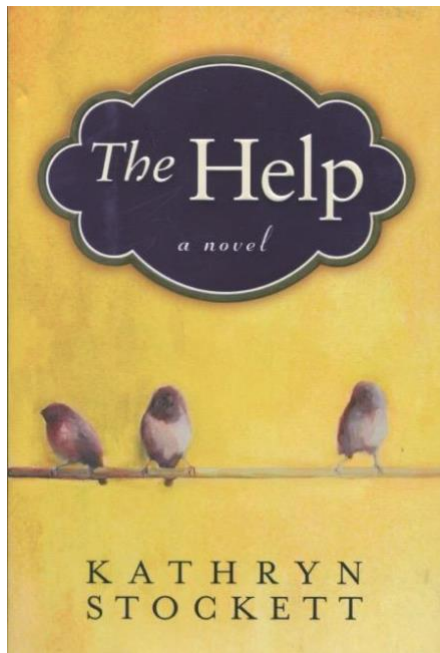




The Help

Book Author: Kathryn Stockett

Reviewed by: Saihba Viridi, 15

Star Book Reviewer of Be the Star You Are! Charity

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Life during the 1960s in Jackson, Mississippi, is difficult if you are a person of color. Minny and Aibileen know this, and have had to contend with blatant racism and discrimination their entire lives. That is until they meet a woman named Eugenia ‘Skeeter’ Phelan, a 22 year old graduate who returns to her family's cotton plantation with ambitions to become a writer, and is shocked by the rampant racism in her social circle. They embark on a secret project to uncover the systemic racism and abuses black domestic workers face in white southern households. The three women must find a way to interview the workers who are too afraid of telling their stories, too hurt by the world to find the bravery to talk about their lives. Finally, Skeeter’s expose is published after arduous work, and is an immediate success, highlighting the humanity of the domestic workers that their white clients refuse to acknowledge; bringing forward the uncomfortable truth. The three women continue on to find their way through life, no longer willing to let others squash their dreams.

I watched the movie and read the book, and they are both incredibly enjoyable. Learning more about the lives of black people during and right after segregation was very interesting, and allowed me to have a more holistic view about life during that time. The characters in this book are unique and dimensional, with beliefs, hopes, personality traits, and story lines that are very realistic.

I would recommend this book for teenagers 15 years old and above, for crude language and some graphic violence. This is a longer read at about 544 pages, taking around 4 weeks to finish reading thoroughly. I really enjoyed reading this book, because it holds some incredibly valuable lessons, and I recommend that everyone read books like these in order to hold more knowledge on the humanitarian aspect of the history of racial segregation.

Recommended Titles:

- The Secret Life of Bees
- The Vanishing Half
- The Dry Grass of August