

“You Never Get it Out of Your Bones”: The Christ-Haunted Security of Jean Louise “Scout”

Finch in Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Go Set a Watchman*

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## Introduction

As a region with a rich but difficult history, the American South produced literature that became more popular and more discussed during the mid-twentieth century, specifically from the 1930s to the 1960s. This rise directly corresponded to the continual race issue in the Southern states and the rest of the nation's realization of these acts. Alabama was one of the most notable states for racial tension; Claudia Johnson notes in *To Kill a Mockingbird: Threatening Boundaries*, that in March of 1931, Alabama was of national importance due to the Scottsboro incident, where nine black men were falsely accused of raping two white women (5). Johnson further explains how, during the next couple of decades, Alabama kept dealing with acts of tension and racial violence. In 1954, *Brown vs. the Board of Education* passed and became a catalyst for future events: Rosa Parks's arrest, the start of countless bus boycotts, and the bombing of African American churches (Johnson 11). These outbursts hinted at the mounting strain lying beneath the surface for Southerners and their society; they were outward expressions of inward tension.

While defining a person's identity is always a complex discussion, a Southerner's identity often holds several additional complex layers. Flannery O'Connor encapsulates the core problem with Southern identity in an essay from her book, *Mystery and Manners*, titled "The Regional Writer":

Southern identity is not really connected with mocking-birds and beaten biscuits and white columns any more than it is with hookworm and bare feet and muddy clay roads. Nor is it necessarily shown forth in the antics of our politicians, for the development of power obeys strange laws of its own. An identity is not to be found on the surface; it is not accessible to the poll taker; it is not something that can become a cliché. It is not

made from the mean average or the typical, but from the hidden and often the most extreme. It is not made from what passes, because they are [sic] related to truth. It lies very deep. In its entirety, it is known only to God, but of those who look for it, none gets so close as the artist. (57-58)

O'Connor artistically uncovers the difficulty of Southern identity since it is not based solely on the external: rather, it is also internal, buried within the mindset of Southern culture. In the mid-twentieth century, Southerners typically dealt with uncertainty about their home and culture due to upheaval and outside critique. Specifically, the rise of racism and the push to modernize the region began to reshape Southern culture; thus, Southerners' identity became less sure than ever. In his essay "Southern Mythology," George B. Tindall notes how Southern authors tried to describe their unsureness in their identity as Southerners: "Trace it through modern Southern writing, and at the center—in Ellen Glasgow, in Faulkner, Wolfe, Caldwell, the Fugitive-Agrarian poets, and all the others—there is the consciousness of change, of suspension between two worlds, a double focus looking backward and forward" (19). Throughout the 1930s and 1960s, Southerners struggled to grasp to what they knew was familiar while keeping up with changes around them.

In the midst of uncertainty and change, mid-twentieth century Southerners needed to find some type of certainty within their personal identities, and historians have noted this importance. Well-known Southern historian C. Vann Woodward discusses the struggles of this period and its effects on Southern society in his essay, "The Search for Southern Identity." Woodward writes on the insecure climate; he expounds upon how some more extreme Southerners fully accepted or rejected their Southern identity, not taking from the good traits and leaving out the bad ones. He warns that full acceptance of the Southern identity often led to a strong desire for unity,

which can push a Southerner toward racism, so “the frustrated traditionalist might at last take his stand for the defense of all the defiled, traduced, and neglected values of the traditional order” (178). The full rejection of Southern identity was also tricky. Some younger Southerners tried to align with American characteristics to escape Southern relations, but “to deny it [Southern heritage] would be to deny our history” (Woodward 186). Southerners cannot reject every part of their Southern way of life; otherwise, they risk losing their entire foundation and history. Woodward stresses how a security—an inward balance of character—must exist for modern Southerners to survive.

To gain the security Woodward mentions, Southerners can look at their cultural roots. Once again, O'Connor pinpoints the crux of Southern identity's issue in her speech “Some Aspects of the Grotesque in Southern Fiction” (printed in *Mystery and Manners*). Although she specifically highlights the grotesque in Southern fiction, she notably observes that its prevalence comes from the South's religious background since a Christian knows what “the whole man” should be (44). This inherited culture causes Southerners to better recognize the grotesque in humanity; by viewing the world according to their Christian beliefs, Southerners know what humanity could be and see how far humans can fall. More importantly, she makes a groundbreaking point: “[W]hile the South is hardly Christ-centered, it is most certainly Christ-haunted” (44). Christianity entrenches Southern life, as believed by those inside and outside of the South; it colors every aspect of Southern living—symbolized by the appearance of a church on every street corner and general acceptance of Southern hospitality. Moreover, their “Christ-haunted” nature colors their perception of themselves and the traits they express, whether they are conscious of their actions or not; the values and tenets of Christianity reach every part of their lives. This influence affects their way of life. When Southerners are aware of how their

Christ-haunted nature appears and accept or reject certain traits attached to that nature, they can achieve Woodward's security in their identity. Works by Southern artists—the writers—best expressed the tensions and solutions since they could reach to the heart of the matter for their Southern brethren.

### ***Mockingbird* and *Watchman*: Lee's Effect on Southern Identity**

Harper Lee was a Southern writer who described the issues at hand eloquently and powerfully. A native of south Alabama, Lee grew up in the center of Southern culture, and her famous novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, reflects her understanding of this society. *Mockingbird's* popularity is no surprise; for instance, *Mockingbird*, a book typically assigned to early high school students in the United States, currently has three separate essay collections on it. Wayne Flynt's article "Nelle Harper Lee on Law" explains its success: its moral lessons combine with a discussion of race for the 1960s, and "based upon lots of polling data, [...] the novel and the movie based on it make this particular piece of literature the most unifying cultural icon in American life" (637). Lee's skill and craft build a story that revolves around a young white Southern tomboy whose dealings with her small town in Alabama resonate with every American. *Mockingbird* is so well-known that its plot does not even need repeating (Flynt 637). *Mockingbird's* complexity allows it depth and status.

The question for literary scholars—even in Southern divisions—is not about *Mockingbird's* value; rather, they debate Lee's other novel, *Go Set a Watchman*. *Watchman* became controversial not long after the public received it in 2015. Theories that Lee's mental state was unstable circulated—that she could not properly sign off on the publication of this long-forgotten work—yet her close friend, Wayne Flynt, explains that Lee was still mentally cognizant. In his collection of letters and stories, *Mockingbird Songs*, he reports that "[n]ot only

did she pass whatever cognitive test they administered, she reportedly dismissed their intrusion into her private life by telling them to go to hell and leave her alone” (194). Flynt’s story proves Lee purposely allowed *Watchman*’s release. A more textual evaluation from critics of *Watchman* is its unedited structure, which they believe leads to confusion upon a cursory reading: it is “unfinished, preachy, too long on dialogue and too short on wordsmithing and characterization” (*Mockingbird Songs* 197). *Watchman*’s largely unedited condition is not a secret. Flynt even expected a lack of revisions due to the dislike Lee’s agent and editor had toward *Watchman* originally, and this lack carried into the published version (“Nelle” 638). Nonetheless, *Watchman* has a more complex plot and underlying tension than *Mockingbird*. Lee’s “original manuscript [*Watchman*] was set in 1956 during the Montgomery bus boycott, not in 1932–1935 as was *Mockingbird*” (Flynt 638). As previously noted, this period of American and Southern history held extremely troubling and horrific events, ones which would cause any person—or writer—to need to process much about his own life and society.

Despite the surface-level issues, *Watchman* read alongside its published precursor, *Mockingbird*, helps readers fully grasp the similar concepts covered in each work and Scout’s Southern characterization. Some academics do consider this suggestion. Julia Pond’s article “No One Likes to Feel Like an Adolescent: Genre Resistance in Harper Lee’s Novels” argues that “[m]aybe the best way to read *Go Set a Watchman*, written first but published second, is as a continuation of, an epilogue to, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, rather than as a separate novel” (88). *Watchman* does not stand alone, and noting its connections to *Mockingbird* can lead to a better understanding of the novel’s ideas. Pond is not alone in her interpretation; Flynt’s view on the setting of *Watchman* supports Pond’s mindset. He writes that the setting of *Watchman* has “a mostly familiar cast of characters but a far more believable world of flawed law and injustice”

(“Nelle Harper Lee on Law” 638). *Watchman*’s inclusion of the same beloved characters from *Mockingbird* allows for a realistic view of the Southern culture, from which *Mockingbird*’s sentimental environment came.

Importantly, Lee’s *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Go Set a Watchman* connect to Woodward’s call for internal security seen through the lens of O’Connor’s “Christ-haunted” idea of the South as expressed in Lee’s fictional characters. Lee’s main character in both works—Jean Louise or “Scout” Finch—embodies this struggle the best; she battles with accepting or rejecting her Southern identity, but she finds an internal, secure balance within the tension. Julia Pond properly notes that “*Mockingbird* tells a story of initiation into the culture of southern racism as well as explores different southern identities available to Jem and Scout” (86). The novel focuses mostly on young Scout and the events that occurred around her during a few years, including fun childhood antics, discussion of Southern identity, the famous Tom Robinson trial, and her connection to Boo Radley. Pond argues that Scout ends up “wiser and more aware, but she has not matured in a sense of self or identity” (88). Nevertheless, glimpses of a Christ-haunted South appear in Scout—as much as they can since she is a child. She accepts Southern traits, treating fellow townspeople with discrimination and respect, defending the honor of her family, and showing Southern Christian grace. Additionally, she rejects typical Southern characteristics, like traditional Southern femininity, an “Us vs. Them” mentality, and legalism. In a couple of instances in the novel, Scout both accepts and rejects these six traits, which reflects not only a Christ-haunted nature but also Woodward’s call for internal security.

The traits Scout accepts and the ones she rejects in *Mockingbird* lay the groundwork for Jean Louise’s characterization in *Watchman*. Indeed, the issue of Southern identity may be strongest in *Watchman*. Lee’s second published but first written book still centers on Jean Louise,

but this time as “a girl who feels at home nowhere, who has firm moral beliefs but cannot effect change, who repeatedly returns to the site of her childhood home to find identity in reminiscing and yearning for a past” (Pond 89). Jean Louise's discovery of Atticus' personal flaws—and his racist ideas—drives the central conflict of *Watchman*. This realization, along with her finally seeing her hometown of Maycomb as having hidden evils, wrecks her. Trevor Cook's essay “‘Well, Heck’: Confounding Grace in Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*” points out Jean Louise's problem: “the pain and frustration [Jean Louise] experiences throughout [*Watchman*] arises from the paradox that, despite no longer wanting to support this ideology, she cannot deny that it has largely shaped her worldview” (661). She cannot fully accept her hometown, but she cannot fully reject it either. The grocery store owner in *Watchman*, Mr. Fred, foreshadows Jean Louise's struggle for her identity. After Jean Louise rebuffs his question of if she will stay in Maycomb this time, Mr. Fred mentions how he stayed away after his time in World War I until “I got to the point where I felt like I had to come back or die. You never get it out of your bones” (Lee 153). Jean Louise experiences what many Southerners do: the pull of loving home despite its flaws. The question becomes what one accepts and rejects. Therefore, like in *Mockingbird* when she was an innocent child, Jean Louise holds to the Southern traits of discrimination and respect, honor of family, and grace, while simultaneously stepping away from the South's femininity, “us vs. them” mentality, and legalism. Jean Louise's struggle to balance these six traits—even as an adult—showcase Lee's expression of the South's Christ-hauntedness and Woodward's security.

### **Jean Louise “Scout” Finch's Struggle of Acceptance and Rejection**

Discussions about the characterization of Jean Louise or “Scout” Finch often miss the strong impression of Southern culture on her or view its presence in her life as negative; thus, the

aforementioned works of Woodward and O'Connor can help solve this oversight. Moreover, specific terms and definitions will help analyze Jean Louise throughout *Mockingbird* and *Watchman*. These terms are the character traits displayed most often in Jean Louise—the ones she accepts and rejects; additionally, they show her “Christ-haunted” awareness clearly. For Scout’s acceptance, she adheres to the traits of “Discrimination and Respect,” “Honor of Family,” and “Grace” in *Mockingbird* and *Watchman*. Moreover, she rejects “Traditional Southern Femininity,” “Us vs. Them Mentality,” and “Legalism” in the novels. Some of these terms have particular definitions while others are more general concepts within Southern culture.

For the Southern traits Jean Louise accepts, her characteristic of “discrimination and respect” is important yet often misunderstood. This combination specifically comes from Thomas L. Shaffer's “Growing Up Good in Maycomb.” In his article, Shaffer writes that discrimination “is the practiced ability to tell people from one another and to treat them in a way that is consistent with their differences” (558-59). While those outside the South assume this trait as a type of judgment, Southerners know discrimination notes class differences and how to follow the class’ implied codes. This type of discrimination may not be a negative characteristic, but a way in which Southerners can better understand each other. Respect directly correlates to this discrimination; as Shaffer says, respect “is the virtue that accepts the differences discrimination helps a person notice and then treats each person with dignity” (559). Respect gives value and meaning to discrimination; Southerners use societal information to politely treat people per their class standing or family background. Southerners do not act upon these traits separately; rather, Southerners use both simultaneously in their day-to-day interactions to be friendly and kind toward one another. This attitude of discrimination and respect is a key Southern aspect, and Jean Louise often follows it in the novels.

Honor of family is another consistent and major Southern trait within Scout. Charles Regan Wilson's Southern encyclopedia's definition of manners—or the formal codes for Southerners—includes Southerners having “honor obligations to kin” (96). The word “honor” denotes how Southerners protect and support their family simply because they are blood related. This connection appeared in the twentieth century in both upper and lower white classes in Alabama; Wayne Flynt notes, from Southern author Rick Bragg's own works, that “genteel southerners fought for abstract concepts of honor; poor people fought out of a sense of personal or family pride” (*Alabama in the Twentieth Century* 191). No matter one's background, countless Southerners feel a sense of pride—honor—for their heritage and family; further, they desire to defend it. Some scholars think Jean Louise should reject this Southern trait of honor to one's family—as seen in Kathryn Lee Siedel's “Growing Up Southern: Resisting the Code for Southerners in *To Kill a Mockingbird*.” She comments that early in the novel, Scout recognizes Southern boundaries and will resolutely protect them, but she changes positively when she moves away from her previous grip on Southern ideas (Siedel 82). Nevertheless, textual evidence from *Mockingbird* and *Watchman* shows that Jean Louise holds to honor of family as a positive choice to express this aspect of Southern life.

The traditional Southern concept of femininity is one of the major traits of Southern society that Jean Louise most often rejects. Historical and social context best give a helpful glimpse into Southern femininity, particularly as explained by Wayne Flynt in Chapter 4 of his work, *Alabama in the Twentieth Century* and Anne Firor Scott's *The Southern Lady: From Pedestal to Politics, 1830-1930*. Flynt notes that Victorianism overshadows Southern culture, particularly in the influential concept that “women presided over hearth and home. They provided faithful companionship, fidelity in sexual as well as domestic service, maternal

nurturing both for children and sometimes equally infantile spouses” (251). This Victorian mindset emphasized domesticity as the key, overall characteristic for women, and the South held onto it, which is unsurprising since most Southern scholars recognize that Southern culture stemmed from the older British society (Flynt 251-53, Scott 16-17). However, this concept deepened and gained a new life and implementation in antebellum South; Southern belles and well-spoken, kind-hearted women became the ideal female persona. Scott discusses this image in detail. For instance, she notes that antebellum Southern women were to try to become “a submissive wife whose reason for being was to love, honor, obey, and occasionally amuse her husband, to bring up his children and manage his household” (Scott 4). Several other features added to the traditional Southern lady, but the themes of domesticity and submissiveness—in regard to men—reign over them all. Women not only lived within the realm of their homes but also were to recognize their place below their husbands. Outside, societal sources also forced this identity onto women. For instance, etiquette books increased the image’s authority and impact: “[U]sually written by men, they emphasize[d] the softness, purity, and spirituality of women while denying them intellectual capacity” (Scott 15). Southern women were overwhelmingly instructed on how to be good ladies, and the pressure to conform to this ideal abounded. Their value as women and people became rooted in their ability to properly adhere to these characteristics. This structure created the traditional Southern female, a woman of trained domesticity and submission. As time moved toward the early twentieth century, Southern women did begin to rebel against this concept of femininity (Flynt 251). These women wanted to be more than female companions suited for homebound life; they wanted their identity separate from Southern male expectations and desires. Nevertheless, Scott’s study reflects that, despite women gaining the right to vote by the late 1910s, the traditional Southern feminine image was

difficult to overcome (221). Some women successfully freed themselves from the forced domestic and submissive female person of the male-centered, antebellum world while others continued to embrace the ideal for simplicity and ease; change for Southern women meant not only a new identity but also having to figure out what that new identity would be (Scott 230-31). The antebellum South had been far from over in the minds of Southern women and their culture, even into the mid-twentieth century. Jean Louise follows this identity struggle in her non-traditional Southern female choices in *Mockingbird* and *Watchman*.

