Sophia University Junior College Division Faculty Journal
創立 40 周年記念　第 35 号, 2014, 105-117

The Never Ending Ending: Pragmatic and Artistic Choices in the 'Evasion' of Huckleberry Finn

Timothy Gould

"When a prisoner of style escapes it's called an evasion."

Tom Sawyer

Mark Twain's dire "Notice" at the outset of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn,* which warns that, "Persons attempting to find a motive in this narrative will be prosecuted; persons attempting to find a moral in it will be banished; persons attempting to find a plot in it will be shot," is perhaps the world's premier example of reverse psychology. Hordes of critics, in defiance of Twain's edict, have poked and prodded Huck, Jim, and Tom, along with every nook and cranny of the novel, for well over a hundred years. This sustained analysis has delivered verdicts on Huckleberry's adventures ranging from Ernest Hemingway's: "All modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called *Huckleberry Finn*," (22) to John H. Wallace's: "*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, by Mark Twain, is the most grotesque example of racist trash ever written" (16). But it is the ending of the book, the final twelve chapters, commonly known as the "evasion," that have "spawned a critical industry of their own" (Hill 492). The ultimate judgement on the novel, by both proponents and detractors, has often hinged on this section, some claiming greatness for the novel while rationalizing the ending's purported weaknesses, some asserting it hangs like a dead weight on the book, an anchor that prevents the novel from ever achieving its potential greatness, and some, including myself, defending it as a pragmatically and artistically sound choice by Twain.

Even Hemingway, despite his conclusion that, "it's the best book we've had. All American writing comes from that. There was nothing before. There has been nothing as good since," advises us that, "If you read it you must stop where the Nigger Jim is stolen from the boys. That is the real end. The rest is just cheating" (22). The notion that the "evasion," which takes place on the Phelps' farm after Tom Sawyer reappears in the narrative, is "weak" has become, according to Hill, "a given for most modern critics" (492). There are, however, defenders as well. For example, contra Hemingway, Ralph Ellison asserts that, "so thoroughly had the Negro, both as man and as a symbol of man, been pushed into the underground of the American conscience that Hemingway missed

completely the structural, symbolic and moral necessity for that part of the plot in which the boys rescue Jim. Yet it is precisely this part which gives the novel it's significance. Without it, except as a boy's tale, the novel is meaningless" (262).

In this paper, I will briefly recapitulate some of the novel's early issues that inform the ending, focusing on pragmatic explanations that have been posited in support of the evasion as it stands, and muster some existing argumentation to develop a composite view of the ending sequence as a structurally sound, well-developed satire, operating on multiple levels, which, as Gollin and Gollin point out, is as much about the political and social circumstances in the South at the time the novel was published as it is the 'official' time of the novel's setting, around 1835 - 1845 (6).

I will first quickly glance at some instrumental events in the novel that "form" Huck and Jim's characters before Huck arrives at the Phelps's farm intent on setting Jim free. Early on, at Jackson's Island, after faking his own murder and running away from Pap, his abusive father, Huck meets Jim, whom he learns has "run off" from Miss Watson. On hearing this news from Jim, Huck cries out indignantly, "Jim!" (52). In his tone we can feel Huck's shock at Jim's revelation, and we instantly recognize the irony Huck fails to see: that Jim's rationale for running away from slavery is as good, if not better than Huck's own reason for escaping his predicament. Huck reflexively utters the "correct" response, expressing the expected and mandatory outrage that any "good" Southerner would on learning a slave has "stolen" himself. Within moments, however, Huck, having previously given Jim his word not to tell, is struggling to balance what he knows is the "right" thing to do (returning Jim to Miss Watson) and keeping his promise to Jim, which means doing "wrong." He tells Jim that he knows, "People would call me a low-down Abolitionist and despise me for keeping mum--but that don't make no difference. I ain't a-going to tell" (52). It is at this moment that Huck becomes the true protagonist of the narrative and separates himself from his "comrade" Tom Sawyer, who consistently and unthinkingly advocates and hews to the culturally prescribed, accepted course, even, as we will see, to the detriment of Jim.

