

CHAPTER TWO

Behind the Masks of Obedience:

Model Children in Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and "The Story of the Good Little Boy Who Did Not Prosper"

And last of all came the Model Boy, Willie Mufferson, taking as heedful care of his mother as if she were cut glass. He always brought his mother to church, and was the pride of all the matrons. The boys all hated him, he was so good; and besides, he had been "thrown up to them" so much. His white handkerchief was hanging out of his pocket behind, as usual on Sundays—accidentally. Tom had no handkerchief, and he looked upon boys who had as snobs.

—Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*

Once Jim stole the teacher's penknife, and, when he was afraid it would be found out, and he would get whipped, he slipped it into George Wilson's cap—poor Widow Wilson's son, the moral boy, the good little boy of the village, who always obeyed his mother, and never told an untruth, and was fond of his lessons and infatuated with Sunday-school.

—Mark Twain, "The Story of the Bad Little Boy Who Didn't Come to Grief"

As the epigraphs suggest, model children portrayed by Mark Twain show the endearing but effeminate traits such as docility, devoutness, diligence, obedience, and gentility, all of which are the core values of disciplinary practices. Not only do these docile boys submit to the demands of the family and religious authorities but they behave so well that they usually become "the pride of all the matrons" (*Tom Sawyer* 42). Despite the fact that model children, who adhere to the rules of the disciplinary practices, meet adults' expectations, their excellent performances in their daily lives do not guarantee unalloyed happiness, respect, and prosperity. For example, although Willie Mufferson is acclaimed as a model boy in St. Petersburg, who is usually "thrown up to" (*Tom Sawyer* 42) the matrons, he is neither admired nor popular among his peers; instead, most of the boys who are not seen

as model children loathe him and see him as a snob. Like Mufferson, who is ostracized and despised by his peers, George Wilson, “the good little boy of the village” (“Bad Little Boy” 12), does not prosper; instead, he suffers misfortune. For example, he is made a scapegoat for the crime he does not perpetrate. The bad little boy, Jim, pilfers a penknife from his teacher, but he “slip[s] it into George Wilson’s cap” (“Bad Little Boy” 12) when he wants to escape the corporal punishment imposed by his teacher; thus, the model child, though being innocent of the pilferage, gets the teacher’s merciless lashing. Through highlighting the misery of the two model children, Mark Twain seems to poke fun at these model children who embrace the moral principles of the disciplinary practices and criticize the social thinking on how a child might be endeared to adults. In order to examine how Mark Twain thinks of the institutionalized thinking on model children, this chapter will center on Mark Twain’s model children, specifically concentrating upon Sid and Jacob, and then study the influence of the disciplinary practices and their effeminate codes of conduct upon these two model children.

Through investigating the impact of the two distinctive disciplinary practices devised by the multiple authorities upon the two different types of model children that are portrayed in Mark Twain’s *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and “The Story of the Good Little Boy Who Did Not Prosper,” this chapter will attempt to show how Mark Twain undermines the disciplinary systems in the hope of stripping off the masks worn by those “model” boys and demystifying the notion of model children. It will start from revealing a hierarchical structure of disciplinary systems between the adult world and the children’s world. It will first analyze how the fictional society, St. Petersburg, moulds its adults into socially acceptable people by means of the discourse on social norms as well as the disciplinary and punitive mechanisms. Then, this chapter will demonstrate that these two disciplinary practices in the adult world of St. Petersburg will greatly affect the ways adults educate or discipline their children because most of the adults, who internalize the social values embedded in the two disciplinary

practices, will adopt the similar approaches to disciplining their children. Through examining the reasons why and showing the ways how adults constitute and use the control mechanisms and the discourse on model children, this chapter will reveal how the repressive measures and the written language meticulously control and manipulate children. Lastly, by using the two disciplinary strategies as the framework for the analysis of the model children, this chapter will not only explain why they comply with the constraints imposed by the adults but also examine how they cope with the multiple authorities, in order to see how the authorities assert their control over these obedient children and investigate how these docile children abuse the privilege conferred on them by the authorities. Through examining the ulterior motives for their obedience, moreover, this chapter will investigate how the two model children, Sid and Jacob, are respectively depraved and ruined by the two disciplinary practices. Finally, by contrasting these two model children with Huck Finn, this chapter not only aims to uncover Sid's hypocrisy and Jacob's gullibility but also reveals an ironical paradox, a situation in which the wild child, Huck Finn, can meet the criteria for being a naturally good boy without being afflicted by the manipulation of the disciplinary practices.

I

The Adult World in St. Petersburg:

In *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Mark Twain gives Judge Thatcher a privileged status as a role model of a socially acceptable man and of how contentment can be found in being an admirable personage. This "fine, portly, middle-aged gentleman" (*Tom Sawyer* 37), Mark Twain suggests, is not only a law-abiding and well-educated citizen but also a powerful county judge who has the authority to deal with the social matters that affect the community as a whole. After Tom and Becky's rescue from the cave, for example, Judge Thatcher immediately commands some inhabitants to have the

door of the cave “sheathed with boiler iron” (*Tom Sawyer* 225) lest anyone else get lost in that labyrinth again. Moreover, when Tom and Huck get a windfall from the cave, the judge is also vested with power to take charge of their money and “put it out at interest” (*Huck Finn* 13). Whenever this influential and powerful man appears in public places, as illustrated in the amusing episode of the Sunday school, he may be courted, admired, and gazed in awe. Basking in the admiration of the general public, this local celebrity, who seems to “beam a majestic judicial smile” (*Tom Sawyer* 38) upon the whole hamlet, becomes “the most august creation” (*Tom Sawyer* 37) that the little children in St. Petersburg have ever seen. Awe-stricken by this “prodigious personage” (*Tom Sawyer* 37), most of the children always “wonder what kind of material he [is] made of; and they half want to hear him roar, and [are] half afraid he might, too” (*Tom Sawyer* 37).

Despite the fact that those little children have no inkling of what secret ingredients the judge is made, Mark Twain implies the real materials used to shape a socially acceptable man are a set of social values and control mechanisms, both of which are highly relative to the children’s daily life. In order to safeguard the security and property of each inhabitant, the society where Mark Twain’s children live will devise two strategies to mould its dwellers into socially acceptable people, such as Judge Thatcher and his lawyer brother. The first strategy is a discourse on social norms which clearly teaches people what they can and cannot do under specific circumstances, whereas the second strategy is a set of disciplinary and punitive mechanisms that are used as an effective means of punishing those violating the social regulations and of compelling people to meet the minimum standards of being a socially acceptable man. Through these two strategies, Mark Twain suggests each inhabitant, like a lump of formless clay, can be baked into a graceful shape that his society wishes him to be, and that the peace and stability of the society will thus be maintained.

The Discourse on Social Norms:

In the fifth century A.D., an anonymous Indian mentor whose job was to instruct the different facets of kingship for princes had ever written a collection of animal fables, *Panchatantra*,¹ in which he indoctrinated the princes into a strong belief in social security: “Nor a gift of a cow, nor a gift of land, nor yet a gift of food, is so important as the gift of safety, which is declared to be the greatest gift among all gifts in this world” (qtd. in Edgerton 1). This ancient belief, albeit *démodé* and hackneyed, is reflected in Mark Twain’s fictional town, St. Petersburg, in and around which its inhabitants feel a keen urge to maintain their social order through a set of rules, or rather social norms, because they all hope to dwell in a safe social community. In light of the types of human behavior, the inhabitants of St. Petersburg establish two forms of social norms—the norms which not only reflect their shared tenets and ideas about various aspects of their society but also prescribe and proscribe their demeanor under given circumstances. Without the norms that regulate social behavior, they consider that their life will be in chaos, and that any social interaction will be impossible.

Mark Twain suggests that the first type of social norms, known as “folkways” (Sumner 1), is “rules governing behavior of no great social import or consequences” (Bryant 8). Included in this kind of behavior are the norms regarding table manners, etiquette, dress code, language usage, and social manners. For example, these norms are meticulously illustrated in the episode of the Sunday school where the superintendent is depicted as a stalwart conformist of these generally accepted standards of social behavior. While standing in front of the pulpit, he gets habituated to wearing “a stiff standing-collar whose upper edge almost reach[es] his ears and whose sharp points curve[s] forward abreast the corners of his mouth” (*Tom Sawyer* 36). Moreover, “his chin [is] propped on a spreading cravat which [is] as broad

¹ *Panchatantra*, is a compilation of five volumes of stories written by an anonymous teacher in order to instruct princes how to rule a kingdom. It is mainly used to help princes to know how to rule, how to choose friends as well as ministers, and how to conduct their demeanor in their daily lives.

and as long as a bank-note, and [has] fringed ends; his boot toes [are] turned sharply up, in the fashion of the day, like sleigh-runners—an effect patiently and laboriously produced by the young men by sitting with their toes pressed against a wall for hours together” (*Tom Sawyer* 36). Whenever he is delivering his interminable sermons or speeches, he is always scrupulous about his language usage that he does not use on weekdays. Despite the fact that the folkways influence people’s behavior, making or teaching them to act in a more sensible or gentle way, transgressors of such social norms, like Huck’s raggedly-dressed father, will not be severely chastised or sanctioned because the inhabitants believe that even if they are confronted with “massive violations of such norms, the existence and continuation of society would not be imperiled” (Bryant 9); in other words, a breach of the folkways might only lead to a disagreeable and uncivilized society, but not pose an imminent threat to the security of a whole society.

In contrast to the folkways that have less severe sanctions, Mark Twain suggests that the second type of social norms, known as “mores” (Bryant 10), refers to “norms that are considered essential to the existence of social life and the continuation of society” (Bryant 10). Mark Twain implies the inhabitants of St. Petersburg do not tend to level vehement criticism against the violation of the folkways, but, by contrast, they feel inclined to place a premium on the public compliance with the mores, for any transgression of the mores may not only imperil the security and stability of their society but also jeopardize their lives and property. In *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, for instance, Mark Twain reveals at least three distinct examples of mores, including the prohibition against murder as well as fraudulence, and the obligation to adhere to social beliefs. The first example of the prohibition against murder is illustrated in the episode of the premeditated murder of the Widow Douglas. When Huck follows Injun Joe and his companion to the Widow Douglas’s house where he eavesdrops on their conversation about their scheme to

“slit her nostrils” (*Tom Sawyer* 202) and “notch her ears like a sow” (*Tom Sawyer* 202) as a vengeance, he immediately goes galloping down the hill to the Welshman’s house and pleads with them to save the widow’s life. On hearing this stunning piece of news, the old man and his sons seize their guns and rush to the scene of the crime to forbid the two villains from killing the widow. The second example of the prohibition against fraudulence is epitomized by people’s resentment at the king and the duke. After Jim discloses the details of these two imposters’ “scandalous show” (*Huck Finn* 239), the townspeople decide to banish “the owdacious loafers out of town” (*Huck Finn* 239) and have the two impudent liars tarred and feathered like “a couple of monstrous big soldier-plumes” (*Huck Finn* 239). The last example of mores is adumbrated in an unwritten agreement to slavery institute. If anyone like Huck breaches this social belief and helps “a nigger to get his freedom” (*Huck Finn* 222), the unrelenting pressure of public opinion will grind this betrayer down and make him “get down and lick his [townspeople’s] boots for shame” (*Huck Finn* 222). Despite the fact that the mores function as social constraints, the inhabitants of St. Petersburg still think of them as a must because the mores offer them a set of rules that clearly tell them what they can or cannot do, think, and say in specific circumstances.

