

**A COMPARITIVE STUDY BETWEEN THE CLASSIC AND THE COMTEMPORARY
– TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD AND THE HATE U GIVE**

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Arts
degree in English

by

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INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)

Accredited with Grade “A” by NAAC

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ABSTRACT

From 1906 to 2017, with a time span of 3 decades from one book to another, each set in the same premise – Systematic Racism, White Supremacy and Black Orientalism hasn't changed by a mile.

The classic, *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee & the contemporary, *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas are the two novels chosen to study and dissect.

Perusing through how a white female author views racism, in comparison to a black female author. The similarities in roles and positioning of characters from either novels, the differences through the ages of how Black Americans deal with said bigotry, intricacies of storyline and plot, bringing out the truth from the pages of literature into media and reality as well as public reception – that either books despite being a multi-award winner, was yet banned from libraries.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 RACISM

Racism is the belief that some races are inherently superior or inferior to others, and the discrimination, prejudice, and mistreatment that result from these beliefs. It is a form of discrimination based on someone's race or ethnicity, which can lead to unequal treatment, unequal access to opportunities, and negative stereotypes.

Racism can manifest in many different ways, from individual acts of prejudice and discrimination to institutional and systemic biases in areas such as education, employment, housing, and criminal justice. It can also take the form of hate speech, hate crimes, and other forms of violence.

Racism has a long history and continues to be a pervasive issue in many societies around the world. It can have significant impacts on individuals and communities, including on their mental and physical health, social and economic opportunities, and overall quality of life.

1.1.2 ***Current Day Racism in America***

Police brutality and racial profiling: There have been numerous incidents in which police officers have used excessive force against Black people, resulting in injury or death. Racial profiling, in which individuals are targeted by law enforcement based on their race, is also a significant problem.

Housing discrimination: Black people and other minorities still face discrimination when it comes to buying or renting homes in certain neighbourhoods.

Employment discrimination: Black people and other minorities may face discrimination in hiring, promotion, and pay in the workplace.

Education: There are significant disparities in educational opportunities and outcomes between white and minority students, particularly in low-income areas.

Healthcare disparities: Minority communities often face disparities in access to healthcare and quality of care, leading to poorer health outcomes.

Hate crimes and discrimination: Black people and other minorities continue to be the targets of hate crimes and discrimination based on their race, ethnicity, or religion.

1.2 ORIENTALISM

Orientalism is a term used to describe a set of assumptions, stereotypes, and cultural biases that Western societies have historically held towards the cultures and peoples of the Middle East, Asia, and North Africa, often referred to as the "Orient." It was popularized in the 1978 book "Orientalism" by Edward Said.

According to Said, Orientalism is a way of looking at the world that is rooted in European imperialism and colonialism. It is characterized by the representation of the "Orient" as exotic, backward, and uncivilized, in contrast to the supposedly superior, rational, and advanced Western culture. This representation has been perpetuated through various forms of media, including art, literature, and popular culture.

Said argues that Orientalism has had a profound impact on the way Western societies have interacted with the "Orient" over time, leading to the subjugation,

exploitation, and marginalization of its peoples and cultures. It has also contributed to the perpetuation of stereotypes and misunderstandings that continue to this day.

Overall, Orientalism is a critique of the way in which Western societies have historically constructed and portrayed the "Orient," and the power dynamics that have resulted from this construction.

1.3 BLACK ORIENTALISM

The term "black Orientalism" refers to a similar phenomenon to Orientalism, but specifically focused on the way in which Black people and cultures have been exoticized, fetishized, and stereotyped by Western societies. It is the application of Orientalist stereotypes and biases to Black cultures and peoples, particularly those from Africa.

Black Orientalism can be observed in the ways in which Black cultures have been portrayed in art, literature, and popular culture. This can include the portrayal of Black people as primitive, savage, or hypersexual, as well as the appropriation of Black cultural practices and aesthetics for the sake of Western consumption.

Black Orientalism has its roots in the same historical context as Orientalism, which is rooted in European imperialism and colonialism. It has contributed to the marginalization and subjugation of Black people and cultures, as well as the perpetuation of negative stereotypes and misunderstandings.

The term "black Orientalism" is not as widely used or recognized as "Orientalism," which is a more established concept. Nonetheless, it is an important perspective to consider when examining the intersection of race and culture in Western societies.

1.3.1 *Black Orientalism in America*

Black Orientalism refers to the way in which African Americans have been portrayed in American culture as exotic, primitive, and inferior to the dominant culture. This portrayal draws on racist stereotypes and cultural ignorance, much like the Orientalist representations of the East in the West.

Black Orientalism can be seen in various aspects of American culture, including literature, film, and popular media. In literature, for example, African American writers have been subjected to Orientalist tropes that exoticize and stereotype them, such as the idea of the "noble savage" or the "magical Negro." These tropes reduce African Americans to caricatures and deny them their humanity and complexity.

In film, Black Orientalism can be seen in the representation of African Americans as threatening or mysterious figures, often associated with mysticism or the supernatural. This representation perpetuates the idea that African Americans are somehow different and other than the dominant culture, reinforcing racial hierarchies and perpetuating prejudice.

Black Orientalism can also be seen in the way that African American culture has been appropriated and commodified by the dominant culture. For example, elements of African American culture such as jazz music or hip hop have been co-opted and marketed to the mainstream culture, often without proper recognition or compensation to the original creators.

Overall, Black Orientalism is a form of racism and cultural imperialism that perpetuates negative stereotypes and reinforces existing power dynamics. It is important to recognize and challenge these representations in order to create a more just and equitable society.

1.4 TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD

1.4.1 Plot

"To Kill a Mockingbird" is a novel by Harper Lee, published in 1960. The story is set in the 1930s in the fictional town of Maycomb, Alabama, and is told through the eyes of a young girl named Scout Finch.

