

CHAPTER ONE

The Shackles of Multiple Authorities:

Constraints and Repressions in Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

Tom appeared on the sidewalk with a bucket of whitewash and a long-handled brush. He surveyed the fence, and all gladness left him and a deep melancholy settled down upon his spirit.

—Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*

Miss Watson she kept pecking at me, and it got tiresome and lonesome. By and by they fetched the niggers in and had prayers, and then everybody was off to bed. I went up to my room with a piece of candle, and put it on the table. Then I set down in a chair by the window and tried to think of something cheerful, but it warn't no use. I felt so lonesome I most wished I was dead.

—Mark Twain, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

As the epigraphs indicate, children portrayed by Mark Twain are usually under the shackles and manipulation of multiple authorities. Owing to his mischievousness, for example, Tom Sawyer is deprived of his holiday and sent to whitewash the fence by his stern aunt on a beautiful Saturday morning. Shuffling across the sidewalk, Tom Sawyer, who sinks into deep melancholy, carries “a bucket of whitewash and a long-handled brush” (*Tom Sawyer* 60) and then reluctantly starts to do the labor until he hoodwinks his friends into doing this drudgery for him. Like Tom Sawyer, Huckleberry Finn is fettered by the multiple authorities after he is hurled into the protection of Widow Douglas. For instance, after being forced to receive the baptism of civilization, he is required to lead a regular life and follow the strict rules prescribed by the widow. In order to become a civilized boy, moreover, he is not only prohibited from smoking, yelling, cursing, and gaping but also compelled to memorize the Christian doctrines through poring over the Holy Bible every

day. Despite the fact that Huck Finn endeavors to adjust himself to his new life, one of his authorized superiors, Miss Watson, is never satisfied with his effort. Being constantly reproved for his improper behavior by his nagging adopters, Huck almost goes insane and “most wish[es] [he] [were] dead” (*Huck Finn* 16). Through illustrating how the children are being punished or manipulated by the multiple authorities, Mark Twain seems to imply that the world where the children dwell is in fact a place full of constraints and repressions.

In order to probe deeper into the impact of the shackles of multiple authorities upon Mark Twain’s children, this chapter attempts to show a panorama of the different forms of authority described in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* in the hope of categorizing the various ways of adults’ manipulation into two educative mechanisms. It will start from the comparison between Mark Twain’s childhood and the childhood he describes in his novels, in order to draw a parallel between the multiple authorities shown in the two juvenile novels and the authorities which Mark Twain faces during his childhood. Then, this chapter will investigate how the four authorities—family and church, school and society—manipulate the children, in order to examine how the authorities wield and assert their power. Through examining how Mark Twain’s children are repressed by multiple authorities and analyzing the effect of the repression on them, this chapter will eventually illustrate two educative mechanisms and two distinctive codes of conduct, in order to investigate how Mark Twain creates different kinds of juvenile images. The first type of the educative mechanism that embodies a set of effeminate codes of conduct is represented by the disciplinary practices, whereas the second type that includes a set of masculine rules of conduct is epitomized in the masculine culture of Mark Twain’s teenage boys.

I

Mark Twain’s Happiness and Nightmares in Hannibal:

Mark Twain, the pseudonym of Samuel Langhorne Clemens, establishes a reputation as a humorous novelist in American letters through his childhood's memories along the Mississippi River during the years preceding the Civil War, which inspires him to create the well-known characters and enthralling episodes in his two best-known works, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Born in “the almost invisible village of Florida, Monroe County, Missouri” (Mark Twain, *Autobiography* 1), yet Mark Twain tends to look back on his childhood in Hannibal with a certain amount of nostalgia. For him, Hannibal is not only “a boy’s paradise” (Margaret Sanborn 35),¹ as his autobiography illustrates, but also a muse to his artistic creativity.

Amidst this blissful realm exclusive to boys, Mark Twain consumed his youthful energy and lived out the seemingly carefree childhood in the three settings—his hometown and its outskirts, Uncle John Quarles’ farm, and the Mississippi River²—whereas this earthly paradise did not always guarantee an unalloyed happiness because he was still required to fulfill his obligation to the family, school, and church.³ Being free to gain valuable experiences in these three places, yet he was constantly repressed by his mother, disciplined by his ferocious teachers, and confined to the chapel. For instance, after slipping away from the school, he and his playmates took delight in playing Robin Hood in Sherwood Forest, on the outskirts of Hannibal, in order to pass a boring day in the classroom. If these boys got

¹ Steven Mintz argues that Mark Twain romanticizes childhood in Hannibal where many enduring American fantasies about childhood come into life. Through idealizing Hannibal childhood as “a bucolic time of freedom, untainted innocence, and self-discovery,” Mintz suggests that Mark Twain gives us a carefree picture of childhood in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. However, Mintz’s historical study of mid-nineteenth century Hannibal reminds us of the impossibility of a carefree childhood, for high fatality and fatal disease, family disruption and early entry into the world of work are what really occurs in Hannibal daily life. By investigating the real life in Hannibal, Mintz not only demystifies the notion of a carefree childhood which clouds our thinking about the history of American childhood but also reveals the social reality at that time.

² May McNeer reminds us of the importance of the Mississippi to the children in Hannibal. She says, “Every boy in Hannibal wanted to become a pilot on a river steamboat. Every boy dreamed proud dreams of piloting the glittering floating palaces; and when a boy was not imagining himself a pilot, then he pretended to be the steamboat itself—backing and turning, making steaming and whistling noises, up and down the streets of Hannibal” (8-9).

³ In “A Connecticut Yankee in God’s Court,” Sloan Gary offers us a brief introduction of Mark Twain’s religious background throughout his life in which Mark Twain’s religion evolves from skepticism to nihilism via temporary piety.

tired of playing Robin Hood, they might either disguise themselves as Indians, pretending to slaughter their deadly enemies, or become the bandit gangs, waylaying the “passing hog-drivers and farmwives” (Sanborn 41). Yet, Mark Twain and his bosom friends would certainly receive a severe flogging as a punishment for their truancy the next day. In addition to the outdoor games, they could occasionally indulge in the carnival atmosphere throughout the town where they “watched the parades—Fourth of July, circus, and political—which filled it from side to side with brightly uniformed and costumed marches and horsemen” (Sanborn 41). After this transient pleasure was over, however, they had to return to their school and take the boring classes such as “[p]iety, good manners, reading, recitation, long division, and spelling” (Sanborn 23).⁴ Although his hometown and its outskirts offered Mark Twain a variety of entertainment, it was Uncle John Quarles’ farm⁵ that left him an indelible impression. On the farm, he might go on predawn expeditions, “with a company of men and boys, black and white, and a pack of hounds, to hunt rabbits, squirrels, prairie chickens, and wild turkeys” (Sanborn 30). At night, he could linger on the fireplace listening to Negroes’ eerie stories.⁶ For him, Uncle John Quarles’ farm, which he called “a heavenly place for a boy” in his autobiography (*Autobiography* 4), helped him develop his appreciation of nature and his friendly relationship with slaves.⁷ Despite the happiness on the farm, he would be

⁴ Although the spelling class was a grueling and frustrating experience to many children, Margaret Sanborn reminds us that Mark Twain was an excellent speller: Mark Twain “won the Friday afternoon bee regularly—a thin, smooth silver disk about the size of a dollar, engraved with the words ‘Good Speller’ in ‘flowing Italian script,’ as partial payment for the whippings he got whenever he stumbled through the multiplication tables, parsed incorrectly, or confused mountains with rivers and lakes in geography. He enjoyed being envied by the whole school” (52).