Through the two forms of the social norms, the inhabitants, Mark Twain suggests, are able to know what is appropriate, correct, desirable, and normal. For example, they know they are required to dress up as “a man and a brother” (*Tom Sawyer* 33), when going to church on Sundays, for, according to the dress code, it is considered profanity if they are dressed casually in any religious ceremonies. Moreover, they know etiquette is important on formal occasions, particularly on the occasion when a bigwig shows up. As Judge Thatcher, “a prodigious personage” (*Tom Sawyer* 37) in St. Petersburg, visits the Sunday-school class, the superintendent, the librarian, the young lady teachers and gentleman teachers not only give this unexpected visitor “the highest seat of honour” (*Tom Sawyer* 37) but also endeavor

to show him their obsequious manners by “‘showing off,’ with all sorts of official bustlings and activities, giving orders, delivering judgments, discharging directions here, there, everywhere that [they] could find a target” (*Tom Sawyer* 38). On the other hand, the inhabitants, Mark Twain suggests, are instructed that they cannot kill, hurt, cheat, or betray other people; otherwise, their violation of the mores will be seen as an unpardonable offense and their conscience might be terribly smitten.

Disciplinary and Punitive Mechanisms:

Although the inhabitants of St. Petersburg know how to behave and think normally through the instructions of the social norms, there is still a large discrepancy between understanding the guidelines and completely accepting them. Not every one of the inhabitants, Mark Twain intimates, is willing to comply with the social norms with which he or she is already familiar. For instance, Huck’s drunken father, whose hair is “long and tangled and greasy, and hung down” (*Huck Finn* 31), is always dressed in rags. Whenever this demon-like scoundrel drinks himself into a stupor, he would “raise Cain around town; and every time he raise[s] Cain he [gets] jailed” (*Huck Finn* 36). Even the well-educated and promising young man, Doctor Robinson, risks perpetrating the crime of grave-robbing. Being in cahoots with Muff Potter and Injun Joe, Robinson orders the two villains to dig up Hoss Williams’s corpse, “pr[y] off the [coffin’s] lid with their shovels, [get] out the body and dump it rudely on the ground” (*Tom Sawyer* 77). Through the illustration of these two examples, Mark Twain suggests that the social norms, which are actually more like the conscience-oriented and unwritten rules of social behavior, should be made into “legal norms” (Hechter and Opp xi)—a deliberative process which formalizes and specifies the social norms “to the extent of being enacted as legislation or ordinances” (Bryant 11). In other words, without some means of legal enforcement, the social norms would merely serve as ideal, but ineffective,

affirmations and, in consequence, the society may not successfully mould its citizens into socially acceptable men.

The enactment of the social norms into written laws, Mark Twain suggests, is a much more effective way of disciplining people, on the grounds that the law itself has a set of disciplinary and punitive mechanisms which can be employed as an effective tactical weapon in curbing the excesses of human behavior. Included in these legal sanctions are imprisonment, capital punishment, corporal punishment, and surveillance.² Mark Twain suggests these sanctions will be usually enforced by a group of social elites standing at the top of the social pyramid, such as presidents, governors, judges, lawyers, generals, and sheriffs. For instance, after the horrible news of Dr. Robinson's murder flies "from man to man, from group to group, from house to house" (*Tom Sawyer* 88), a throng of villagers, the sheriff, and the horsemen, who seem to be "electrified with the ghastly news" (*Tom Sawyer* 88), are ransacking for the culprit, Muff Potter, for they would not allow anyone to violate the law, neither would they tolerate anyone who poses a hazard to their lives. As they gather in the cemetery and find "the grisly spectacle" (*Tom Sawyer* 89), some people immediately recognize Potter's "gory knife" (*Tom Sawyer* 88) that is "close to the murdered man" (*Tom Sawyer* 88) whereas other people who sympathize with the murdered doctor insist that Potter should be hung. In addition, people in St. Petersburg, Mark Twain implies, are kept under constant close surveillance day and night because "a belated citizen" (*Tom Sawyer* 88) declares that he carefully watches Potter "washing himself in the 'branch' about one or two o'clock in the morning, and that Potter [has] at once sneaked off—suspicious circumstances, especially the washing which [is] not a habit with Potter" (*Tom Sawyer* 88). Though Potter denies murdering Robinson, the real murderer, Injun Joe, puts the blame on him, falsely describing how Potter perpetrates the crime. In consequence, this poor scapegoat is arrested

² Jennifer M. Gore suggests that surveillance "was found frequently during our observations—where surveillance was defined as 'supervising, closely observing, watching, threatening to watch, or expecting to be watched'" (235).

for the culpable homicide and temporarily incarcerated in a dilapidated penitentiary³ until the judge gives him a definite sentence in court. Despite its stringency and inflexibility, Mark Twain suggests that this control mechanism, which develops from human fear of punishment and death, becomes coercive and effective measures to eliminate any heterogeneous social members and impel each inhabitant to reach a satisfactory standard sanctioned by his society. Even if the inhabitants find it difficult to become a perfect model of their society such as Judge Thatcher and his brother, they must at least guarantee not to infringe the law or imperil the public safety, or they will definitely suffer the same public humiliations as Potter does.

Through the illustration of the discourse on social norms and the control mechanisms, Mark Twain reveals the baseness of human nature, but he also suggests that this human imperfection can be tamed by a set of disciplinary training, through which a man can learn how to control his demeanor, obey social rules, and most importantly, avoid stepping into the path laid ahead by Pap, Injun Joe, Muff Potter, the King, and the Duke. In order to avoid being punished by and excluded from their society, most of the inhabitants might not only adapt themselves to the behavior and thinking patterns of their living community but also gradually internalize the moral values and the control systems to the extent of recognizing them as a powerful tool for disciplining themselves and their younger generation. In other words, once the inhabitants, such as Judge Thatcher, Aunt Polly, the Widow Douglas, Miss Watson, and the superintendent, are successfully socialized into decent and law-abiding citizens, they will not merely behave and think as their society tells them but also acknowledge the need for social constraints. Their recognition of the ways in which their society disciplines them will thus evolve into a normative paradigm for each inhabitant to emulate.

³ In *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Mark Twain describes the prison in St. Petersburg as “a trifling little brick den that [stands] in a marsh at the edge of the village” (92). He says the jail is “seldom occupied” (92), so “no guards [are] afforded for it” (92).

II

The Children's World in St. Petersburg:

Adults' High Expectations for their Younger Generation:

Since most of the adults in St. Petersburg internalize the social values that are embedded in the two disciplinary mechanisms, they may have a value judgment as to how a man could be accepted or admired by their living community. This kind of value judgment, Mark Twain implies, has two profound impacts on their ways of educating the younger generation because it keeps reminding them of what is sanctioned in their society. The first impact, Mark Twain suggests, is shown in their high expectations for their children while the second impact is their acute anxiety to eliminate any heterogeneous element that may have a detrimental effect on children. For instance, their value judgment reminds them a decent and law-abiding man, like the judge, is highly expected whereas a perpetrator of crimes, like Injun Joe, is strongly disapproved of or even despised by their society. Affected by these social criteria for judging how acceptable a man is, most of the adults would lead their children along the path that is recognized by the adult world for fear that those little children would go astray. They may encourage their children to emulate the success of judges, lawyers, and generals because these social elites not only represent a positive role model for everyone but also symbolize power and authority. In the episode of Muff Potter's trial, for example, many people carefully watch how the prosecutor brings charges against Muff Potter and how Potter's defense attorney tricks Injun Joe into confession. Through the two lawyers' professional performances, the audiences of that murder trial see clearly how a man's life can be decided by those people in power. Deeply impressed by the lawyers' immense power and social prestige, most of the adults may encourage their children to follow in the footsteps of these powerful people, hoping that their children will enjoy the same authority and respect as they grow up. This kind of expectation is illustrated much more meticulously in a later scene,

when Judge Thatcher strongly advises Tom to be “a great lawyer or a great soldier some day” (*Tom Sawyer* 242). Deeply moved by Tom’s courage to get his daughter out of the cave and take the whipping for her at school, Judge Thatcher not only “conceive[s] a great opinion of Tom” (*Tom Sawyer* 242) but also “mean[s] to look to it that Tom should be admitted to the National Military Academy and afterward trained in the best law school in the country, in order that he might be ready for either career, or both” (*Tom Sawyer* 242). Clearly understanding the special privileges of those social elites and the severe punishment of criminal offense, most of the adults like the judge are anxious to aid their children in searching out the right path, impose the generally accepted values upon them, and steer them away from any antisocial behavior. Through the two illustrations, therefore, Mark Twain suggests the adults not only hold those social elites in great esteem but also entertain great hopes of the younger generation.

Adults’ Acute Anxiety to Eliminate the Heterogeneity of the Children’s Group:

The adults’ effort to guide their children towards the right path can be seen much more clearly in their anxiety to exclude or even eliminate any heterogeneous element which they believe may deprave and corrupt their children. This heterogeneous element, Mark Twain suggests, is embodied in “the juvenile pariah of the village, Huckleberry Finn, son of the town drunkard” (*Tom Sawyer* 51). This juvenile outcast is “cordially hated and dreaded by all the mothers of the town” (*Tom Sawyer* 51), for these mothers usually see him as an uncivilized barbarian who always violates the social norms. For instance, Huck’s attire always offends these well-cultivated mothers because he is “always dressed in the cast-off clothes of full-grown men, and they [are] in perennial bloom and fluttering with rags” (*Tom Sawyer* 51). Moreover, this ragamuffin’s “hat [is] a vast ruin with a wide crescent lopped out of its brim; his coat, when he [wears] one, hung nearly to his heels and [has] the rearward

buttons far down the back; but one suspender supported his trousers; the seat of the trousers bagged low and contained nothing; the fringed legs dragged in the dirt when not rolled up.” (*Tom Sawyer* 51-52). In addition to his obtrusive shabby clothes, Huck’s social manners and intemperate behavior are utterly repugnant to those genteel mothers. As Mark Twain says in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*:

Huckleberry [comes] and [goes], at his own free will. He [sleeps] on doorsteps in fine weather and in empty hogsheads in wet; he [does] not have to go to school or to church, or call any being master or obey anybody; he could go fishing or swimming when and where he chose, and stay as long as it suited him; nobody [forbids] him to fight; he could sit up as late as he pleased; he [is] always the first boy that [goes] barefoot in the spring and the last to resume leather in the fall; he never [has] to wash, nor put on clean clothes; he could swear wonderfully. (52)

Despite the fact that Huck is free to swim, play, curse, and walk barefoot without any encumbrance of the church, school, parental harassment, and personal hygiene, most of the adults regard his freedom from adult authorities as self-indulgence and always frown at him disapprovingly. For instance, in order to prevent their children from being contaminated by this contemptible outsider, who is “idle and lawless and vulgar and bad” (*Tom Sawyer* 51), they not only warn their children “not to play with him” (*Tom Sawyer* 51) but also forbid them to have any face-to-face contact with Huck Finn. If anyone like Tom Sawyer boldly confesses to his teacher that “*I stopped to talk with Huckleberry Finn!*” (*Tom Sawyer* 56), he or she will definitely face the same catastrophe as Tom and get the most horrible lashings from their demon-like teacher, who takes corporal punishment as his great pleasure. The adults’ abhorrence of Huck Finn is illustrated much more lucidly in the episode of the three boys’ obsequies where all of the inhabitants, dressed in the deepest mourning, only exuberantly welcome the return of Tom and Joe and completely ignore Huck. On seeing the

three dead boys come “marching up the aisle, Tom in the lead, Joe next, and Huck, a ruin of drooping rags, sneaking sheepishly in the rear” (*Tom Sawyer* 131), Aunt Polly, Mary, and Joe’s family tightly embrace Tom and Joe, “smother them with kisses and pour out thanksgivings, while poor Huck [stands] abashed and uncomfortable, not knowing exactly what to do or where to hide from so many unwelcoming eyes” (*Tom Sawyer* 131). Feeling increasingly uncomfortable under the inhabitants’ unwelcome gaze, Huck starts to sneak away. But Tom seizes him, complaining that “Aunt Polly, it ain’t fair. Somebody’s got to be glad to see Huck” (*Tom Sawyer* 131). Following Tom’s request, Aunt Polly gives Huck a warm hug and tries hard to show him her “loving attentions” (*Tom Sawyer* 132), which makes Huck much “more uncomfortable than he [is] before” (*Tom Sawyer* 132). By showing the adults’ antipathy towards Huck Finn, in short, Mark Twain suggests that the adults in St. Petersburg would endeavor to insulate their “harassed, hampered, [but] respectable” (*Tom Sawyer* 52) children from any defilement of this unkempt and ill-bred urchin, in that they would not like to see their children become another social outcasts whom everyone regards with disdain.

