

Adventures of huckleberry finn

Literature



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn While the canon of American literature is short compared to Europe, the country has produced a great many seminal writers. One of the most notable of these writers is Mark Twain. Twain's works, including Tom Sawyer and the Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, constitute some of the most memorable works of the 19th century. Although there are a great many reasons for Twain's lasting legacy, one of the most prominent reasons is for the expert way he implements satire in his works. This essay examines Twain's the Adventures of Huckleberry Finn in terms of the ways and means that the author implements satire in the novel. One of the most large uses of satire in the Adventures of Huckleberry Finn occurs through the satirizing of romantic ideals. Romanticism was a 17th and 18th century literary and cultural movement that embraced ideals of idealism and romantic virtue. Twain's perspective contrasts romanticism, as he is highly practical and pragmatic. The first instance of such satire in the novel occurs when Tom and Huck start a gang of robbers. The gang agrees to rob and kill people that get in their way. The only thing is, is that they will not do this on Sunday. Twain writes, " all the boys said it would be wicked to do it on Sunday, and that settled the thing" (Twain, p. 7). The boy's gang represents the romantic ideals of adventure and in the humor of refusing to kill or rob on Sunday Twain is mocking these romantic ideals. Another instance Twain satirizes romanticism occurs as Huck and Tom are traveling down the Mississippi River. During their travels they encounter a ship called the Walter Scott. Walter Scott was a famous author of romantic novels of adventure. The boys describe the ship as wrecked and broken down. In describing the ship as broken down Twain is indicating that the romantic ideals of romanticism are also broken down. Another major use of satire in <https://assignbuster.com/adventures-of-huckleberry-finn-essay-samples/>

the novel occurs in the satirizing of religion. The satirizing of religion takes on a wide variety of forms and is a prominent theme throughout the novel. The first instance of this satire occurs early in the novel between Huck's interactions with Widow Douglas. Widow Douglas reads stories from the Bible to Huck and one story is about Moses. Huck indicates that, " I was in a sweat to find out all about him; but by and by she let it out that Moses had been dead a considerable long time; so then I didn't care no more about him" (Twain, p. 3). Here Huck is indicating that he does not care for Moses because he is dead. The satire in this is the trivialization of the Bible as only being about adventures. Only example where religious satire occurs in the novel is when Huck considers Widow Douglas perspective on God and the perspective of Miss Watson. Widow Douglas' perspective presents God as a loving and compassionate person, while Miss Watson presents God as angry and vindictive. This leads Huck to believe that there are two Gods and he wants to be with Widow Douglas version. This is Twain's way of satirizing religion through showing that oftentimes religion contradicts itself. A final example of satire in the Adventures of Huckleberry Finn is in terms of slavery. Twain's criticism of slavery is a prominent theme throughout the novel. Indeed, when considering the events of his time Huck states, " Human beings can be awful cruel to one another" (Twain, p. 222). One example of such cruelty occurs with Widow Douglas. While Widow Douglas attempts to be a good Christian person she still has a slave. The slave is a house slave and is not depicted on the plantation. While one might consider that this does not go far enough in showing the true nature of slavery, in reality it shows how the essential nature of slavery is the dehumanization and removing one from their family. Ultimately, this is Twain prominent means of

<https://assignbuster.com/adventures-of-huckleberry-finn-essay-samples/>

satirizing slavery in the novel. In conclusion, this essay has examined satire in Mark Twain's the Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. In these regards, satire is presented through a criticism of romanticism, religion, and slavery. While the Adventures of Huckleberry Finn has an engaging plot, it's clear that in large part the lasting nature of the novel is because of the way that Twain uses satire to criticize society. This ultimately demonstrates Twain's brilliance and independent thought. References Twain, Mark. "Adventures of Huckleberry Finn." etext. N. p., n. d. Web. 14 Nov 2011. .