

“Sympathy” by Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872-1906)

I know what the caged bird feels, alas!
When the sun is bright on the upland slopes;
When the wind stirs soft through the springing grass,
And the river flows like a stream of glass;
When the first bird sings and the first bud opes,
And the faint perfume from its chalice steals—
I know what the caged bird feels!

I know why the caged bird beats his wing
Till its blood is red on the cruel bars;
For he must fly back to his perch and cling
When he fain would be on the bough a-swing;
And a pain still throbs in the old, old scars
And they pulse again with a keener sting—
I know why he beats his wing!

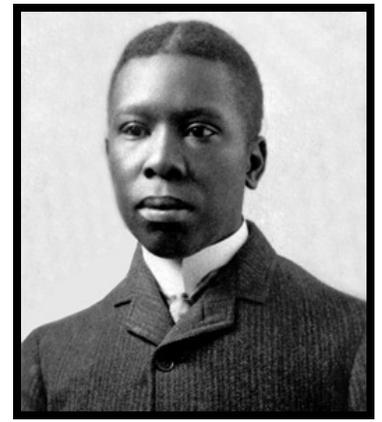
I know why the caged bird sings, ah me,
When his wing is bruised and his bosom sore,—
When he beats his bars and he would be free;
It is not a carol of joy or glee,
But a prayer that he sends from his heart’s deep core,
But a plea, that upward to Heaven he flings—
I know why the caged bird sings

“We Wear the Mask” by Paul Laurence Dunbar

WE wear the mask that grins and lies,
It hides our cheeks and shades our eyes,—
This debt we pay to human guile;
With torn and bleeding hearts we smile,
And mouth with myriad subtleties.

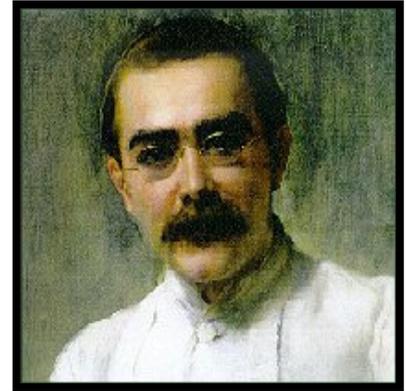
Why should the world be over-wise,
In counting all our tears and sighs?
Nay, let them only see us, while
We wear the mask.

We smile, but, O great Christ, our cries
To thee from tortured souls arise.
We sing, but oh the clay is vile
Beneath our feet, and long the mile;
But let the world dream otherwise,
We wear the mask!



If—

By Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936)



If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:

If you can dream—and not make dreams your master;
If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat those two impostors just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools:

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: 'Hold on!'

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with Kings—nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!

Source: *A Choice of Kipling's Verse* (1943)

At the Bar; To Attack A Lawyer In 'To Kill a Mockingbird': An Iconoclast Takes Aim At A Hero

By David Margolick

Published: February 28, 1992 (New York Times)

In her prognostications for 1992, the psychic Jeanne Dixon predicted that "anti-lawyer riots will shake the profession." But could even the canniest clairvoyant have foreseen an attack on Atticus Finch?

Atticus Finch, the sagacious and avuncular lawyer-hero of Harper Lee's 1960 novel, "To Kill a Mockingbird," who earned the scorn of his segregated Southern town by defending a black man wrongly accused of rape? Atticus Finch, who stood down a lynch mob that had come to collect his client one night at the Maycomb jail? Atticus Finch, who taught a community and his two young children about justice, decency and tolerance, and who drove a generation of real-life Jems and Scouts to become lawyers themselves?

Monroe Freedman of Hofstra Law School has never been one to duck controversy. His heterodox views on what constitutes vigorous representation of a client once led Chief Justice Warren E. Burger to call for his disbarment. Now, in his column on professional ethics, which appears monthly in *Legal Times*, Mr. Freedman has taken on Atticus Finch.

Legal scholars concede that Finch has his ethical lapses. In telling his children to pity their grumpy, bigoted neighbor, Mrs. Henry Lafayette Dubose, because she was addicted to morphine, he was arguably betraying a client's confidence. Later, to spare the reclusive Boo Radley from a murder prosecution, he countenances Sheriff Heck Tate's fiction that the nefarious Bob Ewell actually fell upon his own knife.

But in legal literature as much as in the popular imagination, Finch, particularly Gregory Peck's film version of the man, has heretofore remained unsullied. In his trailblazing 1981 law review article, "The Moral Theology of Atticus Finch," Thomas Shaffer of Notre Dame Law School described Finch as someone "who risks everything in order to tell the truth." Two years ago, Timothy Hall of the University of Mississippi Law School wrote of Finch, "Truthfulness was stamped upon his character like an Indian head on an old nickel."

All this is too much for the iconoclastic Mr. Freedman. "Atticus Finch has become the ethical exemplar in articles on topics ranging from military justice to moral theology," he writes. "If we

don't do something fast, lawyers are going to take him seriously as someone to emulate. And that would be a bad mistake."

Sure, Mr. Freedman writes, Finch represented Tom Robinson zealously, and for nothing in return. But he took the case involuntarily -- failure to accept the court-ordered appointment could have landed him in what Miss Lee called Maycomb's "miniature Gothic joke" of a jail for contempt -- and only "from an elitist sense of noblesse oblige." Besides, Mr. Freedman asked, what had Finch done up to that point to combat the forces that brought Robinson down?

Far from attacking racism at its root, Mr. Freedman charges, Finch was complicit in it. For all his gentlemanliness, he does not complain that blacks attending court are relegated to the balcony. He eats in segregated restaurants; he walks in parks where signs say "No Dogs or Colored Allowed." And he is too willing to excuse racism in others, dismissing the local chapter of the Ku Klux Klan as "a political organization more than anything else," and the leader of the lynch mob as "basically a good man" with "blind spots."

More than a racist, Finch is a sexist. Mr. Freedman notes that in his closing argument to the jury Finch dismisses Eleanor Roosevelt as "the distaff side of the executive branch in Washington." Worse, while encouraging Jem to follow in his footsteps and become a lawyer, he does not similarly encourage his daughter. "Scout understands that she will be some gentleman's lady," Mr. Freedman writes.

Professors Shaffer and Hall, both of whom regularly assign "To Kill a Mockingbird" in their legal ethics classes, good-naturedly accuse Mr. Freedman of compulsive contrariness. "There isn't a sacred cow in the world Monroe Freedman doesn't enjoy taking on," Mr. Shaffer said. In addition, they accused Mr. Freedman of what Mr. Hall called "chronological snobbery"; that is, unfairly subjecting a New Deal-era Alabama lawyer to contemporary standards of behavior.

Mr. Freedman, they added, also has a mistaken notion of perfection, one that would require lawyers not only to stand vigilantly by their oppressed clients, but also to separate themselves entirely from all agents of oppression.

"What Monroe really wants is for Atticus to be working on the front lines for the N.A.A.C.P. in the 1930's, and if he's not, he's disqualified from being any kind of hero," Mr. Hall said. "Monroe has this vision of lawyer as prophet. Atticus has a vision of lawyer not only as prophet, but as parish priest