⁵ In his *Autobiography*, Mark Twain had ever reflected that Uncle John Quarles’ farm usually came into his mind when he was writing *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and *Tom Sawyer, Detective*: “I [Mark Twain] have never consciously used him [Uncle John A. Quarles] and his wife in a book but his farm has come very handy to me in literature once or twice. In *Huck Finn* and in *Tom Sawyer, Detective* I moved it down to Arkansas” (4).

⁶ May McNeer informs us that Mark Twain was infatuated by the fearsome stories told by the slaves: “Negroes sat there telling fearsome stories of old Raw Head and Bloody Bones—or the tale of ‘The Golden Arm.’ That one sent chills racing down Sammy’s spine, no matter how many times he heard it, and he went off to bed shivering with fright. But it was his favorite, just the same” (9).

⁷ In his *Autobiography*, Mark Twain reminded us that he “had no aversion to slavery” (7). He once wrote that “[a]ll the Negroes were friends of ours, and with those of our own age we were in effect comrades” (6) and that they “had a faithful and affectionate good friend, ally and adviser in ‘Uncle Dan’l,’” (6) who was transformed into the character, Jim.

taken to the church and tormented by the interminable sermons on Sundays. In short, although his small universe was only restricted to the idyllic and highly-disciplined surroundings, it gave him an opportunity to store many experiences which later became the sources of his works.

II

A Boy's World Mingled with Adult Authorities and Restraints in Mark Twain's Works:

As Mark Twain is working on *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, those old marvelous memories, like a flash of lightning, would come into his mind. So retentive are his childhood memories that they, after transformed, would find their own way into these two juvenile novels. As he says in the preface of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*:

MOST of the adventures recorded in this book really occurred; one or two were experiences of my own, the rest those of boys who were schoolmates of mine. Huck Finn is drawn from life; Tom Sawyer also, but not from an individual—he is a combination of the characteristics of three boys whom I knew, and therefore belongs to the composite order of architecture. (3)

By rewriting his schoolmates and the incidents happening in his childhood, Mark Twain creates a boy's world he calls St. Petersburg, in and around which Tom, Huck, and their comrades are free to look for adventures and play games. On the other hand, he illustrates at least four authorities and constraints—family and church, school and society—that usually disturb the children and cloud the happiness of their world. Like the real world Mark Twain inhabits, the fictional society described by Mark Twain is also mingled with both a pleasant ambience and adult authorities.

III

Family Environment/Education/Constraints:

In *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Mark Twain presents three different kinds of families, each with its own distinctive philosophy of manipulating their children. One is the genteel family embodied by Tom's family as well as Huck's adopted life, another is the belligerent family represented by the Grangerfords, and still the other is Huck's violent family where his drunken father abuses him as he wishes.⁸ Through the descriptions of these three families, Mark Twain not only criticizes their ways of education but also suggests the optimal strategies to educate children.

The Genteel Family:

Despite the masculine ambience and the relegation of women to the ancillary roles in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, it is remarkable that the family context of these two novels is mainly a matriarchal society where Tom, Huck, and their comrades are suffocated by the strict rules of decorum, Christian doctrines, clean but effeminate apparel, and a variety of punishments. In this virtue-oriented matriarchy, its educative philosophy is epitomized in the opening of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* in which Mark Twain conveys four manipulative ways in a family: children's absolute obedience to parents' orders and adherence to their rules, severe castigation, physical punishment, and religious inculcation. Through these four methods, its main targets are to eradicate the children's socially unacceptable behavior and lead them to the path of civilization. For instance, the story opens with a hide-and-seek game in which Aunt Polly is like an eagle preying on a little rabbit. She shouts in anger, commanding his naughty nephew, Tom Sawyer,

⁸ Keith M. Opdahl considers that all adults, particularly the male adults, are a threat to Huck, who oscillates between the threat of the adults and the protection of the adults. Due to the threat of the male characters, Opdahl agrees with Peter Beidler's insight into Huck who is more of an emotionally suffering child than a traveling rogue.

to show up immediately, but Tom makes no reply to her order. Furiously irritated by his disobedience, she “pull[s] her spectacles down and look[s] over them about the room (*Tom Sawyer* 9),” scouring the house with a broom to thoroughly look for her mischievous urchin. When she discovers that Tom hides himself in a closet and that his hands and mouth are full of jam, she angrily castigates him for his improper behavior and says, “Forty times I’ve said if you didn’t let that jam alone I’d skin you. Hand me that switch” (*Tom Sawyer* 10). As the switch is hovering in the air, Tom dodges her whipping and flies across the fence, crying out, “My! Look behind you, aunt!” (*Tom Sawyer* 10). His mischief leads her to cogitate on her dilemma of choosing between corporal punishment and lenient tolerance. Provided she “[s]pare[s] the rod” (*Tom Sawyer* 10), “[her] conscience does hurt [her]” (*Tom Sawyer* 10), but if she “hit[s] him” (*Tom Sawyer* 10), “[her] old heart most breaks” (*Tom Sawyer* 10). Reminding her of the Scripture’s warning, Aunt Polly bemoans the fact that she fails to fulfill her obligation to him and is thus “laying up sin and suffering for [them] both” (*Tom Sawyer* 10). However, she finally compromises with her inner conflict by a verse in the Holy Bible—“man that is born of women is of few days and full of trouble” (*Tom Sawyer* 10)—through which she finds a balance between the two extreme educative methods. She decides to deprive Tom of his holiday, asking him to whitewash the fence on Saturday, the day when every boy is having fun, for she knows arduous work is the very thing Tom detests most.

In addition to Tom’s family, Mark Twain describes another cloyingly genteel family in Huck Finn’s adopted life. After Huck is hurled into the Widow Douglas’s protection, his “sufferings [are] almost more than he could bear” (*Tom Sawyer* 242). Although Huck suffers less physical punishment than Tom, he is smothered by the stringent regulations and religious inculcation. After fleeing from the civilized life, for example, he grumpily complains to Tom about his intolerance of the lifeless standard of dress, saying that “[t]he widow’s servants

[keep] him clean and neat, combed and brushed, and they [bed] him nightly in unsympathetic sheets that [have] not one little spot or stain which he could press to his heart and know for a friend” (*Tom Sawyer* 242). Moreover, he feels obliged to lead a dismally regular life, for the widow “eats by a bell; she goes to bed by a bell; she gets up by a bell—everything’s so awful reg’lar a body can’t stand it” (*Tom Sawyer* 243). Whenever the widow rings the bell for supper, he must get to the table immediately, but before eating he has to “wait for the widow to tuck down her head and grumble a little over the victuals” (*Huck Finn* 14). When finally allowed to start eating, he must have good table manners, eating “with a knife and fork” (*Tom Sawyer* 242) and using “napkin, cup, and plate” (*Tom Sawyer* 242). After their dinner time, the widow and Miss Watson would endeavor to inculcate the Christian values in this “poor lost lamb” (*Huck Finn* 14) by telling him the story of Moses and the happiness of heaven, but he cannot see any advantages in these matters. Although he has ever complied with Miss Watson’s request to pray every day, she calls him a fool when he asks her to pray hooks for him. In short, after Huck is dragged into the civilized world, his life fettered by rigid rules and religious doctrines is getting “tiresome and lonesome” (*Huck Finn* 16). Not only do his adopters keep finding fault with his smallest misdemeanor but they prohibit him from smoking, cursing, yelling, and gaping. Even if he wants to do the outdoor activities such as fishing and swimming, he must get their permission in advance; otherwise, he might be once again reprovved for his ill behavior. Confronted with this kind of strict and routine life, he says ruefully that “I set down in a chair by the window and trie[s] to think of something cheerful, but it [isn’t] no use. I [feel] so lonesome I most wish I was dead” (*Huck Finn* 16).