III

The Disciplinary System of the Children’s World as a Microcosm of that of the Adult World:

The disciplinary system of the children’s world, Mark Twain suggests, can be seen as a microcosm of that of the adult world because its inner workings usually operate in the similar way as those of the social macrocosm. In order to secure the success of their children and forestall any deviant behavior, Mark Twain suggests that the four authorities—family and church, school and society—are anxious to impose strict discipline upon their children. These multiple authorities might employ two disciplinary approaches to train their children to

behave and think as the ways they expect, for they believe that children, if not disciplined, may become good-for-nothings, like Huck and Injun Joe, and make no contribution to their society. The first approach they adopt is a set of control mechanisms which impose upon children rules, obligation, constraint, prohibition, and punishment, whereas the second approach is a discourse on model children which teaches children how to behave well by showing them a plethora of imaginary role models in their Sunday-school books. Through the two manipulative practices, the adults believe that they will be able to make their children comply with their orders and shape them into “good little boys and girls” (*Tom Sawyer* 36) whom everyone likes.

Control Mechanisms:

In contrast to the adult world’s disciplinary mechanisms that hinge on law enforcement, the control practices in the children’s world, which are used as an effective means of disciplining and punishing children, require an enclosed area, a specific place which allows adults to make possible the meticulous control of children’s bodies,⁴ minds, time, and activities. Included in this kind of enclosure are homes, churches, and schools, beyond which adults may find it difficult to have a hold upon their children. For instance, after the Widow Douglas adopts Huck and plans to civilize this “poor lost lamb” (*Huck Finn* 14), Huck’s body and mind are always manipulated by the Widow Douglas and Miss Watson. These two guardians “make [him] get up just at the same time every morning; [they] make [him] wash, they comb [him] all to thunder; [they] won’t let [him] sleep in the woodshed; [he] [gets] to wear them blamed clothes that just smothers [him]” (*Tom Sawyer* 243). Furthermore, Miss Watson, “a tolerable slim old maid, with goggles on” (*Huck Finn* 15), is eager to teach Huck “with a spelling-book” (*Huck Finn* 15), impart the Christian values to him, and modify his

⁴ Andrew Edgar and Peter Sedgwick suggest the function of exercising control over bodies. They argue that “exerting power over the body functions as a means of defining subjectivity and thereby shaping and policing social order” (75).

inappropriate behavior. Whenever Huck feels bored with Miss Watson's lessons and almost falls into a trance, "Miss Watson would say, 'Don't put your feet up there, Huckleberry;' and 'Don't scrunch up like that, Huckleberry—set up straight;' and pretty soon she would say, 'Don't gap and stretch like that, Huckleberry—why don't you try to behave'" (*Huck Finn* 15)? In addition to the physical and mental manipulation, Huck's activities are strictly controlled by his two adopters. For example, not only does he "[get] to wear shoes" (*Tom Sawyer* 243) on Sundays but he also has to go to church where he can neither "ketch a fly" (*Tom Sawyer* 243) nor "chaw" anything (*Tom Sawyer* 243); instead, the only thing he can do there is hear the "ornery sermons" (*Tom Sawyer* 243) which he reviles most. Moreover, he "[gets] to ask to go a-fishing; [he] [gets] to ask to go in a-swimming—dern'd if [he] hain't got to ask to do everything" (*Tom Sawyer* 243). His time is also well scheduled by the widow. Whenever the widow rings her bell, he must go to eat, go to bed, or get up immediately. In short, the Widow Douglas and Miss Watson hope that Huck can be changed into a well-mannered and civilized boy through their overall control.

Like Huck Finn, Tom Sawyer undergoes the similar treatment. Before going to church on Sundays, Tom is always forced to memorize the verses of the Holy Bible, clean his dirty face, and put on "a suit of his clothing that [has] been used only on Sundays" (*Tom Sawyer* 33). This wardrobe always makes Tom very uncomfortable because "there [is] a restraint about whole clothes and cleanliness that gall[s] him" (*Tom Sawyer* 33). He has to "button his neat roundabout up to his chin, turn his vast shirt collar down over his shoulders, brush him off, and crown him with his speckled straw hat" (*Tom Sawyer* 33). After making himself look "exceedingly improved" (*Tom Sawyer* 33), Tom is confined to the Sunday school and the church where he is compelled to listen to the moral edifications and tedious sermons given by the minister. If Tom causes his aunt big trouble and irritates her, his aunt may impose physical punishment on him. For instance, after Tom, Joe, and Huck sneak away from their homes to

Jackson's Island, the three young pirates are free from any burden of authority interference because they have overstepped the boundaries of the control mechanisms. In that earthly paradise, not only can these boys eat "some bacon" (*Tom Sawyer* 103) that Tom and Joe purloin from their homes but they are free to go swimming and fishing as they wish. While tarrying in that desolate islet, the boys can enjoy the chance to frolic around in nature and temporarily get rid of the constraints of the multiple authorities because they "don't have to get up, mornings, and [they] don't have to go to school, and wash, and all that blame foolishness" (*Tom Sawyer* 104). Nevertheless, after Tom returns from the island and gives his aunt a great surprise in his funeral ceremony, he "[gets] more cuffs and kisses that day—according to Aunt Polly's varying moods—than he [has] earned before in a year; and he hardly [knows] which express[es] the most gratefulness to God and affection for himself" (*Tom Sawyer* 132).

In addition to homes and churches, Tom's school is another place where his teacher, Mr. Dobbins, is able to manipulate the students' minds and bodies. For example, those little boys and girls, who are given many hackneyed themes of compositions, are asked to deliver bombastic speeches with dramatic gestures on "'Examination' day" (*Tom Sawyer* 151). Provided those students do not pay attention in class, their violent teacher whose tempers will flare even in "the least shortcomings" (*Tom Sawyer* 151) might treat these absent-minded students with various kinds of punishments such as spanking, lashing, belting, and whipping, all of which, as Peter Messent suggests, "play a prominent role in Twain's boy fictions" (219). Their teacher's oppression, for instance, can be seen in the episode of tick-running where Tom and Joe are playing with the tick. Each of them almost forgets his class, attempting to keep the tick on his side of the desk by harassing it with a pin. While they start to argue midway through the game, their teacher secretly appears behind them and gives both of the boys a tremendous whack on their shoulders. Like his body and mind, Tom's time and

activities are sometimes dominated by his aunt. This kind of manipulation, for example, is clearly illustrated in the episode where Tom is deprived of his happy holiday because he is ordered to whitewash the fence on a beautiful Saturday morning as a punishment for playing truant. Through the “calculated constraint [that] runs slowly through each part” (Foucault 135) of those children’s lives, in short, Mark Twain suggests that the adults wish to keep their children under their close and constant surveillance and transform their children into docile objects that are completely under their sway.

Despite the fact that children can be manipulated and trained by the control mechanisms, their need for discipline and punishment conveys a message: children, or rather human beings, are not born perfect, so they require the repressive measures to train them with good qualities that are necessary to be “great men and good men” (*Tom Sawyer* 40). Most of the adults in St. Petersburg, Mark Twain implies, acquiesce to this fact, but their acquiescence does not mean they have lost faith in their children because they still relish the thought of having a naturally-born perfect child free from the fetters of adults’ manipulation. These contradictory feelings, for instance, are adumbrated in the scene of the Sunday school where the superintendent knows clearly children are not naturally-born pious and diligent. Without the tickets given as rewards for well-recited Bible verses, he believes children might not “have the industry and application to memorize two thousand verses” (*Tom Sawyer* 35). Notwithstanding their imperfection, children are still expected to possess such praiseworthy qualities as politeness and piety, diligence and honesty, integrity and thoughtfulness without inflicting any external interference or deliberate control upon them. This kind of expectation, for instance, is illustrated in the episode of the Bible-awarding ceremony where Judge Thatcher mistakes Tom Sawyer for a hard-working boy who *spontaneously* recites the verses. As the judge gives plenty of praise and encouragement to Tom, he not only “put[s] his hand on Tom’s head and call[s] him a fine little man” (*Tom Sawyer* 39) but also compliments him

on his perseverance and says:

That's it! That's a good boy. Fine boy. Fine, manly little fellow. Two thousand verses is a great many—very, very great many. And you never can be sorry for the trouble you took to learn them; for knowledge is worth more than anything there is in the world; it's what makes great men and good men; you'll be a great man and a good man yourself, some day, Thomas. (*Tom Sawyer* 40)

Through the two examples above, Mark Twain implies that most of the adults, like the judge, are enmeshed in an embarrassing situation. They cherish hopes for their children and have an ideal image of children in their minds. As the Bible-awarding ceremony illustrates, they may feel elated when they come across a child who can come up to their expectations. Nevertheless, they are usually frustrated by the reality and forced to acknowledge that children are not naturally good, so they feel obliged to shape their children into the ideal type they expect through imposing the control practices upon them. Therefore, in order to defuse this tension and satisfy their psychological need for a flawless child, they use imagination and language to create a number of model children in Sunday-school books, through which they can compensate for their feelings of loss and make their children strive towards the image of perfection.

