



0. The Help - Story Preface

1. LIFE in JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI
2. JIM CROW in MISSISSIPPI
3. EMMETT TILL VISITS MISSISSIPPI
4. EMMETT TILL DIES in MISSISSIPPI
5. BLACK MAIDS and WHITE CHILDREN
6. MEDGAR EVERS in JACKSON
7. "FREEDOM SUMMER"
8. "WE SHALL OVERCOME"

During and after the years when chattel-slavery was legal in America, African-American women cared for white children in white homes. This image, published in Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper on 23 February 1867, depicts a black woman caring for a sick white child during the South's "Reconstruction Era." Image online, courtesy Library of Congress.

Freedom has never been free.

Medgar Evers
June 7, 1963

Trouble had started in Jackson, Mississippi long before Hilly Holbrook launched her "Home Help Sanitation Initiative." Although both Hilly and her proposed law are fictional components of The Help, they could easily be real.

Consider this. When the "Civil Rights Bill" became law, in 1964, the owner of the Robert E. Lee Hotel - where key parts of The Help story take place - closed down his beautiful Jackson-based establishment just to keep-out black patrons.

Flying a Confederate battle flag, Stewart Gammill, Jr. posted this sign:

*CLOSED IN DESPAIR.
CIVIL RIGHTS BILL UNCONSTITUTIONAL.*

(Quoted in The Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission:
Civil Rights and States' Rights, by Yasuhiro Katagiri, page 168.)

Two days later he declared that henceforth the hotel would be a private club, open only to members. Why would he do such a thing?

Visual Vocabulary Builder for this Story

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/The-Help>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/The-Help>

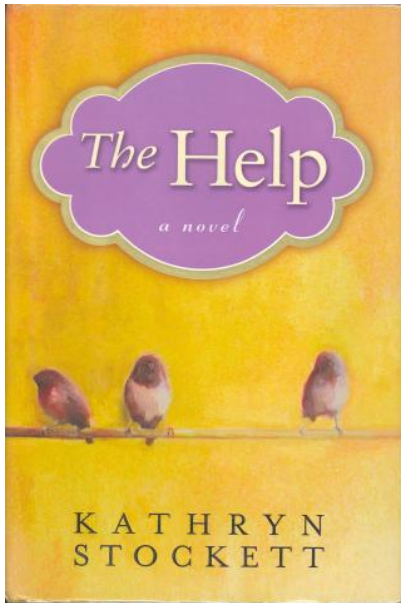
Questions 2 Ponder

What Does "Freedom Has Never Been Free" Mean to You?

Medgar Evers—who chose to live in Jackson, Mississippi despite racial tensions—loved the South. He was free to live where he pleased, but he once observed that "Freedom has never been free."

What does Evers' observation—"Freedom has never been free"—mean to you?

If Medgar Evers were still alive, do you think he would still believe that "freedom has never been free?" Why, or why not?



The Help - by Kathryn Stockett

Kathryn Stockett creates memorable characters in her first novel, *The Help*. Among those characters is a bigoted woman, named Hilly Holbrook, who invents the "Home Help Sanitation Initiative" as a way to perpetuate prejudice against "home help" workers in Jackson, Mississippi. All of those "home help" workers are African-Americans.

The Help, Stockett's first novel, is the basis for a movie of the same name. This image depicts the cover of her book. Click on it for a better view.

Bookcover image online courtesy Kathryn Stockett and her publisher. Copyright, Kathryn Stockett, all rights reserved. Image provided here as fair use for educational purposes and to acquaint new readers with the book.

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Robert E. Lee Hotel

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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Robert E. Lee Hotel - Front Door

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Lobby of the Robert E. Lee Hotel

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The Help

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