Mark Twain Essay, Research Paper

Mark Twain

What the Huck?

Though popularity associated with the American frontier and life on the Mississippi, Samuel Longhorne Clemens –Mark Twain actually spent many of his happiest and most productive years in and near New York City. Mark Twain was, without question, the finest sastirist of his time. Through his writing, one can see as deeper morality than most of his time held. Twain wrote the Adventures of Huckleberry Finn in 1885. His novel of Huckleberry Finn was no exception; he used his gift of satire to show the flaws of the people around him. He contrasted the illusion of freedom to realitity, ignorance with enlightenment, and what is percieved as good to what is truly good. Since its publication it has always seem to be in trouble. It is known as one of the greatest books ever written and also one of the most racists books ever written. Many people felt that it was similar to a history lesson of a hands on account of what life was like in Mississippi. On the other hand people felt it is derogatory toward African-Americans. It is still frequently in the news, as various schools and school systems across the country either ban it from or restore it to their classrooms.

The social classes that Twain portrays in this novel are extremely slanted, and they are not just about racism. It s more like a rich-poor issue, which is illustrated by Huck and Jim (poor) versus the upper-class townspeople (rich). The upper-class people are racist and keep slaves. Huck, being part of the lower class, is not racist and makes friends with the slaves. Basically, Twain s opinion is that they are wrong and separationalist. He continually portrays the upper-class people as immoral, unintelligent, and bigoted. On the other hand, the lower-class people, such as Huck and Jim, are portrayed as clever, moral, and self satisfied. Of course, Huck and Jim end up as heroes, successful in their quest for freedom.

The illusion of freedom is a powerful one. It allows people, in this case,Huck, to rest in a false sensew of control over one s own life. When Huck is with Widow Douglas, he feels that he can sneak out at night and be by himself, but she is constantly trying to control his every constriction. After he ran away, he felt he was finally free, but he had to constantly hide and stay in certain places to avoid being caught. In a note of irony, the only place he is truly free is on the raft, the most physically confining place he can possibly be.