The novel revolves around Scout's father, Atticus Finch, a lawyer who is appointed to defend a black man named Tom Robinson who has been accused of raping a white woman. The trial becomes a major event in the town, revealing the deep-seated racism and prejudice of the community.

Through the characters and events in the novel, Lee explores themes of racism, injustice, and the loss of innocence. Scout learns important lessons about empathy, courage, and the importance of standing up for what is right, even in the face of opposition.

The novel also explores Scout's coming-of-age story, as she learns about the complexities of the adult world and comes to understand the harsh realities of racism and prejudice.

"To Kill a Mockingbird" is a classic of American literature and has been widely praised for its portrayal of the injustices of racism and its exploration of the human condition. It has been adapted into a successful film and has been studied in schools and universities around the world.

1.4.2 Harper Lee

Harper Lee was an American author known for her novel "To Kill a Mockingbird," which was published in 1960 and became an instant classic of American literature. Born in Monroeville, Alabama, in 1926, Lee grew up in a small Southern town that served as the inspiration for the setting of her novel.

Lee attended the University of Alabama and later studied law at Oxford University in England. She worked as a clerk and researcher for a lawyer in her hometown before pursuing a career in writing.

"To Kill a Mockingbird" was Lee's only published novel until 2015, when a second novel entitled "Go Set a Watchman" was released. However, it was later revealed that "Go Set a Watchman" was actually an early draft of "To Kill a Mockingbird," rather than a separate novel.

Lee was awarded numerous honours for her contributions to American literature, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2007. She passed away in 2016 at the age of 89.

1.4.3 Harper Lee's Vision

Harper Lee's vision in "To Kill a Mockingbird" was to highlight the unjust and discriminatory treatment of African Americans in the American South during the 1930s, as well as to critique the entrenched social structures that perpetuated this discrimination. The novel is set in the fictional town of Maycomb, Alabama, and follows the experiences of the Finch family, particularly the young protagonist Scout, as they navigate the complex racial dynamics of their community.

Through the character of Atticus Finch, a lawyer who defends a falsely accused black man in court, Lee challenges the notion of racial superiority and exposes the prejudices and injustices that exist in the legal system. Atticus is a moral figure who represents the idea of justice and equality, and he stands up for his principles even when it puts him and his family in danger.

Lee's vision is also conveyed through the character of Tom Robinson, the black man who is falsely accused of raping a white woman. Tom's case represents the injustice and racism that existed in the South at the time, as well as the devastating consequences of such discrimination on individuals and communities.

Ultimately, Lee's vision in "To Kill a Mockingbird" is to expose the reality of racism and discrimination in the American South, and to encourage her readers to question their own biases and prejudices. The novel remains a powerful and enduring critique of the social and political structures that perpetuate inequality and injustice, and a reminder of the importance of empathy, courage, and standing up for what is right.

1.5 THE HATE U GIVE

1.5.1 Plot

"The Hate U Give" by Angie Thomas is a powerful and thought-provoking novel that explores themes of racial injustice, police brutality, and activism. The story follows the life of 16-year-old Starr Carter, a black girl who lives in a predominantly black neighbourhood but attends a predominantly white private school.

Starr's world is turned upside down when she witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood friend Khalil by a white police officer during a traffic stop. As the only witness to the shooting, Starr is forced to navigate the complex and often hostile relationships between her black community and the predominantly white police force, while also dealing with her own grief and trauma.

As the story unfolds, Starr finds herself caught between two worlds - the world of her predominantly black neighbourhood, where she feels a sense of belonging and community, and the world of her predominantly white school, where she feels pressure to conform to white standards of behaviour and success.

As Starr becomes increasingly involved in the fight for justice for Khalil, she must also confront the realities of systemic racism and the ways in which it affects her own life and the lives of those around her. Through her activism and her relationships with family and friends, Starr learns the power of speaking up and using her voice to make a difference.

Overall, "The Hate U Give" is a timely and important novel that addresses important issues of race and justice, and encourages readers to examine their own biases and prejudices. The novel is a reminder that every person has a voice and the power to make a difference, and that we must all work together to create a more just and equitable society.

1.5.2 Angie Thomas

Angie Thomas is an American author who was born and raised in Jackson, Mississippi. She is best known for her debut novel, "The Hate U Give," which became a bestseller and won numerous awards, including the William C. Morris Award, the Michael L. Printz Award, and the Coretta Scott King Award.

Thomas attended Belhaven University, where she studied creative writing. After college, she worked as a teen rapper and a hip-hop dancer before turning her focus to writing. She began writing "The Hate U Give" in response to the shooting of Oscar Grant, a young black man who was killed by a police officer in Oakland, California in 2009.

"The Hate U Give" was published in 2017 and quickly became a critical and commercial success, earning widespread praise for its powerful portrayal of race, police brutality, and activism. The book has been adapted into a successful movie and has become a cultural touchstone, inspiring conversations about social justice and the Black Lives Matter movement.

In addition to "The Hate U Give," Thomas has also written the young adult novel "On the Come Up," which follows the story of a young rapper named Bri who dreams of making it big in the music industry. Like "The Hate U Give," "On the Come Up" explores issues of race, identity, and social justice, and has been praised for its powerful and authentic portrayal of the contemporary black experience in America.

1.5.3 Angie Thomas's Vision

Angie Thomas's vision in "The Hate U Give" is to shine a light on the realities of racism, police brutality, and the Black Lives Matter movement in America. The novel addresses these issues through the eyes of Starr Carter, a young black girl who witnesses the shooting of her childhood friend by a white police officer.

