

## Huck's True Conscience

Thesis statement: In *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, satire and realism are Mark Twain's main tools in demonstrating Huck's descent from public morality into personal philosophy.

### I. Satire

#### A. Racist language

1. Misunderstood
2. Anti-racist (Smith, David Web)
3. Slaveholders
4. Attacks the infringement of human rights

#### B. Defending human dignity

1. Contradictory content (Smith, David Web)
2. Huck's conscience (Twain 190-191)
3. Society's convoluted conscience
4. Huck's ironic actions

#### C. King and Duke

1. Irony and comic relief disguised
2. Lies and fabrications (Twain 110-113)
3. Critique of Romanticism (Smith, David Web)
4. Pap Finn and the social norm (Carter Web, Twain 23-25)
5. Hypocritical ridicule of government

### II. Realism

#### A. Huck's southern society

1. Escape plan at Phelps' farm (Twain 232-235)
2. Jim's reality and Tom's Romanticism
3. Racist implications ("Adventures," *American Web*)
4. Inferiority
  - a. Authenticity of the N-word
  - b. Huck's treatment of Jim (Twain 72, 78)
  - c. Language regardless of sentiment

- B. Authentic speech patterns
  - 1. Incorrect grammar and usage
  - 2. Rural dialect
    - a. Wisdom and honesty (Smith, Henry Web)
    - b. Huck's boyish speech
    - c. Innocent narrator
  - 3. Language defines characters
  - 4. Reveals character traits (Smith, Henry Web)
  - 5. Doctor Robinson (Twain 152-153)
  - 6. Genuine dialect
- III. Theme – moral conscience
  - A. Huck's battle of conscience (Quirk Web)
    - 1. Struggles with African American inferiority
    - 2. Bends under society's values (Twain 78)
    - 3. Influence of the river on Huck's thought process
    - 4. Return to land/society regresses Huck
  - B. Tom's influence (Twain 207-208)
    - 1. Huck and Jim's search for freedom ("Adventures," *Literary Web*)
    - 2. Society's constraints ("Adventure," *Literary Web*)
    - 3. Society's control