

# Huckleberry finn's escape from society

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Mark Twain's novel, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, describes the journey of a boy named Huck and a runaway slave, Jim, heading down the Mississippi river in hope of freedom. While Jim is trying to free his family and escape slavery, Huck wants to break away from his former life. With the many experiences had throughout the novel, on land and water, Huck finds himself determined to escape what he has come to know as "civilization." Huck first sees the human corruption in his father, the Grangerfords and Sheperdsons, and the supposed Duke and Dauphin. This is Twain's way of showing his loss of hope in society and the cruelty of humanity. Huck doesn't want to be "civilized" because he doesn't want to be part of such a cruel people.

Coming from an abusive home, Huck sees the cruelties of humanity early on. With his father being a violent, abusive drunk, Huck no longer considers him as essential to his family life. "Pap he hadn't been seen for more than a year, and that was comfortable for me; I didn't want to see him no more. He used to always whale me when he was sober and could get his hands on me; though I used to take to the woods most of the time when he was around."

(Ch. 3) Huck was afraid of him and saw the evil in him. When Huck decided to escape, he was running away from his father and the constant abuse. Huck didn't want to belong in a society that allowed someone as horrible as his father to have custody over him. Even traveling out of his own town, Huck saw the cruelty of society in other places, among highly-respected families no less.

When meeting the Grangerfords, Huck came across their life-long feud with the Sheperdsons. When finding out more about this feud, Huck realized it was pointless and inhumane. "Well," says Buck, "a feud is this way: A man

has a quarrel with another man, and kills him; then that other man's brother kills HIM; then the other brothers, on both sides, goes for one another; then the COUSINS chip in — and by and by everybody's killed off, and there ain't no more feud. But it's kind of slow, and takes a long time." (Ch. 18). These families were both classified as respected, high-society families; they were considered "sivilized". While Huck couldn't understand why men were mindlessly killing each other because of a problem that happened many, many years ago, everyone else considered it normal. This "sivilized" society didn't make sense to Huck, for he saw the senseless violence, while no one else did. Huck's thoughts about the insensitivity of humanity only heightened when he met the "Duke" and "Dauphin".

Upon meeting the two con men, the Duke and Dauphin, Huck knew they were fakes. Throughout the novel, the two were constantly scamming, tricking, and lying to people for money. When one town got word from another town that the Duke and Dauphin previously scammed, they decided to tar and feather the two conmen. Though Huck had been there to witness all their lies and deceits, he couldn't help but feeling bad for them. "Well, it made me sick to see it; and I was sorry for them poor pitiful rascals, it seemed like I couldn't ever feel any hardness against them any more in the world. It was a dreadful thing to see. Human beings CAN be awful cruel to one another." (Ch. 33) Though Huck does feel bad for the Duke and Dauphin, he knew that they would soon get caught and punished for everything they had done. By this point in the novel, Twain shows us how pessimistically he feels about society. He already gave the readers an opportunity to see how cruel the Duke and Dauphin were, now Twain gives a chance to see how

cruel the rest of society is, the people who actually got scammed. He's hinting that the criminals and the victims are practically one in the same, each one as cruel, insensitive and selfish as the next.

Adventures of Huckleberry Finn describes Huck's journey of running away from "civilization." Escaping from his father shows Huck's desire to escape society as he has come to know. Introduced to the concept of a feud, Huck saw the mindless violence that people would get involved with even if they knew no reason for it. Meeting the Duke and Dauphin, Huck saw how the cruelty of criminals and their victims are virtually the same... Experiencing these things on his journey, Huck realized that the unkindness and wickedness of men was considered civil in society, and did not want to be a part of it.