Through Starr's perspective, Thomas explores the trauma, anger, and grief that many young black people experience as a result of police violence and systemic racism. The novel also exposes the ways in which racism and poverty intersect, and how these factors can perpetuate a cycle of violence and despair in communities of colour.

At the same time, "The Hate U Give" is a story of hope and empowerment. Through Starr's journey, Thomas shows how young people can use their voices and their activism to fight against injustice and make a difference in their communities. The novel also celebrates the strength and resilience of black families and communities, and highlights the importance of love, solidarity, and support in the face of adversity.

Overall, Thomas's vision in "The Hate U Give" is to encourage readers to examine their own biases and prejudices, to confront the realities of systemic racism and police brutality, and to join the fight for justice and equality. The novel is a powerful

and timely call to action, inspiring readers to use their voices and their actions to create a better, more just world.

2.0 THE CLASSIC

2.1 PORTRAYAL OF RACISM

Racism is a central theme in Harper Lee's novel "To Kill a Mockingbird." The novel is set in the 1930s in a fictional town in Alabama, and it portrays the racism and prejudice that were common during that time period.

Throughout the novel, Lee portrays the racial tensions and divisions that existed in the town, particularly between the white and black communities. The black characters in the novel, such as Tom Robinson and Calpurnia, are portrayed as being treated unfairly and with disrespect by many of the white characters.

One of the most prominent examples of racism in the novel is the trial of Tom Robinson, a black man who is falsely accused of raping a white woman. Despite overwhelming evidence that proves Tom's innocence, he is convicted and ultimately killed because of the color of his skin.

Lee also portrays the racism that exists within the white community, particularly through the character of Bob Ewell, who is shown to be a hateful and bigoted man. The novel also shows how children can be influenced by the racism of their parents and communities, as seen in the character of Scout's classmate, Burris Ewell.

However, Lee also shows that not all white characters are racist, and that there are some who are willing to stand up against injustice and racism. Atticus Finch, the protagonist's father, is a lawyer who defends Tom Robinson and stands up against the racism and prejudice of his community.

It portrays racism as a deeply ingrained and pervasive problem in society, but also shows that there are individuals who are willing to fight against it.

Through its portrayal of the trial of Tom Robinson, a black man falsely accused of rape, the novel depicts the deep-rooted systemic racism that existed in the region at that time.

The novel shows how racism was embedded in the legal system and society as a whole, with black characters facing discrimination at every turn. Atticus Finch, the protagonist and defence attorney for Tom Robinson, highlights the injustice of the legal system when he says: "In our courts, when it's a white man's word against a black man's, the white man always wins."

The novel also shows how racism affected the lives of individuals and families, with the Finch family facing ostracism from their community for defending a black man. Additionally, the characters of Calpurnia, the Finch family's black housekeeper, and Tom Robinson's wife, Helen, are portrayed as facing additional hardships and discrimination because of their race.

2.2 POLICE BRUTALITY IN THE NOVEL

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee is a novel that explores racism and prejudice in the deep south of the United States during the 1930s. The novel features a number of instances of police brutality, both overt and covert.

One of the most notable examples of police brutality in the novel occurs during the trial of Tom Robinson, a black man accused of raping a white woman. The police officer, Bob Ewell, is called to the stand to testify. During his testimony, it becomes clear that Ewell is lying and that Tom Robinson is innocent. However, the police officer still attempts to frame Tom Robinson by claiming that he saw Robinson assaulting the woman. This is an example of police brutality because Ewell is abusing his power as a police officer to falsely accuse an innocent man and protect himself from being exposed as a liar.

Another instance of police brutality in the novel is when the sheriff, Heck Tate, is complicit in covering up the murder of Bob Ewell. After Ewell attempts to attack Atticus Finch and his children, Jem and Scout, Boo Radley intervenes and kills Ewell in self-defense. Rather than report the incident and investigate it properly, Tate decides to cover it up and fabricate a story to protect Boo Radley. This is a form of police brutality because Tate is not upholding the law and is instead choosing to protect someone who committed a violent act.

Overall, *To Kill a Mockingbird* highlights the ways in which police brutality can be used to enforce unjust laws and maintain social hierarchies. The novel underscores the importance of standing up against police brutality and the need for law enforcement officials to uphold justice and fairness.

2.3 THROUGH THE EYES OF SCOUT

"*To Kill a Mockingbird*" is a novel that is narrated by Scout Finch, a young girl growing up in the 1930s in the American South. Scout's perspective provides a unique and insightful view of the events and themes of the novel.

Throughout the novel, Scout's innocent and curious nature allows her to see the world in a different way than the adults around her. Her naivety initially makes it difficult for her to understand the racism and prejudice that permeates her community, but she slowly begins to recognize the injustices and inequality that exist.

Scout's relationship with her father, Atticus Finch, is a central part of the novel. Atticus is a lawyer who defends a black man, Tom Robinson, against false charges of rape, and his decision to do so puts him and his family in danger. Through her interactions with Atticus, Scout learns important lessons about courage, integrity, and justice.

Scout also forms close relationships with other characters in the novel, including her brother Jem, their friend Dill, and their black housekeeper Calpurnia. Through her interactions with these characters, Scout learns about the complexities of race and class in her community, and begins to see the world through a more mature and empathetic lens.

Overall, Scout's perspective provides an important lens through which to view the events of the novel. Her innocence and curiosity allows her to ask questions and challenge the status quo, while also highlighting the injustices and inequalities that exist in her community. Through her interactions with various characters and her own personal growth, Scout serves as a conduit for the novel's themes of courage, justice, and empathy.

One of the most significant moments in the novel is when Scout witnesses the trial of Tom Robinson. Through her eyes, the reader sees the deep-rooted racism and prejudice that exists in the courtroom and the larger community. Scout is initially confused by the proceedings, but as the trial progresses, she begins to understand the gravity of the situation and the importance of her father's defence of Tom Robinson. This experience shapes Scout's understanding of the world and underscores the novel's message about the importance of standing up for what is right, even in the face of overwhelming opposition.