The Discourse on Model Children:⁵

In contrast to the high-handed tactics of the control mechanisms, the discourse on model children, which is adumbrated in children's Sunday-school books, can dispense with the nervous tension caused by the control mechanisms, for it disseminates its dominant ideas about how a child can be held in veneration by means of written language. In "The Story of

⁵ John Storey suggests "[d]iscourse is the means by which institutions wield their power through a process of definition and exclusion. What he [Foucault] means by this is the way particular discourses or discursive formations define what it is possible to say on any given topic. A discursive formation consists of a body of unwritten rules which attempt to regulate what can be written, thought and acted upon in a particular field" (92).

the Good Little Boy Who Did Not Prosper” and “The Story of the Bad Little Boy Who Didn’t Come to Grief,” for instance, Mark Twain suggests this institutionalized thinking is an effective means by which the multiple authorities can wield their immense power and influence over their children “through a process of definition and exclusion” (John Storey 92). Such a process, Mark Twain implies, can be discerned in Jacob Blivens’s Sunday-school books whose authors clearly define which distinctive characteristics are inherited in model children and which are not by depicting two contrasting types of children. The first type is “the good little boys” (“Good Little Boy” 30), who always enjoy prosperity and win the supreme accolade from many people, whereas the second type is the “bad little boys” (“Bad Little Boy” 10), who always suffer a catalogue of misfortune. Through extolling the virtues of the model children and blaming those wild children for their bad behavior, the authors of the Sunday-school books successfully construct a type of moral knowledge and reasoning, which makes children “conform to the accepted pattern of the community” (Campbell 125) without exercising any coercive measures upon them.⁶

According to the Sunday-school books closely perused by Jacob Blivens, model children are defined as virtuous boys, who “always [have] a good time” (“Good Little Boy” 30) and possess such endearing traits as compassion and benevolence, obedience and gentility. For example, if they see a blind man mired in mud, they will rush to save him and the man will give them “his blessing” (“Good Little Boy” 31) to repay all their kindness. When they discover “a lame dog that [hasn’t] any place to stay, and [is] hungry and persecuted” (“Good Little Boy” 31), they will “bring him home and pet him” (“Good Little Boy” 31). These kind-hearted boys, according to the description of the Sunday-school books, will be rewarded with “that dog’s imperishable gratitude” (“Good Little Boy” 31). In addition, when these well-mannered and elegant boys whose spoken language “always commence with ‘Oh, sir!’”

⁶ Raman Selden suggests that the functions of the discourses are to “determine and constrain the forms of knowledge, the types of normality and the nature of subjectivity” (106).

(“Good Little Boy” 32) are going to apply for a job as “a cabin-boy” (“Good Little Boy” 31), their teacher will write them the letters of recommendations, which will “move the tenderest emotions of ship captains” (“Good Little Boy” 32) because the letters are overflowing with the teacher’s extravagant compliment. Provided one of the moral boys is wronged by his malevolent classmate, who steals “the teacher’s pen-knife” (“Bad Little Boy” 12) at school and then shifts the responsibility for the theft onto him, the moral boy does not need to worry about the wild accusation, for, according to the depiction of the Sunday-school books, “a white-haired improbable justice of the peace” (“Bad Little Boy” 12) will “suddenly appear in their midst and strike an attitude and say, ‘Spare this noble boy—there stands the cowering culprit! I was passing the school-door at recess, and unseen myself, I saw the theft committed’” (“Bad Little Boy” 12)! Then, the bona fide thief will “get whaled” (“Bad Little Boy” 12) and the justice will take the moral boy by the hand and “say such a boy deserved to be exalted, and then tell him to come and make his home with him, and sweep out the office, and make fires, and run errands, and chop wood, and study law, and help his wife do household labors, and have all the balance of the time to play, and get forty cents a month, and be happy” (“Bad Little Boy” 12). In other words, the Sunday-school books imply that model children, who are always under the aegis of justice, are invulnerable to any slander.

Unlike the model children that always enjoy the unalloyed joy and respect, those excluded from the category of model children are defined as insidious and malicious boys, who need to face various kinds of catastrophes and punishments. These vicious boys in the Sunday-school books “are nearly always called James” (“Bad Little Boy” 10) and “have sick mothers” (“Bad Little Boy” 11), who suffer from “the consumption” (“Bad Little Boy” 10). Although their invalid mothers are anxious that “the world might be harsh and cold towards [their boys]” (“Bad Little Boy” 11) after they pass away, these wicked boys seem to be unaffected by their mothers’ “strong love” (“Bad Little Boy” 10). Instead of trying to be

considerate towards their dying mothers, these selfish boys take delight in causing their family terrible trouble. However, the trouble stirred up by these naughty boys will in turn make them get injured, repent of their wrongdoing, have an enormous sense of guilt, and finally lead them to annihilation. For instance, they may steal “the key of the pantry, and slip in there and help himself to some jam, and fill up the vessel with tar so that his mother would never know the difference” (“Bad Little Boy” 11). But, they may be suddenly racked by with guilt and hear a sound whispering to him, “Is it right to disobey my mother? Isn’t in sinful to do this? Where do bad little boys go who gobble up their good kind mother’s jam” (“Bad Little Boy” 11)? Then, these mischievous boys will “kneel down all alone and promise never to be wicked any more, and rise up with a light, happy heart, and go and tell [their] mother[s] all about it and beg [their] forgiveness, and be blessed by [them] with tears of pride and thankfulness in [their] eyes” (“Bad Little Boy” 11). Moreover, these knavish children are usually depicted as mean boys, who dare to “climb up in Farmer Acorn’s apple-tree to steal apples” (“Bad Little Boy” 11), but, according to the description of the Sunday-school books, they may “fall and break [their] arm[s], and get torn by the farmer’s great dog, and then languish on a sick bed for weeks, and repent and become good” (“Bad Little Boy” 11). Compared with the childish antics and the crime of pilferage, impiety is regarded as an unpardonable offence in the Sunday-school books. In order to convince children to forgo their pleasure on Sunday and go to church instead, those authors of the Sunday-school books invent a sad story of the impious boys where the boys always die in a tragic accident. For example, the authors show that boys who “[go] boating on Sunday” (“Bad Little Boy” 12) will “get drowned” (“Bad Little Boy” 12). Moreover, if boys go fishing on the Sabbath, they will “get caught out in storms” (“Bad Little Boy” 12) and “get struck by lightning” (“Bad Little Boy” 12). Through the warning of the horrible story, hence, the authors may not only successfully intimidate children into going to church on Sunday but also cleverly inveigle

their young readers into believing that playing adventures on the Sabbath will cause death.

By clearly delineating the differences between model children and non-model children, the authors of the Sunday-school books, Mark Twain suggests, are able to transform their ideal image of children into a written discourse, which can be used to mould children into docile and pliant subjects through its advertising strategy. The authors advertise the fact that children will grow and prosper, as long as they make a resolution to emulate those model children in the Sunday-school books. On the other hand, they warn their young readers not to cause their family trouble or repudiate any religious edification by highlighting the miserable lives of those wicked boys in the Sunday-school books. Owing to the seductive and manipulative power of the discourse, Mark Twain suggests that children who lack their own judgment about the moral lessons might be completely manipulated by the discourse. Taking in the moral teachings as an integral part of their beliefs and making up their mind to become model boys, these children will have blind faith in the dominant ideas articulated in the Sunday-school books. Not only will these children “do what one wishes” (Foucault 138) but they will finally “operate as one wishes” (Foucault 138). For one thing, they recognize the role played by the model children. For another, they wish to win praise from people and benefit greatly from being model children. Hence, Mark Twain suggests children who are manipulated by the discourse on model children may be symbolically neutered by adults. Their natural instinct to rebel may be turned into complete subjection to the multiple authorities, so adults can much more easily keep their children under their strict control without recourse to any repressive tactics.

IV

Two Different Types of Model Children Portrayed by Mark Twain:

Mark Twain portrays two different types of model children, who are fashioned by the

two disciplinary practices. The first type of model children, which is like a duplicate of the control mechanisms, is embodied by Tom's half-brother, Sid, in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. The second type, like a replica of the discourse on model children, is represented by a moral boy, Jacob Blivens, in "The Story of the Good Little Boy Who Did Not Prosper." Despite the fact that these model children, when confronted with the severe control of the multiple authorities, will voluntarily accept the constraints and obey the instructions given by their authorized superiors, Mark Twain implies that their conformity to the adults' expectations is caused by the defects in the design of the two disciplinary mechanisms rather than by the innate sense of morality. Through exposing the design flaws in the two disciplinary measures, Mark Twain not only undermines the control systems that have a reverse effect on children but also tears off the masks, worn by those model children whose behavior only superficially or blindly conforms to the ethical standards. By contrasting the two model boys with Huck Finn, furthermore, Mark Twain reveals an ironical paradox, a situation in which "the juvenile pariah of the village" (*Tom Sawyer* 51), Huck Finn, appears to be the most capable boy that can subvert the influence of civilized beliefs and practices and dispel the myth of model children.

V

Sid as a Recipient of the Control Mechanisms:

In *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Sid is depicted as "a quiet boy" (11), who "[has] no adventurous, troublesome ways" (11). Submitting himself to the oppressive measures imposed by the multiple authorities, Sid can be seen as a successful product of the control mechanisms. Unlike Tom, who is usually blamed for his poor personal hygiene, for example, Sid is always a neat and tidy boy, who has a good habit of keeping himself and the things around him clean. He is also a conscientious and hard-working boy, who is always

responsible for the tasks assigned by his aunt. Whenever Tom plays hooky and enjoys the chance to folic around the Mississippi River, Sid “[is] already through with his part of the work (picking up chips)” (*Tom Sawyer* 11). Moreover, compared with Tom, Sid is neither annoyed by the moral edification nor the religious ceremonies. Before Tom is girding up his loins for “the memorizing of five verses” (*Tom Sawyer* 31) of the Holy Bible on every Sunday morning, Sid has already “learned his lesson days before” (*Tom Sawyer* 31). Not only is Sid willing to devote his time and energy to the recitation of the Book but he is also fond of being confined to the church and the Sunday school, the two places which “Tom hate[s] with his whole heart” (*Tom Sawyer* 34). In short, Sid conforms to the normal pattern of behavior and thinking, which allows adults to completely dominate his body, mind, time, and activity.

The Causes and Consequences of Sid’s Obedience to the Multiple Authorities:

Although Sid shows enough respect and deference to the multiple authorities and lives up to the adults’ expectations, his full compliance is not ascribed to his inborn quality but to a system of rewards and punishments deriving from the control mechanisms. This system, Mark Twain suggests, has a dual function. On the one hand, its first function is to make children comply with those stringent regulations by dint of bribery. Through coaxing children into doing something they should do, most of the adults believe that their children will behave properly and responsibly. On the other, if the reward strategy cannot produce any effect on children who are not moved or tempted by the bribes, the second function of this system will come into effect. It will function as a cowhide to coerce children into succumbing to pressure from the multiple authorities. Despite the fact that this well-intentioned system is originally designed to encourage children’s morally and socially acceptable demeanor, its two side benefits, such as honor and privilege, ignite Sid’s foolish vanity and bring about his callous indifference to the plight of his peers. Hence, Mark Twain suggests that these

additional advantages coming from the reward system will not only distort a child's moral character but also make this system go against its original intention.

