



Satire or Evasion? Black Perspectives on Huckleberry Finn

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Though one of America's best known and loved novels, Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* has often been the object of fierce controversy because of its racist language and reliance on racial stereotypes. This collection of fifteen essays by prominent African American scholars and critics examines the novel's racist elements and assesses the degree to which Twain's ironies succeed or fail to turn those elements into a satirical attack on racism.

Ranging from the laudatory to the openly hostile, these essays include personal impressions of *Huckleberry Finn*, descriptions of classroom experience with the book, evaluations of its ironic and allegorical aspects, explorations of its nineteenth-century context, and appraisal of its effects on twentieth-century African American writers. Among the issues the authors contend with are Twain's pervasive use of the word "nigger," his portrayal of the slave Jim according to the conventions of the minstrel show "darker," and the thematic chaos created by the "evasion" depicted in the novel's final chapters.

Sure to provoke thought and stir debate, *Satire or Evasion?* provides a variety of new perspectives on one of this country's most troubling classics.

Contributors. Richard K. Barksdale, Bernard W. Bell, Mary Kemp Davis, Peaches M. Henry, Betty Harris Jones, Rhett S. Jones, Julius Lester, Donnarae MacCann, Charles H. Nichols, Charles H. Nilon, Arnold Rampersad, David L. Smith, Carmen Dubryan, John H. Wallace, Kenny Jackson Williams, Fredrick Woodard

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