Despite the danger inherent in helping a runaway slave that exists within his own cultural milieu, Huck goes against his "better" judgement and follows what we would be inclined to call his heart, but what he believes is the irresistible and deleterious influence of his conscience, the devil on his shoulder, as it were. This is the ironic struggle that drives Huck's character through the first part of the book, and it culminates when Huck decides to turn Jim in, but his "weak" conscience "fails" him again. In the following scene, Huck is debating with himself about sending a letter that

he has written informing Miss Watson of Jim's whereabouts. He wrote the letter, which he is holding in his hand, in an attempt to assuage his conscience, which has been "grinding" at him and making him feel "wicked, and lowdown and ornery" about helping Jim:

> It was a close place. I took it up, and held it in my hand. I was a-trembling, because I'd got to decide, forever, betwixt two things, and I knowed it. I studied a minute, sort of holding my breath, and then says to myself:
> "All right, then, I'll *go* to hell"— and tore it up.
> It was awful thoughts and awful words, but they was said. And I let them stay said; and never thought no more about reforming. I shoved the whole thing out of my head; and said I would take up wickedness again, which was in my line, being brung up to it, and the other warn't. And for a starter I would go to work and steal Jim out of slavery again; and if I could think up anything worse, I would do that, too; because as long as I was in, and in for good, I might as well go the whole hog. (270)

We, of course, can see that Huck's decision to tear up the letter is absolutely right, the only possible decision, but he, as a creature of his time, a pure conscience distorted by his environment and with no confidence in the humane intuitions that he misinterprets as evil, and which he is convinced emerge in him as a result of his bad upbringing, sees his choice to destroy the letter as the inevitable result of the "wickedness" that resides "in his line." This phrase can be interpreted as referring to a "line" of work, meaning he is merely being consistent with previous "bad" choices he has made up to this point in his life, or Huck may also be referring to his genetic "line," inherited from the inarguably rotten Pap, which he believes haunts him like an unshakeable devil on his shoulder, dooming him to "wickedness." Huck's is a pure soul, and we know that somehow he has severed his "line" with Pap and emerged unscathed, but ignorant nevertheless of his own goodness.

Huck's forfeiture of his soul to hell on account of his "line," and his promise to continue and find even "worse" acts to commit, guarantees him a place in purgatory, at least from his own perspective, but in reality, from the reader's viewpoint, his decision has precisely the opposite effect — delivering him from that horrible fate. Let us remove the irony for a moment and analyze Huck's "worse" in the underlying way we regard it as we read, namely as "better." Again, we have just witnessed Huck actually redeeming his soul even as he believes he is damning it, so what would it mean for him to do

better? What more can he do? He has, in essence, regardless of his belief to the contrary, reached the pinnacle of goodness by sacrificing himself for another. At this point in the novel, Huck's moral journey is complete.

A bildungsroman appears to be unfolding, and with this almost angelic view of Huck in mind, and about twenty-five percent of the book remaining, we arrive at the Phelps's farm, where Jim is being held prisoner and where the evasion sequence that ends the novel takes place. Soon, Tom Sawyer, who has been absent since the beginning of the narrative, appears on the scene again and, as is his way, takes over the operation. While W. Somerset Maugham's judgement that, "if Mark Twain had not had the unfortunate notion of bringing in that boring little muttonhead, Tom Sawyer, to ruin the last few chapters, [*Huckleberry Finn*] would have been faultless," (Fishkin 5).

While Maugham may be overstating the case, there is, without a doubt, a stark contrast between the middle section of the book, where Huck and Jim make their way down the river, and the ending sequence on the Phelps's farm. During the middle section, Huck and Jim's relationship has become real and substantial, a bonding between them has occurred based on shared experience and shared humanity. Jim emerges as a man, shedding the one dimensional traits he exhibited at the beginning of the book. We see him display a range of emotions, even chastising Huck for playing a nasty practical joke of which he (Jim) was the butt. We learn about his love and attachment to his children and how he plans to free his family from slavery even if he has to "get an Ab'litionist to go and steal them" (124).

