

# Harper Lee on 'Equality'

The news of [Harper Lee's death](#) at age 89 will undoubtedly rekindle interest and fond reflection in her famous novel, [To Kill a Mockingbird](#).

Ms. Lee received widespread acclaim for tackling difficult civil rights issues at a time when race relations were reaching a breaking point. In spite of this acclaim, several of her statements about equality might actually be perceived as un-PC in today's culture. Do you think the following still ring true today?

1. "The most ridiculous example I can think of is that the people who run public education promote the stupid and idle along with the industrious—because all men are created equal, educators will gravely tell you, the children left behind suffer terrible feelings of inferiority."

2. "[A]s I inched sluggishly along the treadmill of the Maycomb County school system, I could not help receiving the impression that I was being cheated out of something. Out of what I knew not, yet I did not believe that twelve years of unrelieved boredom was exactly what the state had in mind for me."

3. "We know all men are not created equal in the sense some people would have us believe—some people are smarter than others, some people have more opportunity because they're born with it, some men make more money than others, some ladies make better cakes than others—some people are born gifted beyond the normal scope of most men."

4. "But there is one way in this country in which all men are created equal—there is one human institution that makes a pauper the equal of a Rockefeller, the stupid man the equal of an Einstein, and the ignorant man the equal of any college president. That institution, gentlemen, is a court."

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