Another trait Jean Louise rejects is an “Us vs. Them” mentality. Rob E. Atkinson Jr.'s “Growing Up with Scout and Atticus: Getting from *To Kill a Mockingbird* Through *Go Set a Watchman*” article discusses this trait, though not directly. He often refers to how—in *Watchman*—Jean Louise, Atticus, and Uncle Jack discuss the South—their “us”—fighting or living against the North/Yankees, NAACP, or Big Government—their “them”; this one side versus another aligns with an “Us vs. Them” mentality (103-22). Nonetheless, Jean Louise showcases her rejection of this mentality in both novels not only by addressing “the Other” in Southern society but also her colorblindness.

Alec Gilmore and Claudia Johnson best define the term of “the Other.” Gilmore emphasizes the universal human experience of the “Other,” listing several kinds and explaining that, “All are expressions of an ‘exclusive other,’ which is one of the most popular and familiar expressions of otherness. It is a product of the ‘them and us’ syndrome, a label we pin on people we don't like, are afraid of or suspicious of; unfortunately we are all party to it” (232). Gilmore focuses solely on the fear and anxiety aspect for the Others. Johnson dives deeper into the “Other” in her book, *Threatening Boundaries*, in the chapter, “The Danger and Delight of Difference.” Her main stress of this chapter illustrates the Gothic—a genre to which several

Southern stories adhere—and Scout's fascination with the people Maycomb shuns, or the Others (71-93). Johnson defines Other as “any entity, markedly different from the sheltered self” (73). Southerners typically avoid these people—the ones with whom they disagree with or those who live differently from how they do. However, as Johnson importantly notes, Scout consistently reaches out to the Others—not only in *Mockingbird* but also in *Watchman*, as further discussion proves.

Jean Louise recognizes her colorblindness, which also highlights her rejection of the “Us vs Them” mentality. The term colorblindness can be defined in many ways, but Dwight Tanner's article, “‘She Forgot’: Obscuring White Privilege and Colorblindness in Harper Lee's Novels” gives the clearest understanding for both works. He states that colorblindness has had several meanings over the decades, but it has “almost always been about blindness—specifically a willed blindness to the reality of racial oppression and injustice” (Tanner 60). Jean Louise does not see race; instead, she does not recognize the evils of racism. Southern culture unfortunately generally accepts this ignorance, and Tanner believes that Jean Louise does not overcome this issue in *Watchman*; however, as later analysis will prove, she realizes her willful blindness by the end of *Watchman* as she works against her previous ignorance.

Jean Louise also expresses a more modern form of Southern Christianity in her acceptance of grace but rejection of legalism. Southern Christianity can split into two parts: the last two terms, “Grace” and “Legalism,” as a study of Alabama culture highlights. Southern culture includes Christianity as one of its key features, which causes some circular development since it is a consistent characteristic assigned to the region as well. However, Alabamians in the twentieth century believed themselves to be different, stronger Christians: “[S]outherners in general and Alabamians in particular believed they were uniquely and distinctly Christian. They

believed they adhered to a stronger, purer, deeper, more personal, evangelical, Protestant faith than other Americans” (Flynt *Alabama in the Twentieth Century* 445). Alabamian Protestants saw themselves as a more religious sect of their Christian brethren, expressing their faith in more distinct ways. They were the epitome of Southern Christianity in this period. Further, their expression of Christianity not only leaned toward the evangelical sect of their faith but also came with stricter ideals to which Alabamian Christians felt they must adhere. Wayne Flynt lists them succinctly in *Alabama in the Twentieth Century*: “Among various Christian values—unity, acceptance, grace, judgment, tolerance, forgiveness, purity, zeal—Alabama evangelicals chose to emphasize purity and zeal” (467). For Alabamians, their Christianity came with care and definitive standards, showcasing two sides of the Southern Christianity coin.

One half of Southern Christianity is grace, a trait Jean Louise accepts in *Mockingbird* and *Watchman*. The specific concept of grace in light of Lee's works comes from Trevor Cook's essay, “‘Well, Heck’: Confounding Grace in Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*.” He reads *Mockingbird* and *Watchman* sacramentally to better address “the outward signs of the inward and invisible grace with which Lee was concerned as an author and a Methodist” (657). His article further dives into the moments of grace found in Lee's writings, leaning heavily on Methodist ideology—a popular denomination for evangelical Christianity in Alabama. To express his idea of grace, he juxtaposes it with the law. For instance, in his analysis of *Mockingbird*, he writes that it “is concerned with illustrating the means by which one might fulfill the end (or telos) of the law [...] by recognizing the principles behind the precepts that allow responsible people to act justly of their own free will” (Cook 658). He does not specifically discuss grace appearing in Scout; nevertheless, he discusses it in his section on *Watchman*. The entire climax of the novel revolves around how “Jean Louise must at some point

exchange her Old Testament reliance upon rules and rituals for a New Testament Christian regard for the precept behind the law, whereby believers are free to act according to their heart's new desires" (Cook 665). Grace connects to Christian freedom of expression and in their lives—the opposite of law.

Like grace, the term legalism derives from Flynt's context and Cook's essay. Flynt describes Alabama evangelicals—with their focus on purity and zeal—as “aggressively self-righteous and determined to enforce their values on others” (*Alabama in the Twentieth Century* 467). This attitude aligns with the general movement of religious fundamentalism among Southern Christians, a concentration on the outward expressions of Christianity's fundamentals, like a value on innocence and virtue. Unfortunately, this movement can become too emphasized in a Christian Southerner's life, which leads to the negative attitudes in Cook's “Well, Heck” article. Cook notes that religious fundamentalism can appear to be the opposite side of grace, completing the expression of Christianity in Alabamians. He comments that “[i]n an early draft of the novel [*Mockingbird*], recently published as *Go Set a Watchman* (hereafter simply *Watchman*), [Lee] confirms what many readers had already suspected: that religious fundamentalism is responsible for much of what is wrong in *Mockingbird*, from the oppressive gender roles scorned by Scout to the forcible confinement of Boo Radley” (661). For Cook, the heavily strict, religious culture of the South is a major theme in Lee's novels. Moreover, he contrast this strictness with grace in his judgments of Atticus and Uncle Jack, saying they agree more with “the love of law rather than what the Apostle Paul would call the law of love”—living out the Old Testament rather than the New (Cook 665). Atticus and Uncle Jack care about following the system of Christianity rather than expressing the more emotional side of their faith. However, Cook's thoughts on Atticus and Jack and the main points of his article reflect more of

a tie to the issues of legalism. The central problem he discusses—love for the law over the law of love—follows the trouble with legalism, where a Christian focuses too much on adhering to the fundamentals of their faith. Cook’s overall ideas align more with legalism, though he uses terms like religious fundamentalism and religious conservatism interchangeably and does not note their nuances. He uses the term “legalism” himself, though only briefly (664). Thus, legalism—an overemphasis on law and rules—better expresses the trait Jean Louse truly rejects.

*Mockingbird* includes this discussion and rejection of legalism—as later analysis highlights—but *Watchman*’s antagonist attitude toward such ideology is obvious. Overall, both novels disagree with weighty religion with their mouthpiece being Jean Louise.

### **New Historicism and Southern Female Gender Studies: Narrower Lens for Lee’s Works**

Throughout history, the Southern region of the United States has been defined by one thing: its past. If the past and its influence vanish, no accurate study of the South can occur; therefore, a helpful literary theory for Southern literature must emphasize history. For Southern pieces like *Mockingbird* and *Watchman*, a New Historicist’s view works best. Stephen J. Greenblatt’s thoughts behind New Historicism and culture best highlight Southern texts, like Harper Lee’s works. His article “Resonance and Wonder” was his first piece to outline what he believed his New Historicist reading included as he expounds upon three major aspects of New Historicism. This discussion roots itself in Greenblatt’s disagreement with the definition of New Historicism according to *The American Heritage Dictionary*. First, New Historicism always holds to “agency, for even inaction or extreme marginality is understood to possess meaning and therefore to imply intention” (Greenblatt 15). Every choice compounds on one another; nothing happens alone in society or history. Second, New Historicism believes that writing connects “the present with the past” and these relations can “be made either by analogy or causality” (15). Past

literature relates to the present condition either metaphorically or directly; no matter what, it helps understand the present better or colors how the present is understood. Third, New Historicism recognizes that previous theories on formalism and history are not complete: “What is missing is psychic, social, and material resistance, a stubborn, unassimilable otherness, a sense of distance and difference. New historicism has attempted to restore this distance; hence its characteristic concerns have seemed to some critics off-center or strange” (18). These older theories focused on decided boundaries; New Historicism searches for the neglected history and holds value for understanding a work’s society and culture better. Greenblatt states the overall focus of New Historicism:

New historicism obviously has distinct affinities with resonance; that is, its concern with literary texts has been to recover as far as possible the historical circumstances of their original production and consumption and to analyze the relationship between these circumstances and our own. New-historicist critics have tried to understand the intersecting circumstances not as a stable, prefabricated background against which the literary texts can be placed but as a dense network of evolving and often contradictory social forces. (20)

New Historicism recognizes that social movements affect perspectives and, thus, the comprehension and study of them changes over time. A New Historicist acknowledges that multiple facts affect a literary work’s creation. Hence, this theory—one about constantly searching and seeking what aspects of history and culture affect a literary work—fits a study on Southern literature—a genre with a complicated history—perfectly. A solid study on a Southern literary piece requires an analysis of history; however, history and Southern history particularly is dynamic, and these literary works need such a lens.

Greenblatt's concept of how culture influences literature also affects his literary approach and gives further insight into his concept of New Historicism. In his section "Culture" in *Critical Terms for Literary Study* edited by Frank Lentricchia, and Thomas McLaughlin, Greenblatt expounds upon the vagueness which develops when the term *culture* appears in literary study. His section then works to develop a way in which to utilize culture in a clearer manner; for instance, he lists six questions for understanding a literary work's culture and the concepts it espouses:

What kinds of behavior, what models of practice, does this work seem to enforce?

Why might readers at a particular time and place find this work compelling?

Are there differences between my values and the values implicit in the work I am reading?

Upon what social understandings does the work depend?

Whose freedom of thought or movement might be constrained implicitly or explicitly by this work?

What are the larger social structures with which these particular acts of praise or blame might be connected? (Greenblatt "Culture")

Literary works that have rich histories and convoluted social connections gain a better analysis alongside these questions. More specifically, when noting *Mockingbird* and *Watchman*'s culture, Greenblatt's questions become imperative. O'Connor and Woodward's pieces can guide to answers since they align with a new historicism and cultural criticism approach; Woodward's essay helps focus on how historical events shaped Southerners and their perception of their identity (new historicism), and O'Connor's analysis of the cultural context of the South assists in recognizing the values at work in Southern literature (cultural criticism). By using O'Connor's

“Christ-haunted” nature of the South, Jean Louise knows what a “whole man” should be simply due to her Southern culture (44). This awareness leads her to choose what parts of Southern culture—what character traits—to accept or reject; what aligns with her understanding of Christianity and what does not. Further, when Jean Louise simultaneously accepts and rejects those Southern traits, she achieves a security of identity that Woodward emphasizes in his article, which is what Southerners of her era needed. Therefore, Woodward and O’Connor’s works are other factors in a new historicist and cultural criticism approach for Lee’s works.

In addition to Greenblatt’s New Historicism and focus on a literary piece’s culture, a study of females in the South will provide important insight for Lee’s novels, specifically Anne Firor Scott’s aforementioned *The Southern Lady: From Pedestal to Politics, 1830-1930*. While published in 1970, Scott’s historical collection displays the power of the antebellum Southern lady tradition and its lasting control over Southern women—for their society and their views of themselves. Scott states her work’s fourfold purpose in her Preface:

[T]o describe the culturally defined image of the lady; to trace the effect this definition had on women's behavior; to describe the realities of women's lives which were often at odds with the image; to describe and characterize the struggle of women to free themselves from the confines of cultural expectation and find a way to self-determination. (x)

This study clearly observes Southern female gender expression, the concept of the Southern lady, the influence of the South’s patriarchal culture, and the issues therewithin. Moreover, Scott compiles diary and journal entries, historical artifacts, novels, articles, and more to support the vastness of the ideal image for traditional Southern women. While originally stemming from the antebellum South, the overwhelming nature of this ideal form of ladyhood caused its authority

and power to be felt and followed for decades after its conception. Scott notes that the construct of the Southern woman was strictly held and “[one] result was that southern women became in time a distinct type among American women. Another was that their efforts to free themselves were more complex than those of women elsewhere” (xi). These two results should be kept in mind when discussing the traditional Southern female image and its power over women in the South: complexity lies beneath the surface of antebellum ladyhood. Scott further states that her work is not—as her male historians claimed—a piece of “female chauvinism,” but its purpose is to “add to our understand of what has been social reality” (xii). Scott speaks for women who previously had no voice and who fought to find their voices throughout the years. Her information gives an important, insightful lens into the world of Southern women, and this framework assists with analyzing Lee’s novels.

The South’s deep-rooted history and multifaceted society give its literature such a complexity that it requires lenses such as Greenblatt’s New Historicism and a focus on culture alongside Scott’s women’s studies. Moreover, this mixed literary theory can help give *Mockingbird* and *Watchman* a strong analysis and further insight into the characterization of Jean Louise. With a foundation on history, society, and gender, her acceptance and rejection of Southern traits—and the logic behind these decisions—can be better understood and discussed.

## Chapter One: Scout in *To Kill a Mockingbird*

Jean Louise—or “Scout” (as she will be called in the *Mockingbird* chapters)—Finch holds an important place among general literary and specific Southern characters since she is not only a Southern woman growing up in 1930s, small town Alabama but also a child learning right from wrong, giving her identity obvious complexity. Indeed, as a character reflecting her historical time, Scout indirectly struggles with the collective Southern desire for internal security, like Woodward notes in his discussion. The search for a solid Southern identity—the inward balance—surrounds and influences her. Moreover, Scout begins to discover who she wants to be, figuring out what Southern aspects she will accept or reject. Scout can be inconsistent in her accepting and rejecting of Southern traits, but this manner could appear in any child.

Furthermore, Scout’s identity develops due to her subconscious adherence to the “whole man” ideal entrenched in the Christ-haunted nature of the South (O’Connor 44). Whether she understands or not, Scout’s move toward accepting or rejecting a Southern characteristic stems from this innate belief, and her decisions help her eventually achieve internal security—a balance between positive and negative traits. An analysis of which traits she accepts and rejects most often gives a better picture of Scout’s Southern identity. Overall, Scout most consistently accepts discrimination and respect, honor of family, and grace while she most often rejects traditional Southern femininity, an “Us vs. Them” mentality, and legalism. She acts upon them individually, and each instance enlightens her search for security in the Christ-haunted South.

### **Acceptance of the South: Discrimination and Respect, Honor of Family, and Grace**

Scout first accepts discrimination and respect, a notable Southern trait since this trait first appears negative but holds positive outcomes as Scout learns to portray it. Following Shaffer’s definitions of discrimination and respect, the two occur when one recognizes class but in a caring

manner, which is a well-meaning approach. Shaffer notes a couple of instances where discrimination and respect separately occur. For instance, Atticus saves Miss Maudie's rocking chair when her house is on fire as an act of discrimination (Shaffer 559-60). As a sign of respect, Atticus is polite to Mrs. Dubose despite her cruel nature (Shaffer 560). While Schaffer also notes moments when Scout expresses the traits simultaneously, he does not write on the clearest example: her interactions with the younger Walter Cunningham. Early in the novel, Walter Cunningham irritates his and Scout's first-grade schoolteacher, Miss Caroline Fisher, because he does not have his lunch and he refuses to take a quarter from her to get lunch. Scout notices Walter growing uncomfortable and—at the prompting of her peers—interrupts, “Miss Caroline, he's a Cunningham” (Lee 22). To Scout and the other children, this statement clarifies the issue: he is a member of his family and acts accordingly. Nevertheless, since Miss Caroline is new to Maycomb County, she does not understand, and Scout goes on to enlighten her. Scout explains that, as a Cunningham, he does not take from others since his family “never took anything they can't pay back” (22). Walter cannot pay Miss Caroline back; thus, he will not take her money. Cunninghams do not take from others when they cannot reimburse, and Scout shares this fact because Walter's family's background matters to treat Walter properly. Scout shows care toward Walter by sharing this information, helping him be more at ease. Thus, Scout's interjection and explanation expresses a level of discrimination and respect: she identifies Walter's differences and assists him when he receives behavior dissimilar from what he finds comfortable, which is a positive Southern trait.