Once Huck and Tom reunite at the Phelps's farm and start planning to free Jim, however, the notable consequence of their reunion is that the progress Huck has made as a person over the course of his journey with Jim is virtually erased. Suddenly, he is Tom's sidekick again. The three dimensional aspect of their characters and their relationship that has been so realistically constructed is drained out of both Huck and Jim and we are again left with the one dimensional place holders that operate as foils for Tom's antics. The effect is jarring, and the discomfort it produces is intensified because Jim at the same time undergoes a kind of 'de-evolution', and 'reverts' back to the former minstrelsy, caricature-like poltroon, or comic 'darkey' he played in the early part of the book (Berret). It is this stark transition, the erasure of the characters' progress and the sudden change in trajectory of the narrative that surely prompted Hemingway to suggest Twain "cheated" here and we would do best to ignore this part of the book, advice which, like the "Notice," is generally ignored. But does all this mean that the artistic integrity of the novel has been compromised by the ending? Before analyzing

that question, it may help to briefly summarize the final twelve chapters that make up the evasion sequence.

The king, an itinerant con man traveling with Huck and Jim, without Huck's knowledge, sells Jim for "forty dirty dollars" as a runaway slave, and Jim is held in a rickety old shack on a farm that belongs to Tom Sawyer's aunt Sally and uncle Silas Phelps. Huck has already decided that he will "go to hell" and is determined to "steal" Jim and continue helping him to freedom when Tom Sawyer arrives at the farm. On hearing that Huck plans to steal Jim, Tom says, "What! Why Jim is —" and then he stops and does not utter the critical next word, "free." Huck continues, sure of Tom's reproach: "*I* know what you'll say. You'll say it's dirty low-down business; but what if it is? —*I*'m low-down; and I'm agoing to steal him, and I want you to keep mum and not let on. Will you?" Huck is astonished when Tom not only agrees to "keep mum," but further says, "I'll *help* you steal him!" (284). Tom suggests that they each "study out a plan to steal Jim . . . and we'll take the one we like the best" (291). Here is Huck's description of his plan:

"We can easy find out if it's Jim in there. Then get up my canoe tomorrow night, and fetch my raft over from the island. Then the first dark night that comes, steal the key out of the old man's britches, after he goes to bed, and shove off down the river on the raft, with Jim, hiding daytimes and running nights, the way me and Jim used to do before. Wouldn't that plan work?" (292).

Unveiled in one short paragraph, Huck's proposal is clear, concise and immediately ready for action. Tom's reaction is characteristic; he responds to Huck's question about whether the plan just offered will work with, "*Work?* Why cert'nly, it would work, like rats a-fighting. But it's too blame' simple; there ain't nothing *to* it. What's the good of a plan that ain't no more trouble than that? It's as mild as goose-milk. Why, Huck, it wouldn't make no more talk than breaking into a soap factory" (292).

Tom's objection to Huck's plan is actually longer than Huck's plan, but as usually happens when they are together, Huck defers and accepts Tom's plan, which Huck says, "was worth fifteen of mine, for style, and would make Jim just as free a man as mine would, and maybe get us all killed, besides" (292). Tom's plan comprises a mish-mash of escape scenes and motifs that he has gleaned from romantic adventure stories, and if Huck puts up any objection, Tom chastises him for his intolerable ignorance. When Huck points out, for example, that Jim could simply lift the bed he is chained to and walk away, Tom answers with exasperation, "Why, hain't you ever read any books at all? — Baron Trenck, nor Casanova, nor Benvenuto Chelleeny, nor Henri IV, nor

none of them heroes? Whoever heard of getting a prisoner loose in such an old-maidy way as that?"(299). Again and again Tom invokes "the authorities" and trumpets the self-proclaimed expertise he has conferred upon himself by dint of reading them as justification to repudiate almost every objection Huck raises. As the evasion unfolds, Jim, who is still being detained, is subjected to all manner of humilities as he, too, plays along with Tom's romantic notions of what an escape must be. Tom eventually decides that Jim simply must carve his coat of arms and other "mournful inscriptions" into a rock, a log will not do, insisting, "they don't have log walls in a dungeon: we got to dig the inscriptions into a rock"(323). The rock Tom is determined to use, however, is a grindstone, which turns out to be too heavy for the boys to move. To solve this problem, they decide to go and get Jim. When they get to where Jim is being held, Jim, "raised up his bed and slid the chain off the bed-leg, and wrapt it round and round his neck, and we crawled out through our hole and down there, and Jim and me laid into that grindstone and walked her along like nothing"(323). Jim simply "escapes" to help the boys, laying out boldly the irony that has been apparent to us all along. Furthermore, when it turns out the hole to get the grindstone into the shack is too small, "Jim he took the pick and soon made it big enough"(324). A full catalog of the satiric antics comprising the evasion is beyond the scope of this paper, but clearly the positive character growth and development that Huck and Jim evinced during their earlier voyage down the Mississippi are no longer evident.

