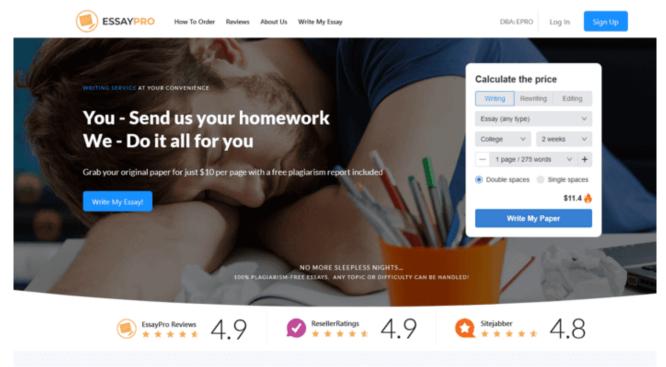
Racial Issues in Mark Twain's The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn



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Racial Issues in Huckleberry Finn An issue of central importance to Huckleberry Finn is the issue of race. The story takes place in a time of slavery, when blacks were considered inferior to whites, sometimes to the point of being considered less than fully human. But Huckleberry Finn challenges the traditional notions of the time, through its narrator and main character, Huckleberry Finn. While in the beginning, Huck is as unaware of the incorrectness of society's attitudes as the rest of society is, he undergoes many experiences which help him to form his own perspective of racial issues. Through the adventures and misadventures of Huck Finn and the slave Jim, Twain challenges the traditional societal views of race and encourages people to form their own views of what is wrong and what is right.

Huck begins in the novel as a character who sees things as they really are. Huck acknowledges that some of the stories about him and <u>Tom Sawyer</u> are exaggerated.

About Tom Sawyer, Huck says that "That book was made by Mr. Mark Twain, and he told the truth, mainly. There was things which he stretched, but mainly he told the truth" (Twain

4). Huck, however, can be trusted a little more. Huck has no reason to exaggerate the tale he will tell. Tom Sawyer had his A-rabs and elephants. "I reckoned he believed in the A-rabs and the elephants, but as for me I think different" (Twain 14). Huck therefore tells things in his story just as they happened. He has no need for the exaggeration. Huck Finn therefore is a reasonably reliable narrator; he sees the truth as it is, and likewise he tells it as it is.

Huck Finn fakes his own death and then runs away from home. The <u>immediate</u> cause is to escape from his father. The underlying...

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...iety might resent him for it. It feels right to him, and he will do it. This action goes contrary to the social norms. A white was never expected to care about a black, much less to help one escape. But Huck did just that. Huck has opened his mind to the view that slavery is wrong; he has taken a big step in this direction. In this manner, Huck Finn attacks the social norm of slavery in specific, and racism in general.

The representations of race and the challenges to social norms of racism make up an important part of the novel The <u>Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</u>. Huck himself undergoes a change; he stops accepting the social norms and instead follows his own beliefs. He acquires these beliefs after many adventures with the slave Jim. In this way, Twain encourages people to be like Huck and not to accept the racism just because society accepts it.

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