The Impact of the Dictatorial Measures on Parents and Children:

Through the high-handed disciplinary measures of these two families, Mark Twain implies that parents are always the bosses of their children and that children ought to meekly

do their bidding no matter how preposterous it is. Mark Twain suggests that this irreversible power relation, despite its high effectiveness in dominating children, may cause the harmful effect of on both the parents and children. For instance, parents' dictatorship might lead to the indifference to their children's psychology, for they have got accustomed to their own conceited way to manipulate their children. Squeezing their little devils into their imaginary Eden by wielding immense power over them, parents who become more and more self-centered autocrats have lost their power to build up a communicative network with their children; that is, they are unable to discover what their children really want. In the Pain-Killer episode, for instance, Mark Twain illustrates the consequences of parents' failure to look into children's emotional turmoil. On seeing Tom in low spirits, Aunt Polly coerces him into receiving many an ineffective treatment which she reads from the medical magazines. Nonetheless, Tom is actually disturbed by the secret of Dr. Robinson's murder and Becky's absence rather than by any physical ailments. Unable to know his real troubles, Aunt Polly keeps giving him treatments, which culminate in a bitter-tasting serum called "Pain-killer" (*Tom Sawyer* 94). When finding this last medicine unbearable, Tom feeds it to his aunt's yellow cat which "[springs] a couple of yards in the air, and then deliver[s] a war-whoop and set[s] off round and round the room, banging against furniture, upsetting flower-pots, and making general havoc" (*Tom Sawyer* 95). As Aunt Polly reproves him for his meanness, he justifies his cruelty by saying that "if he'd [the cat] had one [aunt] she'd a burnt him out herself! She'd a roasted his bowels out of him 'thout any more feeling than if he was a human!" (*Tom Sawyer* 96). Feeling a sharp twinge of remorse, Aunt Polly realizes that "what [is] cruelty to a cat *might* be cruelty to a boy, too" (*Tom Sawyer* 96). Although she gives Tom the medicine with good intention, Mark Twain suggests that she fails to talk with him and explore his inner world to dig out his real problems. Hence, her infatuation with her own nourishment and her ineradicable habit of commanding her child bring about the

misunderstanding between parents and children.

In addition to creating a gulf between parents and children, Mark Twain is aware that this high-handed tactic might lead to parents' bias against children who do not follow their rules. In order to shun any children's troubles, parents would use strict rules and severe punishment to eliminate any troublemakers. They endeavor to squelch their children because only by so doing can parents have a peaceful time. However, if they cannot successfully manipulate rebellious children after their desperate effort, they may label them troublemakers. For instance, when Tom inquires why his aunt does not reprimand Sid for taking the sugar, she 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). After being granted immunity from reproach, Sid reaches for the sugar bowl with a smug smile and then breaks it, but it is Tom that is blamed for the fault. Stereotyped as a troublemaker in Aunt Polly's mind, Tom becomes the scapegoat that deserves the punishment. Even if he does not cause any disturbance, Aunt Polly would put the blame on him, for she has got accustomed to his misdemeanor. Instead of showing her apology, nevertheless, Aunt Polly retorted that "Umf! Well, you didn't get a lick amiss, I reckon. You been into some other audacious mischief when I wasn't around, like enough" (*Tom Sawyer* 28). Even if it is the parents' fault, they do not apologize to their children because their apology would be seen as a confession of their wrongness and a reversal of their power. As Mark Twain says, "her conscience reproach[es] her, and she yearn[s] to say something kind and loving; but she judge[s] that this would be construed into a confession that she ha[s] been in the wrong, and discipline [forbids] that" (*Tom Sawyer* 28). It is this discipline that hurts the boys' pride and impairs the intimate relation between parents and children.

As far as the children are concerned, Mark Twain reminds us that the strict discipline often causes them to tell more lies and strengthen their resolve to challenge the family

authority. For instance, Aunt Polly wants to use her wily questions to snare Tom into revealing his truancy. She asks Tom if he wishes to go swimming in such a sultry day, but this sly fox is aware of her trick and has sewn back his collar before going home. If Sid did not indicate Tom's collar were not sewn with the white thread that his aunt had used, Tom could succeed in cheating her and escape her punishment. In this tricky relation, Aunt Polly needs to outwit Tom to get the evidence of his truancy whereas Tom has to circumvent her cunning questions in order to shirk his responsibility and punishment. In consequence, parents would harden their heart and engross themselves in finding fault with their children rather than try to understand what they need, while children may fail to develop their sense of responsibility.

Mark Twain suggests that the oppressive method which is targeted at civilizing children may cause a reverse effect on them, for he considers the repression of the parents, if getting more and more severely, might ignite children's desire to rebel against their parents. Mark Twain considers that putting too many severe stresses and strains on children will "propel [a] subject to disobedience" (Stanley Milgram 153). For example, after introduced into the respectful life, Huck is forbidden to swear, spit, and smoke. Despite his herculean effort to adapt himself to the new environment, he cannot put up with the restriction. The more he is repressed, the more he is tempted to breach the rules. Hence, he feels obliged to "go up in the attic and rip out awhile, every day, to git a taste in my mouth, or I'd a died" (*Tom Sawyer* 243). In effect, if parents could give children more freedom, children might obey their orders. When Joe feels exceedingly homesick in Jackson's Island, for instance, Tom tries to bolster his morale by telling him "there ain't such another swimming place anywhere" (*Tom Sawyer* 121). But, Joe insipidly says, "Swimming's no good. I don't seem to care for it, somehow, when there ain't anybody to say I sha'n't go in. I mean to go home" (*Tom Sawyer* 121). Although Joe enjoys swimming, he loses this desire when there is no prohibition. This kind of feeling is elucidated much more meticulously in the later episode where Tom joins "the

new order of Cadets of Temperance” (*Tom Sawyer* 158) because he is attracted by “the showy character of their ‘regalia’” (*Tom Sawyer* 158). He promises to abstain from “smoking, chewing, and profanity” (*Tom Sawyer* 158), but he finds that “to promise not to do a thing is the surest way in the world to make a body want to go and do that very thing” (*Tom Sawyer* 158). Quickly submitting his resignation and regaining his freedom, however, he loses his appetite for drinking or swearing and discovers the rules of desire: “The simple fact that he could took the desire away, and the charm of it” (*Tom Sawyer* 159).

