

Symbolism of moby dick based on outline provided



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Slavery in Moby Dick One should understand that Melville's standpoint regarding slavery can be felt in this work. Firstly, the labor system in Pequod is very much similar to slavery in terms of punishment, peril, cruelty, and force (Petty 31). It can easily be compared to the laborers and the American army during the building of canals and railways in the 1850s (Robertson-Lorant 381). Melville hints of the horrible effects of abuse of power and slavery in this work. What Ahab wants are means to pursue his goals, using the crew in the ship to serve his aims (Petty 33-4). With the White Whale being alluded to the greatness of Christianity --- Ahab being part of this whale --- this could be representational of the concept of the white Christian civilization utilizing slavery as a means toward global success. Captain Ahab is at the helm of Pequod setting sail with a crew coming from different races. Their purpose is to hunt the White Whale with no regard to people who might change this itinerary (Robertson-Lorant 385). Notice that the crew consists of a New England voyager named Ishmael, a South Pacific islander named Queequeg --- who comes from a place that is not seen on maps, and a possible freeman or slave cabin boy named Pip (Petty 43). Hints about the Indian wars are seen in Melville's work. First, Pequod is named after the exterminated tribes in 1637. Harpooners in the Pequod consists of "Aboriginal whalers" and "unmixed Indian from Gay Head... where there still exists the last remnant of a village of red men" (Petty 47-8). It can be said that Moby Dick has the Indian genocide and the exploitation of workers as two of the major themes in Melville's work. Works Cited Petty, H B. "Cannibalism, Slavery, and Self-Consumption in Moby-Dick." *The Arizona Quarterly*. 59 (2003): 31-58. Print. Robertson-Lorant, Laurie. "Red Blood,

White Bones: the Native American Presence in Moby- Dick." *Comparative American Studies*. 1. 3 (2003): 379-390. Print.