

ADVENTURES *of*
HUCKLEBERRY
FINN

MARK TWAIN



EDITED BY THOMAS COOLEY

A NORTON CRITICAL EDITION
THIRD EDITION

A NORTON CRITICAL EDITION

Mark Twain

ADVENTURES OF
HUCKLEBERRY FINN



AN AUTHORITATIVE TEXT

CONTEXTS AND SOURCES

CRITICISM

THIRD EDITION

Edited by

THOMAS COOLEY

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY



W · W · NORTON & COMPANY · *New York · London*

Copyright © 1999, 1990, 1977, 1962, 1961 by W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.

The text of ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN, edited by Walter Blair and Victor Fischer, is © 1985 The Mark Twain Foundation. Published by arrangement with the University of California Press.

All rights reserved.
Printed in the United States of America.

The text of this book is composed in Fairfield Medium with the display set in Bernhard Modern.
Composition by Binghamton Valley Composition.
Manufacturing by Maple-Vail Book Group.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Twain, Mark, 1835–1910.
Adventures of Huckleberry Finn : an authoritative text, contexts and sources, criticism / Mark Twain ; edited by Thomas Cooley. — 3rd ed.
p. cm. — (A Norton critical ed.)
Includes bibliographical references (p.).

ISBN 0-393-96640-2 (pbk.)

1. Finn, Huckleberry (Fictitious character)—Fiction. 2. Boys—Travel—Mississippi River—Fiction. 3. Boys—Missouri—Fiction. 4. Twain, Mark, 1835–1910. Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. I. Cooley, Thomas, 1942–. II. Title. III. Series.
PS1305.T93 1998
813'.4—DC21 98-6901
CIP

W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 500 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10110
www.wnorton.com

W. W. Norton & Company Ltd., Castle House, 75/76 Wells Street, London W1T 3QT

Preface to the Third Edition

The youthful hero of Mark Twain's masterpiece is well over a hundred years old now, but he and his troublesome book—"if I'd knowed what trouble it was to make a book I wouldn't a tackled it"—are in more hot water than ever. Originally, Huck and his *Adventures* were banned from public libraries and schools for being crude and using bad grammar. Now the issue is racism.

Is *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* a racist book? Huck himself likes comfort—the comfort of fishing naked from the raft, the comfort of sleeping while Jim takes his watch—but reading Huck's opus even in private, much less as part of a class, is a profoundly uncomfortable experience for many people, and not just because Mark Twain uses a single demeaning racial epithet more than 200 times in the book. Does this mean that we shouldn't read it? Or that the book shouldn't be taught in the public schools? (At what level is another question.)

"Fear and alarm," says Toni Morrison, "are what I remember most about my first encounter with Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*." When Morrison read the book a second time "under the supervision of an English teacher in junior high school," she felt no less uncomfortable—rather more." Her discomfort did not reside just in Huck's (or Mark Twain's) name-calling, however. Removing the book from required reading lists, she says, is "a narrow notion of how to handle the offense Mark Twain's use of the term 'nigger' would occasion for black students and the corrosive effect it would have on white ones." Banning the book because its *language* is uncomfortable or offensive, says Morrison, constitutes "a purist yet elementary kind of censorship designed to appease adults rather than educate children. Amputate the problem, band-aid the solution."

If there is a single aspect of *Huck Finn* that most readers agree on, in fact, it is the power of Huck's language—when he is being free with the syntax and vocabulary of social and racial convention implied by "standard" or "white" or "King's" English. Surely, the racism in *Huck Finn* lies not in the author's language, however offensive at times, but in the social and racial conventions imbedded in that language, the prevailing moral grammar of nineteenth-century America, toward which Mark Twain was profoundly ambivalent—Morrison would say silent—and in which Huck himself professes firmly to believe. The "all right, then, I'll go to hell" scene works only if we, as readers, really believe that Huck really believes he is committing an immoral (and socially unacceptable) act when he vows to free Jim.