It is notable that, despite his piquant criticism about the manipulative ways of the genteel family, Mark Twain never advocates the abolition of this system nor denies its educational function. For one thing, he believes a home can offer a child a sense of belonging, as illustrated in the episode of Tom Sawyer’s Gang where the boys want to rule Huck out when Ben Rogers says, “he hain’t got no family” (*Huck Finn* 21), asides from his drunken father who cannot be found. The boys are convinced that “every boy must have a family or somebody to kill, or else it wouldn’t be fair and square for the others” (*Huck Finn* 21). For another, the high-handed educational approaches still have their own merits. Without Miss Watson’s literacy education, it is impossible for Huck to write a letter to help the three sisters who are duped by the two impudent liars. In fact, Mark Twain suggests that, besides letting up on children, parents should give children more freedom, listen to what they need, and look into their inner world. They can try to forget they are the bosses of their children who like to hold sway over them and take charge of their lives. The best way to teach children, Mark Twain implies, is to make friends with them rather than become their oppressors. This is not the condescension, but a beginning to establish a good relation with children because no one will feel happy if he is always under an oppressive environment.

The Belligerent Family:

In sharp contrast to the distinctively matriarchal and genteel enclaves that Tom and Huck encounter, Buck Grangerford's family, which has feuded with a neighboring clan for several generations, is described as an exclusively patriarchal and belligerent society of which its educative philosophy is to instill into children the importance of annihilating their deadly enemies. Its ultimate goal is to train the children as undaunted warriors ready to launch a massive onslaught. For instance, one day Huck and Buck go hunting in the woods where they accidentally encounter Harney Shepherdson. Quickly lying in ambush, Buck takes aim and squeezes the trigger, but he fails to shoot him dead. After Buck tells his father what has happened in the forest, his father reprimands him for his cowardice, saying that "I don't like that shooting from behind a bush. Why didn't you step into the road, my boy" (*Huck Finn* 127)? Instead of caring about his son's safety, Colonel Grangerford's main concern is whether Buck fairly kills the enemy, for he believes an honest warrior ought to risk his life slaying his mortal foes. Hence, brought up in a world full of animosity, retaliation, and massacre, Buck is forced to put his life in jeopardy and badly distorted by a family belief—avenging the blood feud is much more important than cherishing his precious life.

Despite its success in training young killers, Mark Twain suggests this military education may cause two pernicious effects on the children. One is the rapid acceleration of children's aggressive behavior; the other is the distortion of children's character. "Through witnessing the negative interactions between the significant adults in their lives" (Ola W. Barnett et al. 60), children may "learn maladaptive or violent methods of expressing anger, reacting to stress, or coping with conflict" (Barnett et al. 60). Moreover, as Virginia Hullings-Catalano suggests, children who are exposed to a violent environment may "demonstrate both internalizing (i.e., fearful, inhibited) behaviors and externalizing (i.e., antisocial, aggressive) behaviors" (45). Having internalized the aggressive behavior, Buck has lost the innocent nature of a child. For instance, Buck's first encounter with Huck shows

his unusual way to deal with tension. He carries a gun and strikes a pose of shooting because he mistakes Huck as one of the members of the Shepherdsons. His belligerent behavior culminates in the bloody scene of the gunfight where his heroic deed and sacrifice are in retaliation for Harney Shepherdson's elopement with his sister. Intrepid as Buck is, he is unfortunately deprived of the right to survive and compelled to lead a violent and bloody childhood.

Another impact is illustrated in the conversation between Huck and Buck where Mark Twain adumbrates the depravity of a child's moral character through the eye-for-an-eye education. For instance, when Huck is told that Buck kills the Shepherdsons on account of the feud, Huck asks him what a feud means. Although Buck is shocked at Huck's ignorance, he still elucidates its meaning scrupulously: "a feud is this way: A man has a quarrel with another man, and kills him; then that other man's brother kills him; then the other brothers, on both sides, goes for one another; then the cousins chip in—and by and by everybody's killed off, and there ain't no more feud. But it's kind of slow, and takes a long time" (*Huck Finn* 128). It is this endless feud that distorts Buck's moral character. He shows no remorse for his atrocity because violence has been legitimized by his family. Moreover, Buck insists he follow in his father's footsteps killing all of his mortal foes because he thinks what he does is only following his family convention, though he acknowledges that the Shepherdsons never do anything wrong to him and that he has no vendetta against them. Hence, Mark Twain suggests Colonel Grangerford not only sets a bad example for his children but also corrupts their lives. Instead of teaching them how to resolve the dispute rationally and how to show their compassion for the victims of the feud, Colonel Grangerford imbues his children's character with hostility and rage and eventually brings about their own ruin.

The Violent Family:

Another example of child abuse—in contrast to Buck’s family where the children are compelled to be the perpetrators of violence—is illustrated in Huck’s violent family where his drunken father not only maltreats him through physical and verbal abuses but also forbids him to receive any baptism of civilization. For instance, noticing his son’s “[s]tarchy clothes” (*Huck Finn* 31), Pap sarcastically asks him if he thinks he is better than his father and promises to take him “down a peg before [he] get[s] done with [Huck]” (*Huck Finn* 31). Moreover, after hearing Huck read the stories about General Washington and the wars, Pap orders him to drop out of school, for education will make his son believe in God and put on airs over and get the better of his father. Pap’s abuse culminates in the episode of the kidnapping where he locks his son in a wooden log and beats him so severely that his body is all over welts. If Pap gets drunk, Huck’s day will become harder. For example, after awaking from his alcoholic stupor, Pap seems to go insane and chases after Huck with a clasp-knife, calling him “the Angel of Death” (*Huck Finn* 41). Although Huck escapes unscathed from his father’s brutality, he has been petrified with fear. In order to protect himself, he holds a rifle aimed at his sleeping father until he falls asleep. Through illustrating how Pap oppresses Huck, Mark Twain suggests that Pap’s individual pathology is a pivotal factor that causes him to abuse his son. Due to his “abuse of alcohol” (Barnett et al. 53), “anger control problems, low frustration tolerance, depression, low self-esteem, deficits in empathy, and rigidity” (Barnett et al. 51), all of which are the typical characteristics of abusive parents, Huck always lives in the terror of his devilish-like father. As Huck says, “I used to be scared of him all the time, he tanned me so much. I reckoned I was scared now, too” (*Huck Finn* 31).

Asides from his individual pathology, Mark Twain implies Pap’s low socioeconomic status is another factor that contributes to child abuse. Despite the fact that family violence occurs in different socioeconomic groups, Mark Twain discovers parents with low socioeconomic status may tend to treat their children in a cruel and violent way because

physical child abuse, as S. J. Zuravin and A. J. Sedlak argue, “occurs disproportionately more often among economically and socially disadvantaged families” (Barnett et al. 48). For instance, Pap is economically repressed by his society because it may not be easy for a lower-class, unemployed, alcoholic, and middle-aged man to survive in a middle-class society where people are often concerned with the idea that they should work hard, have a good education, and try to earn enough money to live a comfortable life. Moreover, he is despised and bullied by a society which usually ignores the rights of the minorities. For example, he speaks openly about his resentment at the government who may let the widow be his son’s legal guardian and allow Judge Thatcher to help Huck keep his six thousand dollars. Although he launches this assault on the government and the law when he is drunk, what he condemns expresses his anger at the oppression of the minorities. Hence, Pap’s life-long economical and social disadvantages results in his antipathy towards the success of the middle-class people and the economic disparity between the middle classes and the lower classes. This antipathy, in turn, is transformed into abusive behavior towards his son once he discovers his son is aligned with the middle classes. For instance, when Pap finds his son dressed in clean and beautiful attire given by the widow, he is so jealous that he teases his son mercilessly and says, “Ain’t you a sweet-scented dandy, though? A bed; and bedclothes; and a look’n’-glass; and a piece of carpet on the floor—and your own father got to sleep with the hogs in the tanyard. I never see such a son. I bet I’ll take some o’these frills out o’you before I’m done with you” (*Huck Finn* 32-33). Furthermore, after knowing that Huck gets the windfall, Pap intimidates his son into giving him money for drink; otherwise, “he’d cowhide [Huck] till [Huck] was black and blue” (*Huck Finn* 33). In short, constantly repressed and disdained by his society, Pap forbids his son to emulate the living styles of the middle class. If his son disobeys his orders, he will become an outlet for his father’s aggression.