In conclusion, Scout's perspective in "To Kill a Mockingbird" is an essential part of the novel's message and themes. Her innocence and curiosity provide a unique lens through which to view the injustices and inequalities of her community, and her personal growth serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of empathy, courage, and justice in our lives.

2.4 PREVALENT THEME OF PREJUDICE

One of the central themes of "To Kill a Mockingbird" is prejudice, which is explored in various forms throughout the novel. The story takes place in the American South during the 1930s, where racial discrimination was pervasive and deeply ingrained in the society. Through the story of the trial of Tom Robinson, a black man who is falsely accused of raping a white woman, the novel highlights the devastating effects of prejudice and discrimination.

One of the most prominent forms of prejudice in the novel is racial prejudice. The white community in Maycomb, Alabama, where the novel is set, is deeply prejudiced against black people. This is evident in the treatment of Tom Robinson, who is automatically assumed to be guilty simply because he is black. The novel portrays the systemic racism of the time, in which white people held power and black people were discriminated against in every aspect of their lives, from education to employment to basic civil rights.

Another form of prejudice in the novel is gender prejudice. Scout, the novel's protagonist, is a tomboy who rejects traditional gender roles, but she is constantly pressured by the adults around her to conform to the expectations of Southern

womanhood. The novel portrays the limitations placed on women in the society, who were often viewed as inferior to men and relegated to domestic roles.

This is evident in the character of Aunt Alexandra, who tries to mold Scout into a proper young lady, and in the treatment of Mayella Ewell, the white woman who falsely accuses Tom Robinson of rape. Mayella is trapped in a life of poverty and abuse, and her actions are driven in part by her desire to escape her circumstances and gain some semblance of power over her own life.

Yet another form of prejudice explored in the novel is class prejudice. The Finch family, who are relatively well-off and respected in the community, look down on the poorer members of Maycomb society, such as the Ewells. This is evident in the way that the Finch children are taught to treat the Ewells with suspicion and disdain, and in the way that the Ewells are treated by the justice system.

Through its exploration of these different forms of prejudice, "To Kill a Mockingbird" highlights the insidious ways in which prejudice can manifest in society, and the devastating effects it can have on individuals and communities. The novel ultimately argues for the importance of empathy, understanding, and compassion in breaking down the barriers created by prejudice, and for the necessity of standing up against injustice even when it is unpopular or dangerous to do so.

2.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF TIME PERIOD

The time period in which "To Kill a Mockingbird" is set, the 1930s in the American South, has a significant impact on the story and its themes. The novel takes place during a time of deep-seated racial prejudice and discrimination, which permeated all aspects of life in the region. This pervasive racism is a central element of the novel's story and themes, as it shapes the characters' lives and influences their beliefs and actions.

The Great Depression also had a significant impact on the story. The economic hardships of the era created divisions and tensions within communities, and exacerbated existing prejudices. The Ewell family, for example, are portrayed as a

group of impoverished, uneducated white people who are looked down upon by other members of the community. The novel highlights the ways in which poverty and lack of access to education can contribute to prejudice and social divisions.

The time period also shaped the novel's portrayal of gender roles. The story takes place in a time when women's roles were largely confined to the domestic sphere, and the novel explores the limitations placed on women by the societal expectations of the era. Scout's rejection of traditional gender roles is a significant element of her character, and her struggles to navigate these expectations are a key part of her personal growth throughout the novel.

Finally, the time period also influenced the novel's themes of courage and justice. The story takes place during a time when racial discrimination was deeply ingrained in the society, and those who spoke out against it often faced significant risks and consequences. The novel celebrates the bravery of characters like Atticus Finch, who risked his reputation and safety to defend Tom Robinson, and highlights the importance of standing up for what is right, even in the face of overwhelming opposition.

In conclusion, the time period in which "To Kill a Mockingbird" is set plays a significant role in shaping the novel's story and themes. The pervasive racism, economic hardships, gender expectations, and societal norms of the era all contribute to the complex portrayal of prejudice and discrimination that is at the heart of the novel.

2.6 WHITE PRIVILEGE

While "white privilege" is not a term used in "To Kill a Mockingbird," the novel does explore the ways in which white characters benefit from the systemic racism that exists in their society.

Atticus Finch, as a white lawyer defending a black man, is able to use his privilege to challenge the deeply ingrained prejudices of the legal system and to provide a defense for Tom Robinson. This is contrasted with the experiences of black

characters like Tom Robinson, who are denied the same rights and protections simply because of their race.

The novel also depicts the ways in which white characters are able to participate in, and even perpetuate, racism through their actions and attitudes. For example, characters like Bob Ewell and his daughter Mayella, who falsely accuse Tom Robinson of rape, do so in order to preserve their own status and to avoid the social consequences of associating with a black man.

Similarly, characters like Mrs. Merriweather and Mrs. Dubose use their privilege to perpetuate racist beliefs and attitudes, often in the guise of religious or moral superiority

2.7 PUBLIC RESPONSE

"To Kill a Mockingbird" has been challenged and banned in various places for a number of reasons, most commonly due to its use of racial slurs and its depiction of controversial topics such as rape and the inequality of the legal system.

Many critics argue that the book's frank treatment of racism and prejudice is what has led to its banning in some places. The use of racial slurs and the novel's portrayal of white characters who are complicit in the oppression of black characters have been seen as controversial by some.

Additionally, some have objected to the book's treatment of sexuality, including its references to rape, which have led to the book being banned in some schools and libraries.

