

CHAPTER THREE

Beneath a Veneer of Disobedience:

Masculine Urchins in Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

“Holler ’nuff!” said he.

The boy only struggled to free himself. He was crying—mainly from rage.

“Holler ’nuff!”—and the pounding went on.

At last the stranger got out a smothered ‘Nuff!’ and Tom let him up and said:

“Now that’ll learn you. Better look out who you’re fooling with next time.”

—Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*

Then for an hour it was deadly dull, and I was fidgety. 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?”

—Mark Twain, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

As the epigraphs indicate, Mark Twain’s wild children, whose rebellious streak is deeply etched in our mind, have been long recognized as a symbol of freedom and self-reliance. Depicted as wild and untidy, troublesome and disobedient urchins, they are widely believed to be free from the shackles of authority. For instance, Tom Sawyer, as Cynthia Griffin Wolff argues, is unconstrained by his family because he has the “right to govern his own comings and goings” (98) through “[c]rawling out his bedroom window at night” (98). When the dead silence falls upon the whole village where everyone has fallen asleep, Tom is free to sneak out of his house, giving Huck his “me-yow” signal to start playing adventures all night long without disturbance caused by the real world. Like Tom Sawyer, Huckleberry Finn is given considerable individual autonomy. His self-independence and freedom are acclaimed by critics as a challenge to authority. As Alan Trachtenberg suggests, Huck is created to project “an image of wise innocence in conflict with corruption,

of natural man achieving independence of a depraved society” (48). For example, Huck’s loyalty and assistance to the runaway slave, Jim, as many critics assert, reinforces our impression of his freedom from the restraints of his deformed society. Despite the fact that these wild boys have won critics’ accolade for their unconstrained idiosyncrasies, their rebellious behavior is usually oversimplified to the extent that defiance and mischievousness are seen as their “inborn” qualities.

In order to probe deeper into the causes of their disobedience to the multiple authorities, this chapter will concentrate upon Mark Twain’s masculine urchins such as Tom and Huck in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Through examining the masculine culture exemplified in the world of Mark Twain’s wild boys, this chapter will attempt to reveal how the fictional society, St. Petersburg, shapes its teenage boys into masculine urchins in the hope of elucidating the possible causes of their disobedience and stripping off the “masculine” armor worn by those masculine urchins. It will start from analyzing how the boys’ society, St. Petersburg, mould them into masculine children by means of two cultural and two social factors. Through studying children’s games, storybooks, circuses, social expectations of boys, and peer pressure, it will not only examine how language, writing, and the culture of the boys’ world create masculine images for boys but also investigate how Tom and Huck are affected or even dominated by these spoken and written discourses on boyhood masculinity. Then, this chapter will demonstrate how the codes of masculinity embedded in the world of boys determine those wild children’s mind, behavior, and entertainments. Through comparing the effeminate ethos embodied in the disciplinary practices with the masculine ethos exemplified in the world of boys, moreover, this chapter will examine the impact of the wild boys’ submission to the masculine culture upon their daily lives. Using this comparison as a framework for Mark Twain’s masculine urchins, this chapter will argue that their internalization of the codes of masculinity may

bring about their disobedience to the multiple authorities. Nevertheless, there is a subtle difference in the ways Tom and Huck challenge the authorities. For instance, Tom takes a malicious pleasure in rebelling against his aunt, teacher, and preacher and derives his enormous happiness from others' misfortune. Unlike this self-centered and wayward boy, Huck shows his noncompliance with the authorities, but he always takes other people's feelings into consideration, struggling to convince him of the righteousness of his defiance. Through the comparison of the two noncompliant boys, the ultimate aim of this chapter is to demonstrate Huck is a naturally good child.

I

The World of Boys Saturated with Masculinity:

In *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Mark Twain portrays a masculine world exclusive to his wild boys such as Tom Sawyer, Huckleberry Finn, and Joe Harper. Within this realm of masculinity, these wild boys are always free to display their strength, courage, and competence. Their exhibition of manliness, Mark Twain suggests, is usually epitomized in their competitive physical games, in which they can not only enjoy a lot of pleasure by indulging in male fantasies but also prove their masculinity through playing the roles of being "a big man." Moreover, these "pleasure-loving and pleasure-seeking" (Brown 30) boys, who are fascinated with playing outlaws, are able to "get the satisfactions of power and adventure without any effort or danger" (Brown 29). For example, after Tom daydreams about being a pirate in "a dense wood" (*Tom Sawyer* 67) and then chants a futile "incantation" (*Tom Sawyer* 69) in order to retrieve his lost marbles, he hears a blast of "a toy tin trumpet" (*Tom Sawyer* 70) that faintly comes from the forest. On hearing the sudden loud noise, he immediately flings off his garment and slacks, turning his suspender into a belt and raking some small bushes over to get a stash of his secret playthings such as "a rude bow and