Although children living under the threat of child abuse “are more likely to be

physically, behaviorally, and/or emotionally impaired, compared to their non-abused counterparts” (Barnett et al. 52), it is notable that Huck does not have socially unacceptable behavior or undergo tremendous emotional problems. Except the physical injuries, Huck does not have the serious behavioral problems caused by his father’s abuse such as “[p]hysical aggression and antisocial behavior” (Barnett et al. 55), “drinking and drug use, noncompliance, defiance, fighting in and out of the home, property offenses, and arrests” (Barnett et al. 55). Instead of resorting to violence, Huck would compose himself, showing his wit and courage, love and empathy in the face of absurdity and adversity. In contrast to Buck or Tom who usually behave in an aggressive manner, Huck seems to be a more genial and mature boy. In addition, Huck does not suffer from the emotional deficiencies caused by his father’s abuse such as “delayed play skills, infant attachment problems, poor social interaction skills, deficits in social competence with peers, avoidance of adults, difficulty making friends, deficits in pro-social behaviors, hopelessness, depression, low self-esteem” (Barnett et al. 53). Although he fails to build up his self-esteem and always thinks of him as a mean boy, he has no difficulty making friends or interacting with adults. Instead, he forms a deep and lasting friendship with Tom and Jim. Moreover, he is equipped with many social experiences which he can use to cope with different people. For example, when manipulated by the king and duke, Huck does not let on these two lairs; rather, he knows “the best way to get along with his kind of people is to let them have their own way” (*Huck Finn* 142), for the wisest way to avoid any trouble and protect Jim’s safety is to satisfy their demands. Although Huck is terribly tortured by his drunken father, Mark Twain suggests that Huck always shows the tenacity of his life under the disadvantaged environment, and it is his tenacity that helps him survive in his world.

Religious Environment/Education/Constraints:

Religious authority to which Mark Twain offers his fresh ammunition is the second kind of the social constraint that seems to crucify children every Sunday. Its ultimate goal, as illustrated in the scene of the Bible-awarding ceremony, is to make children “great men and good men” (*Tom Sawyer* 40) by the Sabbath-school’s religious and moral edification. Despite this lofty ideal, its two strategies to achieve this aim are not merely a kind of mental repression but also an excruciating torture for children. Its first strategy to keep children under its sway is through the physical confinement in the Sabbath-school and the church for the whole Sunday morning. For instance, children should have felt excited about the coming of Sunday, but this day becomes a nightmare for Mark Twain’s children because they are forced to lodge in the Sabbath-school and the church, the two places which restrict their freedom and test their patience. In the Sabbath-school, they are compelled to listen to the superintendent’s affected speeches of which his voices have “a peculiar intonation” (*Tom Sawyer* 36) that he would not use on weekdays. The smug-looking superintendent is convinced that, through listening to his inspiring speeches, children are capable of “learning to do right and be good” (*Tom Sawyer* 36). Nevertheless, his speeches neither appeal to those children nor modify their misdemeanor, for the children he faces are not a host of angels but a throng of “restless, noisy, and troublesome” (*Tom Sawyer* 34) devils. Before he finishes his clichés, the boys have interrupted him “by the resumption of fights and other recreations among certain of the bad boys, and by fidgetings and whisperings that extended far and wide, washing even to the bases of isolated and incorruptible rocks like Sid and Mary” (*Tom Sawyer* 36-37). When concluding his hackneyed speeches, he receives a gush of silent gratitude rather than a round of applause. In consequence, instead of successfully instilling the moral education into these inattentive children, the Sabbath-school becomes a recreation area for them to play tricks and display their childish and effervescent antics.

After the trial of the speeches, these Sabbath-school children are confined to a small church where they reluctantly hear the preacher's interminable prayer whose voices drone, maddening as an insect around their heads. Imposed on them are the values of philanthropy and the belief in hereafter. For example, the preacher pleads for the Church, the nation, and the whole world and then his topic will be converted into the vivid description of the "limitless fore and brimstone" (*Tom Sawyer* 45). Generous and touching as the prayer is, the children seldom enjoy it; instead, they are trained to keep a stiff upper lip, enduring it impatiently. If the preacher adds a new matter into his prayers, the children like Tom would detect it and bend their energy to despising it. The children's suffering would go on to the minister's sermons after the prayer. As the tedious sermon progresses, more and more members of the congregation are dozing off while Tom lapses into his suffering again, taking a box which contains a black beetle from his pocket. The insect latches onto a stray poodle's hip. The sharp yelp of the poodle causes the spectators' "smothered burst of unholy mirth," (*Tom Sawyer* 47) which disrupts the gravest sermon completely, as if they heard the most facetious thing from the minister. When the sermon is finally over, Tom feels satisfied with that divine service, but his cheerfulness is not due to the spiritual inspiration of the prayer or sermon but to the funny scene of the battle between the poodle and his beetle. This comical but ironical scene, a stark contrast to the solemnity of the religious occasion, successfully highlights the sheer boredom of the religious ceremonies and the complete failure to elevate the children's spirituality by those didactic teachings.

The second strategy to manipulate the children is through the mental manipulation. In "The Story of the Bad Little Boy," for instance, children who learn from their Sunday-school books are admonished for the peril of getting drowned if they go sailing on Sunday. Moreover, they are inveigled into believing that they would get caught out in storms and infallibly get struck by lightning if they go fishing on this day. Despite these two warnings,

the bad boy called Jim never gets drowned or struck by lightning when taking pleasure in going boating and fishing on Sunday. Instead, the tragedy falls on the good little boy, Jacob, who has a strong faith in the Sunday-school books. For instance, when Jacob sees the bad boys go boating on the Sabbath, he is so aghast that he runs out to a raft to warn them. Nevertheless, no catastrophe happens to the bad boys; rather, it is Jacob that gets drowned. Through this ironic contrast, Mark Twain ridicules the deceitful stories of the Sunday-school books, through which the church inveigles the innocent children into believing that if they do not go to church on Sunday, their profanity will bring them bad luck. Hence, the church believes that through its intimidation, children may forgo their pleasure and go to church to receive the biblical education without any dissent.