Despite these challenges, "To Kill a Mockingbird" remains a widely read and acclaimed novel, and its continued popularity speaks to its enduring relevance and importance in American literature.

2.8 COVERT FLAWS

The limited perspective: The novel is narrated by Scout Finch, a young white girl, which limits the reader's understanding of the experiences of black characters. While the novel does address issues of racism and inequality, it does so primarily through the lens of a white character, which some argue perpetuates a white-centered perspective.

The portrayal of black characters:

While the novel critiques racism and prejudice, some readers and critics have pointed out that the black characters are still largely defined by their relationship to white characters. Additionally, some have argued that the novel reinforces negative stereotypes about black people, such as the "magical negro" trope embodied by the character of Tom Robinson.

The portrayal of women:

While the novel has been praised for its strong and independent female protagonist in Scout Finch, some have argued that the female characters are largely defined by their relationships to men, and that they are often portrayed as passive and subservient.

The oversimplification of issues:

Some have argued that the novel presents a somewhat idealized and simplistic view of issues like racism and inequality, with clear heroes and villains and a neat resolution to the central conflict. This oversimplification, they argue, can lead to a lack of nuance and complexity in understanding these issues.

"To Kill a Mockingbird" is an important and influential work of literature, it is not without its flaws and limitations, and readers should approach the novel critically and with an awareness of its historical context.

3.0 THE CONTEMPORARY

3.1 PORTRAYAL OF RACISM

In "The Hate U Give," racism is portrayed as a pervasive and destructive force that affects every aspect of the main character Starr's life. The novel explores the ways in which racism operates on both an individual and systemic level, and how it affects different communities and social structures.

The novel focuses on the experiences of Starr, a black teenager who witnesses the shooting of her childhood friend Khalil, who is also black, by a white police officer. Through Starr's perspective, the novel portrays the deep-seated racial biases and prejudices that exist in society, and the challenges that black people face in navigating and surviving in such an environment.

One of the key themes of the novel is the unequal treatment of black and white people by the police and the legal system. The shooting of Khalil, and the subsequent lack of consequences for the white police officer, highlights the systemic racism that exists in law enforcement and the legal system. The novel also explores the concept of racial profiling, with Starr and her black friends frequently subjected to harassment and suspicion simply because of their race.

Additionally, the novel portrays the ways in which racism affects individuals and communities on a personal level, with characters like Starr and her family facing discrimination and micro-aggressions in their everyday lives. The novel also highlights the importance of solidarity and allyship, with characters from different racial backgrounds coming together to challenge racism and advocate for justice.

Angie Thomas portrays racism as a deeply ingrained and systemic issue that affects every aspect of society, from law enforcement and the legal system to individual interactions and relationships.

The novel also explores the concept of white privilege, with characters like Starr's white boyfriend Chris coming to terms with the ways in which they benefit from a system that is designed to disadvantage people of color. Additionally, the novel portrays the ways in which racism operates on a structural level, with the legal

system and law enforcement agencies perpetuating systemic discrimination against black people.

One of the key themes of the novel is the idea of "code-switching," or the way in which black people are often forced to modify their behavior and language in order to navigate different social situations. The novel portrays the ways in which this can be both exhausting and dehumanizing, and highlights the importance of being true to oneself and one's cultural heritage.

Overall, Angie Thomas portrays racism in "The Hate U Give" as a complex and pervasive issue that affects every aspect of society, and highlights the need for systemic change in order to create a more just and equitable world.

3.2 POLICE BRUTALITY IN THE NOVEL

Angie Thomas strongly explores the impact of police brutality on black communities. The incident sparks protests and unrest in their community, as Starr struggles to find her voice and speak out against the injustice.

The novel provides a searing portrayal of the systemic racism and police brutality that black Americans continue to face today. It shows how police officers can abuse their power and use excessive force against black individuals, often with little or no consequences. The shooting of Khalil is a heart breaking example of this, as he is portrayed as a young man who was simply in the wrong place at the wrong time, and who is unfairly targeted because of his race.

Through Starr's experiences, the novel also highlights the trauma and emotional toll that police brutality can have on individuals and communities. Starr grapples with the fear and anger that comes with witnessing such violence, as well as the pressure to speak out against it. The book underscores the importance of solidarity and community support in the face of such injustice, and calls for real change and accountability in the criminal justice system.

Police brutality has a significant impact on the mental health and well-being of adolescent Black Americans. Studies have shown that exposure to police brutality can lead to symptoms of depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and other mental health problems.

Adolescents who experience police brutality or witness it in their communities may develop a deep mistrust of law enforcement, which can lead to feelings of fear and anxiety. This can make it difficult for them to engage with the police or seek help in situations where they may need assistance.

Additionally, police brutality can have a negative impact on academic performance and educational outcomes for Black adolescents. The stress and trauma associated with police violence can make it difficult for them to focus on their studies and succeed academically.

Furthermore, police brutality can also have long-term effects on the physical health of Black adolescents. The stress associated with experiencing or witnessing police violence can lead to chronic health problems such as high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes.

Police brutality has a profound impact on the lives of adolescent Black Americans, and addressing this issue is crucial for promoting the health and well-being of this population. It is important to work towards creating a more just and equitable society where everyone is treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their race or ethnicity.

3.3 THROUGH THE EYES OF STARR CARTER

Starr Carter lives in a predominantly Black neighbourhood called Garden Heights but attends a predominantly white private school called Williamson Prep. Starr struggles with her identity and the pressure to conform to the expectations of both of these worlds.

Throughout the novel, Starr is a complex and multi-dimensional character who must navigate the complexities of her identity as a Black girl living in two different worlds. She is torn between her loyalty to her community and her desire to fit in at

her school. She is also dealing with the grief and trauma of witnessing Khalil's death.

