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Character Analysis: Huckleberry Finn Huckleberry Finn is one of the many milestones in modern literature. It stands as a testament to the genius the world knows as Mark Twain. Through clever use of “local color” and other literary devices, he is able to weave not only the entertaining tale of Huck and Jim, but also a powerful anti-slavery message, which became the cause of both negative criticism and critical acclaim. This embodiment of Mark Twain’s ideals in the young Huck Finn is a perfect example of the many people and things Huck Finn poses as and represents in the novel.

Throughout the tale, Huckleberry Finn is portrayed as being a master of masquerading around as another person and is the means by which Mark Twain conveys his views to the world. If Mark Twain could have written an autobiography about himself, he more than likely would describe himself as possessing many qualities similar to those of Huck Finn. The many encounters Huck has with the Mississippi River are drawn from Mark Twain’s childhood home of Hannibal, Missouri, a town on the Mississippi. Even more important than childhood similarities; in the novel, Huck becomes more than just another character. He becomes a vessel by which Mark Twain shares his views with the world. In the South where he lived, there was still much bitterness towards ex-slaves and this dictated what was proper and what was not.

Instead of writing a manifesto of his views, these views were consolidated with Huck’s character. Through Huck’s eyes, we are not only able to see Twain’s views but we also see them justified. Twain’s satirical view of religion manifests itself when Miss Watson confronts Huck on the subject of Heaven.

She feels that Heaven is a place where “all a body would have to do there was to go around all day long with a harp and sing, forever, and ever.” Huck is disgusted by this and says that he “didn’t think much of it.” and goes on to say that he wants to go to the “bad place” because the widow said that Tom Sawyer didn’t have much of a chance of going to the “good place”.

Not only is this Twain’s way of saying that religion, taken at face value, is bunk, but is also his observation of how society shapes the minds of those who choose to harmonize with it. At another point during the book, Huck assumes the guise of a girl named Sarah Williams. During this entire episode, Huck is eerily calm and plays his part perfectly; that is, until the woman sees Huck’s seasoned throwing skills and his threading of the needle.

Although Huck plays his part almost perfectly, because of his lack of interaction with society, especially with women, he cannot anticipate the ‘traps’, which the woman unknowingly lays out for him. The fact that Huck forgot his name for a minute is but a minor detail that would have probably gone unnoticed had it not been for Huck’s two previous follies. After he divulges his “true” identity as being George Peters, the woman tells Huck “You do a girl tolerable poor, but you might fool men, maybe.

Bless you, child, when you set out to thread the needle don’t hold the thread still and fetch the needle up to it; hold the needle still and poke the thread at it; that’s the way a woman most always does, but a man always does t’otherway.” This is Mark Twain’s way of telling us that society makes fools of those who choose not to conform to its standards. Despite a failed first

attempt, Huck proves himself to be comfortable in disguise when he encounters the Grangerfords.

At one point in this encounter, he forgets his name, despite being warned not to do so by the lady who saw through his guise. Here, Huck shows his superior ability of human understanding by fooling the young Buck Grangerford into telling him his own name. To accomplish this, he first asks Buck whether he can spell his name.

Knowing that if a person sees a chance to raise himself over another person's expectations, he probably will, Huck taunts Buck by saying " I bet you can't spell my name". Buck falls for Huck's tricks and replies by saying " I bet you what you dare I can". After this, Buck reveals the alias Huck gave them when they first met, and saved Huck the trouble of working around using his fake name.

In this scene, Twain illustrates his belief of the importance of understanding human nature, which Huck clearly excels at. Throughout the novel, Huck takes on many roles that, for the most part, are comical. However, The final disguise is one which the reader seldom notices; that of the author, who speaks through the words and actions of Huck Finn. The last laugh goes to none other than Mark Twain himself.