In addition to the Sunday-school books, Mark Twain suggests the Holy Bible is another tool to manipulate children's minds. The children are forced to memorize the verses of the Book which they would use to perform the mental acrobatics in the Sunday school. For the model children such as Mary and Sid, this religious indoctrination does work very well for them because they would use their whole nature to recite the verses without any complaint. For the boys who do not like recitation, it becomes their great burden and wreck their happiness on Sunday. For instance, picking up the shortest verses from "The Beatitudes," yet Tom still muddles through his required studying and "[has] a vague general idea of his lesson" (*Tom Sawyer* 31) until Mary boosts his confidence by bribing him with a Barlow knife as a reward, which successfully raises up his dead spirit to accomplish this drudgery. In order to encourage the children, lazy boys in particular, to learn the Bible by rote, the church takes the same measure as Mary, bribing them with three different kinds of tickets for their hard work: "each blue ticket [is] pay for two verses of the recitation. Ten blue tickets [equal] a red one, and could be exchanged for it; ten red tickets [equal] a yellow one; for ten yellow tickets the superintendent [gives] a very plainly bound Bible (worth forty cents in those easy

times) to the pupil” (*Tom Sawyer* 35). Although the church successfully makes the children memorize the verses through its bribery, their devotion to the Bible does not mean that they hunger for the spiritual edification or the prizes. Instead, they care more about the *éclat* and honor that come with the award ceremony where the pupil who wins the plainly-bound Bible will become a conspicuous hero. Hence, this positive reinforcement, though effective on children, may stimulate their vanity.

Despite the church’s effort to edify the children, its two strategies, Mark Twain suggests, may cause a reverse effect on them and lead them to hate its moral education with their whole hearts. In fact, Mark Twain implies that they have reasons to disapprove of its constraint. First, Sunday should be a wonderful holiday for each child. On this day, they can do many outdoor activities, but the church deprives them of this privilege. Not only do they need to beat their brains out fighting against those verses but they are imprisoned in the church to hear the boring sermons. Second, the allegories of the Bible are too abstract for them to be understood. If not, the stories are usually didactic enough to stifle the children’s desire to give them their fleeting glimpse. Moreover, their lessons are detached from the children’s personal experiences, so they seldom touch the children’s heart. For instance, when the minister describes how a little child will lead the lion and lamb at the millennium, Tom wishes that “he could be that child, if it was a tame lion” (*Tom Sawyer* 45). For a child, this allegory is beyond their ability to figure out its meaning because there is no connection between this lesson and his daily life experiences. Moreover, he distorts the allegorical implication because his main concern is not “the pathos, the lesson, the moral of the great spectacle” (*Tom Sawyer* 45) but “the conspicuousness of the principal character” (*Tom Sawyer* 45).

Through his criticism of the religious oppression, Mark Twain adumbrates the invalidity of didactic education in the church because the ethereal teaching, which is too

abstract to be understood by children, has an adverse effect on them. Instead, Mark Twain argues that the effective moral education should have something to do with children's daily life. For example, Tom's and Joe's conscience is terribly disturbed after they steal the food for their pirate game. They cannot fall asleep because they know they have violated one of the commandments in the Holy Bible—stealing. In other words, Mark Twain suggests that the moral sense of a child is cultivated by his daily experience rather than by any compulsory didactic education.⁹

V

School Environment/Education/Constraints:

After attacking the constraint of the Sabbath school and the church, Mark Twain continues his barrage against teachers' corporal punishment at school. For Mark Twain's children, the school is another heaviest burden in their childhood, for it is a place replete with humiliation and violence. Their irresponsible teacher, Mr. Dobbins, usually hypnotized by their "drowsy hum of study" (*Tom Sawyer* 56), enjoys taking the perverted pleasure in flogging his students, so his rod, rather than his books, becomes the only tool to educate and oppress his students. For instance, despite his effort to concentrate upon his study, Tom's mind is still wandering and his heart aches for freedom when he is sitting in the classroom. In order to kill his time, he fumbles around in his pocket for a "percussion-cap box" (*Tom Sawyer* 60) from which he releases a tick. He plays the tick with his bosom schoolmate, Joe

⁹ In the episode of rescuing Jim out of captivity, Tom distorts the definition of pilferage. Tom knows clearly Huck and he are stealing a sheet and a white shirt from the clothes-line, but he justifies his ill behavior by arguing that a prisoner has his right to steal everything he needs to get out of the prison. He tells Huck that as long as they represent prisoners, they have the perfect right to steal the things they will use to rescue Jim. Bearing what Tom has told him in mind, Huck steals a watermelon from a nigger. But Tom asks him to pay the nigger a dime. Baffled by Tom's request, Huck asks Tom why he is not allowed to steal a watermelon. Tom tells him that the watermelon is not used for rescuing Jim, so he cannot steal it. In this episode, Tom distorts the definition of stealth while Huck gets confused at Tom's instruction. Tom knows it is ill-mannered to steal anything, but he legitimizes his stealing act to implement his plan. The immoral instruction of Huck's father has obscured his boundary between stealing and borrowing. Tom's ludicrous justification for stealing makes Huck get much more confused at the nuance between stealing and borrowing.

Harper, but they are too absorbed to notice the approach of their catastrophe before their ferocious teacher tiptoes down the classroom and stands watching them playing with the tiny prey. The two boys are thus given a tremendous whack on their shoulders for their absent-mindedness. Their teacher's tyranny culminates in the episode of the "Examination day" (*Tom Sawyer* 151) where he is tempted to flaunt the success of his teaching in the face of the students' parents. In order to satisfy his vanity and please the parents, "[h]is rod and his ferule [are] seldom idle now—at least among the smaller pupils" (*Tom Sawyer* 151). As this day approaches, he is becoming severer and likes to "take a vindictive pleasure in punishing the least shortcomings" (*Tom Sawyer* 151). The consequence of his oppression is that "the smaller boys [spend] their days in terror and suffering and their nights in plotting revenge" (*Tom Sawyer* 151).

Mark Twain indicates that physical punishment, though effective in frightening the children, causes at least two negative impacts on them. First, physical punishment impairs the relation between the teacher and the students because "[w]hat students dislike most is the excessive strictness of teachers who punish on any occasion" (Cleopatra Montandon 113). Frequently humiliated by the teacher's tyranny, the students may bear grudges against him and finally avenge their insult if they cannot bear it any longer. For instance, the students retaliate against Mr. Dobbins by asking the sign-painter's son to prepare for a blindfolded cat. It is suspended from the rafters by a string until it snatches away Dobbins's wig, revealing his gilded bald head. Through the students' revenge, hence, Mark Twain implies that it is human nature to be antipathetic to oppression. If the teacher is growing severer and severer, the students will become more rebellious. Moreover, the corporal punishment should have been exercised to curb the excess of the students, but if teachers do not restrain themselves from using this privilege, not only do they fail to administer their students but they have to face the consequences of their own violence. The second impact of physical punishment on children is

its invalidity. Mark Twain suggests that physical punishment, if frequently used, may lose its disciplinary function because students have been numb with its fear. For instance, when discovering Becky carelessly tears Mr. Dobbins's favorite book about anatomy, Tom volunteers to take "the most merciless flaying that even Mr. Dobbins [has] ever administered" (*Tom Sawyer* 149) in order to save Becky from embarrassment. His willingness to become the scapegoat is partly due to his sense of chivalry, but his numbness with the corporal punishment is the main reason of his heroic action. As Tom says, "What a curious kind of a fool a girl is! Never been licked in school! Shucks! What's a licking! That's just like a girl—they're so thin-skinned and chicken-hearted" (*Tom Sawyer* 147). Due to Tom's immunity to the teacher's rod, his teacher's lashing is all in vain.