So Morrison is right: the "brilliance of *Huckleberry Finn* is that it is the argument it raises." (To discover the true source, or sources, of her

“alarm” when reading *Huck Finn*, see Morrison’s remarkable Introduction to the book, pp. 385–92.

Some readers will find a different sort of license to read *Huck Finn*’s troublesome book in Shelley Fisher Fishkin’s *Was Huck Black?*, a study that advances the seemingly implausible argument that Huck, in his capacity as first-person narrator of Mark Twain’s narrative, actually speaks in a black “voice.” By this, Fishkin does not mean that Huck is a black youth in whiteface or that he is not, as Clemens claimed, actually based on Tom Blankenship. She argues, rather, that Huck’s liberating vernacular has much in common with the speech patterns of African Americans in the nineteenth century, particularly a “sociable” youth Mark Twain met on a lecture tour in the 1870s as he was writing *Tom Sawyer*. (See Fishkin’s “Jimmy,” pp. 375–83, and Mark Twain’s “Sociable Jimmy,” pp. 324–26.)

Whether *Huck Finn*’s voice is “black” or “white,” it is his speaking voice that, along with Mark Twain’s evocation of the great river, gives Huck’s narrative its distinctive place in American literature. Here, for example, is a passage describing Huck’s separation from Jim in a dense, white (no less) fog:

I threw the paddle down. I heard the whoop again; it was behind me yet, but in a different place; it kept coming, and kept changing its place, and I kept answering, till by and by it was in front of me again and I knowed the current had swung the canoe’s head down stream and I was all right, if that was Jim and not some other raftsmen hollering. I couldn’t tell nothing about voices in a fog, for nothing don’t look natural nor sound natural in a fog.

This is the language of speech, and it is very different from the language in which most American literature was written before 1885. The language of Irving, Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne, and even Melville was a formal, “literary” language; at its worst, it was sometimes inflated into what Mark Twain called “the showiest kind of book-talk.” Mark Twain’s greatest achievement in *Huck Finn*, perhaps, was to make a spoken language do everything a literary language alone could do before him. Nothing is lost when Huck describes his panic in the fog, or the coming of a storm, or Pap’s malice, or Jim’s kindness—all in the vocabulary and syntax of the uneducated son of the town drunk, whose special way of seeing beyond conventional prejudices required an unconventional way of speaking. Nothing was lost, and a great deal was gained for a literature that is so often *told* in the first person by narrators whose innocence is the highest knowledge.

In this third Norton Critical Edition of *Huck Finn*, the only essay in criticism retained from earlier editions is T. S. Eliot’s Introduction, which praises his fellow Missourian for his poetic evocation of the Mississippi River. Paired with it is a recent dissenting opinion by Jane Smiley, who thinks *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* is “by far” a better book than *Huck Finn*. Other new contributions, besides those already mentioned, include essays by David Carkeet on the dialects, Earl F. Briden on the illustrations, Victor A. Doyno on the composition of the text, and John H. Wallace and David L. Smith on the racism issue; also

included are James R. Kincaid's cautionary review of *Was Huck Black?*; samples of young Sam Clemens's bad poetry and Mark Twain's first extended attempt ("A True Story") to reproduce African American speech; more early reviews and responses, including the first *negative* review; and, most important of all, an authoritative text of *Huck Finn*, with original illustrations, produced as part of The Mark Twain Project by the University of California, Berkeley, in cooperation with the University of Iowa.

For their expert help with preparing this third Norton Critical Edition of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, I wish especially to thank Victor A. Doyno, Barbara Joy Cooley, and Carol Bemis.