Jem and Calpurnia provide Scout with guidance on her inclination of discrimination and respect, further showing the trait's positive consequences. After stopping Scout from hurting Walter, Jem invites him over to their house for dinner. While Jem, Scout, and Atticus eat, Walter

asks for molasses and pours it over his food, causing Scout to immediately mock Walter for his unconventional decision. Calpurnia immediately removes Scout from the table and reprimands Scout for her actions. Scout tries to defend herself with a similar phrase: “Cal, he’s just a Cunningham” (27). Her defense quickly falters as Calpurnia chides, “Don't matter who they are, anybody sets foot in this house's yo' company, and don't let me catch you remarkin' on their ways like you was so high and mighty! Yo' folks might be better'n the Cunninghams but it don't count for nothin' the way you're disgracin' 'em” (27). By bringing attention to Walter’s decisions, Scout only highlights discrimination and leaves out respect. Kathryn Siedel rightly acknowledges that, in this moment, “Scout is so class-conscious that when Walter is invited to dinner, she refuses to be polite to him” (82). Seidel continues that this class-consciousness is a negative trait, but Scout merely misses respect. Scout’s oversight causes her to mistreat Walter and ignore classic Southern ideals. By figuring out how to express discrimination and respect at the same time, Scout in *Mockingbird* acts upon a major aspect of Southern culture: “This sort of thing [discrimination and respect] is often spoken of as Southern courtesy, and it is that; but in this story, which is a story about how children are taught the virtues, it is shown to be a practice that is necessary when a society preserves both its memory and a faith that says every person is redeemed” (Shaffer 560). This understanding will grow within Scout as the novel progresses and she matures. Under Calpurnia and Jem’s directions, Scout strengthens her usage of discrimination and respect and stresses their useful influence on others.

In addition to discrimination and respect, Scout honors her family by protecting and supporting Atticus and Jem. Scout does not take this characteristic lightly, which aligns with Charles Regan Wilson’s emphasis on Southern family obligation. Throughout *Mockingbird*, she consistently stands up for her family—no matter what is at stake—in verbal but mostly

physically aggressive ways. Her aggression is tricky. Flynt, using Rick Bragg's opinions, notes different kinds of honor Southerners fought for: lower-class Southerners connect honor with pride while more refined Southerners see honor as abstract (*Alabama in the Twentieth Century* 191). Poorer Southerners cared passionately more about their name and its importance and protection, often seeming prideful. Despite belonging to the more refined class, Scout's physical altercations cause a prideful appearance. For example, during Christmas at Finch's Landing with her extended family, Scout's cousin Francis comments on how Atticus' legal representation of Tom Robinson causes issues for the Finch family image; he degradingly calls Atticus a "nigger-lover" (Lee 94). After too many of these remarks, she punches Francis's face (96). When reasoning her actions to Uncle Jack, Scout admits she was unsure of the word's meaning, but "I swear before God if I'll sit there and let him say somethin' about Atticus" (98). Francis' words about Atticus easily anger Scout because of her high value of her family's honor. Some scholars believe this honor harms Scout; Seidel chides this attitude as well since Scout appears to "figh[t] or apparently no reason other than her honor and her own amusement" (81). In a late-night conversation, Atticus' comments to Uncle Jack seem to support Siedel: "Scout'd just as soon jump on someone as look at him if her pride's at stake" (Lee 100). Atticus ties her violence to the vice of personal pride. However, Scout tries to protect her father and not herself by attacking Francis; her violent manner is troubling to Atticus and Jack, yet her heart reflects a daughter who wants to stand up for her father and their family name. Thus, Scout's honor of family appears imperfect at first since she is young, but she works toward bettering it.

Scout's sibling relationship with Jem shows her honing her honor of family due to her support of him. Scout and Jem's dynamic matters despite their fights, like Julia Pond states, "One of the most important relationships in *Mockingbird* is the sibling companionship between

Scout and Jem” (84). Pond continues to discuss how Jem grows apart from Scout as he matures throughout the novel, which various academics highlight as well. Nevertheless, while Jem moves into a different stage of life, Scout reliably supports him; he is her brother, and adhering to familial bonds matters greatly in Southern life. Their moments of connection are often short, but her attachment toward him does not waver. Scout always views Jem and her separate from everyone else. She first reflects on their distinction when she reviews the Great Depression in Alabama and how “these events were remote from the world of Jem and me,” and then she mentions it again when she comments that Aunt Alexandra does not fit “into the world of Jem and me” (Lee 132, 149). Scout recognizes Jem’s changes, but they cannot lose their bond. Scout typically follows Jem’s lead or agrees to his ideas out of support only because he is her brother. One of the most interesting displays of Scout’s honor of Jem comes after his outburst against Mrs. Dubose’s camellias. When Atticus sends Jem to apologize, Scout tries to go with Jem before Atticus stops her (119). Scout fears Jem heads to his death since rumors say Mrs. Dubose owns a pistol, but Scout still attempts to go with him—and willingly. Furthermore, she reflects that “[o]f course Jem antagonized me sometimes until I could kill him, but when it came down to it he was all I had” (119). Scout values her brother, no matter their quarrels. She continues to show honor of family through Jem in her choice to sit beside him in Mrs. Dubose’s house while he reads; Atticus even comments on her opportunity to not go if she so chooses (124). Scout stays by Jem’s side, desiring to help support her brother by her presence. Scout and Jem grow apart, but their family ties are stronger. Through disagreements and strife, Scout maintains her sibling bond with Jem since she supports him on their familial grounds; she gives him honor as a member of her family.

Scout's third accepted Southern trait is how she most consistently expresses Southern Christianity's grace. She adheres to love over the law—empathy instead of justice. Due to grace's abstract quality, Robert Butler's "The Religious Vision of *To Kill a Mockingbird*" and Trevor Cook's aforementioned article give concrete examples of this trait in *Mockingbird*. Butler states that grace appears when "the laws of verisimilitude [are suspended] in order to bring to life startling moments of 'grace'" (125). In these moments, characters miraculously overcome mental and physiological obstacles or evils and give grace—help—to others (Butler 126). Cook's analysis of *Mockingbird* gives grace more specifics; for instance, Cook agrees with Butler's overall argument that, in *Mockingbird*, grace supersedes evil, but Cook also comments that it replaces the law (667-68). The overwhelmingly kind treatment of others—no matter the circumstances—reveals grace. Atticus wisely describes grace: "You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view [...] until you climb into his skin and walk around in it" (Lee 33). A person embodies grace when he decides to try to understand someone rather than assume his choices; it shows care toward another human being instead of focusing on facts.

Scout demonstrates grace toward a few townspeople, but her grace toward Mayella gives a different view on this trait. Scout and Mayella's connection has been categorized and analyzed under several theories and terms, giving their interactions an interesting depth despite their lack of direct contact. Indeed, Scout only thinks about Mayella a handful of times. First, she thinks about her during Tom Robinson's testimony. In this short paragraph, Scout realizes much about Mayella's difficulties:

[I]t came to me that Mayella Ewell must have been the loneliest person in the world. She was even lonelier than Boo Radley, who had not been out of the house in twenty-five

years. When Atticus asked had she any friends, she seemed not to know what he meant, then she thought he was making fun of her. She was as sad, I thought, as what Jem called a mixed child: 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 [...] Maycomb gave [the Ewells] Christmas baskets, welfare money, and the back of its hand. (Lee 218)

Mayella has struggled greatly in her young life, and this reality troubles Scout; she spends an entire paragraph processing Mayella's probable life. Scout considers Mayella a second time during Aunt Alexandra's Missionary Society. Mrs. Grace Merriweather chats about how they must "forgive and forget" and how the church should become more involved in an unnamed woman's life. Scout then asks if Mrs. Merriweather means Mayella, but Mrs. Merriweather reveals they are discussing Tom Robinson's wife, Helen (264). Scout's assumption that a conversation about the church forgiving and helping a woman would be about Mayella highlights that in spite of Mayella's choices directly leading to Tom's trial and later death, Scout deems her worthy of forgiveness. Theodore R. and Grace-Ann Hovet note that Mayella is arguably a "lying slut who causes the death of an innocent African American," but Scout sees past this surface (75). Scout showcases grace by thinking about Mayella's difficulties, but Scout does not act on grace; she does not reach out to Mayella or befriend her. However, her attitude toward Mayella suggests surprising kindness and forgiveness. Hovet and Hovet note that Scout's recognition of Mayella reflects Mayella's humanity despite the evils surrounding her (75). Scout chooses to see life and her wrongful actions from Mayella's point of view. Mayella is a lonely, troubled woman in need of help. Scout desires better for Mayella and gives her grace—more than some would assume a child could understand.

## Rejection of the South: Traditional Southern Femininity, “Us Vs. Them” Mentality, and Legalism

While Scout displays some Southern traits, she rejects the South's more negative qualities as well. First, Scout constantly breaks from the traditional southern female role, a popular characteristic of hers in *Mockingbird* studies. Some scholars—like Laura Fine and her essay “Structuring the Narrator’s Rebellion in *To Kill a Mockingbird*”—liken Scout’s tomboyishness in her choices and dress to a rejection of heterosexuality or hints at Scout’s possible avoidance of heteronormative feelings. Nonetheless, these claims go outside what Scout embodies at her core: the desire among some mid-twentieth century Southern females to make their own decisions about what it was to be a Southern woman. Anne Frior Scott discusses the increasing opportunities and new life choices for women after the 1920s. Although not all women preferred it, more women tried to separate themselves from the antebellum ideals as they cut their ties to the previously assumed positions of wife and mother (229-30). Dean Shackelford's article, “The Female Voice in ‘To Kill a Mockingbird’: Narrative Strategies in Film and Novel” covers this aspect of Scout, too. Although he heavily analyzes the film, Shackelford still discusses how Scout objects to becoming a typical Southern lady in the novel. Crucially, he notes that a major subject of *Mockingbird* is gender roles, specifically “Scout’s tomboyishness as it relates to her developing sense of the female self” (109). Numerous instances indicate Scout’s rejection of Southern ladyhood in favor of male features. For instance, Scout consistently does not wear a dress—an article of clothing ascribed to the expected image of a Southern female—but rather overalls—a piece of male work clothes. Neither Atticus nor Calpurnia force Scout to wear a dress, which is a “failure to train her to be a lady” in the South (Shaffer 533). Aunt Alexandra seeks to correct this situation. Upon her arrival, she states that her move to Maycomb specifically

revolves around Scout needing her womanly presence while she grows up (Lee 145). Aunt Alexandra's actions and personality mirror the older women of the 1930s who were content to stay within the antebellum ways and mindset (Scott 230). She continues to follow the older ways of Southern society that upheld more traditional ideas for women. She not only aligns with the traditional female Southern identity, but she also decides to describe "southern ladyhood for Scout with admonitions to wear dresses, to learn to cook, to curb her tongue" (Seidel 86). She believes her duty is to help Scout become a Southern lady, much to Scout's dismay. Their relationship becomes a major conflict for Scout. She grips onto her own female identity, going against any feminine feature her aunt might desire from her. Jem comments on their disagreements, saying, "You know she's not used to girls [...] leastways, not girls like you. She's trying to make you a lady. Can't you take up sewin' or somethin'" to which Scout says, "Hell no" (Lee 257). Scout is not willing to compromise; she does not want to be a traditional Southern woman under her aunt's forced guidance.

Aside from her tomboyishness, Scout also seems to not enjoy the world of Southern women and prefers the company of men. Shackelford debates where Scout's ambivalence toward Southern women comes from, and he emphasizes the possibility that Scout's rejection of Southern females may be due to their lack of real power in the South (110-12). For a headstrong girl like Scout, this fear is a valid concern. Nevertheless, Scout's internal thoughts show a more straight-forward reason behind her rebellion: she does not like how traditional Southern women act, and, as she grows up, she does not want to be one of them. Her opinions solidify after Aunt Alexandra's Missionary Society meeting. As Scout interacts with these women who seem to embody antebellum, traditional Southern femininity, she realizes her unfortunate destiny to be a part of this Southern female world. Furthermore, she thinks about how she prefers the world of

men: “people like Mr. Heck Tate did not trap you with innocent questions to make fun of you; even Jem was not highly critical unless you said something stupid” (Lee 266-67). In Scout’s mind, Southern men are not hypocrites—unlike Southern women, who hide behind pretty façades. Scout experiences their fakeness firsthand earlier during the meeting; different women ask her seemingly innocent questions to only laugh at her answers (262-63). Scout seems upset over how they feign kindness just to make her feel small and silly. With this example before her, Scout rejects the traditional Southern female role and its entire realm, wanting to avoid its inconsistencies and hidden evils.

Scout also revolts against the Southern “Us vs. Them” mentality, expressed in her recognition of the “Other” and the unconscious realization of her colorblindness. While people from countless other cultures claim this mindset, the Southern expression of “Us vs. Them” is distinct; it is usually expressed alongside fear and contempt—like an avoidance of the “Other” or a hold to colorblindness. This part of Southern culture arises most clearly in the latter half of the novel. Jem, upset by the outcome of Tom’s trial, tells Scout he realizes now that Maycomb has four different kinds of “folks”: the Finches, the Cunninghams, the Ewells, and the Black people—none of which get along with each other (Lee 259). Jem’s view is realistic for the mid-twentieth century South. Flynt mentions a growing focus on differences between statuses in Alabama in this period specifically (*Alabama in the Twentieth Century* 185). Furthermore, Jem thinks families all have different backgrounds that separate them from each other in distinction and importance, with which Southern towns like Maycomb agree—an example of an “us” and “them” stance. Scout disagrees, famously saying, “Nah, Jem, I think there’s just one kind of folks. Folks” (Lee 259). She finds that Jem’s declared barriers should not exist; rather, no one is better than anyone else since everyone is human. Simply put, Scout does not believe in “us” and

“them” but just folks—just human beings. This characteristic is arguably naïve, but it develops in complexity when Scout uses it to befriend Others and to subconsciously recognize her colorblindness. For Scout, people are people; their differences deserve recognition, but not in a fearful or ignorant manner.

Scout’s connection to the “Others” in Southern society directly reflects her rejection of “Us vs. Them” since she aligns herself with the “them.” The “Other” distinction is generally known as that which is “different from the sheltered self,” as Claudia Johnson defines it (*Threatening* 73). Alec Gilmore’s article “*To Kill a Mockingbird*: Perceptions of “the Other”” takes the “Other” deeper by basing it in fear and anxiety. Gilmore discusses several types of Others throughout *Mockingbird*, and Claudia Johnson includes multiple examples in which Scout chooses to interact with Others, but one crucial instance they miss specifically in connection to Scout is Dill Harris. Introduced with the eclectic name of Charles Baker Harris, Dill stands out from the ordinary in Maycomb. Besides his odd looks, Dill’s unstable family situation makes him separate from the Maycomb people. Scout’s cousin Francis comments on Dill’s difference in a conversation with Scout. He blatantly degrades Dill, first by discussing how Dill’s family passes him from one home to the next and second by referring to Dill as a “stray do[g]” (Lee 94). Francis makes it clear that Dill is not a part of the “us.” His remarks also support Gilmore’s classification of Dill’s otherness. Indeed, Gilmore does identify Dill—alongside Tom Robinson and Mayella Ewell—under “The Victimized Other,” the ones who require “help most of all” (239). Moreover, they “have each had otherness thrust upon them” by society and not due to their own choices or actions (Gilmore 240). For Dill, his otherness comes from his parents. He tells Scout that his parents got frustrated by his desire to be around them, assumingly mocking his father’s comments by saying in a deeper tone that “[y]ou’re not a boy. Boys get out and play

baseball with other boys” (Lee 162). Dill does not act like a Southern boy, unlike what his parents anticipated, which places him apart from Southern culture expectations. Gilmore breaks down the victimized category more as he gives subsections for each of the three listed characters; Dill is the “not needed” Other (239). Gilmore spends this section mainly emphasizing Atticus’ treatment of these victimized others, but he does briefly comment on Scout’s connection with Dill. When Dill runs away to the Finch’s home, Scout “understands—she *knows* she is needed and that Dill isn’t” (Gilmore 239). This understanding does not come from Atticus—despite Gilmore’s push—but from Scout’s own care for Dill. Scout and Dill’s close friendship allows Dill to truly reveal to Scout why he ran away from his family: he felt unloved (Lee 161-63). He is vulnerable with her. Although Dill quickly changes the subject to babies, Scout reflects on his uniqueness and talents with fascination and appreciation, beginning with how “[b]eautiful things floated around in his dreamy head” (Lee 163). He does annoy her at different points, but she recognizes his otherness and accepts it as special and good.

Scout’s rejection of “Us vs. Them” also emerges in her steps toward seeing her colorblindness, which begun explicitly due to Calpurnia’s presence. Tanner re-summarizes his term: colorblindness “functions as an excuse to claim that racial oppression cannot exist if race is no longer seen or acknowledged” (60). Tanner’s entire argument centers on how Scout—and Jean Louise in *Watchman*—retains her colorblindness by not acknowledging the race problems in Maycomb; however, his view requires downplaying Scout’s growing love and deep interest concerning Calpurnia in *Mockingbird*. Numerous scholars note Calpurnia’s role as key to Scout’s development, both in Scout’s life and in her comprehension of race. While Claudia Johnson examines Scout and Calpurnia’s relationship under the term of “Other,” Johnson’s study supports how Scout begins to remove her colorblindness—as Tanner defines it—due to

Calpurnia. Johnson's most intriguing example is when Scout and Jem visit Calpurnia's church and their conversation afterward. Calpurnia's tone toward other Black people differs from how Scout has always known her to speak, immediately catching Scout's attention (Lee 135).