As the novel progresses, Starr becomes an activist and uses her voice to advocate for justice and equality. She faces backlash from her white friends and classmates, who do not understand her perspective and do not see the injustice in Khalil's death. However, she remains committed to speaking out and making a difference.

Starr's role in the novel is to shed light on the experiences of Black teenagers in America and the urgent need for social justice and equality.

Starr's character is incredibly relevant in today's world as she represents the experiences and struggles of many young Black Americans. She serves as a voice for those who have been marginalized and oppressed and sheds light on the urgent need for social justice and equality.

Her story highlights the importance of using one's voice to fight for what is right and to stand up against discrimination and oppression. It also sheds light on the power of movements like Black Lives Matter to bring about meaningful change and to challenge systemic racism and police brutality.

Her story is a reminder of the ongoing fight for social justice and equality, and the importance of using one's voice to create positive change in the world.

3.4 PREVALENT THEME OF PREJUDICE

Prejudice is a central theme in "The Hate U Give" by Angie Thomas. The novel explores various forms of prejudice, including racism, classism, and stereotyping.

The novel begins with Starr describing the rules she has to follow in her predominantly Black neighbourhood of Garden Heights, where she has to be careful not to draw attention to herself and avoid confrontations with gangs. This highlights the prevalence of prejudice and stereotyping in the community, as well as the impact it has on the lives of the people who live there.

When Starr moves between her neighbourhood and her predominantly white school, she also experiences prejudice and stereotyping from her white classmates. They make assumptions about her and her community based on stereotypes they have heard and perpetuated, highlighting the insidious nature of prejudice.

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The shooting of Khalil, Starr's childhood friend, by a white police officer, is a direct result of prejudice and racism. The officer makes assumptions about Khalil based on his race and his association with Garden Heights, leading him to see him as a threat and use excessive force.

Throughout the novel, Starr confronts prejudice and discrimination in various forms and learns to speak out against it. She challenges her white friends' assumptions and stereotypes about her community and works to raise awareness about the impact of systemic racism and police brutality.

"The Hate U Give" is a powerful exploration of the damaging effects of prejudice and discrimination on individuals and communities. The novel highlights the need to challenge stereotypes and assumptions and to work towards greater understanding and acceptance of others. It is a call to action against prejudice and a reminder of the importance of standing up for what is right.

3.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF TIME PERIOD

The time period in which "The Hate U Give" is set plays an important role in shaping the novel's plot, characters, and themes. The novel is set in the present day, against the backdrop of the Black Lives Matter movement and the ongoing fight against police brutality and systemic racism.

The novel's setting in the present day allows the author, Angie Thomas, to explore contemporary issues and to engage with current events. The novel draws on real-world examples of police brutality, such as the shootings of Michael Brown and Tamir Rice, and the protests that followed. The inclusion of these events grounds the novel in reality and highlights the urgency of the issues it explores.

The present-day setting also allows the novel to explore the impact of social media and the internet on activism and social justice movements.

Starr's use of social media to raise awareness about Khalil's death and to mobilize her community reflects the real-world power of social media in driving social change.

The time period also affects the novel's characters and their experiences. The novel's protagonist, Starr Carter, lives in the present day, and her experiences are shaped by the realities of systemic racism and police brutality in today's world. The novel also explores the experiences of other characters, such as Starr's father, who grew up during the Civil Rights era, highlighting the ongoing impact of racism and discrimination on individuals and communities.

The time period in which "The Hate U Give" is set is essential to the novel's exploration of contemporary issues and its engagement with current events.

The novel's characters and themes are shaped by the realities of systemic racism and police brutality in the present day, making it a powerful and timely work of fiction.

3.6 WHITE PRIVILEGE

White privilege is a theme that is explored in "The Hate U Give" through the attitudes and actions of some of the white characters in the novel. White privilege refers to the advantages and benefits that white people experience simply because of their race, and it is often manifested in the form of unconscious bias, stereotyping, and systemic advantages.

One example of white privilege in the novel is the behaviour of Starr's white friends at her predominantly white school. They make insensitive and racially charged comments without realizing the impact of their words, highlighting the way in which white privilege can lead to a lack of awareness of the experiences of people of colour.

Another example of white privilege in the novel is the behaviour of the white police officer who shoots Khalil. The officer assumes that Khalil is dangerous because he is a young Black man, and this assumption leads to his use of excessive force. This behaviour reflects the way in which white privilege can lead to unconscious bias and stereotyping that can have deadly consequences for people of colour.

Starr's uncle, Carlos, is also an example of white privilege in the novel. As a Black police officer, he has experienced racism and discrimination, but he still defends the actions of the officer who shot Khalil. His actions highlight the way in which white privilege can lead people of colour to internalize harmful beliefs and perpetuate systemic racism and discrimination.

Overall, "The Hate U Give" explores the theme of white privilege through its portrayal of characters that benefit from the advantages and benefits that come with being white. The novel highlights the need to challenge and confront these forms of privilege in order to achieve true social justice and equality.

3.7 PUBLIC RESPONSE

"The Hate U Give" by Angie Thomas has received widespread critical acclaim and has been well-received by the public. The novel has won numerous awards,

including the William C. Morris Award and the Coretta Scott King Award, and has spent more than 100 weeks on the New York Times Bestseller list.

The novel has been praised for its timely and powerful exploration of issues related to race, police brutality, and social justice. Many readers have found the novel to be a moving and thought-provoking portrayal of the impact of systemic racism and discrimination on individuals and communities.

In addition to critical acclaim, "The Hate U Give" has also generated controversy and backlash. Some individuals and groups have criticized the novel for its portrayal of police officers and for its exploration of themes related to race and racism. Others have argued that the novel is anti-police and promotes a biased view of law enforcement.

However, many readers and advocates have defended the novel and argued that it is an important work of fiction that speaks to the experiences of people of colour in today's society.