A Note on the Text and Illustrations

Adventures of Huckleberry Finn was first published in England in December 1884 and in America in February 1885. The text of this third Norton Critical Edition is that of the authoritative Iowa-California edition (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), edited by Walter Blair and Victor Fischer with the assistance of Dahlia Armon and Harriet Elinor Smith. The result of decades of work by scores of Mark Twain scholars, this meticulously reconstructed text is based upon all surviving sources—except the newly recovered first half of the manuscript—over which Mark Twain exercised authorial control, including the American first edition, the second half of the manuscript, the Charles L. Webster company's proofsheets and prospectus, pre-publication excerpts from the *Century Magazine*, and for the raft episode, the first American edition of *Life on the Mississippi* (Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1883). The illustrations are the originals by Edward Winsor Kemble; the illustrations for the raft episode are by John Harley from *Life on the Mississippi*.

Contents

Preface to the Third Edition	vii
A Note on the Text and Illustrations	xi
The Text of <i>Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i>	1
Contexts and Sources	
Mark Twain • [Letters about <i>Huckleberry Finn</i>]	299
• From the <i>Autobiography</i>	301
THE "POET LARIAT," THE "SWEET SINGER OF MICHIGAN," AND YOUNG SAM CLEMENS	303
Bloodgood H. Cutter • On the Death of His Beloved Wife	303
Julia A. Moore • Little Andrew	305
Sam Clemens • To Jennie <i>and</i> To Mollie	306
Publishing Circular • Confidential Terms to Agents	307
A BANNED BOOK: ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF "TROUBLE" FOR HUCK'S BOOK	308
Boston <i>Transcript</i> , March 1885	308
Springfield <i>Republican</i> , March 1885	308
Mark Twain • Replies to the Newspapers	308
John H. Wallace • The Case against <i>Huck Finn</i>	309
Earl F. Briden • Kemble's "Specialty" and the Pictorial Countertext of <i>Huckleberry Finn</i>	310
David Carkeet • The Dialects in <i>Huckleberry Finn</i>	319
Mark Twain • A True Story, Repeated Word for Word as I Heard It	320
• Sociable Jimmy	324

Criticism

EARLY RESPONSES	329
[William Ernest Henley] • [Review] <i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i>	329
Brander Matthews • [Review: <i>Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i>]	330
[Robert Bridges] • Mark Twain's Blood-Curdling Humor	334
Thomas Sergeant Perry • [The First Major American Review]	334
MODERN VIEWS	337
Victor A. Doyno • <i>From Writing Huck Finn: Mark Twain's Creative Process</i>	337
T. S. Eliot • [Introduction to <i>Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i>]	348
Jane Smiley • Say It Ain't So, Huck: Second Thoughts on Mark Twain's "Masterpiece"	354
David L. Smith • Huck, Jim, and American Racial Discourse	362
Shelley Fisher Fishkin • Jimmy [from <i>Was Huck Black?</i>]	375
James R. Kincaid • Voices on the Mississippi [Review of <i>Was Huck Black?</i>]	383
Toni Morrison • [This Amazing, Troubling Book]	385
Mark Twain: A Chronology	393
Selected Bibliography	397

The Text of
ADVENTURES OF
HUCKLEBERRY FINN





HUCKLEBERRY FINN

ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN

(TOM SAWYER'S COMRADE)

SCENE: THE MISSISSIPPI VALLEY

TIME: FORTY TO FIFTY YEARS AGO

BY

MARK TWAIN

NOTICE

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.

BY ORDER OF THE AUTHOR

PER G. G., CHIEF OF ORDNANCE.

EXPLANATORY

IN this book a number of dialects are used, to wit: the Missouri negro dialect; the extremest form of the backwoods South-Western dialect; the ordinary "Pike-County" dialect; and four modified varieties of this last. The shadings have not been done in a hap-hazard fashion, or by guess-work; but pains-takingly, and with the trustworthy guidance and support of personal familiarity with these several forms of speech.

I make this explanation for the reason that without it many readers would suppose that all these characters were trying to talk alike and not succeeding.

THE AUTHOR.