Calpurnia becomes unknown to Scout. Jem, Scout, and Calpurnia discuss her ability to speak "two languages" later, and Scout thinks to herself that "[t]he idea she [Calpurnia] had a separate existence outside our household was a novel one" (143). Scout's amazement directly comes from Calpurnia's sudden difference in light of her actions in her Black community. Scout sees Calpurnia as a Black woman for the first time, and this version of Calpurnia amazes her. As Johnson soundly interprets, Calpurnia now appeals to Scout since Scout hopes to see Calpurnia more often (*Threatening* 86). Calpurnia is suddenly different from the familiar for Scout, and Scout wants to know more about this Calpurnia. She asks Calpurnia if she can go to her house instead of only seeing her in the Finch house, making her desire obvious (Lee 143). She hopes to watch Calpurnia live in this new-to-her environment, the Black community. However, Scout does not fully comprehend the racial oppression Calpurnia faces as a Black woman in Maycomb—or in the South. Scout is not yet a crusader for anti-racist thought; nevertheless, Scout has begun to see that there is something different about Calpurnia's life, specifically because she is a Black woman.

Legalism comes down to choosing the law over love or justice instead of empathy, and Scout rejects this final trait wholeheartedly. For those acting under legalism, structure and order—what people can see—should matter over emotions or difficulties—what cannot be seen easily; outward actions matter more than the heart. As Cook states, everyone in the Maycomb community is religious in some form, which emphasizes that "[t]his religious ideology was established through generations of indoctrination in the Christian faith; it is the invisible order

behind the ethical judgments the inhabitants spontaneously make of one another” (661).

Expressions of piety and zeal center the community’s conclusions about one another since public actions matter more than internal decisions. Cook admits that these concerns of legalism are less obvious in *Mockingbird*, particularly compared to *Watchman* (661). Nevertheless, Scout still rejects this trait throughout the novel.

The most direct moment of legalism—and when Scout best interacts—emerges between the women attending Aunt Alexandra’s Missionary Society Tea. Cook describes this group as “the do-gooders” who follow the lead of Mrs. Grace Merriweather, who is described in the novel as “the most devout lady in town” (660). Despite their supposed religious nature, these women quickly reveal themselves to be more concerned with outward appearance—an issue with legalism. Indeed, their meeting allegedly revolves around the Christian missionary J. Grimes Everett and his work among the Mrundas, an African “primitive tribe infected with yaws and earworms and, the ladies fear, possessed of no sense of family,” but divulges from there (Johnson “Secret Courts” 137). The women jump from subject to subject, mainly in the form of gossip, and Scout struggles to keep up. Nonetheless, she does hear a crucial comment made by Mrs. Merriweather. Mrs. Merriweather complains to some of the women about the actions of those in Maycomb who believe they are helping the Black community when they are only causing trouble, calling them “[g]ood, but misguided” (Lee 265). While many in attendance know she means Atticus and his support of Tom Robinson, Scout misses the connection. Miss Maudie, on the other hand, does not; she responds to Mrs. Merriweather’s judgment: “His food doesn’t stick going down, does it?” (266). Miss Maudie’s comment stops Mrs. Merriweather from going further. These women consider themselves to good Christian people, but they focus on whether a person’s outward choices align with their personal religious beliefs. At this

moment, as Johnson points out, they “cuttingly and cruelly censure Atticus in his own house and in the presence of his nine-year-old daughter and his sister, their hostess” (“Secret Court” 137). The Society prides themselves on their sympathy toward others only to slight Atticus around those closest to him. They choose order—justice—instead of love toward Atticus and his family. Scout is still not entirely sure what has occurred due to Mrs. Merriweather’s comments, but Scout notices that Aunt Alexandra gives Miss Maudie a thankful glance, which surprises Scout and shows her it must have been truly troubling (Lee 266). Scout immediately considers how she does not want to be a part of these women and their surface-level benevolence or in a circle where “fragranced ladies rocked slowly, fanning gentle, and drank cool water” (266-67). Scout does not directly act against this moment of legalism, but she makes it clear that she does not want to be a member of their group. She will not adhere to their practices of justice over love, refusing their unsympathetic views.

### **Scout’s Southern Traits and Christ-Haunted Security**

Within these textual examples, Scout works toward accepting or rejecting these six Southern traits, which highlights her search for security in her identity alongside her Christ-haunted nature. The push and pull of mid-twentieth century Southern life and Scout’s own childlike mentality cause some discrepancies and difficulties. However, a “whole man” does and should exist for Southerners, and this inherited outlook subconsciously guides Scout in which traits she consistently picks and chooses. She seemingly follows more positive Southern characteristics and rebuffs the negative ones. This ability proves she innately recognizes the differences between the two sides and desires a more peaceful, steady identity—one between the two extremes. Scout does not always act on these traits alone or in a singular fashion since many easily overlap, but they strongly appear in individual moments, showing her tendency toward

these six predominately. These instances prove Scout can learn what parts of the South she will or will not embody; moreover, they hint that she will eventually find more steadiness in her identity as a Southerner, mainly through her reconciliation of all six traits as an adherence to the guidance of Christ-hauntedness.

## **Chapter Two: Scout's Simultaneous Acceptance and Rejection in *To Kill a Mockingbird***

Throughout *Mockingbird*, Scout accepts and rejects some traits of Southern culture, which can create an unclear view of who Scout is; however, her mixture of traits reflects the complexity of Southern identity. Historically, the push and pull of her character aligns with the identity struggle of mid-twentieth century Southerners. Moreover, *To Kill a Mockingbird* is a coming-of-age novel; hence, internal uncertainty is common. As Theodore and Grace Ann Hovet comment, Scout should still “respond to negative experiences and threatening events by developing an individualistic moral center that can triumph over them” (68). Indeed, in stressful moments, Scout consistently appears to hold to a moral center that guides her through the difficulties. Her moral center may be translated to Scout's ability to reconcile the aforementioned six Southern traits together—accepting discrimination and respect, honor of family, and grace while rejecting traditional Southern femininity, “Us vs. Them” mentality, and legalism—in response to her Christ-haunted nature. She communicates these characteristics all at once, giving her security in her identity. They overlap and develop in tandem. In *Mockingbird*, Scout utilizes these six traits simultaneously only twice: the incident outside the Maycomb jail and her final interactions with Boo Radley.

### **The Power of Entailments: Scout Against the Mob**

The first reconciliation within Scout occurs when the lynch mob arrives at Maycomb's jail, and she takes control of the scene, strengthening her balanced, Southern identity. Atticus originally handles the stress of the unidentified men well, but the scene grows tense upon Scout, Jem, and Dill's interruption. With the additional stress and uncertainty, Scout suddenly acts. She does not appear to be fully aware of her actions; she is still a child facing a relatively complex situation. Nonetheless, an innate ability—a Christ-haunted awareness—compels her to create

peace—security—to this intense moment. Subconscious or not, Scout showcases control over the previously listed six Southern traits and directly brings resolution to a difficult confrontation.

From the start of the mob scene, Scout's honor of family appears in her desire to protect Atticus, which begins the following chains of reactions. Seidel describes Scout's—and Jem's—actions and refusal to go back home as being “innocently brave, and perhaps reckless” (89). While Seidel credits this bravery to Atticus' lessons that people are generally good, the Southern sense of honor toward family guides Scout. Indeed, this trait appears first in front of the mob, taking the form of her defense of Atticus and Jem. Scout's helping Atticus is subtle; she does not seem aware of her assistance at first. Nevertheless, she innately understands that something darker comes for Atticus. Her narration recounts several disturbing events that would have caught Scout's attention, such as Heck Tate and Mr. Underwood meeting with Atticus, Jem admitting his fears for Atticus' safety, and Atticus' sudden decision to drive downtown, which he never does (Lee 164-169). These moments build toward her decision to go downtown with Jem, who wants to check on Atticus. As Jem decides to search for Atticus, Scout states she will join him, no matter what he says (Lee 169). She will not leave her father unprotected. Scout's guard is up as it concerns Atticus, stressing her honor toward him as her family member.

Her sense of protection toward her family also includes Jem, and their bond appears clearer than her tie to Atticus. For instance, in her decision to follow Jem in his search, she does not allow Jem to go into this possibly dangerous situation alone. She continues to stick by Jem's side rather than stay at home, where Atticus would want them, hinting at a new expression for old Southern features: “[W]omen and children who would once have been expected to bow entirely to the father's will were finding a voice” (Scott 214). This choice adds complexity to Scout's femininity since she still cares for her family—an aspect of the antebellum woman—but

goes against her father's wishes; she values protecting her family over her female duties. Scout's more aggressive expression of honor of family suddenly arises, too. When Jem refuses to leave, one of the men menacingly grabs Jem by his shirt collar, and Scout quickly kicks the man in an attempt "to kick his shin, but aimed too high" (Lee 173). Although her kick was an accident, Scout's anger still developed into a physical act. Atticus immediately scolds her, but she defends herself: "Ain't nobody gonna do Jem that way" (173). Jem receives threats, and Scout will not let that attitude happen in front of her. Scout shows that, despite the edge in the air, she will not allow harm to come upon her family and will physically act if necessary.

Scout next engages in discrimination and respect, specifically in her conversation with Mr. Cunningham. She thoughtfully addresses him according to his class. After kicking one of the men, Scout searches the mob for anyone she might know and finally notices Mr. Cunningham, Walter's father. She talks to him about Walter, but she observes that he does not respond positively to the subject; thus, she shifts over to his legal troubles with entailment—his desire to keep his land in his family despite their financial struggles (Lee 174-75). Scout's switch of subjects and awareness of Mr. Cunningham's possible desires denotes her discrimination and respect. Indeed, by mentioning the entailment, she recognizes his class but in a thoughtful manner; she refers to an issue—one important to a poorer man—in order to discuss his interests, as Atticus taught her to do (174). Chapter two of the novel foreshadows the entailment's importance. While assisting Walter with Miss Caroline, Scout recalls Atticus helping Mr. Cunningham with an entailment, their conversation about the Cunninghams' class, and the description of Mr. Cunningham as a man "willing to go hungry to keep his land" and who "came from a set breed of men" (23). Scout learns that Mr. Cunningham might be poor, but he cares about his land, and she remembers this information. Through her forced conversation at the jail,

Scout helps Mr. Cunningham “calm down, control himself physically, and gain for a moment the restraint that [...] Cunningham—as an adult member of the community, even though in a lower class—should already possess” (Seidel 89). Mr. Cunningham is not a faceless member of an aggressive mob. He remains a Cunningham, a poorer group that deeply values land and family. Scout treats him according to his societal standing, and her thoughtful words crucially remind Mr. Cunningham who he is.

Regarding her rejections, Scout’s outspoken nature toward the mob men displays her non-traditional Southern female manner. The mob tensely threatens Atticus, but Scout matches the male atmosphere. Unlike typical female expectations, Scout deals straightforwardly with the tension: she talks directly at Mr. Cunningham in an attempt to gain a sense of normalcy. While she continues with him, Scout realizes the entire group—mob, Atticus, Jem, and Dill—watch her and “their attention amounted to fascination” (Lee 174). Her choice to speak casually shocks them all. She refuses to stand quietly simply because she is the only woman in the group; thus, she follows the candid, masculine environment. She speaks like a classic Southern gentleman: “firm, commanding” (Hundley qtd. in Scott 14). Furthermore, her winning topic of conversation—Mr. Cunningham’s entailments—sources back to Atticus, a male influence. Her compounded choices move her away from the female image. Importantly, Scout’s less feminine attitude changes the outcome of this crisis; Hovet and Hovet state, “Scout’s persistence in speaking directly to the poor white Walter Cunningham about his legal problems leads to the dispersal of a mob attempting to lynch Tom” (Lee 77). Her ability to shock the mob with her outspokenness brings the men to their senses, particularly Mr. Cunningham, who leads the group back home. When Scout questions the odd reaction she receives, Mr. Cunningham reaches out and grabs her on her shoulders before heading off. His calm, almost reciprocal action signals an

understanding between the two (Lee 175). The mob scene would have likely ended differently without Scout's rejection of traditional Southern femininity.

Considering the two ways Scout rejects the "Us vs. Them" mentality, she aligns most with a recognition of her own colorblindness. By assisting Tom and interacting with this racially motivated mob, she begins to step away from her ignorance. Crucially, her growth does not come from Atticus. Despite popular readings, Dwight Tanner demonstrates how Atticus' connection with Tom does not reveal Atticus' anti-racist nature:

[I]n *Mockingbird* Atticus also describes the decision to defend Tom Robinson as one of duty, stating that he must defend Robinson because "if I didn't I couldn't hold up my head in town" (86). *Mockingbird* also makes it clear that Atticus was actually assigned to the case by Judge Taylor (100). In other words, the case of Tom Robinson is not something that Atticus went looking for; Atticus even makes it clear that he had "hoped to get through life without a case of this kind" (100). Any other motivations that readers ascribe to Atticus for why he is defending Tom Robinson are perhaps mostly indicative of our own need to create a white, anti-racist savior. (68)

Atticus' defense of Tom is not showing his children the problems with racial injustice. Rather, his moral choices lead Scout to face the deeper evils within her warm small town. Claudia Johnson's article notes that "[a]s Tom Robinson's trial proceeds, the children become gradually aware of a world in sharp contrast to the one they had known" ("Secret Court" 133). Johnson emphasizes that Tom's incorrect conviction begins this recognition. Nonetheless, the mob's gathering amplifies Scout's racial comprehension; she starts to see the cracks. For example, Scout discloses later in the evening that "[t]he full meaning of the night's events hit me and I began crying" (Lee 177). Her outburst comes from her realization that the mob tried to harm her

father. The mob's violent desires center on one factor: Tom Robinson, the black man accused of raping a white woman. Scout knows the connection, like the entire Finch family. However, the scene at the jail is the first time she faces the reality of what it means to help a black man in 1930s Alabama; it means putting safety on the line. Scout's interaction with the mob allows her to begin to see past the surface—her viewpoint shifts. Her colorblindness starts to fade as she experiences the possibility of a racial motivation act, showing her that such evil can occur even in a town like Maycomb.

Finally, Scout's conversation with Mr. Cunningham and her treatment of him exemplifies grace—and grace over legalism; Scout's acceptance of one leads to the rejection of the other in this scene due to its short structure. Her grace does not base itself in the typical source for a Southern woman: "Southern women sought diligently to live up to the prescriptions, to attain the perfection and the submissiveness demanded of them by God and man" (Scott 8). Scout chooses grace of her own volition; she does not act in this manner due to God or her father's commands. Butler lists this scene among his three examples of grace, those moments in which goodness shockingly supersedes evil. Abiding by his definition of grace, Scout's connection to Mr. Cunningham is when "a physically slight force surprisingly—that is, not realistically—overcomes an outwardly stronger power, one linked to madness and sickness" (Butler 125). As a child, Scout should not be able to stop a large, intimidating man—overtaken by a mob mentality—like Mr. Cunningham, but her grace makes an impact. Her heart focuses on Mr. Cunningham. For instance, Scout's entire entailment conversation revolves around one motive: "a last-ditch effort to make [Mr. Cunningham] feel at home" (Lee 174). Atticus taught her this lesson, and she follows suit. Despite the tension in the air, Scout attempts to talk to the one person she recognizes—Mr. Cunningham—about what might connect best with him. She wants

to make him feel at ease. Scout's kindness crucially creates the nonviolent outcome to the original danger; her "display of friendship and courtesy disarms Cunningham completely" (Butler 125). Scout's politeness makes him aware of his actions. For Cunningham, this young child stands in front of him—obviously unsure of herself yet still kind toward him—and he came to hurt her father, the man who taught her to act in such a manner. He needed to truly see Atticus and think about his position (Lee 179). This acknowledgment leads him to round up his men (175). Mr. Cunningham's sudden calm actions come as a direct result of Scout and how she influences Mr. Cunningham with her attitude of grace.

Moreover, Scout's grace reminds the mob of their shared humanity, another aspect of grace. She treats them as human beings—not like the monsters their outward actions portray: "She reminds the mob of their humanity and manners and invites them to reject violence" (Seidel 89). Legalism only sees the outside choices, like how Aunt Alexandra emphasizes it was a group of drunk Cunninghams that made up the mob (Lee 180). This reason seems to explain their actions succinctly for her; only drunk, sinful men would act in such a way. Nonetheless, Scout's empathy touches the malicious ensemble to the core. Atticus marvels: "So it took an eight-year-old child to bring 'em to their senses, didn't it? [...] That proves something—that a gang of wild animals *can* be stopped, simply because they're still human" (179; emphasis in original). Scout does not stop beasts; she stopped men—human beings, like her. Through whole-hearted grace, Scout easily disarms an entire petrifying group of previously unthinking men.