It has had a significant impact on public discourse around issues related to race, police brutality, and social justice. The novel has sparked important conversations and has inspired readers to engage with these issues in their own lives and communities.

3.8 ROLE OF GANGS IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY – PROJECTS & “THE HOOD”

The theme of gangs is explored in "The Hate U Give" through the character of Starr's childhood friend, Khalil, who was involved in a gang before his death. The novel portrays the ways in which gangs can be both a source of community and support for young people, as well as a source of violence and harm.

Khalil's involvement in the gang is presented as a complex issue. On the one hand, the gang provided a sense of community and belonging for Khalil and his friends, who had grown up in a neighbourhood with few resources and opportunities. The gang also provided a source of protection and security in a neighbourhood where violence and danger were a constant threat.

On the other hand, the gang also contributed to the violence and harm that existed in the neighbourhood. Khalil's involvement in the gang put him in danger, and ultimately led to his death at the hands of a police officer. The novel highlights the ways in which gang violence and police violence are interconnected, and how they both contribute to the cycle of harm and trauma that affects many communities of colour.

It reflects the complex realities of life in many communities of colour, where young people are often faced with difficult choices and limited opportunities. The novel encourages readers to think critically about the role of gangs in these communities, and to consider ways in which we can work towards creating more equitable and just communities for all.

4.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

4.1 AS A BILDUNGSROMAN

Either novels show multiple features, themes and theories in common and similarity, one such literary genre that they fall into is a Bildungsroman.

In a typical bildungsroman, the protagonist faces challenges and obstacles that help them develop a greater understanding of themselves, their place in the world, and their values. Often, the protagonist's growth is linked to their education, and they may have to leave home or be exposed to new experiences in order to learn and grow.

"To Kill a Mockingbird" by Harper Lee is often considered a classic example of a Bildungsroman, a type of novel that focuses on the coming-of-age journey and personal growth of its protagonist. Through the experiences of the young narrator, Scout Finch, the novel explores themes of race, justice, and morality in a small Southern town in the 1930s.

Scout's journey begins as a curious and innocent young girl who is fascinated by the world around her. She is often confused by the social rules and expectations of her town, which she finds to be arbitrary and unjust.

As the novel progresses, Scout becomes increasingly aware of the deep-seated racism and prejudice that exists in her town. She learns about the Tom Robinson trial, in which a Black man is falsely accused of raping a white woman, and witnesses the injustice and hatred that result from the trial.

Through her interactions with her father, Atticus Finch, and the African American character of Calpurnia, Scout begins to understand the complex issues of race and morality that are at play in her town. She learns to question the prejudices and assumptions of those around her and to see the world from different perspectives.

In the end, Scout's journey is one of personal growth and moral development. She emerges from the novel as a more compassionate and empathetic young woman who is committed to fighting against injustice and discrimination.

Overall, "To Kill a Mockingbird" can be seen as a powerful Bildungsroman that not only tells the story of Scout's personal growth but also sheds light on the complexities of race, justice, and morality in the American South. The novel continues to be a timeless and relevant exploration of these issues and their impact on society.

Now, subsequently, in "The Hate U Give" it focuses on the coming-of-age journey and personal growth of its protagonist. Through Starr's journey, the novel explores the challenges of growing up Black in America and the complex intersections of identity, race, and class.

Starr's journey begins with the traumatic experience of witnessing the shooting of her childhood friend, Khalil, by a white police officer. This event serves as a catalyst for her personal growth and her journey towards finding her voice and speaking out against injustice.

Throughout the novel, Starr struggles with the pressure to conform to the expectations of her predominantly white school and her predominantly Black neighbourhood. She also navigates the complexities of her identity as a Black girl who lives in two different worlds.

As the novel progresses, Starr begins to question her own beliefs and assumptions about race and privilege. She confronts her own biases and learns to

see the world from different perspectives. She also becomes an activist and uses her voice to advocate for justice and equality.

In the end, Starr's journey is one of self-discovery, empowerment, and resilience. She emerges from the novel as a stronger, more confident young woman who is committed to fighting for what is right.

Overall, "The Hate U Give" can be seen as a powerful Bildungsroman that not only tells the story of Starr's personal growth but also sheds light on the experiences of Black teenagers in America and the urgent need for social justice and equality.

4.2 SYSTEMATIC RACISM

Robert O. Stephens's article, "*The Law and the Code in Harper Lee's 'To Kill a Mockingbird'*," explores the themes of law and justice in Harper Lee's classic novel.

Stephens argues that Lee portrays the legal system in the novel as flawed, but still capable of achieving justice when individuals act with integrity and courage. He discusses the contrast between the formal laws of the state and the unwritten codes of behavior that govern the community, such as the code of honor that dictates that Atticus Finch must defend Tom Robinson even though he knows it will be an uphill battle.

Stephens also explores the character of Atticus Finch, who embodies the ideal of the just and principled lawyer. He argues that Atticus's belief in the rule of law, combined with his empathy and compassion, make him a powerful force for justice in the novel.

Additionally, Stephens discusses the role of race in the legal system depicted in the novel. He argues that the novel highlights the ways in which racial prejudice can undermine the pursuit of justice and that it underscores the need for individuals to challenge unjust laws and practices.

Stephens's article offers a detailed analysis of the themes of law and justice in "To Kill a Mockingbird" and explores how these themes are developed through the

characters, plot, and setting of the novel, the very same framework that Stephen's provides can be applied with all aspects of "The Hate U Give"

4.3 REPRESENTATION IN YOUNG ADULT FICTION

Scout and Starr, both set great examples of strong women at heart, especially to the readers. While one teaches compassion, the other clarity and confidence.