Contents

CHAPTER I.	
Civilizing Huck.—Miss Watson.—Tom Sawyer Waits	13
CHAPTER II.	
The Boys Escape Jim.—Tom Sawyer's Gang.—Deep-laid Plans .	18
CHAPTER III.	
A Good Going-over.—Grace Triumphant.—“One of Tom Sawyer's Lies”	23
CHAPTER IV.	
Huck and the Judge.—Superstition	27
CHAPTER V.	
Huck's Father.—The Fond Parent.—Reform	31
CHAPTER VI.	
He Went for Judge Thatcher.—Huck Decides to Leave.—Political Economy.—Thrashing Around	36
CHAPTER VII.	
Laying for Him.—Locked in the Cabin.—Sinking the Body.—Resting	43
CHAPTER VIII.	
Sleeping in the Woods.—Raising the Dead.—Exploring the Island.—Finding Jim.—Jim's Escape.—Signs.—“Balum”	49
CHAPTER IX.	
The Cave.—The Floating House	59
CHAPTER X.	
The Find.—Old Hank Bunker.—In Disguise	63
CHAPTER XI.	
Huck and the Woman.—The Search.—Prevarication.—Going to Goshen	67
CHAPTER XII.	
Slow Navigation.—Borrowing Things.—Boarding the Wreck.—The Plotters.—Hunting for the Boat	74
CHAPTER XIII.	
Escaping from the Wreck.—The Watchman.—Sinking	81
CHAPTER XIV.	
A General Good Time.—The Harem.—French	86

CHAPTER XV.

- Huck Loses the Raft.—In the Fog.—Huck Finds the Raft.—
Trash. 91

CHAPTER XVI.

- “Give Us a Rest.”—The Corpse-Maker Crows.—“The Child of
Calamity.”—They Both Weaken.—Little Davy Steps In.—
After the Battle.—Ed’s Adventures.—Something Queer.—A
Haunted Barrel.—It Brings a Storm.—The Barrel Pursues.—
Killed by Lightning.—Allbright Atones.—Ed Gets Mad.—
Snake or Boy?—“Snake Him Out.”—Some Lively Lying.—Off
and Overboard.—Expectations.—A White Lie.—Floating
Currency.—Running by Cairo.—Swimming Ashore 96

CHAPTER XVII.

- An Evening Call.—The Farm in Arkansas.—Interior Decora-
tions.—Stephen Dowling Bots.—Poetical Effusions 117

CHAPTER XVIII.

- Col. Grangerford.—Aristocracy.—Feuds.—The Testament.—Re-
covering the Raft.—The Wood-pile.—Pork and Cabbage. 125

CHAPTER XIX.

- Tying Up Day-times.—An Astronomical Theory.—Running a Tem-
perance Revival.—The Duke of Bridgewater.—The Troubles
of Royalty 135

CHAPTER XX.

- Huck Explains.—Laying Out a Campaign.—Working the Camp-
meeting.—A Pirate at the Camp-meeting.—The Duke as a
Printer 143

CHAPTER XXI.

- Sword Exercise.—Hamlet’s Soliloquy.—They Loafed Around
Town.—A Lazy Town.—Old Boggs.—Dead 151

CHAPTER XXII.

- Sherburn.—Attending the Circus.—Intoxication in the Ring.—
The Thrilling Tragedy 161

CHAPTER XXIII.

- “Sold!”—Royal Comparisons.—Jim Gets Homesick 166

CHAPTER XXIV.

- Jim in Royal Robes.—They Take a Passenger.—Getting Infor-
mation.—Family Grief 171

CHAPTER XXV.

- “Is It *Them?*”—Singing the “Doxologer.”—Awful Square.—Fu-
neral Orgies.—A Bad Investment 177

CHAPTER XXVI.

- A Pious King.—The King’s Clergy.—She Asked His Pardon.—
Hiding in the Room.—Huck Takes the Money 184