By choosing between these six traits in one scene, Scout proves that a steadiness between accepting and rejecting Southern culture can occur for Southerners in this period. Unfortunately, Scout's balanced identity only lasts temporarily; for example, she threatens to hurt Walter for his father threats against Atticus, which shows she has forgotten grace (Lee 179). However, Scout

still stands before the mob, acted according to her accepted and rejected traits, and she makes a constructive impression on those around her. Though only for a brief moment, Scout embodied a new possibility: the mid-twentieth century Southern identity—one which holds the positives and rejects the negatives simultaneously and in harmony.

### **“Hey, Boo”: Scout’s Relationship with Boo Radley**

Scout shows the six traits all together only one other time in *Mockingbird*: her interactions with the infamous Boo Radley in the final chapters. Scout’s exchanges with Boo are similar to the mob scene in that she communicates these six traits in the midst of a stressful experience, but she seems more aware of her identity. Indeed, she appears to choose to make use of or go against her Southern traits rather than subconsciously accepting or rejecting them. She works to find balance and peace after Mr. Ewell’s attack. This search also helps her begin to discover what type of person she wants to be—a Southerner with a secure, balanced understanding of Southern identity. She gives Boo Radley discrimination and respect, honor of family, and grace while withholding traditional Southern femininity, the Other idea in an “Us vs. Them” mentality, and legalism. With these traits combined and balanced, Scout continues to develop her Christ-haunted nature to find her secure mid-twentieth century Southern identity.

She first displays discrimination and respect toward Boo by considering his comforts. When Atticus and Heck Tate start to discuss Bob Ewell's attack on the children, Scout notices Boo standing awkwardly nearby. She soon guides Boo “to the chair farthest from Atticus and Mr. Tate. It was in deep shadow. Boo would feel more comfortable in the dark” (Lee 312). She notices his uncertainty and helps him feel more a part of the conversation. Shaffer highlights Scout’s assistance toward Boo. In his own description of discrimination and respect, Shaffer refers to this scene specifically to support his definitions (560). Scout recognizes Boo's

difference from her father and Tate and gives him distance, making sure he feels like he belongs but not to the point of uncomfortableness. She also treats Boo with discrimination and respect through her capacity to read him. Once she learns that it is Boo in her home, she quickly figures out his body language and unspoken thoughts or desires. For example, she knows his gesture toward her front door indicates he wants to see Jem, and she takes him back to Jem (Lee 318). While with Jem, Scout sees Boo wants to pat Jem, and she tells him he can. Scout then realizes her sudden adjustments, saying, "I was beginning to learn his body English" (319). Her ability clearly comes from her recognition of his background. Scout understands Boo's actions and desires differ from others, and she treats him accordingly.

She also demonstrates honor of family to Boo when she extends her family boundaries to include him upon perceiving his mindset and probable life. After taking Boo back to his house, Scout lingers on his front porch and enters a dream-like state: she views Boo's life for the past few years in connection to her, Jem, and Dill. Moreover, she seems to take on Boo's mindset, specifically within the past few hours when he witnessed Mr. Ewell's attack on Scout and Jem; Boo realized then that his "children needed him" (Lee 320-21). In this passage, Boo seems to have a stronger relationship with Scout and Jem than she knew. As Johnson writes, Boo "is from the first metaphorical kin to them" (85). This kinship comes not only from Boo's watching of and grown attachment to Scout and Jem as they get older but also his supposed saving of the children from Mr. Ewell. He acts like Scout would in that moment, too; he protects his family no matter the cost to his own self. Hypothetically, his counterattack against Mr. Ewell defends his family's honor. Scout entering his assumed mindset, as well as her understanding of his choices, strengthens this connection. On her way home, Scout reveals she "felt very odd" (Lee 321). Her change derives from her standing on the porch—in Boo's shoes (Lee 321). Although she did not

know before, Boo saw himself to be a part of the Finches, and his actions allow her to see him as such for the first time. She understands his decisions because she values the honor of her family as well; she connects to him and allows him inside her familial circle. Due to recognizing his actions and thought-process, Scout allows Boo Radley to be her kin now—her family—and honors him as such.

She continues to reconcile her Southern identity as her rejections of Southernness appear in these chapters as well, starting with her active denial of the traditional Southern female image. Her choices against this persona are subtle but reveal her persistence against negative Southern characteristics. After Atticus and Heck Tate leave Jem's room to go outside to talk, Scout leads Boo out of the room and guides him back outside (Lee 312). She takes control and acts, which is a more masculine approach. As Scott notes, Southern gentlemen were "to be the decision makers and the ultimate source of secular authority" (14). Scout follows this manner with Boo, regardless of feminine expectations. Likewise, Scout stays with the men while they debate what happened to Mr. Ewell. The sight of Jem alone sends Aunt Alexandra—the epitome of traditional Southern ladyhood—out of the room in dismay, but Scout follows the men. She desires their company. The most obvious non-feminine choice Scout makes with Boo is her taking him back home. After checking back on Jem, Boo indicates he needs to leave, and Scout shows him out; however, while on the steps, he requests her to take him home, and she accepts (Lee 319-20). This choice is not a feminine one; men escort women home—not the other way around. Scout comments on this traditional role, and she loops her arm through Boo's to give the appearance of him walking her, as she says, "as any gentleman would do" (Lee 320). Although she makes it seem like she is in the expected female role, she technically takes Boo home. She does not ask Atticus or Tate to help Boo for her either. Thus, she follows a male

straightforwardness by walking Boo without a second thought, rejecting what a lady should do. With Boo, Scout acts outside of Southern female convention and rejects the culture's accepted standards.

Scout's connection with Boo also showcases her recognition of the Other in Southern society, helping her reject the standard "Us vs. Them" mentality. Gilmore categorizes Boo as a "nonexistent other" since he not only exists as a rumor and myth but also does not physically arrive until *Mockingbird's* conclusion (241; emphasis in original). Scout crucially interacts with Boo, bringing him out of his otherness. At the end of chapter thirty, she studies the man who brought Jem into her house after the attack; she believes he is a stranger, but then—without being informed of who he is—says through tears, "Hey, Boo" (Lee 310). She, Jem, and Dill had waited tirelessly to get Boo out of his house, and she finally sees him—fully. Scout's addressing of Boo once again highlights her appreciation of an Other. Johnson notes this connection as well, stating that "what once was regarded as a monster is now a known friend who pats Jem on the head and asks Scout to take him home" (85). The children believe Boo to be some terror, and he is the opposite. Scout metaphorically brings Boo out of the shadows, speaking to him for the first time. Her fascination with Boo persists after she leaves him at his house. She goes to bed that night with Atticus reading one of Jem's stories, one of which the children related back to Boo earlier. Scout mentions how the ghost character—previously associated with Boo—was "real nice," and Atticus says, "Most people are, Scout, when you finally see them" (Lee 322-23). Atticus' line directly ties to Scout and Boo's new bond. *Mockingbird* ends on this point, drawing attention to Scout's new appreciation of Boo in spite of his separation from society. She reaches out to him and refuses to perpetuate the "Other" stance that comes from an "Us vs. Them" mentality.

Scout's treatment of Boo Radley reflects grace since she reminds Atticus that some matters in life require grace instead of staunch legalism. Atticus and Heck Tate continue to disagree about how Mr. Ewell died; Atticus insists on Jem's part in the death while Heck Tate insists Ewell fell on his own knife (Lee 312-14). Heck dodges Atticus' claims as he tries to get Atticus to understand something without saying it directly. Atticus continually misunderstands Tate's insistence against Jem's guilt until Tate shouts, "*God damn it, I'm not thinking of Jem!*" (315). Tate hints that he believes Boo killed Mr. Ewell to protect Jem and Scout—as Atticus finally comprehends. Atticus reluctantly agrees to Tate's official crime report and informs Scout to agree with Tate. His tone toward Scout sounds as if he is trying to convince her—and himself—that leaving the Ewell case alone is the best option; however, Scout needs no convincing. Scout makes the connection by stating that Heck Tate is right. Her understanding answer surprises Atticus, and he quickly asks for clarification, so she replies, "Well, it'd be sort of like shootin' a mockingbird, wouldn't it?" (317). Scout reaches the point better than Atticus realized—or more than he realizes in general. If they demanded some sort of investigation into Mr. Ewell's sudden death, they would force Boo Radley back into Southern society. More importantly, the town would remember his previously rumored erratic behavior, causing him unnecessary dismay. Butler and Cook note how Atticus must allow grace to supersede his love of the law, but Scout already gives love and grace to Boo without hesitation. Unlike her virtuous father, Scout chooses grace over legalism in her alliance with Boo Radley.

Despite enduring Mr. Ewell's scarring attack, Scout appears to be clear-minded, particularly in her relationship with Boo Radley, due to her Christ-haunted nature. She finds this peace intriguing as well since, before guiding Boo to the porch, she comments that "[p]eople have a habit of doing everyday things even under the oddest conditions. I was no exception"

(Lee 312). Scout's "habits" with Boo go much deeper; she ultimately acts according to a balance of identity, avoiding an overemphasis of one side or the other. In this security, she finds peace; in the final pages, Scout falls sound asleep with Atticus by her side. Her Christ-haunted awareness continues to guide her as she understands how to best respond to the stress around her.

### **Scout's Still-Developing Christ-Haunted Security**

Scout's two major life changing moments—the mob scene and her friendship with the Boo Radley—hint at a mid-twentieth century Southerner's ability to reconcile both positive and negative aspects of her Southern culture skillfully through a search for Christ-haunted security. Indeed, Scout accepts discrimination and respect, honor of family, and grace but rejects traditional Southern femininity, colorblindness in "Us vs. Them" mentality, and legalism altogether in her behavior toward the mob at Maycomb's jail. Her subconscious handling of these traits allows her to stop the violence when her almost mythical father can not. Furthermore, with Boo Radley, she actively chooses to accept and reject these traits despite enduring Ewell's attack, showing a step toward a balanced Southern identity. Nevertheless, Scout is still a child; she does not understand the full complexities of Southern life. Julia Pond stresses that "Scout certainly learns and matures in self- and social awareness, but she does not attain by the end of *Mockingbird* the mature southern [sic] voice the narrator demonstrates" (88). Scout's expressions of these traits altogether are not absolute nor perfect, but they demonstrate her early attempts at deciding who she will be. Indeed, these two childhood memories help Scout move toward her journey of maturity: the epilogue that is *Go Set a Watchman*.

### Chapter Three: Jean Louise in *Go Set a Watchman*

*Go Set a Watchman* and the characterization of Jean Louise (as she will now be called in the *Watchman* chapters) puzzle many critics and readers. As Rob E. Atkinson wisely pens, one great difficulty comes from how “we are reading it, not as in the normal course, shortly after it was written, but six decades later” (123). Indeed, years of historical changes and societal enlightenments influence any reading of *Watchman*; considering the South’s current existence, Lee’s ideas could seem misguided or incorrectly founded. This present-to-past type of reading for *Watchman* would certainly allow for some readers to become infuriated, but, with the historical context in mind, the novel realistically responds to its tumultuous period. Flynt recognizes that the 1950s race riots affected *Watchman* and forced Lee into a demanding position: “I knew that threading the racial needle of law, custom, ethics, and justice in the mid-1950s would be far more challenging than her task in *Mockingbird*” (“Nelle on Law” 637-38). *Mockingbird*’s 1930s setting permitted it a sense of safety and ease in which a work like *Watchman* could not also partake. Women in the South experience the increasing disorder as well. For instance, the continual decline of the antebellum view of ladyhood affected Southern women as they were released into a new, ambiguous world: they “had begun to shake loose from the tyranny of a single monolithic image of woman and were now free, for better or worse, to struggle to be themselves” (Scott 231). The slow removal of this formerly stereotypical feminine image permitted more uncertainty into women’s lives. Indeed, *Watchman* openly deals with the issues and struggles of the South in the 1950s, making it heavily complex for any reader.

The novel’s development poses some difficulty since it is not only heavily unedited but also centers on Jean Louise’s instability as she battles to figure out her identity. As Julia Pond argues, *Watchman* is Jean Louise’s coming-of-age story since, for instance, she is “a protagonist

who, although in her twenties, has outgrown childhood but continues to search actively for peace with her own identity, an important adolescent concern” (90-91). The entire plot revolves around Jean Louise facing unexpected and upsetting realizations about Maycomb and her beloved family. She also stubbornly stands opposed to anything connected to growing older or maturing (Pond 91). Due to Jean Louise’s tumultuous search for identity, her embodiment of and separation from the six traits mentioned in the previous chapter (discrimination and respect, honor of family, grace, traditional Southern femininity, “Us vs. Them” mentality, and legalism) are less definite. Jean Louise accepts and rejects these traits but in slighter, more complicated expressions than the examples from *Mockingbird*. She struggles to side with one for a long time; for instance, she will accept one trait only to reject it a few pages later, but then she will accept it again in the next chapter. Characters notice her inconsistency as well. Henry astutely comments, “She was afflicted with a restlessness of spirit he could not guess at” (Lee 13). Despite her inconsistencies, Jean Louise’s character and struggles fit the Southern culture of this period, which was a time of upheaval and uncertainty for the South and its inhabitants. She reflects the identity struggle of her fellow Southerners: the push to move away from the South they knew, but the pull of their heritage and what is familiar. Katherine Henninger’s essay ““My Childhood is Ruined!”: Harper Lee and Racial Innocence” mentions Jean Louise’s battling between “nostalgia and modernity” (610). Henninger’s focus on these competing viewpoints brings to light how Jean Louise might perceive her Southern traits; her nostalgia pulls her to accept the South while her modernity encourages her to reject it all. Moreover, Pond summarizes well that Jean Louise grows due to an awareness about the true nature of the South and herself (93-94). She does not stay stagnant in *Watchman*. By understanding these six traits and deciding her own personhood, Jean Louise can become whole. Considering this point, an analysis of the

aforementioned character traits and their brief appearances in the novel showcases her movement toward awareness—her discovery of identity security in the Christ-haunted nature of the South.

### **Continued Acceptance of Discrimination and Respect, Honor of Family, and Grace**

Despite Jean Louise's self-focused attitude, she—as a Southerner—engages in moments of discrimination and respect, specifically toward her Aunt Alexandra. In his article, Shaffer emphasizes how *Mockingbird* reflects the life lessons Jem, Scout, and Dill learned, including applying discrimination or “the practiced ability to tell people from one another and to treat them in a way that is consistent with their differences” alongside respect, “the virtue that accepts the differences discrimination helps a person notice and then treats each person with dignity” (Shaffer 558-59). *Watchman* develops this combined virtue since Jean Louise adheres to it as well, though she does not always enact it perfectly. Her most consistent use of discrimination and respect occurs in her flashes of patience and understanding toward Alexandra. In the third chapter, Jean Louise categorizes Alexandra as “the last of her kind: she had come [sic] river-boat, boarding-school manners; let any moral come along and she would uphold it; she was a disapprover; she was an incurable gossip” (Lee 28). Alexandra uniquely stands on her own, adhering to conventional Southern characteristics in spite of the passing of time. Jean Louise's understanding of Alexandra's status in life guides her positive responses to Alexandra; she knows her aunt comes from a different time and acts according to this long-forgotten group. At different points and “sometimes in the same phrases, Jean Louise views her aunt with mixed dread and admiration” (Atkinson 105). This acknowledgment toward Alexandra—simultaneous discrimination and respect—showcases itself best when Jean Louise allows her aunt to host the Coffee. When Alexandra mentions the Coffee, Jean Louise negatively explains that it is a social gathering where a Maycomb girl has returned home, and the other hometown women meet to

check on her (Lee 32). This ritual obviously annoys Jean Louise, but she does not protest it. She then mentions that “a pang of tenderness swept over her” as she suddenly considers the kindness of her aunt to take care of Atticus (33). The deeper aspect of the Coffee hits Jean Louise; it is not only Alexandra’s adherence to societal tradition but also what she finds comfortable and normal. Jean Louise regards her aunt in awe, admitting that she “had a certain defenselessness plus a certain fineness Jean Louise would never have” (33). She disagrees and bickers with her aunt, yet Jean Louise sees her as that “last of her kind” and treats her accordingly. By recognizing and valuing her aunt’s experiences, Jean Louise gives Alexandra discrimination and respect.