Another such article, crucial in emphasizing how such novels are necessary for the youth that regularly face adversities is Wayne Partridge's article, "*The Averted Gaze: Representations of Race and the American South in Contemporary Young Adult Fiction*," where he examines how young adult literature addresses issues of race and racism in the American South.

Partridge argues that while contemporary young adult literature often grapples with issues of race, it frequently avoids directly confronting the legacies of racism in the South. He notes that many young adult novels set in the South tend to focus on individual acts of prejudice or discrimination, rather than addressing the broader systemic issues that underpin racial inequality.

He identifies a trend in which these novels often focus on the experiences of white protagonists, who come to recognize the injustices faced by African Americans and seek to redress these wrongs.

However, Partridge also notes that some young adult novels have begun to challenge this trend, featuring African American protagonists and exploring the ways in which racism continues to shape their experiences. He argues that these novels offer a more nuanced and complex perspective on the realities of race in the South.

His postulate can be considered as what conventional books on racism fail cover, from "To Kill A Mockingbird" & "The Hate U Give"

The latter captures the essence and legacy of being a Black American, the pride with which Starr Carter's family brings her up with, as they cherish their heritage and culture.

This can be achieved solely by one who shares such roots, hence filling the Literature Gap.

That, though Harper Lee, a strong advocate of words for the Black Americans, she fails to put them through the lens of awe over pity. But Angie Thomas on the other hand, a Black American female, who would thoroughly understand not just her culture but the complexities and true need for representation.

The impact that "The Hate U Give" is such a tidal wave from "To Kill A Mockingbird", a book of the same premise which was once banned, is now specifically mentioned in "Carpe Librum: Seize the (YA) Book" a book written by Tricia Ebarvia, Kimberly Parker, and Pauline Skowron Schmidt, specifically designed for English language arts teachers who want to incorporate more diverse and representative literature into their curriculum.

5.0 CONCLUSION

"To Kill a Mockingbird" by Harper Lee and "The Hate U Give" by Angie Thomas are two contemporary American novels that share many similarities in their themes and narrative structure.

Both novels explore themes of racism and social injustice: Both novels address issues of racial discrimination and the unfair treatment of minorities in society. They both highlight the importance of empathy, understanding, and standing up against injustice.

They feature young female protagonists: "To Kill a Mockingbird" follows the story of Scout Finch, a young girl growing up in the racially charged environment of the 1930s Deep South, while "The Hate U Give" centers around Starr Carter, a 16-year-old Black girl who witnesses the shooting of her unarmed friend by a police officer.

Focuses on the coming-of-age experience of the protagonists: The bildungsroman theme is prominent in both novels as the protagonists grow and learn from their experiences, developing a greater understanding of the world around them.

Depicts the impact of systemic racism on individuals and communities, how systemic racism affects people on a personal and societal level, and how it perpetuates cycles of poverty, inequality, and violence.

Both novels are critically acclaimed and widely read: Both "To Kill a Mockingbird" and "The Hate U Give" have been popular with readers and have won numerous awards, including being adapted into successful films. They are both celebrated for their social commentary, strong characters, and engaging storytelling.

Harper Lee's novel "To Kill a Mockingbird" is a timeless masterpiece that explores several crucial themes that are still relevant in today's society. The novel delves deeply into the issues of prejudice and racism, which continue to plague our society, and portrays the devastating impact of such behaviour on individuals and communities.

The coming-of-age narrative of Scout and Jem provides a compelling lens through which to view the impact of prejudice and racism on children and how they learn to navigate the complexities of society. The novel also highlights the issue of police brutality and injustice, particularly with the character of Tom Robinson, who is falsely accused and convicted due to his race.

Through the character of Atticus Finch, the novel teaches us the importance of standing up for what is right, even when it is not popular, and the necessity of fighting for justice and equality for all. Atticus serves as a moral compass for his children and the community, and his unwavering commitment to justice and fairness is an inspiration to readers of all ages.

"To Kill a Mockingbird" remains a powerful and relevant novel that sheds light on some of the most pressing issues of our time. Its exploration of themes such as prejudice, racism, coming of age, police brutality, and injustice continue to resonate with readers, and its messages about the importance of compassion, empathy, and standing up for what is right remain as essential today as they were when the novel was first published over half a century ago.

Angie Thomas's novel "The Hate U Give" is a powerful and important work that tackles some of the most pressing issues facing our society today. The novel explores themes of prejudice and racism, police brutality and injustice, and coming

of age, just as "To Kill A Mockingbird" presenting a searing portrayal of the challenges faced by young people growing up in a world that is often hostile and unforgiving.

Through the character of Starr Carter, the novel provides a powerful insight into the experiences of Black Americans and the systemic discrimination that they face in their everyday lives. The novel highlights the importance of speaking out against injustice, even when it is difficult or dangerous to do so, and emphasizes the need for empathy, understanding, and solidarity across communities.

At its core, "The Hate U Give" is a coming-of-age story, chronicling Starr's journey as she grapples with her identity, her relationships, and the world around her. The novel offers a nuanced and complex portrayal of adolescence, highlighting the joys, struggles, and triumphs of growing up in a world that is often hostile and unforgiving.

Overall, "The Hate U Give" is a timely and important novel that offers a powerful critique of the systemic discrimination and injustice that continue to plague our society. Through its exploration of themes such as prejudice, racism, coming of age, police brutality, and injustice, the novel challenges readers to confront their own biases and prejudices and to work towards building a more just and equitable world for all.

Either novels, though written by two racially different women, set in time apart, still succeed to convey the same message set in stone. That one should rise about social prejudices; that police brutality, racism, systematic racism, black orientalism, and other such shallow yet deeply ingrained human beliefs and practices still persists at large, and if not being able to change them all at once, to at least try and be the change ourselves.

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