

Huckleberry finn



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Jesus Estrada Mr. Jefferson English 4/3/13 Period 2 Huckleberry Finn the Greatest Novel Ever Ernest Hemingway stated that ??? All good novels began and ended with Huckleberry Finn.??? What makes The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain so unique and worthy of being called the Greatest American Novel would definitely have to be the satire that is used to criticize American Society. Mark Twain uses satire to attack what he sees as the hypocritical view of the Midwestern society. Nothing is sacred to his words especially not slavery, religion or human nature. Twain used satire to show the wrong that he saw in society such as man??™s cruel and inhumane treatment of a fellow man. The best example of this would have to be the way Tom Sawyer is simply toying with Jim clearly seen in ??? We see it warn??™t no use we got to go fetch Jim.

So he raised up his bed and slid the chain off of the leg (260).??? Here was the perfect time for Jim to escape and no one would get hurt but it was not good enough for Tom he wanted his so called glory which he believed all the authorities needed. What makes things worse is that Jim was free but Tom??™s ambitions took it away similar to The King and The Duke when they sold Jim in the first place.

This is where the satire comes in since Tom knew that Mrs. Watson had set Jim free yet never thought of mentioning it to neither Huck nor Jim which shows the idea of white superiority and the inability to let go of such ??? power???. This is illustrated when Jim sacrificed his freedom after Tom gets shot by trying to help him and ends up being locked up again even after doing a righteous thing.

Jim's action can be taken as Twain trying to tell us that African Americans who were looked down upon can end up being as kind as or even kinder than any white. Nowhere however in the novel is the satire of man's cruelty to man more predominant than the tarring and feathering of The King and The Duke. In the quote "Well it made me sick to see it; and I felt sorry for those poor pitiful rascals, it seemed like I couldn't ever feel any hardness against them any more in the world."

It was a dread to see. Human beings can be awfully cruel to another (231). Clearly demonstrates how Twain felt about that incident. He knew that they were criminals and had stolen from the townspeople but even then he believed that no one deserved such treatment.

Through this event Twain points out that not just crooks and criminals have the capacity to be cruel but instead that any human can have thirst for savage and barbaric treatment of others. It is these types of satire that make people wonder how they would be in a situation like that would they be cruel to them also or help them. Twain also pinpointed human nature as well as religion and bombed their defects using satire. This can clearly be seen in the argument between the Grangerfords and Sheperdsons in which "the men took their guns along and kept them between their knees (109). Here Twain embarks against both religion and human nature by making fun of "aristocratic Catholics since they go to church to listen to the sermon and one of the commandments was thy shall not kill yet they walk into the house of God with tools to murder."

This shows that people are hypocritical and no longer respect Gods ??? word??? like they used to, especially since the sermon was about brotherly love yet later that night the two families are killing each other. Not only that in the quote ??? the men run along the bank shooting at them and singing out ??? Kill them, Kill them!??™ It made me so sick I almost fell of the tree (116).??? It shows us that man could be ruthless and even go as far as saying man to be the lowest animal. Twain used this satire to illustrate that man has not evolved or is as great as we think we are since we are the only race that kills one another for no reason other than revenge, no other animal kills unless it??™s needed for them to survive. When Huck asks how the fighting started Buck answered that he didn??™t know that not even his father knew which proves Twains point of man being savage and likes violence. The Final example of satire that Twain used to illustrate the flaws in human nature would have to be in the quote ??? Greenhorns, flatheads! I knew the first house would keep mum and let the rest of the town get roped in (153).??? Twain goes to satirize human nature through what the town does about the King and the Duke. Instead of running the frauds out of town after the first show in which the people got deceived, the town lets them stay encouraging others to go see the show so that they wouldn??™t be the only ones that got fooled.

Twain then shows the length people will go to not appear gullible towards others whether it be a neighbor or a friend, proving with his satire that one would rather take in others rather than admitting that one has been taken in already. Like many great things there are those who go against all of it and believe it to mean something distinct than the majority perceive it to be.

Julius Lester is a critique of Huck Finn stating that Mark Twain wasn't against slavery rather believed that he was mocking African Americans. This is clearly seen in the quote "If Jim knew that Ohio met with Mississippi at Cairo, why would he continue down the river and go deeper into the heart of slave country (Lester, 3)." Here Lester is saying that Twain purposely made Jim seem dumb and do the opposite of what he wanted to do as a way to make fun of African Americans making them seem slow and not as smart as White people. I disagree with this idea and the fact of the matter is because if Jim had found Cairo then and there the story would have ended and Huck Finn would never be the story it is today. No Twain intended for them to miss Cairo in order to keep the story flowing, the fact that Jim and Huck continued south was not Twain supporting slavery rather it was him going against it criticizing Southern society as well as Northern Carpetbaggers taking advantage of the Southern people (king and duke).

The fact that Jim was aboard the raft was so that one could see the hardships that an African American Slave goes through that is not mocking slaves rather showing things through their perspective. The reason why Twain uses humor and satire is because of the fact that the story itself would be too gruesome and depressing without them. Lester also states that "What Jim clearly is not is a human being, and this is emphasized by the fact that Miss Watson's frees Jim but makes no mention of his wife and children (Lester, 3)." Well to begin Mrs. Watson could not do anything about Jim's family as they were not in her custody, this can be inferred since about the same time Huck and Jim are looking for Cairo and Jim says he will go back and take his wife and kids. Huck begins to feel even guiltier and begins to think of all

the ??? innocent??? people he will harm by doing so. The innocent people he speaks of are the slave owners that probably own Jim??™s family. As for Jim not being human that can be disclaimed in the quote ??? I went to sleep and Jim didn??™t call me when it was my turn.

When I waked up just at daybreak he was sitting there with his head down betwixt his knee (155).??? If Jim wasn??™t human why would he mourn the loss of his family It is also this that separates him from comparison that Lester makes of Jim being like the boys in Tom Sawyers Gang. The fact that he feels bad and misses his family shows his responsibility that he feels towards them. None if the other boys believe in responsibility since they are all still adolescence freedom of having to do anything is their paradise. In conclusion I believe that this novel rightfully deserves the place it has in High School English classes today since none of the other novels read in the previous years can compare to Huckleberry Finn in that no other author uses satire to show the defects of society, criticize slavery in a time when slavery still existed and still have intellectual humor.