

Huck finn criticized

[Literature](#), [American Literature](#)



Huckleberry Finn The book I read was Huckleberry Finn, which was written by Samuel Langhorne Clemens whom is also known as Mark Twain. Twain was born on " November 30, 1835, in Florida or Missouri, his exact birthplace is not known" (Powers, 11). He was born to " John and Jane Clemens" (Powers, 11). At the age of only " twelve years old Twain worked as a printer's apprentice and typesetter in Hannibal" (Powers, 11). It was " at this age that Twain became interested in writing and as he got older he got more serious into his career" (Powers, 11). By the time he died he had received many awards and honors which include " Honorary M. A., 1888, Litt. D., 1901, both Yale University; LL. D., University of Missouri, 1902; named to American Academy of Arts and Letters, 1904; D. Litt., Oxford University, 1907" (Powers, 26). Mark Twain wrote many other " Novels, Humor/Satire, Short Stories, Plays, Essays, and Letters" (Wagenknecht, 31), therefore, making him more than qualified to write this book, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn is considered one of his greatest works. It is so good that " Ernest Hemingway said it " was one of the great masterpieces of the world" (Wagenknecht, 34). The purpose for Huck Finn was to express ideas in the late 1800's, which was dominantly slavery. The character of Jim as the slave as well as other minor characters in the story helps to fulfill this idea. This book is a good piece of literature that took " Twain over seven years to write" (Petit, 18). The intended audience of the book was general readers that wanted a story with adventure and curiosity. Throughout the book Mark Twain does make a bias that mostly black men and women were uneducated and inferior to the society they lived in. This is shown through the author's use of diction describing the characters and how they react to certain

situations. An exaggeration that has been noted by some is that "Huckleberry Finn, the son of a drunken, poor white man, is troubled with many qualms of his conscience due to the part he is taking in helping the negro to gain his freedom" (Shaw, 52). Though this is a fictional book, that is opinion, it is heavily influenced by the times the author lives in by showing Huck as superior to Jim, because back when this book was written there were black slaves. "It was fifteen minutes before I could work myself up to go and humble myself to a nigger," Those are the words of Huck Finn talking about Jim and how "Huck has some sympathy for Jim" (Petit, 41), even if Jim is a different color. This also helps to identify the type of atmosphere that was experienced back when the book was written. "The book is a strong voice against racism, but at the same time some passages mirror the values of the racist society Mark was raised in" (Powers, 31). This helps us in this day to better understand why certain words and characters are portrayed as they are. Huckleberry Finn from its publication was controversial, and "there has been no American novel has been attacked by the public as long and as continuously as Huck Finn" (Shulman, 12). Mark Twain's reactions to the outcry's of his book were that "Those idiots in Concord are not a court of last resort and I am not disturbed by their moral gymnastics" (Shaw, 34). In the very beginning of Huckleberry Finn, Huck and his sidekick Tom Sawyer have discovered a large treasure, which they are allowed to keep. Huck cannot stand the conditions of living with the Widow Douglas, due to his rebellious nature, and his drunken father, so he fakes his own death by spilling pig blood everywhere and then running away. He gets on a raft and heads down the Mississippi River where he discovers Jim, a runaway slave. Together the

two embark on a journey that includes running into a ship and getting separated in the fog. Coming on a ship of robbers where they find a dead body. The Duke and the Dauphin who fool people out of money at every stop they make. In the end the Duke and the Dauphin sale Jim into slavery for forty dollars while Huck is away. Huck then finds himself at Tom Sawyer's Aunt Sally's house, where Tom and Huck rescue Jim. Through Huck's adventures, " Huck learns a variety of life lessons and develops a conscience for people" (Wagenknecht, 41). The thesis of the book is too due what is right even if it is looked down upon. This is prevalent all throughout the book. The most significant point of the book is that " Huckleberry Finn speaks out against conformity and for the freedom and independence of the individual" (Shaw, 25). His upbringing through Miss Watson and the Widow teaches him that black people are under him in social standings but, his friendship with Jim a runaway slave teaches him the values of friendship. Each time Huck and Jim are separated Jim is overjoyed with seeing Huck again and praises him. " Twain's satirical attack on slavery, hypocrisy, and prejudice in antebellum America compels readers to look not only at slavery and racism, but also at the whole tradition of American democracy" (Powers, 28). The people whom Huck and Jim encounter on the Mississippi are all up to no good and have many issues, all are white. " The one man of honor is " Nigger Jim," as Twain called him to emphasize the irony of a society in which the only true gentleman was held beneath contempt" (Shulman, 37). In Huckleberry Finn " the immorality of life in the South during the 1800's " (Petit, 41) is what Mark Twain depicts and he concludes how " humanity's foolishness and injustices affect American society" (Shaw, 31). With the ideas

presented in Huckleberry Finn the differences with one another should be set aside and the American people should work together to have a great nation. The book is written clearly and " the language used in this novel may be degrading, but it's the way people spoke in that time and Mark Twain was just writing as things were in that specific time period" (Petit, 51). Although the book is a bit outspoken it shouldn't been banned. The book is written from the way things were done and spoke in that specific time period, so if you really look closely and pay attention to what the book is saying it isn't degrading, but rather teaching a lesson of friendship. I would recommend the book to anyone who wants to learn a moral lesson and read a book with a sense of adventure. I have read many books and strongly believe that this is one of the best I have read due to the plot and characters that make up the story and the journeys they embark on. Work Cited Petit , Arthur. Mark Twain and the South. Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1974. Powers , Ron. The life of Mark Twain. New York : Free Press Association, 2005. Shaw, Peter. Recovering American literature. Chicago: I. R. Dee, 1994. Shulman, Myra. Journeys through American literature . Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2000. Wagenknecht, Edward. Mark