Honor as the First Inducement that Causes Sid's Obedience to the Multiple Authorities:

The first fringe benefit that causes Sid to obey the multiple authorities is the glory and adulation which come from the material rewards.⁷ Aside from inflicting severe punishment upon children, Mark Twain suggests that the multiple authorities may bestow honor upon children who can fulfill their requirements. This is clearly illustrated in the episode of the Sunday school where the superintendent rewards diligent children with three different kinds of tickets for their efforts. Provided they memorize two verses of the Holy Bible, they will be given a "blue ticket" (*Tom Sawyer* 35). Ten blue tickets can be traded for a red ticket; "ten red tickets equal a yellow one" (*Tom Sawyer* 35). Children, who get "ten yellow tickets" (*Tom Sawyer* 35), will be awarded "a very plainly bound Bible" (*Tom Sawyer* 35) for their conspicuous achievement in the recitation. These hard-working children, moreover, will become "great and conspicuous" (*Tom Sawyer* 35) heroes in the Bible-awarding ceremony where they can enjoy "the glory and the éclat" (*Tom Sawyer* 35) that come with the prizes. When watching those successful children basking in the adulation of so many people, the model children such as Sid, Mary, and "a boy of German parentage" (*Tom Sawyer* 35) will burn with "a fresh ambition" (*Tom Sawyer* 35) to get the better of those outstanding winners, for they also hunger for the superintendent's approval and the full attention in the class. In order to achieve their goal of winning the admiration and honor, they will bend all their energies to the drudgery of recitation. For instance, Sid always diligently "learn[s] his lesson" (*Tom Sawyer* 31) and memorizes the verses without any complaint while Mary spends two

⁷ Martha B. Bronson asserts that in terms of "the perspective of behavioral theory, the development of self-regulation requires children to learn to assess the relative value of a variety of rewards, to learn to choose appropriate goals, to give themselves effective instructions or follow instructions provided, to monitor their own activities, and to reward themselves for behaviors that will ultimately be rewarded in the environment (or will keep them from being punished)" (15).

years on this grueling task and finally “acquire[s] two Bibles” (*Tom Sawyer* 35). As for the boy of “German parentage” (*Tom Sawyer* 35), he has won more than four copies of the Bible, but this industrious boy, Mark Twain says, becomes “an idiot from that day” (*Tom Sawyer* 35) he “recite[s] three thousand verses without stopping” (*Tom Sawyer* 35). The misery of this German boy is seen as “a grievous misfortune for the school, for on great occasions, before company, the superintendent (as Tom expressed it) [has] always made this boy come out and ‘spread himself’” (*Tom Sawyer* 35). In other words, the superintendent enjoys showing how perfectly he manages the Sunday school by “[delivering] a Bible-prize and [exhibiting] a prodigy” (*Tom Sawyer* 38) in the presence of some “prodigious personage[s]” (*Tom Sawyer* 37) such as the judge and his lawyer brother, for he also desires to win accolades from other people. Being engulfed by his vanity, the complaisant superintendent has forgotten his original belief that the practice of recitation is used to edify those little children. Hence, through illustrating a striking similarity between the superintendent and Sid, Mark Twain implies that Sid is a clone of his religious teacher because both of them are eager to please their respective authorities in the hope of gaining much more attention and recognition. His ulterior motive for memorizing the verses, Mark Twain suggests, is not attributed to a strong desire for spiritual growth but to a wish to win personal honor. In order to earn this special bonus from the reward system, he chooses to give in to the constraints of the religious authority and studies hard to meet its heavy demand.

Privilege as the Second Inducement that Causes Sid’s Obedience to the Multiple Authorities:

In addition to honor, privilege is the second bonus that induces Sid to obey the multiple authorities. This special privilege, given as a reward for his unquestioning acceptance of adults’ manipulation, includes permission to do what he likes and immunity from adults’

persecution. This kind of preferential treatment is clearly illustrated in the episode where Aunt Polly shows favor to Sid over Tom. For example, Tom has ever “tried to steal sugar under his aunt’s very nose, and got his knuckles rapped for it” (*Tom Sawyer* 27). Slightly annoyed by his aunt’s disapproval, Tom grunts and says, ““Aunt, you don’t whack Sid when he takes it”” (*Tom Sawyer* 27). Her aunt replies that ““Well, Sid don’t torment a body the way you do. You’d be always into that sugar if I warn’t watching you”” (*Tom Sawyer* 27). Feeling smug about his special permission to take sugar, Sid “reach[es] for the sugar-bowl—a sort of glorying over Tom which [is] well-nigh unbearable” (*Tom Sawyer* 27). But he carelessly slips the sugar bowl onto the floor and breaks it into pieces. When Tom finds the model child “[does] the mischief” (*Tom Sawyer* 27), he is brimming with exultation and expecting to “see the pet model” (*Tom Sawyer* 27) punished by his aunt. However, as Tom is still immersed in his own ecstasy, Aunt Polly has driven her “potent palm” (*Tom Sawyer* 27) into his back, sending him “sprawling on the floor” (*Tom Sawyer* 27). She would strike him hard across his face if Tom did not cry out and say “Hold on, now, what’er you belting *me* for?—Sid broke it” (*Tom Sawyer* 27)! Through illustrating Aunt Polly’s partiality for Sid, Mark Twain suggests that she is lax in disciplining children who are able to strictly conform to the moral standard of behavior. Since Sid lives up to her expectations, he is allowed to enjoy more freedom to do what he wants. For example, despite the fact that his aunt usually prohibits her two nephews from eating sweets because it is detrimental to their teeth, Sid is granted the privilege of taking candies just only because he fits the stereotype of a moral boy. Furthermore, even if Sid himself causes the mischief, it is Tom that will get the blame and become the scapegoat for the fault. This unfair treatment is caused by Aunt Polly’s preconception about the two boys, a preconception which always makes her stereotype Sid as a boy with flawless character. Dwelling in an environment where a well-behaved boy will be given special privileges and treated as the most endearing child in his family, Sid knows

clearly the advantages of being a model child. In order to gain these benefits, Sid chooses to embrace the social values and moral principles held by the multiple authorities and do his utmost to cater to the adults' requirements.

Lifting the Mask of the Model Child:

Being well aware of the added incentives and advantages that derive from the defect in the control mechanisms, Sid would meekly do the adults' bidding and grasp any opportunity to endear him to his authorized superiors. He is always reminded that he can profit from being a model child. This kind of the constant reminder, for example, permeates every aspect of his daily life. While attending church on Sundays, Sid knows that if he emulates the success of "the Model Boy, Willie Mufferson" (*Tom Sawyer* 42), who always conforms to the expected modes of a well-behaved child, he can not only become another "pride of all the matrons" (*Tom Sawyer* 42) but also relish the leverage and the limelight in the church. Moreover, like Willie Mufferson, who is always "'thrown up to them [the matrons]' so much" (*Tom Sawyer* 42) in the church, he can also become a valuable treasure of his parents and teachers. In spite of the fact that these inducements successfully make Sid's behavior fit into the expected patterns, Mark Twain suggests that these powerful stimuli, which are originally used to encourage children to work harder and behave well, would cause a negative effect on Sid and deprave him to the extent of becoming a merciless and insidious boy. In order to maintain his higher status among his peers and protect his special privileges, Mark Twain suggests Sid would unconsciously imitate the modes of behavior and thought of the adult world. Like the adults that are eager to eliminate the heterogeneous members from their living community, Sid is also anxious to ostracize those who are not categorized as model children through two cunning tactics. The first tactic he employs to differentiate himself from his peers is to spy on those who frequently cause trouble to their authorized superiors,

whereas the second tactic is to inform on those boys who have committed excesses. Through secretly collecting and shamelessly divulging the secrets of his peers, Sid is convinced that he can not only cause them to be suspected or proved guilty of violating the regulations but also assert his superiority over them.

Sid as a Cunning Spy:

As the episode of the brutal murder of Dr. Robinson illustrates, the adults in St. Petersburg may keep close tabs on one another. For instance, when gathering at the murder scene in the graveyard, one of the belated citizens informs everyone that he has “come upon Potter washing himself in the ‘branch’ about one or two o’clock in the morning, and that Potter [has] at once sneaked off—suspicious circumstances, especially the washing which [is] not a habit with Potter” (*Tom Sawyer* 88). Like the adults that may carefully watch and tell on other people, Sid always keeps those non-model children under his strict and secret surveillance. In order to expose the wild or immoral behavior of those non-model children, Sid would not only secretly collect information unfavorable to those he wants to exclude but also slyly find out what they have done and said by spying on them. For example, after Tom is wrongly accused of breaking the sugar bowl by his aunt at dinner, he wanders “far from the accustomed haunts of boys, and [seeks] desolate places” (*Tom Sawyer* 29) where he wallows in self-pity. Feeling insulted and unfairly treated by his aunt, Tom starts to imagine how sorry his aunt would be if he were dead.⁸ Then, he meanders along “the deserted street” (*Tom Sawyer* 29) and eventually stands beneath Becky’s window where he once again imagines he “would die—out in the cold world, with no shelter over his homeless head, no friendly hand to wipe the death-damps from his brow, no loving face to bend pityingly over him when the great agony [comes]” (*Tom Sawyer* 29). However, Tom’s fertile imagination is interrupted by

⁸ In “Tom Sawyer’s Games of Death,” Harold Aspiz illustrates four different kinds of games of death and resurrection: (1) Tom’s obsession with death; (2) grave robbing and the murder; (3) the idyllic adventure of Tom, Huck, and Joe; (4) the cave adventure of Tom and Becky.

a maidservant who opens the window and dumps “a deluge of water” (*Tom Sawyer* 30) on his head. Getting terribly drenched, this “strangling hero [springs] up with a relieving snort” (*Tom Sawyer* 30) and scurries home. When Tom, “all undressed for bed, [is] surveying his drenched garments by the light of a tallow dip, Sid [wakes] up” (*Tom Sawyer* 30) and discovers Tom’s soaking wet clothes. As Sid finds his half-brother spends a terrible and unlucky night, he neither apologizes to Tom for his fault for breaking the bowl nor sympathizes with Tom’s plight. Instead, were it not for the blazing fire in Tom’s eyes, Sid would poke fun at Tom’s misfortune and satirize Tom by “making any ‘references to allusions’” (*Tom Sawyer* 30). Though Sid fails to malign Tom with his innuendos, he surreptitiously makes “mental note of the omission” (*Tom Sawyer* 30) when he discovers Tom goes to bed without saying his prayers. Hence, Mark Twain suggests Sid is a cold-hearted, sly, and treacherous boy, who enjoys spying on his half-brother indefatigably.

The surveillance conducted by Sid is illustrated much more clearly in the episode of Tom’s nightmares in which Sid secretly watches Tom every night and looses his bondage to listen to what he mutters in his sleep. After the incident of Doctor Robinson’s murder, Sid starts to notice Tom’s unusual behavior at home and at school. For example, Sid discovers that Tom not only tosses and turns before falling into a fitful doze but also “talk[s] in [his] sleep so much that [Tom] keep[s] [Sid] awake half the time” (*Tom Sawyer* 91). In order to trap Tom into disclosing his secret and see him admonished by Aunt Polly, Sid deliberately informs his aunt of Tom’s unusual behavior, pretending that he seems perturbed by Tom’s noise at night. Although Tom refuses to acknowledge that he talks in his sleep, Sid immediately says, “you [Tom] do talk such stuff” (*Tom Sawyer* 91) because “[I]ast night you said, ‘It’s blood, it’s blood, that’s what it is!’ You said that over and over. And you said, ‘Don’t torment me so—I’ll tell!’ Tell *what?* What is it you’ll tell” (*Tom Sawyer* 91)? Struck dumb by Sid’s sharp retort, Tom feels uneasy about his embarrassing situation until his aunt

helps him release the tension and says “‘Sho! It’s that dreadful murder. I dream about it most every night myself. Sometimes I dream it’s me that done it’” (*Tom Sawyer* 91). After Tom discovers Sid is secretly watching him and listening to what he mumbles at night, Tom pretends that he gets a toothache and needs to “tie up his jaws every night” (*Tom Sawyer* 91). Nevertheless, Tom never knows that his obstinate brother, who is always sticking his nose into matters that are no concern of his, would never give up prying into his private affairs. When Tom falls asleep, Sid “[lies] nightly watching [Tom], and frequently slip[s] the bandage free and then lean[s] on his elbow listening a good while at a time, and afterward slip[s] the bandage back to its place again” (*Tom Sawyer* 91). After hearing “Tom’s disjointed mutterings” (*Tom Sawyer* 91), Sid would “[keep] it to himself” (*Tom Sawyer* 91) until he grasps a good opportunity to divulge the details. Through accusing Sid of muckraking, Mark Twain implies that were Sid a perfectly-good child, he should show his genuine concern for Tom and try to help his brother through the difficult period. Nevertheless, instead of giving Tom any comfort or assistance, Sid hardens his heart against Tom and perverts his strength to find evidence against his brother, who suffers emotional turmoil at night.

