

# The comparison of daisy miller and huck finn

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



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## **Introduction**

Mark Twain and Henry James both had the idea of the American ideals at the time of writing both of their novels about two completely different people but go through similar situations of not wanting to listen to society about how they should act. Huckleberry deals with how to help Jim escape from slavery and Daisy dealing with how people try to tell her what to do and how to act in upper-class European society. In both texts Daisy Miller and Huckleberry Finn show signs of asking moral questions along with learning how they can live in a world where their individual views can be accepted. (Thesis)

## **Huck Finn**

Throughout the “ Adventures of Huckleberry Finn”, Huck struggles with the idea of not showing his individuality and decides to breakout to help Jim escape from his slave owner. First of all, Huck tests the rules of society when he helps Jim escape St. Petersburg, Missouri and helps him find his family. “ Well, I warn’t long making him understand I warn’t dead. I was ever so glad

to see Jim. I warn't lonesome now. I told him I warn't afraid of him telling the people where I was. I talked along, but he only set there and looked at me; never said nothing" (Twain, 31). This is significant for Huck and Jim's relationship growth through the beginning when Huck takes on the challenge of helping Jim out of slave country. " Well, it's a blame ridiclous way, en I down' want to hear no mo' ' bout it. Hey ain' no sense in it. Looky here, Jim; does a cat talk like we do" (Twain, 60). Second of all, Jim has to live on the edge until he is free because he doesn't know if Huck will turn him in or if he will help him to his freedom. " Well, I b'lieve you, Huck. I — I run off. Jim! But mind, you said you wouldn't tell — you know you said you wouldn't tell, Huck. Well, I did. I said I wouldn't, and I'll stick to it. Honest injun I will" (Twain, 32). This makes him very nervous especially when Tom catches up with them when towards the end of the novel and starts to be Tom. Jim has a problem with this since he doesn't really know and trust Tom especially since it is his life in the hands of an upper-class privileged 13 year old.

Well, den, dis is de way it look to me, Huck. Ef it wuz HIM dat ' uz bein' sot free, en one er de boys wuz to git shot, would he say, ' Go on en save me, nemmine 'bout a doctor f'r to save dis one?' Is dat like Mars Tom Sawyer? Would he say dat? You BET he wouldn't! WELL, den, is JIM gywne to say it? No, sah — I doan' budge a step out'n dis place ' dout a DOCTOR, not if it's forty year!" (Twain, 207).

Third of all, towards the end of the novel there was a real sense of trust and love from Huck about Jim after he leaves since he is free man. Huck has a sense of thinking that everyone is white on the inside, this is Huck being

innocent and thinking that everyone is the same on the inside even if they looked different on the outside. “ I know he was white inside, and I reckoned he’d say what he did say — so it was alright” (Twain, 207). In conclusion, Huck Finn breaks out and shows his individualism when he decides to help Jim escape from St. Petersburg so he could not only find his family but become a new man since he wasn’t bound to anyone as a slave anymore.

## **Daisy Miller**

Throughout the short story “ Daisy Miller”, Winterbourne struggles with Daisy’s innocence and questioning whether she is in fact innocent or is it just an act. Firstly, right after Winterbourne meets Daisy and her whole family he starts to wonder if she is completely innocent or is it an act that she is putting on. “ Certainly she was very charming, but how extraordinarily communicative and how tremendously easy! Miss Daisy Miller looked extremely innocent. Some people had told him that after all American girls were exceedingly innocent, and others had told him that after all they weren’t” (James, 15). Winterbourne is speaking about what he has heard about American girls and what they pretend to be and starts to have doubts about Daisy. Secondly, throughout the story Winterbourne asks his aunt Mrs. Costello for advice when they are speaking about Daisy for the first time and wondering what girls like her expect from a man.

“ I haven’t the least idea what such young ladies expect a man to do. But I really think that you had better not meddle with little American girls that are uncultivated, as you call them. You have lived too long out of the country.

You will be sure to make some great mistake. You are too innocent. My dear aunt, I am not so innocent" (James, 22).

Winterbourne is thrown off from Mrs. Costello saying that he is innocent when he feels that he isn't as innocent as she is making him out to be.