Although she has been gone from Maycomb, Jean Louise upholds the Southern trait of honor of family; she persists in her protection and support of her family displayed by her thoughts on Finch’s Landing and in her relationship with Atticus. In both areas, Jean Louise’s honor of family often emerges abstractly. Unlike typical honor expressions in *Mockingbird*, she does not physically fight or become overly aggressive to protect her family’s honor; rather, she internalizes her protection and support and communicates it in her opinions and life choices. This more subtle form follows a “genteel Southerner” type of honor (Flynt 191). Jean Louise’s desire to honor her family uncovers itself in her desire to keep Finch’s Landing. After a date with Henry, she requests to go to her family’s ancestral homeplace, affectionately named “Finch’s Landing.” *Mockingbird* features this location, but Jean Louise’s connection to it develops over the years. The couple adventure around the area with Jean Louise recalling the place’s history, her own warm memories, and how thankful she is that it is being used—even if by some private, rowdy businessmen (Lee 71-74). For her, this familial place continues to live through her memory and love. Henry soon mentions that they are technically trespassers, explaining that the last of the land that Jean Louise’s family owned has been sold, which ruffles her, though she tries

to hide it (74). Henry still detects the sudden shift in her attitude. He recognizes that her reaction stems from the land leaving her family, commenting, “Going Southern on us? Want me to do a Gerald O’Hara?” (74). Jean Louise’s moodiness could be attributed to her sudden realization that this place is no longer her family’s. Moreover, Henninger accurately observes how this scene “epitomizes the lure of the past and shock of new realities for her [Jean Louise]” (611). Her world changes and without her consent, and this move surprises her. Henninger emphasizes that this change affects Jean Louise because it forces her nostalgia to brush against the reality of modernity, too (611). Though her penchant for nostalgia influences her view, Jean Louise’s reaction comes from her honor of family. Despite his joking manner, Henry directly addresses Jean Louise’s unusually strong connection to her family’s land. This aspect is a stereotypical Southern characteristic, which his reference to Gerald O’Hara from *Gone With the Wind*—a famous Southern character known for his passion and pride in his family’s land—brings to light. Neither Jean Louise nor Henry explicitly discusses it, but this joke reflects how Jean Louise zealously cares about her family’s land. Unlike others, she treasures it and her family’s hold to it. She tells Henry that it was not knowing about the selling that troubled her, but the decision appears to deeply frustrate her: she comments that it makes logical sense, but it bothers her (Lee 74-75). Her family has stepped away from their land, something Jean Louise seems not to agree with due to her love for the place. Overall, her mood shift indicates her hold to her family’s honor since she struggles to understand that they have willingly lost their land—a part of their family pride.

While Jean Louise’s protection of Atticus does not follow conventional Southern expectations of honor toward one’s family, she still gives him the typical support and protection this trait requires. Following Jem’s death, Aunt Alexandra chides her for not being home to take

care of Atticus, and Jean Louise explains the larger cause for her aunt's point of view:

“Alexandra saw what Maycomb saw: Maycomb expected every daughter to do her duty. The duty of his only daughter to her widowed father after the death of his only son was clear: Jean Louise would return and make her home with Atticus; that was what a daughter did, and she who did not was no daughter” (Lee 30). On the surface, Jean Louise does not appear to honor her family after Jem's funeral; she did not follow Southern codes by leaving her father. Nevertheless, Jean Louise protects her father through her demand that Atticus have someone with him in his home. She recalls later in the novel how she begged Calpurnia to come back and help Atticus not long after the funeral (Lee 162). Jean Louise made sure Atticus would not be alone when she returned to New York. More recently in the plot's events, she credits Alexandra for moving in with Atticus, and she appears to view herself in her aunt's debt (Lee 31). He never requests assistance, but Jean Louise still acts in his best interest. Moreover, Jean Louise sees her decision to stay in New York to match what Atticus wants. In their conversation after Jem's death, Jean Louise tells Alexandra that “the only way I can do my duty to Atticus is by doing what I'm doing—making my own living and my own life” (Lee 29). She believes she is doing what is right for Atticus by staying away. Jean Louise also takes honor for her father too far, particularly in her personhood and worldview from the character of her father. After fleeing the White Citizen's Council, Jean Louise expounds upon her childhood and adolescence and how foundational Atticus was. She comments that growing up was difficult, but “what stood behind her, the most potent moral force in her life, was the love of her father” (Lee 117). She built her life around what Atticus was: a moral compass and a wonderful father. Atticus shaped Jean Louise's world—a dangerous position but certainly one of familial honor. By supporting and protecting Atticus in unexpected ways, Jean Louise gives him honor.

Due to either her self-centeredness or questioning of her identity, Jean Louise struggles to express Southern Christian grace in *Watchman*, but glimpses of it emerge in her interactions with Atticus. Grace, according to Robert Butler, stems from when a character shockingly—almost inexplicably—tackles complications within his story in order to help other people (126). A character expressing grace goes beyond his own limits to make a good change. Under this definition, Jean Louise's loving actions toward others, despite their vices, show her manifestation of grace. For instance, Jean Louise's helping Atticus after the White Citizen's Council and his racist tendency have been exposed uncovers these slivers of grace. The first moment occurs the morning following the Council scene. Jean Louise eats breakfast with Atticus, and while she comes across oddly cold and distant, she willingly cleans up his spilled milk (Lee 145-46). This interaction is minor, but Jean Louise goes out of her way to assist her father, who has become a complicated figure for her. Jean Louise is still deciding if her discovery is accurate. The second moment of grace allows for more depth for Jean Louise since she has realized she was correct in her assumptions: Atticus is not as morally sound as she thought. In a brief passage, Jean Louise gives Atticus a ride into town, during which she states, "I can do anything but look at him and listen to him and talk to him" (Lee 154). Her honest statement notes her move away from Atticus; she decides to give herself space in order to process the truth about him. While she distances herself mentally, she still warns Atticus when a quickly passing car almost hits him (Lee 154-55). She once again displays care for his safety and well-being, an admirable act in light of his apparently immoral beliefs. These moments of grace are slight, but she clearly chooses to help Atticus; she does not avoid him. Atticus is still her aging and ailing father, and she briefly overcomes her dissent from him to assist him. Grace becomes more

challenging for Jean Louise throughout *Watchman*, but these two scenes reveal her desire to give it.

### **Continued Rejection of Traditional Southern Femininity, “Us Vs. Them” Mentality, and Legalism**

Jean Louise spends the majority of *Watchman* battling her feminine identity, debating its presence in the smaller subsection of traditional Southern femininity. Throughout the novel, Jean Louise fights with her feminine side. For example, Uncle Jack stands her in front of his mirror and states that he sees two people, to which she replies that “[y]ou mean the tomboy and the woman?” (Lee 206). This observation was not his point, but Jack does acknowledge that these two parts exist within Jean Louise. Indeed, her two personas—tomboy and woman—display themselves for all to see. Henry recognizes her internal battling as well: “although she still moved like a thirteen-year-old boy and abjured most feminine adornment, he could something so intensely feminine about her that he fell in love” (13). Her tomboyishness and womanhood seem to be at odds, but what Jean Louise truly rejects is the expectations of the traditional female role in the South—not femininity as a whole.

Her rejection of traditional Southern ladyhood once again displays itself in her relationship with Aunt Alexandra and her view of herself. As in *Mockingbird*, Alexandra “remains the voice of Southern ladyhood, pestering Jean Louise about what she wears, how she speaks, and, most intrusively, whom she dates” (Atkinson 105). Alexandra and Jean Louise’s constant fights in the novel showcase the two’s opposition. A stark contrast consistently exists between the two women: Alexandra acts gentler and more conservative while Jean Louise is brash and open-minded. Indeed, Jean Louise views herself entirely separate from Alexandra, a woman from an older age of refinement and Southern tradition (Lee 33). She compares herself

again to Alexandra when she realizes that marrying Henry would put Jean Louise into her aunt's world. For a second, Jean Louise becomes conscious of how she would flounder in truly female Southern society—with its Coffees, church meetings, and countless small engagements—while Alexandra would thrive (Lee 173). She does not consider herself to have the tools or manners to survive these female activities, unlike her aunt. Jean Louise comments that she can never fully please her aunt in her actions or decisions as well (166). With her aunt as the perfect personification of Southern female expectations, Jean Louise believes she can never live up to such a standard. Alexandra embodies Southern womanhood, and Jean Louise blatantly stands opposed.

Jean Louise also pushes against traditional Southern femininity in her internal rejection of feminine attitudes. In the recounting of her teenage years, Jean Louise notes that “[s]he gave lip service to the world: she went through the motions of complying with the regulations governing behavior of teenaged girls from good families; she developed a halfway interest in clothes, boys, hairdos, gossip, and female aspirations” (Lee 117). When she was younger, Jean Louise seemed to comply with Southern womanhood on the surface, but she never fully accepted the attitude in her spirit. Moreover, in this internal narration, Jean Louise specifically comments that Uncle Jack and Atticus guided her in manners and personality as she grew up (117-18). The brothers easily represent the 1930s-and-on Southern men not made uncomfortable with the women's growing liberation; they are like some husbands in this period who “took pride in the achievement of their wives and urged their daughters on to similar independence” (Scott 219). They did not coerce Jean Louise to conform to previous standards of femininity. She found comfort in their friendship, and she seems more at ease in male company. This moment of contemplation from Jean Louise helps to explain her aversion to married life. Earlier in

*Watchman* when Henry subtly proposes, Jean Louise moves from positivity about marriage to classifying herself as “not domestic” (80). She appears to view herself as unfit for marriage—to run a house and care for a family. With the training of her father and uncle, Jean Louise does not need to enter the realm of womanhood, where such ideals would have been hammered into her. In comparison, female groups cause her consistent anxiety. During the Coffee, Jean Louise cannot easily converse with the other women around her, revealing that she “can't think of anything to say to them” (Lee 172). This inability stems from her separation from female customs in the South, tying back to Atticus and Jack’s support and understanding of her differences in her youth. They encouraged Jean Louise, and she did not receive this connection from women. Rather than forcibly entering the South’s version of the female world, Jean Louise could live separately. Thus, without this feminine foundation, she continues to reject Southern ideals for women as she ages.

The “Us vs. Them” mentality abounds in *Watchman* as Jean Louise fights with this negative aspect of her beloved Southern culture, once again by accepting “Others” and removing her colorblindness; the strongest examples of these areas are Henry’s “Other” status and Calpurnia’s influence of Jean Louise’s colorblindness. Jean Louise’s ignorance about others’ differences—like her family’s racist tendencies—controls parts of the story’s plot, but these two aspects of “Us vs. Them” allow her to see her world as it is. Her relationship with Henry appears romantic on the surface, but her discussion of and thoughts on him throughout the novel reveal that their connection marks her acceptance of the “Other.” Once again, Alec Gilmore defines Others to be those who cause fear and anxiety upon the larger society due to their supposed differences (232-33). While Henry seems to blend in well in Maycomb, others’ reactions toward him classify him as an Other, mainly the responses from Aunt Alexandra and even himself.

Following Jean Louise's admission that she considers marrying Henry, Alexandra throws the "Other" status upon Henry; she rails against Jean Louise, emphasizing Henry's inherited problems since he is a Clinton—a family known for having an alcohol addiction (Lee 34-35). In her multiple-paragraph lecture, Alexandra also repeats Henry's class standing: white trash. Moreover, she explains to Jean Louise bluntly that "[w]e Finches do not marry the children of rednecked white trash, which is exactly what Henry's parents were when they were born and were all their lives. You can't call them anything better" (36). She focuses on her concern for Jean Louise's choice—her fear and worry that she will marry someone unfit. Her concerns go deeper than only the problem of marriage; as Atkinson pens, "Aunt Alexandra, ever vigilant on the social frontiers and always the upholder of Finch family status, sees Hank as an arriviste, no proper protégé for Atticus and a wholly unsuitable suitor for Scout" (104). Jean Louise pushes back against her aunt. During Alexandra's tirade, she mentally aligns herself with Henry: "She can never be common, like Hank and me" (Lee 37). Her final thought after their discussion showcases her acceptance of Henry; she thinks about how she wants to marry Henry now more than ever (Lee 39). Despite her aunt's arguments and concerns, Jean Louise refuses to concede to Henry's "Other" classification.

Jean Louise also rejects Henry's beliefs of his "Other" status. During their breakup in the last few chapters of the novel, Henry maintains that Maycomb still sees him as a Clinton; he comments that Jean Louise can act unusual or disgraceful, and the people will only see her as a Finch, but if he acts out, "'That's the trash in him'" (Lee 232). Henry's echoing of Alexandra's lines—a person Jean Louise often aligns with the consensus of Maycomb—proves that his acceptance within the town is not as sure as Jean Louise assumed. Jean Louise strongly rebuffs his negative outlook, for what originally made Henry attractive to her was his underdog persona

(Lee 234). Additionally, what appears to crush her the most in this scene is her realization of their complete differences. For instance, she cuttingly calls him a “coward” and a “hypocrite” for refusing to stand against Maycomb (Lee 233-34). Her discovery does not fill her with fear and anxiety but disappointment; she believed Henry could overcome. While Jean Louise does end their conversation by noting they are “poles apart,” her previous connection with him showcases her acceptance of him. She supported him, specifically involving herself with him because she did not see him as anything other than who he was; she rejects the “Other” status put upon him by Maycomb—and Southern—society.

Jean Louise also advances toward rejecting the “Us vs. Them” mentality by removing her colorblindness, specifically when she realizes Calpurnia’s opinion on her and her family. Granted, Jean Louise’s growth is not widely believed in some academic circles. Dwight Tanner’s article on colorblindness emphasizes how Jean Louise—in both of Lee’s novels—does not properly address colorblindness; rather, Tanner claims she ignores the racial injustice of the period (56). Tanner’s criticisms are valid. When confronted with racism in Maycomb, Jean Louise often pushes it aside since she finds it difficult—and nauseating—to deal with. Nevertheless, Jean Louise still shows an effort to reject her colorblindness through her striking interaction with Calpurnia. Jean Louise struggles with her family’s sudden racism, particularly Atticus’. In a desperate attempt to figure out what is happening to her family and in Maycomb, Jean Louise visits Calpurnia in chapter twelve. Jean Louise quickly notices the reactions and stares she receives from the other Black people upon her arrival (Lee 156). Their treatment foreshadows Calpurnia’s reception. Indeed, in the middle of her talk with Calpurnia, Jean Louise realizes Calpurnia’s tone: “Calpurnia was wearing her company manners” (Lee 159). Jean Louise—considering herself close to Calpurnia—struggles to comprehend Calpurnia’s new

attitude toward her. However, as she pieces together her father's nature and her own ignorance, she asks Calpurnia out of sheer devastation, "Did you hate us?" (Lee 160). Calpurnia eventually shakes her head, but the damage is made (160). This entire exchange could be viewed as another selfish, white-centered response from Jean Louise since she might appear to blame Calpurnia's distance for the added troubles in her life. However, Katherine Henninger notes that Jean Louise momentarily changes in their interaction:

[H]er relation to Calpurnia has been structured around an unthought but deeply known racism as entrenched in Jean Louise's continuing appeals to Cal's mammy-care as it is in the childhood rhyme that percolates from her unconscious as the chapter ends. Jean Louise here becomes conscious, if only briefly, that her 'color blindness' has not been an inability to think of people in terms of race (as her Uncle Jack diagnoses), but an inability to see her own whiteness at work. (618)

Though Tanner may not have spotted this shift in his reading, Henninger's observations align perfectly with his idea of colorblindness and emphasize how Jean Louise faces it. After this conflict between the two, Jean Louise comments that she has been so blind that she needs a watchman "to tell me this is what a man says but this is what he means, to draw a line down the middle and say here is this justice and there is that justice and make me understand the difference" (Lee 182). This plea goes back to her discovery about Calpurnia's true feelings about the Finch family; Jean Louise struggles to recognize that she constantly missed the racism around her—a central part of what is obviously wrong within her Southern bubble. This desire for understanding pushes her maturation further. Indeed, for the first time, Jean Louise confronts her colorblind ignorance and cannot look away.

While the aforementioned Southern traits fluctuate, Jean Louise constantly rejects Southern Christianity's bent toward legalism; furthermore, her rejection of this trait develops into a major theme of the novel since it influences her relationship with her loved ones. As Cook notes, "*Watchman* is unrelentingly critical of religious conservatism" (661). The critiques of this negative side of Southern Christianity become heavier as Jean Louise grows in her understanding of the reality of Maycomb and Southern life. Jean Louise lightheartedly mocks the fundamentalist nature of Maycomb and its inhabitants from the start. When she arrives home, she and Atticus joke about how Cousin Edgar views her single life in New York as "ipso facto living in sin" (Lee 25). Jean Louise's lifestyle in the supposedly morally questionable North does not adhere to expected Christian standards according to her pious cousin. This comment becomes a running joke, yet it foreshadows greater religious concerns. Overall, Jean Louise underestimates the power of the religious systems within Maycomb until they demand her attention. Jean Louise assumed those closest to her have always obeyed good moral practices: Atticus was the "most potent moral force in her life," Aunt Alexandra was "Sainted," and Henry was "one of [her] kind," someone who shared her understanding on life (117, 167, 9). Unfortunately, each falls prey to a vice of legalism: they each judge people based on outward actions over his or her inner heart—a priority of law over love.

Legalism plagues each of Jean Louise's loved ones, adding to her identity crisis. In separate instances where Atticus, Henry, and Alexandra act according to racist ideology, Jean Louise powerfully muses, "Why doesn't their flesh creep? How can they devoutly believe everything they hear in church and then say the things they do and listen to the things they hear without throwing up? I thought I was a Christian but I'm not. I'm something else and I don't know what" (Lee 167). She perceives her loved ones' complacency and support of segregation

opposes her understanding of Christianity which now puts her religious identity at risk.