In addition to noticing Tom’s unusual behavior at home, Sid also discovers that Tom unexpectedly loses interest in the schoolyard popular activity such as the “inquests on dead cats” (*Tom Sawyer* 92). Sid knows Tom used to “take the lead in all new enterprises” (*Tom Sawyer* 92), but now he notices that Tom neither acts as a coroner nor a witness “at one of these inquiries” (*Tom Sawyer* 92). Furthermore, Sid never overlooks the fact that “Tom even show[s] a marked aversion to these inquests, and always avoid[s] them when he could” (*Tom Sawyer* 92). Although Sid may not always figure out what has happened to Tom, this taciturn and treacherous boy never wavers in his determination to search out Tom’s secrets, keeping his naughty brother under his careful and close surveillance. In a sense, Sid is like a visible but unverifiable monitor because Tom can see this monitor in his daily life but he cannot

always know where and when he is being observed. Taking great delight in stealthily watching Tom and keeping Tom's innermost secrets to himself, Sid is like a sinister figure lurking in the shadows. He always carries a lot of ammunition aimed at those he wants to attack. Hence, Mark Twain suggests that Sid is a well-behaved child whose heart is basically evil. Though this model child conforms to the orders and regulations of the multiple authorities, in fact he is not by nature a kindly and affectionate boy.

Sid as a Mean Informer:

The act of informing against runaway slaves, Mark Twain suggests, prevails in the world where the children live. In order to receive remuneration from slave-owners, most of the inhabitants whose hearts have been corrupted by avarice would tell off the runaway slaves. Like these merciless adults, Sid would also betray his peers in order to mortify them and eventually exclude them from his realm of model children. After successfully gathering all unfavorable information about those ill-behaved children, Sid would have the effrontery to snitch on them. For instance, he leaks out the secret of Tom's delinquency when Aunt Polly attempts to deceive Tom into admitting that he plays truant and goes swimming instead. She inquires whether he "want[s] to go in a-swimming" (*Tom Sawyer* 11) that afternoon and then "reach[es] out her hand and [feels] Tom's shirt" (*Tom Sawyer* 11). Since Tom is aware of the consequences of playing hooky, he has forestalled any possible trouble by first sewing his shirt collar back in place after swimming, which means he could not have taken off his shirt to swim. Then, he explains his wet hair by arguing that he pumps water on his head to make him cool down in the sultry weather. Feeling "half sorry her sagacity [has] miscarried, and half glad that Tom [has] stumbled into obedient conduct for once" (*Tom Sawyer* 12), Aunt Polly sincerely apologizes to him for her suspicion. However, that model child, who always takes vindictive pleasure in seeing his half-brother chastised or punished, deliberately

reminds his aunt that she “sew[s] his collar with white thread [in the morning], but it’s black [now]” (*Tom Sawyer* 12). Through disclosing that Tom has re-sewn the wrong color thread in his shirt to disguise his truancy, Sid believes he can not only ostracize and embarrass his mischievous brother but also demonstrate his superiority over this troublemaker.

Sid’s meanness is also illustrated in the scene where Tom crawls into his bed through his bedroom window after he and Huck undergo their dangerous escapades in the graveyard and witness the murder of Dr. Robinson. Although Tom takes off his clothes silently, and then “and [falls] asleep congratulating himself that nobody [knows] of his escapade” (*Tom Sawyer* 86), he is unaware that “the gently-snoring Sid [is] awake, and [has] been so for an hour” (*Tom Sawyer* 86). Like an invisible monitor, Sid secretly takes note of Tom’s belated arrival and tells on him next morning. But in lieu of rebuking or flogging Tom for his wrongdoing this time, Aunt Polly simply weeps bitterly and “ask[s] him how he could go and break her old heart so; and finally [tells] him to go on, and ruin himself and bring her gray hairs with sorrow to the grave, for it [is] no use for her to try any more” (*Tom Sawyer* 86). Deeply moved by his aunt’s great sorrow, Tom cries, begs her pardon for all the trouble he causes her, “promise[s] to reform over and over again, and then receive[s] his dismissal, feeling that he [has] won but an imperfect forgiveness and established but a feeble confidence” (*Tom Sawyer* 86). Through informing against Tom, Sid once again succeeds in hurting Tom and forcing him into dejected mood for the rest of the day.

The malice of this young and interfering busybody culminates in the episode of Tom’s resentment where Sid divulges the secret about Huck’s rescue of the Widow Douglas on purpose, for he cannot bear to see the outcast, Huck, praised for his noble deed. After being rescued by Huck Finn, the Widow Douglas gives a party in honor of the Welshman and his sons. In this party, old Mr. Jones plans to astonish every guest by announcing Huck is the real hero, for, except the Welshman family and the widow, nobody knows Huck risks his life

rescuing the widow from being mutilated by Injun Joe. Being jealous of the attention Huck receives, Sid has sprung the secret about “Huck tracking the robbers to the widow’s” (*Tom Sawyer* 239) before Mr. Jones can “make a grand time over his surprise” (*Tom Sawyer* 239). Being furious at Sid’s meanness, Tom chides Sid for being such a contemptible sneak and says, “You can’t do any but mean things, and you can’t bear to see anybody praised for doing good ones” (*Tom Sawyer* 239). Before chasing Sid out of the room, Tom “cuff[s] Sid’s ears and help[s] him to the door with several kicks” (*Tom Sawyer* 239). Through illustrating Tom’s righteous indignation at that nasty pest, Mark Twain points out that it is Sid who should be ostracized by his peers and sharply reprimanded for finding and spreading unpleasant or embarrassing information about those mischief-makers.

Through lifting the mask worn by Sid, in short, Mark Twain suggests that Sid is not only disciplined but also corrupted by the reward and punishment system that derives from the control mechanisms. In order to monopolize adults’ love and attention, praise and encouragement, Sid ostensibly adheres to the normal standards of a model child, but on the other hand he unconsciously becomes a stooge of the authorities, who always keeps a vigilant eye on his peers. His desire for approval has made him lose the innocence and purity of a child and instead changed him into a cold-hearted boy who always shows callous disregard for other people’s predicament. For instance, when everyone assumes that Tom, Joe, and Huck have capsized the raft and got drowned, most of the people feel sorry for the bereavement, sadly talking about how much they miss them. Only the model child, Sid, shows little sympathy for the bereaved and even speaks “word[s] against Tom” (*Tom Sawyer* 115). When Aunt Polly, Mary, and Mrs. Harper weep over their dead boys and regret not having treated them well, Sid seems to detach himself from their sorrowful feelings and frigidly says, “I hope Tom’s better off where he is” (*Tom Sawyer* 115), ““but if he’d been better in some ways—”” (*Tom Sawyer* 115). Through highlighting Sid’s indifference to Tom,

Mark Twain not only reveals Sid's malignant instinct but also shows the adults' fruitless attempt to shape children into a perfect model. If Sid were really an upright boy whose heart is untainted by corruption, he might be kinder to those who have problems or difficulties. Moreover, by illustrating how Sid deviates from the expected plans, ideas, and types of behavior, Mark Twain considers that imposing too many artificial barriers upon children may trigger an adverse impact on children, and that judging them only through their appearances and behavior may be deceived by their disguise.

Huck versus Sid:

In stark contrast to Sid whose appearance usually dupes people into believing he is a morally flawless child, Huck Finn, whose looks and behavior always mislead people into thinking he is "idle and lawless and vulgar and bad" (*Tom Sawyer* 51) and in need of reform, is in fact a kind-hearted and humane boy. Unlike that seemingly-good child who enjoys intruding upon his peers' privacy, this ragamuffin with a benign nature seldom deliberately pries into other people's private affairs or informs against anyone, including those who violate the social regulations. His loyalty and kindness are epitomized in his assistance to the runaway slave, Jim. During their journey along the Mississippi River, Huck never reveals Jim's genuine identity as an escaped slave; instead, he always tells lies to protect this runaway slave from those slave-hunters or those who want to sell him for remuneration, even though he knows what he does is prohibited and will be despised by his society. For instance, in order to escape from his violent father's physical abuse, Huck paddles a canoe towards the Jackson's Island where he spends three carefree and peaceful days and lives on berries and fish.⁹ On his fourth lonely day on that desolate island, he starts to explore it, inadvertently stumbling over a clearing but still smoking campfire. Petrified with fear when he discovers

⁹ In "Reinventing the World and Reinventing the Self in *Huck Finn*," Bennett Kravitz suggests that after Huck's arrival on Jackson's Island, he has unconsciously realized one of the most prominent American Dreams, a dream of domination in guise of creating a new world, or settling a virgin land upon which he can impose his will.

someone else inhabits the island, yet he allays his anxiety when he later finds it is Jim that builds up that campfire. As Huck inquires why Jim would come to the island, Jim asks if he would “tell on [him]” (*Huck Finn* 55) if he tells him the truth. Huck replies, “Blamed if I would, Jim” (*Huck Finn* 55). Being satisfied with Huck’s answer, Jim relates his whole story to Huck, telling him he overhears Miss Watson plans to sell him down the river for a large sum of money. In order to avert being traded, Jim discloses to Huck that he “run[s] off” (*Huck Finn* 55) and hides out on the island. Although Huck is astonished to hear this stunning piece of news, he guarantees that he will keep his secret, promising that “I wouldn’t [tell on Jim], and I’ll stick to it. Honest *injun* I will. 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, and I ain’t a-going back there, anyways” (*Huck Finn* 55).

After that, Huck does stick firmly to his promise during his adventures, always telling a lot of lies to explain why he would stay with a nigger. For example, when the two scoundrels, the King and Duke, asks Huck if Jim is “a runaway nigger” (*Huck Finn* 143) because they find Huck and Jim lay up their raft “in the daytime instead of running” (*Huck Finn* 143), Huck immediately retorts that “Goodness sakes, would a runaway nigger run *south*” (*Huck Finn* 143)? Then, he invents a story about how he is orphaned in a shipwreck and tells the two rascals that they are forced to travel at night, for people who run across them are “always coming out in skiffs and trying to take Jim away from me, saying they believe he [is] a runaway nigger” (*Huck Finn* 143). Despite the fact that Huck sees through the ruses of those two liars very soon, he is reticent about their fraudulent activities and “never let[s] on [them]; [keeps] it to [himself]” (*Huck Finn* 142). For one thing, according to the social experiences which he learns from his father, Huck knows the safest way to get along with these two “low-down humbugs and frauds” (*Huck Finn* 142) is to “let them have their own way” (*Huck Finn* 142). Instead of stirring up trouble with either of the two men, Huck thinks it better to

humor them and pretend that he and Jim have been innocently duped by them. For another, Huck worries that if he informs on the two villains, they may tell on Jim and sell him down the river as revenge. In order to avoid getting into trouble and protect Jim, Huck not only keeps silent about the villainy of the two impudent liars but also uses his life of wisdom to ensure the safety of Jim. Even if he knows he will risk his life deceiving the two liars and ruin his reputation to help an escaped slave, this benevolent boy, unlike Sid, never maliciously divulges their secrets, including the secret of the two imposters.