Here I will lay out some of Twain's pragmatic and artistic expediencies that may account for this character "reversion" and consider how these choices influence the nature of the evasion sequence. Initially, Twain set out to produce "another boy's book, a sequel to *Tom Sawyer* . . . but soon found himself with several hundred pages of a manuscript increasingly less like *Tom Sawyer* and more like no book that anyone — including Twain himself — had ever written before" (Fishkin ix). Twain surely intended to maintain *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* as something of a hybrid of a children's tale and a boy-book. Using Hunter's terminology, "the former is composed for the amusement of children, the latter is composed about children for the amusement of adults"(431). The combination of these two was Twain's domain, a place in literature where he had already, with *Tom Sawyer*, carved out a special niche. Twain is "unique . . . in being a writer whose children's books are taken with complete seriousness by literary critics as an important part of adult literature"(Hunter 431). But the farther Huck and Jim travel down the river, and the more "enlightened" they become, the more dangerous the territory for Twain and the closer they come to crossing over the nebulous boundary

which would make the book inaccessible and even inappropriate for one of its ostensible target audiences - children. The early chapters of the novel do, as Fishkin notes, maintain a continuity with, and can be seen as a sequel to *Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, while the middle chapters drift into uncharted, yet still navigable territory for Twain's purposes. But the trajectory Huck and Jim are on leads naturally to an unsupportable outcome in terms of keeping the book in its intended domain.

Imagine that Twain would have allowed Jim and Huck to maintain, after they had reached the Phelps's farm, the character traits they had developed over the course of their journey; Jim as an independent, feeling, fully formed and well-rounded man, and Huck, with his new insight, suddenly able to pierce the thick shroud of ironic ignorance that has enveloped him and reflect on his newfound understanding of humanity. In other words, his bildungsromanesque trajectory would require him to acknowledge and respond to his complete and total misapprehension of himself, recognizing that he truly is fundamentally good where he has all along considered himself fundamentally bad. If Twain did this, he would have sacrificed at least one of the elements of the novel that make it great — our access, through irony, to Huck's truly strong moral fiber.

Huck does indeed have some reflective access to his conscience, but it always delivers the "wrong" results, so that he consistently arrives at the conclusion that, as a direct outcome of his deficient upbringing, his bad "line," he is a deeply flawed human being. Readers, however, even younger ones, can effortlessly recognize Huck's inherent goodness. This easily visible irony is one of the exciting elements that raises the novel out of the realm of the saccharine and makes it perennially popular with younger readers - it is an interesting children's story, but it has just enough sophistication, at this level, to make it seem, to younger readers, that they are 'getting' an adult story. It is Huck's mistaken conviction that his badness is an irresistible force, impossible to overcome, which gives him the confidence to carry out the "despicable" act of stealing Jim. Huck reconciles himself to his own bad character, unknowingly confirming, at least for us, the readers, his own goodness. If Twain abandoned that and gave Huck direct access to his own (true) conscience, the book would become 'flat,' and its charm, for a very important target audience, would be lost. The budding bildungsroman, then, once Huck has resolved himself to Hell, is abandoned and Huck and Jim are returned, so that Twain may make further use of them for satiric purposes, to their initial one-dimensional states.

Critics of the evasion chapters complain that, in failing to allow Huck to complete the trajectory of his character arc, the unity of the novel is fatally disrupted, diminishing

its stature as a first rate classic. Burg, however, remarks that, "Critics who judge the novel's ending a failure mistake Mark Twain's thematic purposes and undervalue his artistic achievement through an unwillingness to deal with his masterpiece in its own terms" (299). Twain does sacrifice the "realness" of his characters in the final chapters, but this is not a manifestation of laziness or because of an inability to adequately handle the issues he had raised in the earlier parts of the book. Twain was certainly cognizant of the choices he made in writing the evasion sequence, and the notion that he somehow did not "control" his own writing must be dispelled.

