] asked, “why do you talk ‘n’...talk to your folks when you know it’s not right...” Calpurnia tilted her hat and scratched her head, then pressed her hat down carefully over her ears. “It’s right hard to say, she said. “Suppose you and Scout talked colored-folks’ talk at home – it’d be out of place, wouldn’t it? Now what if I talked white-folks talk at church, and with my neighbors? They’d think I was puttin on airs to beat Moses.”

- **Aunt Alexandra represents, in Alexandra’s words, ‘respectable’ Southern womanhood (Chapter 13)**

“Jem’s growing up now and you are too...We decided that it would be best for you to have some feminine influence. It won’t be many years, before you become interested in clothes and boys...”I could have made several answers to this: Cal’s a girl, it would be many years before I would be interested in boys, I would never be interested in clothes...but I kept quiet.”

Notes on Chapters 12-15

5. Scout uses what she learns about life and the people of Maycomb to confront the mob at the jail and force

“ a gang of wild animals” to stop “simply because they [recognize], according to Atticus, that “they’re still human”

“ Don’t you remember me, Mr. Cunningham? I’m Jean Louise Finch. You brought us some hicklory nuts one time, remember? I go to school with Walter. He’s your boy ain’t he, sir?We brought him home for dinner one time. Maybe he told you about me, I beat him up one time but he was real nice about it. Tell him hey for me. Won’t you?”

To Look For: Chapters 11-15

Juxtaposition of Character

- Calpurnia in contrast to Aunt Alexandra
- Dill in opposition to Jem
- Calpurnia in contrast to Lulu

Juxtaposition of Scene:

- Sunday service at Black Church Community in opposition to Aunt Alexandra's White Ladies' Missionary Circle Meeting
- Mob gathering of Maycomb residents in Atticus' front yard in contrast to mob, from Old Sarum, gathering at the Jail
- Calpurnia's secret language revealed to the children after church in contrast to Atticus' secret 'markmanship' revealed to the children in mad dog incident

Symbolic Value of Dill's absence/return:

- Ends the world of childish games/friendship
- Ushers in the adult world of the trial
- Marks Jem's transition from boy to man

Literary Technique: Point of View

- Point of View is the perspective or vantage point from which a story is told.
- **Three commonly used Points of View are:**
 - **First Person** – narrator is a character in the story and refers to himself or herself with the 1st person pronoun “I”.
 - **Third Person Limited** – narrator relates the inner thoughts and feelings of only one character
 - **Third Person Omniscient** – narrator knows and tells about what each character feels and thinks.

Point of View: 1st Person Limited

1. Scout, the knowing adult, tells her story in retrospect i.e.,

“As the older adult Scout narrates events from three years of her childhood and tells the effects of those events upon herself, her brother, her father, and others.” (PLC)

“When enough years had gone by to enable us to look back on them we sometimes discussed the events leading to the accident. I maintain that the Ewells started it all, but Jem, who was four years my senior, said it started long before that.”

2. Scout, the ‘innocent child’, also tells the story, as events unfold in Maycomb Alabama, between 1933 and 1935.

“When I was almost six and Jem nearly ten, our summertime boundaries (within calling distance of Calpurnia) were Mrs. Henry Lafayette Dubose’s house two doors to the north of us, and the Radley place three doors to the south. The Radley place was inhabited by an unknown entity....Mrs. Dubose was plain hell.”

Point of View: 1st Person Limited TKM

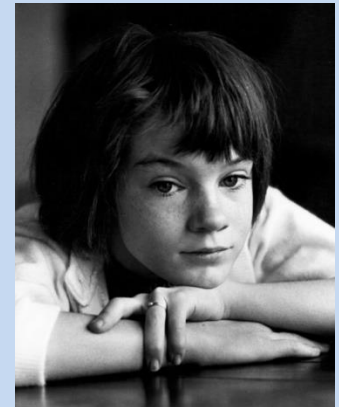
Critical Response Advantages of Lee's narrative choice:

- ❖ “Scout’s vision of the world [as an innocent child] is uncluttered; she serves as a truthful witness to events and facts that the adult community neither wishes to see nor understand.”
- ❖ “Because Scout [as a child] makes her comments with matter-of-fact, humorous, and benign interest, the reader does not feel preached at.”