Through his criticism about the cruelty of physical punishment, Mark Twain argues that children are not teachers' pets which can be either petted or tortured at their own free will; instead, they are human beings who have their own dignity and pride. The excess of corporal punishment would either cause them to fight back to maintain their dignity or make them acquiesce its brutality with a stiff upper lip. Both of the results are detrimental to children's psychological development.

The decorative and uncreative teaching style is another target which Mark Twain severely criticizes. Though it is less oppressive than the corporal punishment, it equips children with histrionic behavior, imbues their mind with clichés, and even distorts their character. On the examination day, for instance, little boys and girls are forced to deliver speeches with dramatic and exaggerated gestures on stage. A very little boy suffering terribly from stage fright uses "the painfully exact and spasmodic gestures which a machine might have used" (*Tom Sawyer* 152) to recite his words sheepishly. Tom with a conceited air makes a "'Give me liberty or give me death' speech, with fine fury and frantic gesticulation" (*Tom Sawyer* 152) but he later succumbs to his grisly terror when forgetting his words. This

apparently interesting speech performance is used to please the parents and let them see how brave and eloquent their children are, but the teacher and the parents neither think about the feelings of the little children who are scared to death on stage nor inquire whether they would like to give the melodramatic performances. Instead, seeing their children as the property at their disposal, the teacher and parents consider they have rights to ask the children to entertain them no matter how reluctant they are.

Another affected performance on the examination day is the recitation of banal compositions of which the themes are all unbearable clichés: “‘Friendship’ [is] one; ‘Memories of Other Days’; ‘Religion in History’; ‘Dream Land’; ‘The Advantages of Culture’; ‘Forms of Political Government Compared and Contrasted’; ‘Melancholy’; ‘Filial Love’; ‘Heart Longings’” (*Tom Sawyer* 153). In these compositions, there are three distinctive features. One is their sentimental styles; another is “a wasteful and opulent gush of ‘fine language’” (*Tom Sawyer* 153); and still the other is each composition with a didactic ending. For instance, prancing around the stage and striking poses, an apparently melancholy girl pretends to look serious and uses a melancholy tone to read her poem, “A Missouri Maiden’s Farewell to Alabama” (*Tom Sawyer* 155). After gushing out her excessive feelings, this Missouri maiden closes her poem by a difficult word “tête” that very few people on that occasion know its meaning. Ornate and poetic as her language is, the poem’s connotations are actually beyond her understanding. For this maiden, the poem only offers her a chance to abuse her emotion, show off her beautiful rhetoric, and win the audience’s applause.

After this poem, another serious-looking girl continues to read a ten-page composition called “A vision” (*Tom Sawyer* 155). Not only is she effusive in her praise of the Eden but she closes her tedious composition with an intolerable sermon. Despite the fact that this girl, through her didactic product, wins the first prize in that performance, her triumph highlights the hypocrisy of school education, for she just follows the school convention of writing a

composition and then produces a mediocre and insincere essay to cater for the teachers' and parents' tastes. As Mark Twain says:

The glaring insincerity of these sermons [is] not sufficient to compass the banishment of the fashion from the schools, and it is not sufficient to-day; it never will be sufficient while the world stands, perhaps. There is no school in all our land where the young ladies do not feel obliged to close their compositions with a sermon; and you will find that the sermon of the most frivolous and the least religious girl in the school is always the longest and the most relentlessly pious. But enough of this. Homely truth is unpalatable. (*Tom Sawyer* 153-54)

Mark Twain indicates that the hypocrisy of school education have two harmful effects on children. The first effect is children's inconsistency between words and minds. He argues that the children trained to get used to the bombastic styles might mechanically close their works with moral lessons which they never believe. After all, "[h]omely truth is unpalatable" (*Tom Sawyer* 154), so they are not allowed to confess their genuine feelings in their compositions, such as their hatred towards the school or teachers, and intolerance of the unnatural performances on the examination day. Instead, what they need to do is conceal their feelings and show their implicit obedience to the school's rules because the school's regulations, as Cedric Cullingford suggests, "are based not on moral guilt but on fear of punishment, not so much on self-reliant as on commands" (81); in other words, the children's obedience to their teacher is only due to their "fear of punishment" (Cullingford 81). Hence, what they think would gradually turn away from what they say until their minds are completely transformed into the standard model demanded by the school. The second impact of this insincere education on children is the distortion of their character. Due to their inconsistency between words and minds, children might have a double-sided character. In order to win the accolades of the adults, for instance, the most frivolous and impious girls can falsely show their piety in

their compositions. The way they behave only meets the expectation of the adults while they can secretly conceal their meanness; consequently, the good values, which the school aims to bestow on them, are of no meaning to them, for they have become no less hypocritical than their school teachers.

Mark Twain implies human nature is inherently good and evil. Because of their straightforwardness and innocence, the unsophisticated children might honestly reveal their evilness. It is through school education that gradually purges their minds of their evilness. However, if teachers excessively repress their students' foibles by corporal punishment, students might revolt against the tyranny in order to stand on their dignity; hence, not only does this disciplinary method fail to suppress students' rebellion but it exacerbates its problem. On the other hand, if teachers excessively impose didactic teaching materials on students in the hope of instilling good values into their minds, students would only use these uncreative materials to give an opulent but insincere performance; hence, this decorative teaching method does not offer students anything good; instead, it creates many hypocritical actors and actresses.

VI

Social Milieu/Education/Constraints:

Social authority against which Mark Twain launches his rhetorical assault is basically entrenched by the middle classes who determine the dominant values, sense of right and wrong, and sense of personal self-worth. Although it is less repressive than the preceding three authorities, Mark Twain's children are consciously or unconsciously dominated and even corrupted by its three discourses: slavery, materialism, and knowledge. For instance, the place where the children dwell is stained by "an ideology of racial hierarchy" (Shelley Fisher Fishkin 127), which is bolstered by the slaveholders and acquiesced by the church. Due to the

social and economic benefits, racism permeates the children's living environment where everyone takes it for granted that he or she does have a right to brutalize the black. For instance, middle-class slaveholders such as Aunt Polly, Widow Douglas, and Miss Watson seem to ignore the fact that their cruelty has brought them into conflict with the Christian doctrines of philanthropy. Without feeling a pang of remorse for their savagery, they exploit their slaves, treating them as working machines. Even Uncle Silas, a respectable preacher in his small village, maltreats Jim, chaining his limbs to the legs of the bed. Deeply affected by the racial prejudice so pervasive in their society, the children might copy the ways the adults behave and internalize the belief of "the allegedly 'natural superiority' of the white race" (Fishkin 128). For example, seeing Jim as his toy, Tom thinks of various inhuman ruses to get Jim out of his captivity, or rather to torture him, at the end of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. In contrast to Tom's cruelty, Huck is tempted to help Jim get his freedom, but he always has misgivings about his betrayal of the society and slaveholder, believing that what he does is morally depraved. Hence, the children are corrupted and dehumanized by the slavery institution.¹⁰ Even if they are not averse to slavery, they may feel obliged to conform to this deformed discourse.