Thirdly, towards the end of the story when Daisy is about to go to Rome with Gionavelli, Winterbourne and her get into an argument about her behaviour with guys, " I'm afraid your habits are those of a ruthless flirt. Of course they are! I'm a fearful frightful flirt! Did you ever hear of a nice girl that wasn't? But I suppose you'll tell me now I'm not a nice girl" (James, 61). In this scene Daisy is telling Winterbourne what she thinks about people trying to tell her what she can and can't do just because she is a woman. Daisy shows her individualism when she is trying to be her own person but she has people telling her what isn't allowed in upper-class society. Fourthly, after Daisy's death Winterbourne and Gionavelli are together and speaking about Daisy and how she was different from other American girls. " She was the most beautiful young lady I ever saw, and the most amiable. Also — naturally! — the most innocent. The most innocent? The most innocent! Why the devil, did you take her to that fatal place? For myself I had no fear; and she she did what she liked" (James, 79-80). By this point Winterbourne is convinced that Daisy was not an innocent untouched American girl and is mad that she wouldn't listen to anyone about not going to Rome with Gionavelli and that she didn't know very well. To conclude, Winterbourne struggles with Daisy's innocence and not following the rules of society with her not changing who she was just to fit into upper-class society.

## **The Similarities between the Characters**

In both of these novels by Mark Twain and Henry James they share many similarities between the two protagonists Huck Finn and Daisy Miller with how they want to be able to separate themselves from the norms of society. First, Huck and Daisy are alike in the way that they want to break away from tradition and show their individualism.

“ I was sorry to her Jim say that, it was such a lowering of him. My conscience got to stirring me up hotter than ever, until at last I says to it, Let up on mr — it ain't too late, yet — I'll paddle ashore at the first light, and tell. I felt east, and happy, and light as a feather, right off. All my troubles was gone” (Twain, 67).

Huck shows his individualism by helping Jim into freedom since it was not common that white boys would help slaves get out of slave country. Huck shows that he doesn't want to be like everyone else since he hasn't lived the average normal life as he was taken away from his father and told he had to live with Widow Douglas than his Aunt Sally. “ But I reckon I got to light out for the Territory ahead of the rest, because Aunt Sally she's going to adopt me and sivilize me and I can't stand it. I been there before” (Twain, 220).

Daisy deals with similar problems as Huck as she doesn't want to follow the rule of high society. Daisy also doesn't like being told what to do and how she is suppose to act. “ I've never allowed a gentler to dictate to me or to interfere with anything I do. I think that's just where your mistake ha come in, You should sometimes listen to a gentleman — the right one” (James, 49).

Winterbourne and Mrs. Miller have a conversation about Daisy and Giovanelli

being together and he is starting to wonder about Daisy and where her priorities are when it comes to men.

“ She’s gone out somewhere with Mr. Giovanelli. She’s always going round with Mr. Giovanelli. I’ve noticed they’re intimate indeed, Oh it seems as if they couldn’t live without each other! Well, he’s a real gentleman anyhow. I guess I have the joke on Daisy — that she must be engaged!” (James, 69).

Second, Huck and Daisy have the same type of mind set that they are going to do what they want even if it isn’t what society wants them to do. Daisy deals with this when people think that she should act one way when she doesn’t want to as she wants to be her own person with no rules.

“ The news that Daisy Miller was surrounded by half a dozen wonderful mustaches checked Winterbourne’s impulse to go straightway to see her. The image of a very pretty girl looking out of an old Roman window and asking herself urgently when Mr. Winterbourne would arrive” (James, 40).

Huck deals with his alcoholic father and being from the lower-class when his best friend Tom Sawyer is from the upper-class so he looks at life with Jim on the run a little different than others would. “ Pap always said it warn’t no harm to borrow things if you was meaning to pay them back some time; but the widow said it warn’t anything but a soft name for stealing, and no decent body would do it” (Twain, 49). In conclusion, Twain and James’ main protagonists share similarities with how they don’t want to conform to society and show their individualism.

## **Conclusion**

To conclude, both Huck Finn and Daisy Miller share the views of not wanting to change who they are even though society is wanting them to be just like every other teenage boy and girl when they just want to be themselves and show off their individualism. Both Daisy Miller and Huck Finn show signs of asking moral questions throughout both of their stories while they both learn how they are able to show their individualism while living in society.

## **Work Cited**

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- Twain, Mark. *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Dover Productions, 1994