Critical Response: Disadvantages of Lee's narrative choice

Reader is left to question:

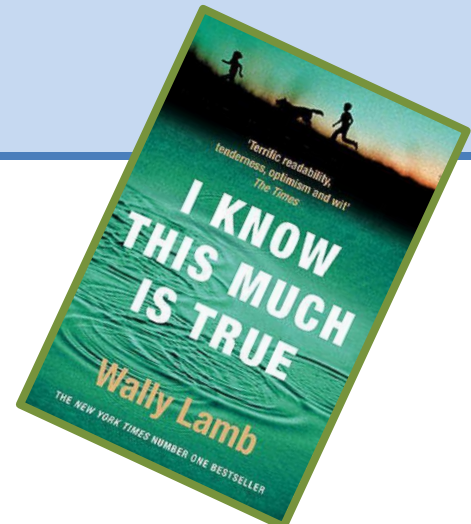
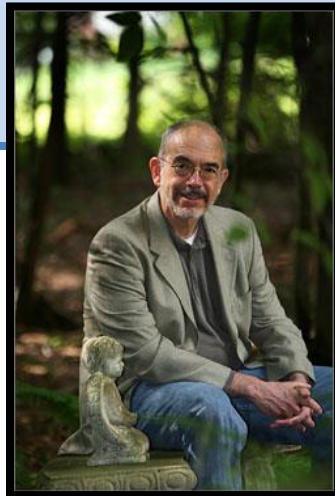
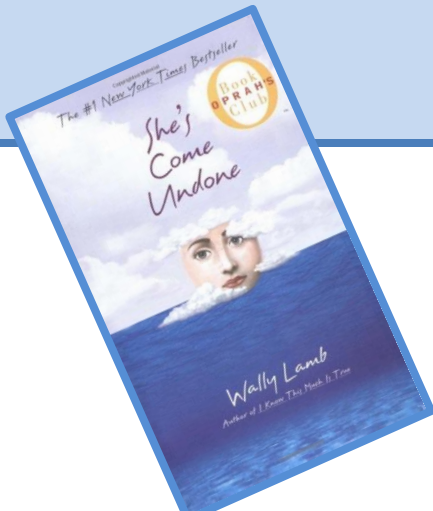
- ❖ Scout’s photographic recall of detail
- ❖ Scout’s sophisticated vocabulary
- ❖ Scout’s intuitive grasp of people and problems

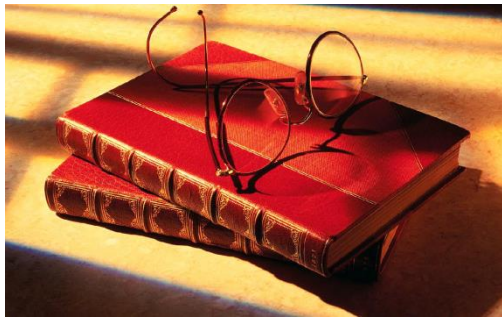


Final Word: Point of View in TKM

“Wally Lamb, author of the critically acclaimed *She’s Come Undone* and *I Know This Much Is True* and former Director of Creative Writing at University of Connecticut, discusses Scout’s universally sympathetic voice and the ways in which *To Kill a Mockingbird* and all literature can act as an agent of change.”

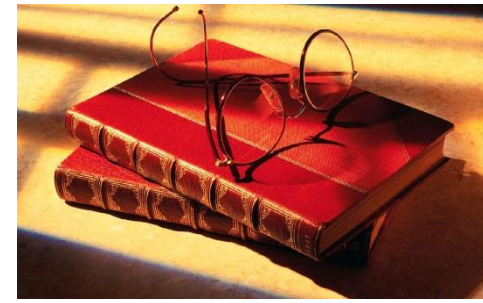
<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/episodes/harper-lee-hey-boo/outtakes-wally-lamb/2009/>





Online Resources

Symbol and Allusion



- **What is a Mockingbird?**
- <http://www.birdsforever.com/mock.html>

- **Literary Allusions**
- http://www.lausd.k12.ca.us/Belmont_HS/tkm/
- <http://mrsconnell-hss.wikispaces.com/TKAM+Allusions>