Aside from slavery institution, the world where Mark Twain's children inhabit is full of shallow materialism. Living in "the poor little shabby village of St. Petersburg" (*Tom Sawyer* 13), people caught in the whirlpool of materialism see money and possessions as the most important things. After Tom and Huck find the treasure in the cave, for instance, the inhabitants ransack each "'haunted' house in St. Petersburg and the neighbouring villages" (*Tom Sawyer* 241) in the hope of digging up the hidden treasures. Whenever the boys appear in the village, moreover, the inhabitants flatter and admire the two boys, displaying a

¹⁰ David Cozy suggests that Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is published after the Emancipation Proclamation, so it is not part of any anti-slavery movement. Instead, its main issue is, through an attack on slavery, to criticize the hypocrisy and evil of Christianity. He argues that Mark "Twain uses his attack on slavery, an attack with which the majority of his public would already agree, to gain from his mostly Christian audience a sympathetic reading of his radical assault on their religion" (51).

shamelessly obsequious air. They even magnify and exaggerate the boys' lives by publishing "biographical sketches of the boys" (*Tom Sawyer* 241) in the village newspaper. Consumed by the middle-class materialism, the children may also share the same proclivity as those greedy inhabitants and see money as the panacea for all the troubles they cause. For example, in order to compensate Jim for the loss of his time and all of his trouble, Tom haughtily gives him "forty dollars for being prisoner for [him] so patient, and doing it up so good" (*Huck Finn* 294). Instead of repenting his cruelty, Tom believes that he can remunerate Jim for the annoyance and suffering caused by his yearning for exciting adventures.

Knowledge is the last domination over the children's mind. In Mark Twain's novels, there are two kinds of knowledge. One is the knowledge from the Holy Bible and the Sunday school books; the other is from the story books. Model children always show their faith in the former while Tom and other boys always comply with the instruction of the latter. Yet, Mark Twain implies that the two kinds of book authorities may cause harmful effect on the children. For instance, although a German boy recites "three thousand verses without stopping" (*Tom Sawyer* 35) in order to win a plainly bound Bible, "the strain upon his mental faculties [is] too great, and he [is] little better than an idiot from that day forth" (*Tom Sawyer* 35). For those children who believe in the story books, they may cause a lot of troubles to their parents. For example, following the instruction of pirate books, Tom and Joe leaves their homes without notice. Their disappearance causes their parents to believe that the boys have been dead. Hence, although books offer children knowledge, Mark Twain implies they seem to have a magical power to dominate their minds.

VII

Two Educative Mechanisms:

Effeminate Codes of Conduct Prescribed by the Disciplinary Practices versus Masculine

Codes of Conduct Exemplified in the Dominant Boys' Culture:

Mark Twain suggests that the various ways in which the multiple authorities discipline or manipulate children can be categorized into two distinctive types of educative mechanisms. The first type that is used as a means of civilizing and controlling children is a set of disciplinary practices, including control mechanisms and a discourse on model children. The control mechanisms, which develop from the manipulative measures used by the authorities of families, churches, and schools, are a kind of meticulous control of children's bodies, minds, time, and activities. The discourse on model children, which derives from the dominant ideology advocated by the social authority, is a kind of mental manipulation. These two disciplinary practices, Mark Twain suggests, prescribe a plethora of effeminate codes of conduct, such as docility and gentility, cleanliness and piety, compassion and benevolence. Children who are under the control of the disciplinary practices are encouraged to take in all of these effeminate codes of conduct as an integral part of their life. For instance, children are expected to comply with rules of decorum, dress codes, and Christian doctrines. They are also required to obey their parents, pay attention to their personal hygiene, and memorize the verses of the Holy Bible. Through the manipulation of the disciplinary practices, adults believe that children who are willing to accept the effeminate codes of conduct can be baked into graceful shapes that their society wishes them to be.

In contrast to the disciplinary practices that impose upon children a set of effeminate rules, the second type of the educative mechanism that introduces a set of masculine codes of conduct to teenage boys is the dominant boys' culture, which educates Mark Twain's boys how to become manly men. The basic tenets of the boys' culture, which are in direct conflict with those of the disciplinary practices, constitute a dominant ideology of masculinity—a set of beliefs in which masculinity is primarily based upon physical strength, courage, virility, resilience, rebellion, stoicism, chivalry, and dominance over women. Children who are under

the sway of the masculine culture are expected to show their manliness in every aspect of their daily life. For example, children who internalize the masculine codes of conduct might display their manliness in their minds, behavior, and games. Through the education of the boys' culture, Mark Twain suggests that a teenage boy who is willing to accept the masculine codes of conduct might be molded into a virile boy that most of the St. Petersburg's inhabitants expect him to be.

The Different Choices Made by Mark Twain's Two Distinctive Types of Children:

When confronted with the requirements of the two educative mechanisms, Mark Twain's two distinctive types of children would show their submission to either of them, from which they are aware that they can gain considerable advantages. The first type of children subjected to the rules prescribed by the disciplinary practices is Mark Twain's model children, such as Sid and Jacob. Not only do they internalize the effeminate codes of conduct but they also strive hard to meet adults' expectations. Although the two well-behaved boys, who follow the regulations prescribed by the disciplinary practices, are all labeled as model children, their different ways of obedience to the multiple authorities reveal two distinctive kinds of juvenile images. Sid, who is under the disguise of a model child, is in fact a treacherous spy and cunning informer, whereas Jacob, though being a kind-hearted model boy, is a conceited and foolish boy eventually ruined by his vanity and inanity. In stark contrast to the model children that show deference to the disciplinary practices, the second type of children that adheres to the rules of masculinity prescribed by the boys' masculine culture is Mark Twain's masculine urchins, such as Tom and Huck. These two masculine urchins not only regard the masculine codes as the catalyst for the formation of their gender identity but also endeavor to come up to the social expectations of a masculine boy. Despite the fact that the two masculine urchins obey the rules exemplified in the boys' culture, Mark Twain

suggests that their different ways of compliance with the dominant boys' culture show two different juvenile images. Masculine as Tom is, he is portrayed as a wayward and self-centered boy, who seldom shows empathy for other people. Unlike Tom, Huck is depicted as a manly but considerate boy, who always takes other people's feelings into consideration.

In order to delve deeper into the impact of the two educative mechanisms and their respective codes of conduct upon the two different types of children, the second chapter of this thesis will concentrate upon how the fictional society, St. Petersburg, constitutes the disciplinary practices and then investigate the influence of these practices upon Mark Twain's model children. Through the examination of the disciplinary practices and the effeminate rules of conduct, the second chapter aims to lift the masks worn by the model children in the hope of presenting two distinctive juvenile images that are embodied in the two model children, Sid and Jacob. After the analysis of the model children in the second chapter, the third chapter of this thesis will focus on how the boys' society shapes its boys into masculine teenagers and then examine the effect of the masculine culture upon Mark Twain's masculine urchins in the hope of stripping off the "masculine" armor worn by Tom and Huck. By dint of studying the social formation of a masculine boy and pointing out the problems of the masculine codes of conduct, the third chapter hopes to show two different juvenile images respectively represented by the two masculine urchins, Tom and Huck.