However, their mistake comes from aligning with a fundamentalist mentality—a focus on piety and zeal. For Atticus, he “stands entirely for what a man should or should not do, rather than the kind of concern for one’s neighbor” (Cook 663). Correct, perceived moral actions guide him.

Alexandra appears to share his outlook, explaining that the issue with Black people is their apparently ungrateful attitude (Lee 166-67). Jean Louise’s family seems only see what is on the surface without considering other influencing factors and judge according to their skewed religious beliefs. Trevor Cook details the larger religious complications at hand, noting that “*Watchman* moves from forms of legalism in the first half toward individual conscience in the second” (664). Cook believes this focus on the importance of one’s own morality holds meaning for Uncle Jack’s statement that “[e]very man’s island, Jean Louise, every man’s watchman, is his conscience” (Lee 246). Jack emphasizes that individual convictions must drive decisions rather than a larger group; goodness cannot come from the collective. None of Jean Louise’s loved ones have reached this understanding since legalism continues to direct their reactions. However, she has begun the process. When recognizing her general blindness, Jean Louise also realizes that she “never thought to look into people's hearts, [she] looked only in their faces” (181). This acknowledgment of blindness helps her begin looking past the outward actions of others in order to see their hearts. Thus, with her reaction against her loved one’s legalism and Jack’s additional warning, she outrightly rejects this Southern trait.

### **Continued Search for Security in Christ-Haunted Nature**

Jean Louise’s tumultuous personality and characterization can be difficult to fully comprehend, but it importantly reflects her innate desire for internal balance, which is the security she can find in her Christ-haunted nature. She begins the novel in an uncertain mindset,

which only grows over time. Pond comments, “Jean Louise returns to Maycomb in *Watchman* confused over what she wants and who she is regionally” (91). This confusion pushes her to constantly move from one attribute to the next, switching from accepting to rejecting and back in the six studied traits (discrimination and respect, honor of family, grace, traditional Southern femininity, “Us vs. Them” mentality, and legalism). Although she constantly changes from whether she should accept or reject a particular Southern characteristic, Jean Louise does recognize these traits the most consistently; these six appear to bring a sense of balance to her identity. Indeed, she seems to innately recognize that she must reach a point where she is secure in herself and her internal tension finds stability. This ability can only come from her actively perceiving her Christ-haunted nature. Christianity overshadows Jean Louise’s struggle since it reminds her of the existence of the “whole man.” The “whole man” denotes humanity’s sinful nature and how missing pieces occur in each person (O’Connor 44-45). However, this concept also exposes the possibility of wholeness for any human being. This approach will subconsciously encourage Jean Louise as she continues her journey toward certainty and assurance; she does not struggle in vain. Moreover, the traits she accepts and the ones she rejects continue to prove their centrality in this wholeness—in her discovery of her own identity. *Watchman*’s plot and ending will bring Jean Louise further complications and issues, but she will continue pursuing a solution for the tension inside of her. Through her innate Christ-haunted nature, Jean Louise’s mid-twentieth century Southern identity will soon be secure, finding true peace and understanding in a balance between accepting and rejecting the South.

**Chapter Four: Jean Louise's Simultaneous Acceptance and Rejection in *Go Set a Watchman***

Jean Louise's identity struggle—the simultaneous pull toward and push against Southern culture—culminates in *Go Set a Watchman*'s dramatic closing chapters. After spending most of the novel battling internally, she finally lashes out specifically at those closest to her: Henry, Uncle Jack, Aunt Alexandra, and even Atticus. Her verbal onslaughts embody her inward fight and subconscious search for a given resolution—an answer to what is happening to her and her worldview. The push against the South has become too great; her closest family and friends' overt racism forces her over the edge. By the end, her identity uncovers itself in her heated conversation with Atticus and her subsequent treatment of him and her other Maycomb relations.

Ultimately, her fight truly rests with Atticus, the novel's reflection of 1950s Southern culture. Through Jean Louise's memories, thoughts, and dialogue, Atticus appears as the force that shaped her worldview and herself. For instance, during her personal musings on Atticus' character in chapter eight, Jean Louise comments that prior to this Maycomb trip, and its subsequent revelations, she “never realized that before she made any decision of importance the reflex, ‘What would Atticus do?’ passed through her unconscious; she never realized what made her dig in her feet and stand firm whenever she did was her father; that whatever was decent and of good report in her character was put there by her father; she did not know that she worshipped him” (Lee 117-18). Atticus subconsciously dictated Jean Louise's choices. Thus, his sudden change in character—along with the outsider's view Jean Louise has obtained during her life in New York—forces her to finally step away from him. This divide does not shock those closest to her in her family. Indeed, Uncle Jack reveals that he and Atticus knew Jean Louise's identity battle, and separation from Atticus, would eventually come (Lee 264-66). She clung too closely

to an only-human man, and she would eventually realize it once he acts too fallen for her mind to comprehend. In other words, she never noticed he was “fallible,” as Cook rightly defines (664). This oversight affects her Christ-haunted nature, the South’s subconscious Christian understanding that a “whole man” or a balanced human being can exist (O’Connor 44-45). As she attempts to find herself, Jean Louise fully rejects Southern culture, a deep-seated part of herself, and only spirals further. She cannot throw off that which has formed her; rather, she must find a balance between accepting and rejecting certain traits to gain security in her own Christ-haunted identity. Within the last three chapters of the novel, Jean Louise’s identity has been shaken, which allows her to definitively figure out who she is, like what aspects of Southern culture she will accept or reject. She discovers internal peace among the good and the bad, finding security in her Christ-haunted nature; a “whole man” can exist, and she will continue to work toward this goal.

### **Disastrous Removal of Her “Bones”: Full Rejection of Southern Culture**

During her conversation with Atticus, Jean Louise moves toward a full rejection of her Southern identity. Rather than holding to her South culture and its positive attributes like discrimination and respect, honor of family, and even grace, Jean Louise refuses to identify or even act Southern, leaning almost entirely against it. She refuses to adhere to the expected traits, such as the traditional female image, “Us vs. Them” mentality, or legalism. However, she does not replace these rejections; she only fights and shouts against them—against her father, an embodiment of her current view of the South. Her strong tone and word choice bother several readers as she sounds “self-righteous and tedious” (“Nelle on Law” Flynt 638). This trouble comes from how far she has stepped away from her Southern lifestyle. For instance, she has completely stopped honoring her family since she feels they have all abandoned her, thinking to

herself “to hell with them all” (Lee 238). Her identity struggle has reached a point where this rude approach to her family is the only way in which she can fully express her frustrations. Also, in the midst of heavy-handed speeches, Jean Louise shares snatches of truth to her father. In order to process her realizations, she must turn to rejection and decide what to do from there apart from Atticus.

Atticus’ sudden racist ideology razes Jean Louise’s core beliefs and view of her world, pushing her further away from the South as she cannot hold onto any Southern trait he follows. Her previous discovery of his white supremacist leanings has been the main conflict of the novel, and their dissent over race reaches a climax in this scene. At the close of their argument, she directly says, “I despise you and everything you stand for” (Lee 253). Atticus’ characteristics now have been tainted in the eyes of Jean Louise. Additionally, any positive Southern trait he embodies becomes foul to her, including her previously accepted discrimination and respect, honor of family, and grace. For example, Atticus treats her politely during their entire argument, honoring her as his daughter. He gives her the familial support she deserves. He never shouts back or curses, but he says that he loves her, that she can act as she wishes, and even calls her by her affectionate childhood nickname, Scout (Lee 236-53). He keeps their familial ties in mind; she will always be his flesh and blood and will be treated as such. Moreover, as Uncle Jack later reveals, Atticus allowed her to act aggressively in their argument because “[h]e was letting you break your icons one by one. He was letting you reduce him to the status of a human being” (Lee 266). Instead of lashing back, Atticus showed Jean Louise discrimination and respect in the conversation. As Shaffer explains, this ability is a recognition of differences and a showcase of value toward another human being within their differences (558-59). Atticus understands where Jean Louise is in her maturing process, and he gives her the freedom to figure out what to do

next, even if it is at the cost of some aggressive statements thrown at him. Nonetheless, his kind Southern attitude angers her. She vehemently curses and insults her once-beloved father, viewing his kindness as a façade and demanding he cease his “double-talk” (Lee 252-53). She cannot see past her pain and frustration with him. No matter what he does, his racism utterly turns her against Southern culture—his fallen, human state ruins any positive Southern characteristic.

Jean Louise strongly combats the South in her conversation with Atticus, rejecting any facet of traditional Southern femininity. In the middle of their discussion, Jean Louise grieves Atticus’ decision not to remarry since she could have been “a simpering, mealy mouthed magnolia type who bats her eyelashes and crosses her hands and lives for nothing but her lil’ole hus-band” (Lee 249). Jean Louise views herself as the entire opposite of this Southern female ideal, which adds to her sudden divergence from her beloved Southern home. She sees compliance as an aspect of a Southern woman, a historically and socially supported idea. Indeed, an 1830s female novelist, Caroline Gillman, observed that a traditional Southern female understands that “[h]er first study must be self-control]” (qtd. in Scott 9). A woman must contain herself above all else, and Jean Louise will not abide. Her lament to Atticus aligns with her actions leading to this moment. Indeed, she will not go along with society’s expectations. For example, she aggressively speaks her mind to Henry, her fiancé, and yells at her aging father—choices a good Southern woman would not make. She mentally notes soon after that she “was no lady,” and Atticus is “being a gentleman” (Lee 249). He treats her properly and stays dignified. She seems saddened by this realization, yet “the piston inside her drove on” (Lee 249). She cannot move from the deeper parts of her personality, but Atticus’ sudden turn on her appears to heighten her preexisting rejection. While a Southern lady should kindly respond to a gentleman’s

actions, Jean Louise will not, particularly when that man is wrong. Within this scene, she fully rebuffs any Southern feminine trait.

Jean Louise's refusal of an "Us vs. Them" mentality—an allowance for the "Other" and colorblindness—adds to her complete rejection of Southern culture; moreover, Atticus strictly embodies this mindset in his attitude toward Black people, increasing her frustration toward him. Instead of fearing the "Other," as Alec Gilmore explains, Atticus seems to view these societal outcasts according to Claudia Johnson's aforementioned definition. For Johnson, the "Other" is "any entity, markedly different from the sheltered self," or a person who does not align with one's personal life and environment (Johnson 73). The first part of Atticus' debate with Jean Louise centers on this view of Black people. Atticus perceives them as different from him and argues that they are "backward people" (Lee 242). This group—these Others—do not have a share in Atticus' world. He acknowledges their presence, but he will not allow them to enter his life. Furthermore, his entire stance on Black people in the Southern community builds upon his belief that they are uneducated and unable to properly engage in society and, thus, they should not be a part of how it runs (Lee 242-45). They are Others and nothing more to him. Jean Louise does not let him talk without interruption; she consistently refutes his ignorance of Others. Crucially, after Atticus asks her if she would want these people in "our world," she responds that "[t]hey're people, aren't they?" (Lee 246). Black people are simply people to Jean Louise; they are in her life because they, too, live and breathe. She accepts these "Others" as a part of society while her father keeps them separated.

Atticus also suffers from colorblindness due to his inability to see his white privilege. For him, the NAACP only causes issues for the South; they push for new laws too soon and destroy states' rights (Lee 244-45). Jean Louise seems to be guilty of the same emphasis since she agrees

with him at the start of their conversation on the topic of states' rights (Lee 242-43). However, she quickly departs from his outlook. She informs her father that the continual race issue does not come from the NAACP: "It's us" (Lee 245). At this moment, she understands that the South denied its own people and problems and, therefore, outside resources had to correct their mistakes. Black Southerners needed more than what the South gave them, and Jean Louise aggressively attempts to show her father this problem. Katherine Henninger rightly mentions that "[d]espite many instances of unexamined racism in her own argument, Jean Louise vehemently (and often very effectively) counters Atticus's increasingly grotesque defense of white supremacy by insisting that his brand of 'respectable' whiteness is responsible for racial injustice" (618-19). Jean Louise's stance on race is far from perfect, but she proves herself to be a Southerner willing to see her colorblindness. Additionally, she will not stand for Atticus' excuses. Eventually, she pinpoints Atticus' overarching issue: he treats everyone the same while still keeping them segregated (Lee 251). Her comment directly ties to how Atticus does not address the mistreatment of Black people for their desire to interact with society in general. When it comes to those hoping to escape the South's racial confinements, Jean Louise tells him that "[y]ou put out your hand in front of them as people and say, 'Stop here. This is as far as you can go!'" (251). Atticus may not see it, but his daughter clearly recognizes the consequences his attitude has for Black people and their future; he keeps them within his preconceived, white boundaries. At the core of their discussion, Jean Louise vehemently opposes his views of race and his refusal to see his own colorblind nature.

Finally, Jean Louise challenges Atticus' subtle legalism; his opinions and choices focus on what is just and right rather than the correct treatment of people, which bothers Jean Louise. Throughout their argument, Atticus aligns himself with the Supreme Court and the Constitution,

parts of the American government which dictate definitive truth and law; furthermore, his issues with the NAACP center on their overreach of government and their misinterpretation of how it should rule (Lee 246-47). He seems to be frustrated by their persistent stance against the proper system—against how government runs. The NAACP's stress on Black people and how they must receive correct, human treatment rather than obeying all of America's justice system's structure bothers Atticus. This disagreement exposes Atticus' true nature as he perceives the world solely through the lens of law and legalism. Jean Louise realizes this characteristic of Atticus, too. During one of her long rants at Atticus, she comments that he “forgot to say that justice is something that has nothing to do with people” (247). Jean Louise believes that people affect justice while her father views it more impartially. Atticus' attitude shows his understanding of Christianity; righteousness guides his life and not grace. Trevor Cook, with the support of 2 Corinthians 3:3, explains that Atticus—and Uncle Jack—observe faith by “the letter of the Old Testament Law, written in ‘tables of stone,’ as opposed to the New Testament covenant of grace written upon men's hearts” (665). Objective righteous truth and justice matter more to Atticus than people or their feelings or human needs. Hence, Atticus adheres to outside structures which judge his and other peoples' choices, like America's government. Jean Louise will not let him stay in this mindset. In a rare, well-spoken moment, Jean Louise informs her father of his disconnect with grace, particularly in light of his behavior toward Black people: “You deny them hope. Any man in this world, Atticus, any man who has a head and arms and legs, was born with hope in his heart. You won't find that in the Constitution, I picked that up in church somewhere. They are simple, most of them, but that doesn't make them subhuman. You are telling them that Jesus loves them, but not much” (Lee 251). She attacks Atticus' single-minded concentration on law and justice; she attempts to show him that—as a Christian—human

beings and their hopes, no matter who they are, should matter to him. No matter his intentions, his actions and strict rules reflect law instead of grace. Jean Louise certainly retaliates against his lack of grace, which means she does not give grace to him either. Nevertheless, her position is strong: she rejects legalism in all its forms.

Jean Louise becomes overwhelmed by the South's negative facets and decides to utterly reject it by physically leaving. She informs Atticus that his façade and incorrect life lessons have now forced her from Maycomb, and she has no other place to turn to for home (Lee 248). Southern culture still exists within her, but she can no longer touch it due to its failures. Jean Louise's claim moves toward action in the following chapter as she prepares to leave; she believes she must flee her home and never return, and she does not see any other option. She tells Aunt Alexandra, "I am going so far away from Maycomb County it'll take me a hundred years to get back" (258). Rather than face her issues, Jean Louise attempts to escape this horrific reality. The South finally reveals its true, broken nature, and she cannot stand by it any longer.

### **Finding Herself: A Full Manifestation of Accepting and Rejecting**

When Jean Louise finally escapes her complete rejection of the South, she starts her path toward acceptance and rejection of Southern traits. Uncle Jack's slap soundly brings her back to reality; Jack, another manifestation of her inherited Southern culture, confronts her and will not let her so quickly abandon her home and its roots. After his slap, Jean Louise takes a moment to reevaluate her feelings and tells Uncle Jack, "it's bearable somehow," to which he replies, "It's bearable, Jean Louise, because you are your own person now" (Lee 264). Jean Louise's argument with Atticus has severed her from his worldview; she can now begin to decide who she will be. While several readers believe Jean Louise moves from a full rejection to a full acceptance of the South, a close reading of her actions and words reveal "the ambivalence of the

southerner” (Pond 97). Jean Louise seems to be somewhere in the middle, which her reactions to the following six traits support. Moreover, these traits bring stability to one another since, by embodying one, a different one cannot take full control. For instance, her use of discrimination and respect in how she acknowledges others’ differences and treats them politely keeps her forthright tone—a lack of traditional Southern femininity—from always appearing rude to others. At last, Jean Louise discovers a way to properly hold to what she loves and refuse what she believes is wrong about her Southern culture. Her discrimination and respect, honor of family, and grace balance her rejection of Southern femininity, “Us vs. Them” mentality, and legalism and give her a new sense of identity.