The naturalness of Twain's prose and his smooth, accurate, almost invisible, presentation of eye dialect created what Moore, in 1922, termed, "an almost universal prejudice," (324) wherein Twain was regarded as a sort of American savant, not a participant in an historical succession of connected literature, but an emergent property, a unique literary entity rising out of the American soil with no antecedents or forebears. This mistaken sense of his literary grounding may lead to an oversimplified view of the structure of Huckleberry Finn and to an under appreciation of the depth of Twain's genius. H.L. Mencken debunked another related fallacy of Twain's reputation when he declared emphatically that, "nothing could be more unsound than the Mark legend — the legend of the light-hearted and kindly old clown" (147), referring to the notion that Twain's works were simply dashed out off the top of his head with no inherent structure or planning. The evasion chapters, far from supplying support for these ideas, are testament to Twain's deep understanding of his own genre.

As Henrickson has pointed out, there are additional rationales that can account for the reappearance of Tom at the evasion. Namely, we know Twain intended to and did continue to use Tom as a character in subsequent books (*Tom Sawyer Detective* and *Tom Sawyer Abroad*), so it is appropriate, even necessary, for Tom not simply to disappear forever after providing the 'link' connecting *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer and Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Throughout *Huckleberry Finn*, Tom's savvy intelligence is referred to and highly respected by both Huck and Jim. He is, for them, the pinnacle of brainpower, and although they may not understand or even agree with his motivations during the evasion, they nevertheless go along with almost all of his suggestions; there is no discernible wavering about who is the boss of the show. Twain's ability to maintain Tom as a likable character, when by rights we should abhor him, as his treatment of Jim occasionally verges on torture, is a testament both to Twain's skill as a writer and evidence of the effectiveness of his choice of "flattening" the characters in the final chapters. The impression is not one of watching "real" people, we understand

and accept that we are looking at a satire of Tom's romantic notions. This ultimately buffers Tom from what should be our natural response - to despise him. In other words, if we were to make a ledger of his behavior, both good and bad, we should hate him, but to the contrary, he is universally loved. We "know" him too well, and can forgive this "play" version of him, and his 'naughty boy' image is not easily displaced in favor of an interpretation where he might be considered essentially bad or evil. From a pragmatic viewpoint, Twain, always concerned with financial profit, must have wanted to keep his book marketable as ostensibly a 'boys book'. Ending with this superficially playful scene of the evasion, while troubling for adults and critics, is exactly the kind of adventure that attracts young readers. Without modern guidance and the benefit of 'enlightened' views on race, it is a romp, and funny on its face. Kids rightly think they are getting the irony during the evasion (just a different level of irony, as we will see later), which 'feels' like and gives the book a sophistication beyond the normal fare meant for this target audience.

The evasion fits the novel and actually serves to unify it, not only from a pragmatic perspective, maintaining the boy-book aspect of the narrative, but also in an artistic sense, which, as I will discuss shortly, allows Twain to make available in the evasion a deeper, satiric "level" of interpretation, further falsifying the "kindly old clown" myth. Finally, it is through the "Notice" at the beginning of the book that Twain projects, in his inimitable style, his intent that the ending of the narrative, the part most likely to cause a violation of the edict itself, is meant to remain firmly grounded on his own home turf children's literature/boy-book, and any attempts to take it from that domain will not be tolerated. That being said, the evasion is nonetheless where Twain makes his most caustic, albeit subtle, satiric commentary.

The first American edition of *Huckleberry Finn* appeared in 1885, but, as Quirk notes, Twain wrote *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* sporadically starting in 1876, and, "Over the extended period of composition, Twain's political, social, and philosophical attitudes changed as did his attitude toward Huck's narrative" (39). Harold Kolb interprets the evasion at its most accessible level of satire and finds that the "final chapters constitute an amusing parody of *The Count of Monte Cristo* and *The Man in the Iron Mask,*" but he may not be giving Twain his due when he concludes that, "Twain seems to have traded in his satiric cannon for a popgun" (8). Quirk, who to a large extent defends the greatness of Twain's narrative, placing it in the illustrious company of American classics such as *Moby Dick* and *The Sound and the Fury*, claims that, in terms of "flaws" in the novel, including the ending, "Mark Twain appears to have fallen asleep

with his face in the soup"(38). Fishkin, however, moves towards what I think is a more accurate reading and finds a sharper satire at work when she notes that, "Huckleberry Finn is subversive in ways that Tom Sawyer is not"(xi).