Despite the fact that Huck does inform against the Duke and King in the later episode of their attempted crime of stealing the three girls' property, Mark Twain suggests his exposure of their fraudulence is a noble deed, for, unlike Sid, who enjoys embarrassing people by telling on them, Huck sincerely helps the three innocent girls get back their property through uncovering the two liars' scheme. For example, after Mary and Susan discover that Huck is being interrogated by Joanna's questions about England, they interrupt her, instruct her to be courteous to their guests, and finally ask Joanna to apologize to Huck for her rudeness. Moreover, he cannot obliterate the sad scene of how the girls' slaves are separated and auctioned off to the town by the two imposters, and neither can he forget how Mary sadly weeps over her dead uncle and those slaves with whom she has formed a strong bond. Hence, deeply moved by the three sweet girls' innocence and ashamed to let them be swindled, Huck resolves to help them get back their money to salve his conscience. Not only does he tell Mary the truth but he also writes a note to her, informing her of the whereabouts of the money.

Through contrasting Sid's hypocrisy and malice with Huck's tenacious loyalty to Jim and altruistic love to the three girls, Mark Twain exhibits a role reversal, a situation in which the genuine demeanor and the intrinsic nature of the respectable model child are opposite to those of the despicable outcast. Unlike that contemptible model child eager to gain his

personal benefits by informing against other people, this noble ragamuffin is not always concerned about his own advantages; instead, he may be careful not to upset them and think of what other people need or want. Through deliberately subverting the social distinction between “good” (*Tom Sawyer* 42) and “bad” (*Tom Sawyer* 51) boys, moreover, Mark Twain not only ridicules those adults who only judge their children on a superficial level but also nullifies the control mechanisms. Unlike Sid, who receives a plethora of moral edification and disciplinary training from the multiple authorities, Huck, who is less burdened by the human infliction, is the only boy that can follow his own nature and conscience to vie with his deformed society. In short, by dispelling the myth of the so-called model children, Mark Twain implies this social idea is only an ideal.

VI

Jacob Blivens as a Duplicate of the Discourse on Model Children:

In contrast to Sid’s meanness and hypocrisy, Jacob Blivens neither takes delight in hurting people’s pride nor conspires against his peers. Instead, in “The Story of the Good Little Boy Who Did Not Prosper,” Jacob is portrayed as a complaisant and polite, kind and harmless boy whose behavior is always consistent with that of those model children in the Sunday-school books. Like the model children in those didactic stories, Jacob also possesses such endearing traits as obedience and piety, kindness and gentleness. For instance, he always shows enough respect and deference to the multiple authorities. He is very respectful at home and always obedient to his parents, “no matter how absurd and unreasonable their demands [are]” (“Good Little Boy” 29). He is also a hardworking and religious boy because he “always learn[s] his book, and never [is] late at Sabbath school” (“Good Little Boy” 29). Being an honest boy, Jacob “wouldn’t lie, no matter how convenient it [is]” (“Good Little Boy” 29). He just [says] it [is] wrong to lie, and that [is] sufficient for him” (“Good Little

Boy” 29). He is also a well-behaved and disciplined student, who “would not play hookey, even when his sober judgment [tells] him it [is] the most profitable thing he could do” (“Good Little Boy” 29). Moreover, Jacob is so well-behaved that he takes little interest in “any kind of rational amusement” (“Good Little Boy” 29). Unlike most of the children that enjoy a variety of entertainments on holidays, this model boy would not “play marbles on Sunday” (“Good Little Boy” 29) or “rob birds’ nests” (“Good Little Boy” 29) or “give hot pennies to organ-grinders’ monkeys” (“Good Little Boy” 29). He would rather stay at home “[reading] all the Sunday-school books” (“Good Little Boy” 29) than join in any frolics.

Aside from his obedience to the family, church, and school, Jacob is also depicted as a caring, compassionate boy, who is always willing to give aid to those in need. For instance, when this willing helper discovers that “some bad boys push a blind man over in the mud” (“Good Little Boy” 31), he immediately “[runs] to help him up” (“Good Little Boy” 31). As he finds “a lame dog that [hasn’t] any place to stay, and [is] hungry and persecuted” (“Good Little Boy” 31), moreover, this kind-hearted boy “[brings] him home and [feeds] him” (“Good Little Boy” 31). In short, Mark Twain suggests that Jacob is successfully shaped into an angel-like child by the disciplinary mechanism, for this “good little boy” (“Good Little Boy” 29), who follows the established patterns of behavior in the Sunday-school books, would not only conform to the regulations set by the multiple authorities but also gets ready to show his charity to anyone in trouble.

The Causes of Jacob’s Obedience and Charity:

Despite the fact that this model boy whose heart is basically good is indeed a docile and benign child, his obedience and charity, Mark Twain suggests, are partially ascribed to his implicit belief in the discourse on model children, the discourse embedded in his Sunday-school books. In addition to being a model child, Jacob is also described as a

Sunday-school-book fanatic. Not only does he “believe in the good little boys they [the authors] put in the Sunday-school books” (“Good Little Boy” 30) but he also “long[s] to come across one of them alive, once” (“Good Little Boy” 30). Whenever he reads of a particular model child in his Sunday-school book, he will quickly turn to the last chapter “to see what became of him, because he want[s] to travel thousands of miles and gaze on him” (“Good Little Boy” 30). However, he never makes this dream come true because those “supernaturally good” (“Good Little Boy” 30) children, according to the description of the Sunday-school books, “all died before his time” (“Good Little Boy” 30). As Mark Twain says, Jacob is always exasperated by the story’s unhappy ending where the model child always passes away “in the last chapter, and there [is] a picture of the funeral, with all his relations and the Sunday-school children standing around the grave in pantaloons that [are] too short, and bonnets that [are] too large, and everybody crying into handkerchiefs that [have] as much as a yard and a half of stuff in them. He [is] always headed off in this way” (“Good Little Boy” 30).

In spite of the fact that the Sunday-school books intimate that there are no saint-like children in this world through deconstructing their central idea about the so-called model children, Jacob neither wavers in his determination to “see one of those good little boys” (“Good Little Boy” 30) nor loses confidence in his storybooks. Instead, this “good little boy” (“Good Little Boy” 29), who has been manipulated by the discourse on model children, blindly emulates those role models in his storybooks in the hope of being catapulted into a firm position as a saint-like icon in a Sunday-school book. He is convinced that as long as he follows in the footsteps of those prosperous role models, he will be “put in a Sunday-school book” (“Good Little Boy” 30) and definitely become a notable personage who is always admired and venerated by many people. For instance, Jacob wishes that he could be shown in a Sunday-school book where he would be illustrated how noble he is by three distinctive

pictures. He wishes the first picture that shows his filial piety could “represent him gloriously declining to lie to his mother, and her weeping for joy about it” (“Good Little Boy” 30), while the second one highlighting his charity could magnificently “represent him standing on the doorstep giving a penny to a poor beggar-woman with six children, and telling her to spend it freely, but not to be extravagant, because extravagance is a sin” (“Good Little Boy” 30). Moreover, he wishes the last picture that illustrates his magnanimity towards those ill-mannered boys could reveal his refusal to “tell on the bad boy who always [lies] in wait for him around the corner as he [comes] from school, and welt[s] him over the head with a lath, and then chase[s] him home, saying, ‘Hi! Hi!’ as he proceed[s]” (“Good Little Boy” 30). Although Jacob is sure that “it [is] not healthy to be good” (“Good Little Boy” 30), and that “it [is] more fatal than consumption to be so supernaturally good as the boys in the books [are]” (“Good Little Boy” 30), he remains adamant about his dream of being put into a Sunday-school book, for this ambitious boy, who has been overwhelmed by his foolish vanity, desires to flaunt these noble qualities and claim the moral credit for his good deeds through written language and iconography. Jacob also knows that none of the model children is able to “stand it long” (“Good Little Boy” 30), and that if he is put “in a book he wouldn’t ever see it, or even if they [do] get the book out before he die[s], it wouldn’t be popular without any picture of his funeral in the back part of it” (“Good Little Boy” 30). Furthermore, he knows if he really wants to be put in a Sunday-school book, he must die very young. His untimely death makes him worry that he cannot make ample preparation for the advice he plans to edify his community. Despite the fact that Jacob feels uneasy about “the most unpleasant feature about being a Sunday-school-book boy” (“Good Little Boy” 30), he finally compromises with his anxiety by resolving to “live right, and hang on as long as he could, and have his dying speech ready when his time [comes]” (“Good Little Boy” 30), for he never gives up any hope of making him prosper. Through highlighting Jacob’s implicit belief

in the Sunday-school books, Mark Twain not only shows how Jacob Blivens is deviated from the expected plans and ideas which develop from the discourse on model children but also reveals how this model boy abuses the knowledge he acquires from his Sunday-school books. Although this model boy is always obedient to the authorities and generous to people in need, his compliance and charity are partially caused by his desire to become “a Sunday-school-book boy” (“Good Little Boy” 30). Having implicit faith in the moral knowledge of the Sunday-school books, Jacob believes that as long as he imitates those role models, he will be a prosperous and prodigious boy among his peers. Hence, the merit of Jacob Blivens is tarnished by his pompous conceit, even though he is really a well-behaved and kind-hearted boy.

The Consequences of Jacob’s Obedience and Charity:

Owing to his implicit belief in the golden rules of Sunday-school books, Jacob gets habituated to thinking and behaving in the same ways as those storybooks’ role models. For instance, Mark Twain suggests most of the children hate to be confined to a church on Sundays because the Sabbath is the day when they can go sailing, but, as mentioned before, Jacob “always learn[s] his book, and never [is] late at Sabbath-school” (“Good Little Boy” 29). Not only does he wholeheartedly go to church on Sundays but he is willing to forgo any pleasure. Pious and well-behaved boy as Jacob is, his obedience to the religious authority is partly attributed to his implicit trust in his Sunday-school books where he is warned that “boys who [go] sailing on Sunday invariably [get] drowned” (“Good Little Boy” 31). When he has once seen a pack of “bad boys starting off pleasuring in a sail-boat” (“Good Little Boy” 31), he is “filled with consternation” (“Good Little Boy” 31), for, according to his reading, these naughty boys will capsized the boat and get drowned. In order to give them a dire warning, Jacob “[runs] out on a raft to warn them, but a log turn[s] with him and slid[es]

him into the river” (“Good Little Boy” 31). He is immediately rescued by a man, and “the doctor pump[s] the water out of him, and [gives] him a fresh start with his bellows” (“Good Little Boy” 31). After that, Jacob “[catches] cold and [lies] sick a-bed nine weeks” (“Good Little Boy” 31). Nevertheless, unlike this poor model child, those “bad boys in the boat [have] a good time all day, and then reach home alive and well in the most surprising manner” (“Good Little Boy” 31). Although Jacob adheres to the instruction of Sunday-school books, the experience he undergoes does not correspond to the description of what he reads. He examines authorities of his Sunday-school books, but he is completely dumbfounded when he finds “there [is] nothing like these things in the books” (“Good Little Boy” 31). Through deliberately reversing the fate of Jacob and those wild children, Mark Twain not only derides this model boy’s folly and imprudence caused by his absolute confidence in the discourse on model children but also subvert the conventional beliefs articulated in Sunday-school books.