Jean Louise accepts discrimination and respect again as she slowly understands that these traits are still a positive Southern aspect in her talk with Uncle Jack. In this scene, he calls her a bigot, explaining that “[w]hat does a bigot do when he meets someone who challenges his opinion? He doesn’t give. He stays rigid” (Lee 267). While talking with Atticus, Jean Louise’s mind kept her from seeing the South for what it was; she only saw the evil and incorrect behaviors and decided to abandon it all. Jack also rightly informs her that she will never continue to learn and mature if she does not acknowledge others (267). The South exemplifies this trait, including her father. Indeed, Atticus displays discrimination and respect consistently in their fight; furthermore, he tells her that “I’m trying to make you understand my position” (246). Jean Louise refuses to hear him. Discrimination and respect on Jean Louise’s part does not mean Jean Louise must agree with Atticus; rather, she will understand his background—his position—and treat him accordingly. Her move toward discrimination and respect appears best in her recognition of his humanity. Jean Louise has always placed her father on a pedestal, as Uncle Jack comments, “you confused your father with God” (265). After their disagreement, Jean

Louise acknowledges that Atticus is not her moral compass; his decisions or attitude are incorrect, specifically toward Black people. Nevertheless, she now understands that he is human and that he should be allowed to be human, which includes making mistakes. This change does scare her since she has never “met” this version of Atticus (271). She will learn to adjust so she can truly understand who he is and what his needs are, giving him discrimination and respect. Her return to discrimination and respect positively affects her growth in her balanced identity; she restores a once well-regarded Southern trait.

Jean Louise regains her Southern trait of honoring her family in the closing chapters by repairing her relationship with Atticus. Some readers struggle with her reconciliation. Wayne Flynt bemoans in “Nelle on Law” that “Liberal Northern readers often dislike the novel because in the end Jean Louise forgives and reconciles with her father and uncle without accepting their racist beliefs, an act that required her to elevate family relationships above racist ideology” (638-39). With such staunch racists near her, Jean Louise supposedly should deal Atticus more attacks for his horrific outlook. While his judgements are highly incorrect, Atticus is still her father; thus, he deserves honor through familial support and protection. She remembers this dynamic when distanced from her argument; her hesitancy to see him soon shows her embarrassment about her treatment of him (Lee 271). Notably, she will not agree with his view on race, and nothing within the text of the novel points to Jean Louise accepting her father’s racism. She understands that their relationship matters most, and she goes to pick him up (271). Before Jean Louise can apologize, Atticus reveals he approves of her newfound independence, breaking the tension between the two. She quickly ensures that he knows she honors him again. As the two prepare to drive off, Jean Louise says to Atticus, “I think I love you very much” (278). Her comment elicits a smile from him. He calls her “Scout” just one last time, cementing their

reconnection (278). The two enemies have returned to their close relationship, though in a different light. Atticus will not always be just human to Jean Louise but also a father to her—her family. In one simple and kind statement, Jean Louise shows Atticus that he is her father once again and that she will continue to honor him.

After Uncle Jack's conversation, Jean Louise still rejects the traditional Southern female ideal in her search for her new identity while curbing her harsh tone. Pond argues that Jean Louise's actions in the closing chapter reflect her acceptance of "a white, female, southern identity" (97). However, Jean Louise neither acts in some sort of reversal nor shockingly begins to adhere to expected Southern female actions. For instance, she does not marry Henry, and the text does not reflect any possibility of her changing her mind. Uncle Jack hints to Jean Louise that she must break up with Henry since he is not "her kind" (Lee 273). While Henry's otherness also fits this word "kind," Jack uses it in a different sense now. As Jean Louise already knows, Henry does not share her views on Maycomb and Southern culture. He will always follow Maycomb's lead since he fears its rejection (234). Uncle Jack's use of "kind" further explains the reason for Jean Louise's thoughts once she meets Henry again. In this scene, she reflects on how Henry is a part of her but only as her closest friend—not someone for whom she can be a wife (276). Her words foreshadow a breakup. If Jean Louise were a proper Southern female, she would look past Henry's shortcomings and support him relentlessly. Nevertheless, she is not this kind of woman; she will speak her mind and refuse to settle with someone she disagrees with—no matter who they are to her. Granted, she does not berate Henry as she once did, but her calm demeanor is not enough evidence to prove her switch to the Southern feminine ideal. Despite her new composure, she persists in her denial of this traditional female attitude and continues to work on her developing identity.

Jean Louise's rejection of the "Us vs. Them" mentality subtly exists since she does not restate or reemphasize her previous stance, but she never retracts her recognition of the "Other" or colorblindness; moreover, her choice to stay in Maycomb supports her continual stance on these traits. Granted, no "Other" makes an appearance, but Jean Louise learns that Others exists in the form of people in Maycomb. Indeed, these "Others" are those who agree with her outlook on the world and what the South should no longer permit. Uncle Jack informs her more of her "kind" exist in her hometown and that "[t]he woods are full of people like you" (Lee 272). Jean Louise is not alone; some citizens of Maycomb already adhere to her worldview. They stand beside her, even if they are on the outskirts of the larger society—the "woods." The novel ends with Uncle Jack's idea about staying in Maycomb hanging over Jean Louise. She now has a kind of great journey where she must search these "Others" out and discover their connection to her. With this bond, she can make a profound difference in the South—in her beloved home. She can encourage the change she has experienced "to have a subtle influence over her community, rather than condemning and avoiding it" (Pond 97). She can highlight her new balanced identity and bring her beloved home away from its damaging, destructive nature. The "Others" are not obvious to her yet, but she will supposedly find them in Maycomb.

Jean Louise's admission of her colorblindness is also less noticeable in the end, but this rejection clearly fuels her possible helpful return to Maycomb. Interestingly, Uncle Jack categorizes Jean Louise as "color blind," too, but he uses it to highlight her avoidance of racial identification; she does not see race (Lee 270). Uncle Jack's definition of "colorblindness" appears fine, but Jean Louise does comprehend race through her realization of the struggles of the Black community throughout the novel; she does not see race in a derogatory way, but she understands that white people mistreat Black people and that this issue must change. Indeed,

when he tries to convince her to consider moving back to Maycomb, Uncle Jack remarks that “the time your friends need you is when they’re wrong, Jean Louise. They don’t need you when they’re right” (273). While he does not directly state it, Uncle Jack hints that Jean Louise’s anti-racist stance is correct. She addresses that racial tension exists beneath the surface of the South—the problem no white Southern wants to address—and she can help bring change. If she stays in Maycomb, Jean Louise’s recognition of colorblindness can help those people around her begin to understand their blindness as well.

Grace crucially overflows *Watchman*’s entire ending in regard to Jean Louise’s new identity and her behavior toward others. Some critics and readers, like Dwight Tanner, may become distracted by the lack of direct, final condemnation of racism and, thus, overlook Jean Louise’s ultimate goal. Overall, legalism—the focus on outward actions—does not control her. Uncle Jack has to remind her that Atticus will “always do it by the letter and by the spirit of the law. That’s the way he lives” (Lee 268). Atticus’ approach is utterly foreign to Jean Louise, but he is not evil. He will always respect the law and justice, though this predisposition has problems. As Trevor Cook highlights, this character trait for Atticus—along with his brother, Uncle Jack—points to “the love of law rather than what the Apostle Paul would call the law of love” (665). By focusing on rules and justice, Atticus ignores faith aspects, such as Paul’s lessons in the New Testament. For instance, in Paul’s writings, the law is not supreme because of “Christ, who demonstrated how love of God and one’s neighbor was better able to achieve the ends the law was intended to realize” (Cook 666). Atticus takes the Christ-haunted nature almost too far: all he sees is the lack of the “whole man” rather than searching for how to fix the gap. Grace reaches people better than legalism; the law reveals one’s sinful nature, but love brings others to salvation. Jean Louise needs to avoid her father and uncle’s type of belief—one which

emphasizes outward signs. As Uncle Jack notes, Jean Louise must embody humility in order to live in the modern South (Lee 273). Only a humble attitude will bring positive change to her home. Jean Louise can develop humility if she expresses grace, searching peoples' hearts and seeing their struggles. By using grace, Jean Louise allows growth for those willing to change, which very well may include her father. In their argument, he tells her, "I'm seventy-two years old, but I'm still open to suggestion" (Lee 246). Atticus appears open to outside help, but Jean Louise withholds grace from him in this moment, choosing to focus on problems with his legalism instead. Thankfully, Uncle Jack's proposal gives her a new multitude of chances in which she can rightly choose grace. These opportunities for grace might allow her a stronger foundation of humility with which she could reach Atticus—and others like him. Rather than enter these discussions with fury and frustration, Jean Louise can search her fellow Southerners' hearts and treat them with grace to bring them closer to her side, one of security in her Christ-haunted nature. She not only understands the missing "whole man" but also desires to return his wholeness, like her own longing for identity security. Her acceptance of grace bothers some readers, but her choice will allow for greater influence and development in her balanced Southern identity. Grace could appear as a loophole or a way to avoid large issues, such as racism. Nevertheless, Jean Louise must treat others with grace to reach other Southerners where they are and guide them to change.

### **How to Go Home Again**

Throughout different readings of the text, *Watchman's* ending remains controversial and supposedly incomplete. For instance, Katherine Henninger argues that Jean Louise's "can't beat them or join them" tone at the end of the novel places her at "an impasse" (621). Jean Louise has nowhere to go and no real solution. However, Uncle Jack clearly gives her a way forward: to

come home and support other Southerners who think like her—not aggressively but by simply living her life and according to her beliefs (Lee 270-71). Jean Louise cannot fight as she did with Atticus; she must live and bring about change in this calm, purposeful manner. Julia Pond’s article emphasizes a similar reading to Henninger’s: “Lee’s novel argues that people who want to effect change in society must ‘take time’ for those who disagree with them; refusing to do so stunts the growth of both parties” (100). Jean Louise never sides with full acceptance or rejection, but her choices at the end of the novel advocate for balance. Jean Louise stands on this middle ground when she once again picks up Atticus. Atticus’ addressing Jean Louise by her adult name—as opposed to “Scout”—emphasizes that the woman picking him up “is, indeed, Jean Louise, fully realized now, completely metamorphosed into adult form. But she is only just out of her cocoon, and still a bit shaky” (Atkinson 121). Jean Louise must persevere in what accepting and rejecting Southern culture means, but her current traits—accepting discrimination and respect, honoring her family, and giving grace while rejecting the traditional Southern female, “Us vs. Them” mentality, and legalism—gives her a strong starting point. These six traits do well to balance one another, keeping one another at bay. Her simultaneous accepting and rejecting of these six Southern traits will lead her to internal peace and understanding. They all reflect her Christ-haunted nature, the shadowing of Christianity on the South and the innate desire to be whole, and her identity’s security can find rest in this end.

### Conclusion: Where to Go from Here

*Mockingbird* and *Watchman* read in tandem allow for the works' implications about mid-twentieth century Southern life to shine. As previously mentioned, Julia Pond's compelling article does well to support this reading and analysis. This recent touchstone for *Watchman* and *Mockingbird* studies suggests that "Lee's second book presents the growth that Scout has to endure in order to become the mature narrator that *Mockingbird* employs" (Pond 90). Jean Louise's character development directly ties to *Mockingbird* and the retelling of its events. Thus, the novels interrelate, and reading them together highlights the correlation and larger matters at play. Other academics seem to agree with Pond. For instance, Allen Mendenhall's earlier 2016 article "Children Once, Not Forever: Harper Lee's *Go Set a Watchman* and Growing Up" matches Pond's view of the novels that *Watchman* does well to holistically enhance readings of *Mockingbird*. He concludes his article with the statement that "[w]e've grown up— all of us— and now, after *Watchman*, we can more judiciously and astutely read *Mockingbird*, like mature and sober adults, for the dark and unsettling portrait of society that it was, not for the idealistic *bildungsroman* that we wanted it to be" (14). Mendenhall challenges those readers who assign *Watchman* a smaller status—and rightly so. *Watchman* offers much insight into the South in its respective time period for those brave and persistent enough to battle through its contents, particularly in light of *Mockingbird*.

The novels also give new insights into the characterization of Jean Louise as a mid-twentieth century Southern woman struggling to find her own identity. Several articles and studies of *Watchman* and *Mockingbird* give crucial examination for the novels, but they each miss how Jean Louise simultaneously accepts and rejects Southern culture. C. Vann Woodward discusses the importance of a secure, personal identity for Southerners in the mid-twentieth

century due to the increase of changes in Southern life (185-86). Jean Louise embodies this importance of security. Furthermore, Southern feminine expectations within this period add to the identity struggle. Some Southern women fought to break the patriarchal molds set before them, which made their life choices even harder since “the image of the lady was slow to die” (Scott 221). Therefore, Jean Louise has a difficult path before her. In both novels, Jean Louise accepts discrimination and respect, honor of family, and grace while rejecting traditional Southern femininity, an “Us vs. Them” mentality (with colorblindness and the “Other” addressed), and legalism, and all six traits find balance in their interactions within her. Scout in *Mockingbird* displays each trait at different instances, but she embodies the acceptance and rejection only twice: the mob appearing at the jail in the middle of the book and her relationship with Boo Radley at the end. In these tense scenes, Scout somehow accepts the three positive Southern traits and rejects the three negatives ones in order to successfully bring harmony and peace. Scout subconsciously desires security in her identity and actions, as much as a child can be aware of such matters. She appears to replicate this process in *Watchman* as well. Jean Louise does battle her identity struggle more vehemently in *Watchman*, but the outcome is still the same: she finds a balance in accepting and rejecting Southern traits. Despite the shift she experiences due to realizing Atticus’ humanity, Jean Louise understands she cannot fully reject her Southern roots and life since the South will always be a part of her. Instead, for her to continue being herself and open herself up to the possibility of helping the South change, Jean Louise must hold to some Southern characteristics and reject others. She discovers this awareness by the close of the novel, which stresses her new-found peace. Jean Louise’s reconciliation these six traits in Lee’s works reflects the deep wish for mid-twentieth century Southerners to find security in their identity.

The guiding force for Jean Louise and her character traits is not her father—as often believed—but her innate, Christ-haunted nature. Wayne Flynt’s personal, overall contemplation in *Mockingbird Songs* encapsulates the Christian treasures within *Mockingbird* and *Watchman*: “I reread Nelle’s classic novel as well as her new one, [sic] and found in them what I had first discovered in the Bible: the most elemental meaning of innocence, judgment, justice, mercy, love, tolerance, forgiveness, and reconciliation, between races as well as generations” (197). Beneath the surface, Lee’s works consistently resonate with the Christian spirit. The Christ-haunted nature—the understanding of the possibility of a “whole man” as O’Connor describes it—flows into every aspect of both novels, including the portrayal of characters. More than any other character, Jean Louise searches for balance within her identity, which reflects her desire for wholeness. Additionally, she selects characteristics that balance one another; she rejects negative Southern traits and accepts positive ones. Although this selection is often subconscious, she still recognizes what will best assist her in her search for a balanced identity—she does not lean too far on one side or the other. Moreover, when she is at her best and most calm, she completely accepts and rejects the South. While Jean Louise is still a mere human, she allows her inherited Christ-haunted nature to assist her as she interacts with the Southern culture around her.

*Mockingbird* and *Watchman*’s connected, shared insights through Jean Louise’s balanced characterization also echo a greater issue within Southern culture. Pond’s article does end with a sad resignation: she relays that *Mockingbird* will hold a lasting influence in America while *Watchman* will have to settle with “a secondary, forgettable place in the shadow of its predecessor, just as adolescence itself will most likely continue in the shadow of the more highly prized statuses of childhood and adulthood” (101). While her comments include truth and honesty, this placement should not persist. *Watchman* rightly emphasizes how Southerners could

continue to interact with their culture by discovering an internal balance with their identities. Southerners have long attempted to escape their roots—to try and leave what is in their “bones” behind. Uncle Jack addresses this idea to Jean Louise at the close of *Watchman* in his encouragement of her returning to Maycomb (Lee 271-73). Despite her assumption, Jean Louise can come home again; she may feel unaccepted and unwanted, but her return would give the South important insight and self-awareness. Indeed, her unique perception possibly reflects the tone of *Mockingbird*'s own narrator: “[w]e could insert *Watchman* between the years related in *Mockingbird* and the Jean Louise who narrates that story” (Pond 89). The character who recounts Scout's life in *Mockingbird* could be the mature version of Jean Louise who has grown and lived in Maycomb after the events of *Watchman*. This version of Jean Louise—reflective and pondering—has possibly returned home and finally gained a new perspective through which she views her nostalgia-filled childhood. With her Christ-haunted nature shepherding her, Jean Louise has finally found peace and harmony, and she can continue to search for this security in her observations of her own life and past.

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