This subversive nature hinges on the evasion as, "a satire of the many betrayals and indignities African-Americans endured after the breakdown of Reconstruction" (Fishkin xvi). Similarly, Gollin and Gollin refer to the ending as a, "satire on enlightened white attitudes toward the freed black man, not in the 1840's, when the story is set, but in the 1880's, when the chapters were written"(6). Riding stowaway, as it were, on Twain's ostensible boy-story, the deep satire of the evasion contains an unexpected level of social commentary that Twain skillfully couched in the genre his readers expected. Fishkin points out as well that, "*Huckleberry Finn* is a masterful satire not of slavery, which had been abolished a decade before Twain began writing the novel, but of the racism that suffused American society as Twain wrote the book in the late 1870's and early 1880's and that continues to stain American culture" (Fishkin xvi).

H.L. Mencken offers an account that illustrates and rationalizes Twain's imperative to "bury" the deeply satiric elements of *Huckleberry Finn*. Mencken writes that, "Mark new his countrymen. He knew their intense suspicion of ideas, their blind hatred of heterodoxy, their bitter way of dealing with dissenters. He knew how, their pruderies outraged, they would turn upon even the gaudiest hero and roll him in the mud. And knowing, he was afraid"(149). A blatant satire, though of a mild intensity, such as we see leveled against Tom's Walter Scott inspired romantic notions of the South, might be considered a kind of gentle poking, rather than the deeper, more caustic criticism directed at the failure of reconstruction and both the North and the South's dismal treatment of the freed slave population. Twain was willing to offer the former at face value, but the latter, as pointed out by Mencken, would have verged on foolish to an author known to be apprehensive of his own public persona to the extent that he demanded that his autobiography not be published in its entirety until one hundred years after his death. Pascal Covici, Jr., discussing Twain's presentation, says, "one can deliver a satire with telling force through the insidious medium of a travesty if he is careful not to overwhelm the satire with the extraneous interest of the travesty." In *Huckleberry Finn*, Twain certainly pushed this to its limits, and ultimately delivered a "forceful", yet sufficiently subtle, satire.

Because it is not always obvious on its face, when attempting to determine if we are dealing with a satire, we must often take recourse to historical context to find the possible analogues that may be lurking in a particular novel. Following are briefly some

of the satiric analogies employed by Twain: Tom can be seen as a symbol of the Southern establishment; when he is on the scene, no divergence from "mainstream," received behavior is brooked, and he is the arbiter of the "right" way to do things, a power bestowed on him by the "authorities" in his romantic fictions. Huck and Jim are "erased" as volitional creatures and the tentative progress made during their time alone, their earlier return to a 'natural state', as it were, a state unimpeded by society, where they were as they would be without the insidious influence of societal pressure, is subjugated to the pressure that Tom himself brings to bear on them in the form of the requirements and vagaries of mainstream culture. Jim is technically and legally free during the entire time of the evasion, and from the time Tom appears on the scene, the reader is acutely aware of this. Despite this "freedom," he remains in bondage, unable to act under his own agency. At the time of the publication of *Huckleberry Finn*, reconstruction, the period after the Civil War which was meant to reconcile the previously warring North and South, had ended. Slaves, of course, had been emancipated, but for all intents and purposes their prospects were not much changed from their time in bondage. The early hope of reconstruction, in which the promise of true freedom and full participation in American society was distinctly possible for the former slaves, had begun on a strong note, and many former slaves had begun participate in public life. The project crashed, however, on the rocks of the white supremacy movement, which successfully terrorized African Americans, in the form of, among others, the KKK, and codified its distorted notions in the Jim Crow laws and Black Codes. The brief moment of hope delivered some enduring results, but in the main, African Americans were reduced to a virtual continuation of slave labor.