Jacob’s implicit belief in the discourse on model children is also clearly illustrated in his motive for charity. Despite the fact that he is demoralized by the experience he undergoes, Jacob is still a stalwart disciple of Sunday-school books and “resolve[s] to keep on trying anyhow” (“Good Little Boy” 31). For one thing, he considers he “[hasn’t] yet reached the allotted term of life for good little boys” (“Good Little Boy” 31) or “[made] a record” (“Good Little Boy” 31) in a Sunday-school book. For another, regardless of the frustrating experience, Jacob is firmly convinced that as long as he follows the instructions of his storybooks, he still has an opportunity to “be put in a Sunday-school book” (“Good Little Boy” 30) and enjoys the prosperity ensured in the books he likes. In order to achieve his noble goal, Jacob is scrupulous in bearing the moral teachings of the storybooks in mind when showing his charity. For example, when Jacob discovers “some bad boys push a blind man over in the mud” (“Good Little Boy” 31), he “[runs] to help him up” (“Good Little Boy” 31), for he knows from his Sunday-school books that boys who kindly help a blind man get out of the

quagmire will surely “receive his [the blind man’s] blessing” (“Good Little Boy” 31). However, in lieu of “[giving] him any blessing” (“Good Little Boy” 31), the vulgar blind man, who mistakes Jacob for the wrongdoing, “whack[s] him over the head with his stick and [says] he would like to catch him shoving *him* again, and then pretending to help him up” (“Good Little Boy” 31). In addition to this terrible experience that does not come out according to the Sunday-school books, Jacob is hurt by a dog to which he wants to show his kindness. According to what he reads, he is informed that boys who “bring [a lame dog] home and pet him” (“Good Little Boy” 31) will certainly “have that dog’s imperishable gratitude” (“Good Little Boy” 31). Burning with desire to earn this “imperishable gratitude” (“Good Little Boy” 31), Jacob is eager to “find a lame dog that [hasn’t] any place to stay, and [is] hungry and persecuted, and bring him home and pet him” (“Good Little Boy” 31). Although it is “‘good’ to be ‘compassionate’ toward” (Nelson and Greene 117) an injured dog, he is once again frustrated by the reality. When he is going to “pet him the dog [flies] at him and [tears] all the clothes off him except those that [are] in front, and [makes] a spectacle of him that [is] astonishing” (“Good Little Boy” 31). Though he checks the books where he finds the dog “[is] of the same breed of dogs that [are] in the books” (“Good Little Boy” 31), it “act[s] very differently” (“Good Little Boy” 31). As Mark Twain says, “Whatever this boy [does], he [gets] into trouble. The very things the boys in the books [get] rewarded for turned out to be about the most unprofitable things he could invest in” (“Good Little Boy” 31).

Jacob’s misery culminates in the episode of his death where his body is dismembered by a pack of wild dogs. When Jacob sees the “bad little boys” (“Good Little Boy” 32) cracking a joke on the “fourteen or fifteen dogs, which they [have] tied together in long procession and [are] going to ornament with empty nitroglycerine cans made fast to their tails” (“Good Little Boy” 32), he is angry at those wicked boys and ready to admonish them for their wrongdoing. After sitting down on one of those greasy cans, Jacob “[takes] hold of

the foremost dog by the collar, and turn[s] his reproving eye upon wicked Tom Jones” (“Good Little Boy” 32). But all of those naughty boys do not offer their good ears to listen to his admonition; instead, they immediately flee in terror as they find “Alderman McWelter, full of wrath, step[s] in” (“Good Little Boy” 32) the iron foundry. Only Jacob stays there because he wants to tell Alderman McWelter about his prevention of those wicked boys’ cruel trick. On seeing the alderman, this innocent but silly boy “[begins] one of those stately little Sunday-school book speeches which always commence with ‘Oh, sir!’ in dead opposition to the fact that no boy, good or bad, ever starts a remark with ‘Oh, sir!’” (“Good Little Boy” 32). However, since the furious alderman finds Jacob is the only boy in the iron foundry, he mistakes this model child for the naughty boy who mistreats the dogs; instead of hearing what Jacob wants to say, the alderman “[takes] Jacob Blivens by the ear and turn[s] him around, and hit[s] him a whack in the rear with the flat of his hand” (“Good Little Boy” 32). Then, the callous alderman releases the fifteen ferocious dogs, which chase after Jacob and eventually tear his body into pieces. As Mark Twain says, the bulk of the model child “[comes] down all right in a tree-top in an adjoining county” (“Good Little Boy” 32), while his limbs “[is] apportioned around among four townships” (“Good Little Boy” 32). Although the strong believer in Sunday-school books, like those role models in the storybooks, dies very young, he is not as prosperous as those Sunday-school-book children. Instead, despite his herculean effort to put what he reads into practice, “nothing ever [goes] right with this good little boy; nothing ever turn[s] out with him the way it turn[s] out with boys in the books” (“Good Little Boy” 30).

Through highlighting Jacob’s imprudence and gullibility, Mark Twain considers that children are encouraged to show charity and love to anyone, but they must be aware of their own safety; otherwise, they might face a series of catastrophes and put their lives in jeopardy. Moreover, by showing Jacob’s obsession with Sunday-school books, Mark Twain suggests

that this moral but conceited boy, who desires to show off his docility and charity, is consumed with knowledge of Sunday-school books, the knowledge which inflames his vanity and eventually brings about his own disaster and ruin. Despite the fact that Mark Twain does not severely blame Jacob for his obedience and charity, he exposes a fatal flaw in this model boy's good deeds by criticizing his implicit belief in the discourse on model children. Through deliberately undermining Jacob's effort to realize what he peruses, Mark Twain argues that this dogmatic discourse oversimplifies the distinction between good and evil in the complex world where an obedient and charitable person is not necessarily rewarded while a rebellious and wicked person might escape punishment and thrive on his life. Due to his trust in this oversimplified discourse, Mark Twain suggests Jacob Blivens confuses the real world with the imaginary world, wrongly identifying the former with what he reads. Hence, blurring the distinctions between reality and fantasy, Jacob is in fact a gullible imbecile who only has a simplified mind.

Huck versus Jacob:

Like Jacob Blivens, Huck Finn, a tenderhearted and generous boy, is always happy to succor the needy, but unlike that imprudent and credulous model boy, Huck knows the importance of self-protection when showing his charity. Huck's discretion and wisdom, for instance, are epitomized in his plan for helping the three Wilks sisters. After being moved by the three girls' innocence and kindness, Huck feels ashamed of "letting that old reptile rob her of her money" (*Huck Finn* 188). His conscience is terribly smitten by his reticence about the fraudulence. He says to himself that the hospitality and friendliness of the three girls does make him "[feel] so ornery and low down" (*Huck Finn* 188). In order to make a truce with his conscience, Huck makes up his mind to "hive that money for them or bust" (*Huck Finn* 188). Nevertheless, unlike Jacob Blivens, who always takes reckless action and disregards his

safety, Huck Finn would cogitate on the whole matter and then make a careful plan before taking any action. This prudent and cautious boy considers that it is unwise to inform the doctor of the two imposters' fraudulence because the doctor "might tell who told him; then the king and the duke would make it warm for me [Huck]" (*Huck Finn* 188). Huck also thinks it inappropriate to tell Mary Jane the truth. For one thing, this precocious ragamuffin, who is good at noticing details, observes that Mary Jane is a straightforward person, so he worries her "face would give them [the two liars] a hint" (*Huck Finn* 188) about her awareness of their heinous crime. For another, if Huck lets Mary know the secret, he fears that she will "fetch in help" (*Huck Finn* 188). Then, he believes he will definitely "get mixed up in the business" (*Huck Finn* 188) and get into big trouble. In order not to be enmeshed in the whole matter, Huck finally comes up with an idea. He decides to steal and hide the money in the way "they [the two liars] won't suspicion that [he] done it" (*Huck Finn* 188). After he finishes dealing with the girls' money, he decides to sneak "away down the river" (*Huck Finn* 188) with Jim and then "write a letter and tell Mary Jane where it's hid" (*Huck Finn* 188). Following his scheme to help the girls retrieve the money from the two deceivers, Huck finds the big money in the con men's room and prepares to sneak out at night in order to hide the money somewhere outside the girls' house. But, when he creeps towards the front door, he finds it is locked. Moreover, he hears Mary coming down stairs and walking to the front room where her dead uncle's corpse lies. Terrified of being noticed, Huck has no choice but to hide the sack of money in the coffin. Although Huck eventually makes a botch of his plan, Mark Twain considers that this smart boy, unlike Jacob, would ponder how to aid the three girls without putting him in danger.

Huck's kindness and carefulness, Mark Twain suggests, culminates in the later episode where Huck takes defensive action to safeguard his security. Finding Mary weeping for the separation of the slave family, Huck unthinkingly blurts out that the slaves auctioned by the

two liars will be reunited in less than two weeks. Since he has accidentally slipped out part of the truth, he resolves to reveal the truth to Mary Jane, telling her everything about the plot hatched by the King and the Duke. Although he agrees that Mary can inform against the two deceivers, he asks her to delay reporting their crime and stay at a friend's house until he safely sneaks away. He also requests that she must "put a candle in [the] window" (*Huck Finn* 200) and wait for him until eleven o'clock, after she comes back from the friend's house. He reminds her if he does not show up at that time, "it means [he's] gone, and out of the way, and safe" (*Huck Finn* 200). Then, she can "spread the news [of the two liars] around, and get these beats jailed" (*Huck Finn* 200). However, if he fails to get away, "but get took up along with them [the liars]" (*Huck Finn* 200), he insists that Mary should stand by him and prove his innocence. Being granted her promise, he leaves her a note on which he writes: "I put it [the money] in the coffin. It [is] in there when you [were] crying there, away in the night. I [am] behind the door, and I [am] mighty sorry for you, Miss Mary Jane'" (*Huck Finn* 202). Deeply touched by Huck's kindness, Mary guarantees to do everything Huck has told her, remember him forever, and even pray for him. Though Huck has never seen Mary Jane from then on, he always thinks of this kind girl, in retrospect. Hence, in contrast to Jacob Blivens's imprudence and recklessness, Huck's cleverness and sophistication not only lead to him successfully succoring people who are suffering or in difficulties but also earn him long-lasting gratitude.

Through contrasting Jacob's rashness with Huck's sagacity, Mark Twain shows an ironical paradox, a situation in which Huck Finn is the more capable of diminishing the influence of the authoritative creeds and practices. Compared with that model boy who blindly follows books' instruction to perform good deeds, Huck Finn, who is less affected by the manipulation of any books, is more capable of naturally carrying out the moral principles explicitly stated in the Sunday-school books. Despite the fact that both Jacob and Huck are

the benevolent children whose behavior usually “reflects concern for family members, friends, members of the community, and the larger society” (Moore et al, 59), Mark Twain suggests that Jacob’s paucity of judgment about his reading becomes his Achilles’ heel. Hence, through making a comparison between Jacob and Huck, not only does Mark Twain show how the knowledge constructed by the multiple authorities ruins a moral boy but he also demystifies the notion of model children.