Chadwick-Joshua points out that, "Tom's reappearance signifies the still (un) reconstructed South, for [Twain] sees no problem in using Jim as a vehicle for having fun and adventure. Jim completes the realistic and rather dark picture of the progress and promise of reconstruction. Jim universally represents the southern ex-slave whose future and anticipated quality of life are at best questionable — given the pervasive economic, social, and political conditions in the South during the late 1880s" (xix). Fishkin additionally notes that, "The final section of Huckleberry Finn-which revolves around Tom Sawyer's bizarre maneuvers to free a slave who, it turns out, is already free — increasingly came to be understood as a satire on the ways in which the United States botched the enterprise of freeing the slaves."

Finally, it seems to me that Huck symbolizes the North. He recognized Jim's humanity, and we loved him for that, but as soon as he is with Tom again, he absolves

himself of any responsibility for Jim's welfare, except in purely existential terms. The North, in terms of Reconstruction, was tired of fighting, both against the South and for the freed slaves. They gave up, and when they stopped being responsible and exerting themselves, the South of the Black Codes rose up and filled the vacuum. This is precisely what happens when Huck and Tom are together and it is to the detriment of both of them, just as both the North and South were ultimately weakened when the promise of Reconstruction was allowed to be destroyed.

Works Cited

Bassett, John Earl. "'Huckleberry Finn': The End Lies in the Beginning." *American Literary Realism, 1870-1910* 17.1 (1984): 89–98.

Berret, Anthony J. "Huckleberry Finn and the Minstrel Show." *American Studies* 27.2 (1986): 37–49.

Burg, David F. "Another View of Huckleberry Finn." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 29.3 (1974): 299–319.

Camfield, Gregg. *The Oxford Companion to Mark Twain*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2003.

Chadwick-Joshua, Jocelyn. *The Jim Dilemma: Reading Race in Huckleberry Finn*. Univ. Press of Mississippi, 1998.

Covici, Pascal Jr. *Mark Twain's Humor: The Image of a World*. Southern Methodist University Press, 1962.

Eliot, T.S. "Introduction to 'The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.'" *Bloom's Modern Critical Views: Mark Twain*. Ed. Harold Bloom. New York: Chelsea House, 2006. 33-41.

Ellison, Ralph. "Twentieth-Century Fiction and the Black Mask of Humanity." *The Mark Twain Anthology: Great Writers on His Life and Works*. Ed. Shelley Fisher Fishkin. New York: Library of America, 2010. 253–270.

Fishkin, Shelley Fisher. Introduction. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer and Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. By Mark Twain. New York: Signet, 2002. v–xxiv.

Gollin, Richard, and Rita Gollin. "' Huckleberry Finn' and the Time of the Evasion." *Modern Language Studies* (1979): 5–15.

Hemingway, Ernest. *Green Hills of Africa*. 1935. New York: Scribner, 2003.

Henrickson, Gary P. "Biographers' Twain, Critics' Twain, Which of the Twain Wrote the 'Evasion'?" *The Southern Literary Journal* 26.1 (1993): 14–29.

Hill, Richard. "Overreaching: Critical Agenda and the Ending of Adventures of Huckleberry Finn." *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 33.4 (1991): 492–513.

Hunter, Jim. "Mark Twain and the Boy-Book in 19th-Century America." *College English* 24.6 (1963): 430–438.

Kolb, Harold H. Jr. "Adventures of Huckleberry Finn." *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Mark Twain*. Ed. J. R. LeMaster and James D. Wilson. New York: Routledge, 2011.

Mencken, H.L. "Mark Twain." *The Mark Twain Anthology: Great Writers on His Life and Works*. Ed. Shelley Fisher Fishkin. New York: Library of America, 2010. 141–150.

Nilon, Charles H. "The Ending of 'Huckleberry Finn':' Freeing the Free Negro'." *Mark Twain Journal* 22.2 (1984): 21–27.

Quirk, Tom. "The Flawed Greatness of Huckleberry Finn." *American Literary Realism* 45.1 (2012): 38–48.

Trites, Roberta S. "Concord Public Library." *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Mark Twain*. 1993. Ed. J. R. LeMaster and James D. Wilson. 2011.

Twain, Mark. *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. 1885. Ed. Victor Fischer and Lin Salamo. Berkeley: U of California P, 2001.

Wallace, John H. "The Case Against Huck Finn." *Satire or Evasion*. Durham: Duke UP, 1992. 16–24.