arrow, a lath sword and a tin trumpet” (*Tom Sawyer* 70). After having armed himself with his false weapon, Tom blows an answering blast and stands under a great elm where he encounters one of his old comrades, Joe Harper, who dons a humble suit of armor, marches towards him. Seeing their rivals “airily clad and elaborately armed” (*Tom Sawyer* 70), the two young brave warriors start to re-enact the stories of Robin Hood and Guy of Guisborne. However, before fighting with each other, Tom shouts at his opponent in a virile and confident manner:

TOM. “Hold! Who comes here into Sherwood Forest without my pass?”

JOE. “Guy of Guisborne wants no man’s pass. Who art thou that—that—”

TOM. “Dares to hold such language,” said Tom, prompting—for they talked “by the book,” from memory.

JOE. “Who art thou that dares to hold such language?”

TOM. “I, indeed! I am Robin Hood, as thy caitiff carcass soon shall know.”

JOE. “Then art thou indeed that famous outlaw? Right gladly will I dispute with thee the passes of the merry wood. Have at thee!” (*Tom Sawyer* 70-71)

After their verbal assault, the two masculine boys pick up their lath swords, strike a fencing pose, and then engage in hand-to-hand combat until one of them is being falsely slain. When they finish playing the game, they go off bemoaning the absence of such masculine role models as Robin Hood and Guy of Guisborne in their real world, and “wondering what modern civilization could claim to have done to compensate for their loss” (*Tom Sawyer* 72). Moreover, both of the boys, who find great enjoyment as well as fulfillment in their violent game, pledge that “they would rather be outlaws a year in Sherwood Forest than President of the United States for ever” (*Tom Sawyer* 72).

Despite the fact that the two young combatants have no inkling of “what modern civilization” (*Tom Sawyer* 72) can make up for the loss of such vigorous and muscular

representatives as Robin Hood and Guy of Guisborne, Mark Twain implies that the dominant culture of boys, which usually determines how a teenage boy develops, behaves, reacts, and thinks, provides a script of masculinity for every boy to follow. This masculine script, which paints a scenario of how a boy can comport himself in a manly fashion, includes two cultural and two social factors that help to either constitute or reinforce particular forms of masculinity within the world of boys. The two cultural factors, which constitute the normal rules of masculinity, are embodied in children's two distinctive entertainments, including storybooks and performances in circuses, whereas the two social factors, which reinforce the notions of desirable manliness, are embedded in the social expectations of boys and the peer pressure among male teenagers. Under the influence of these cultural and social factors, a boy who approves of the codes of masculinity might endeavor to live up to a standard masculine image sanctioned by the dominant culture of boys. For instance, Mark Twain suggests that a boy is able to learn how to fashion and show his own masculinity through reading the stories about intrepid desperadoes or watching a sturdy clown exhibiting his effervescent but dangerous antics. Moreover, he will adapt himself to or confirm his belief in the prescriptions of masculinity under the impact of the social expectations or the peer pressure. Hence, Mark Twain suggests that the codes of masculinity, which are constructed and buttressed by the boys' culture and society respectively, would lead to the social formation of a masculine boy and affect every aspect of a boy's life.

II

The Social Formation of a Masculine Boy:

Children's Storybooks as the First Cultural Factor that Constitute Codes of Masculinity:

In his two juvenile novels, Mark Twain indicates that there are three distinctive types of

children's storybooks, each of them conveying particular masculine messages to its young readers. One is embodied in the stories of Robin Hood, another is represented by the stories of pirates, and still the other is epitomized by the stories of fugitives. Despite their different genres, all of these storybooks, Mark Twain suggests, constitute a dominant ideology of masculinity—a set of beliefs in which manliness is primarily based upon physical strength, audacity, resilience, defiance, stoicism, “action orientation” (Kindlon 15), chivalry, and ascendancy over women. The legend of Robin Hood, for instance, introduces at least three particular masculine codes to its young readers: strength, bravery, and contravention of social norms. This kind of introduction is clearly illustrated in the episode of digging for the hidden treasures, in which Tom tells Huck exactly who Robin Hood is and what he does. Tom informs Huck that Robin Hood is “the noblest man” (*Tom Sawyer* 180) that no one can compete with because he is a strong and courageous archer, who can not only “lick any man in England, with one hand tied behind him” (*Tom Sawyer* 180) but also make dexterous use of “his yew bow and plug a ten-cent piece every time, a mile and a half” (*Tom Sawyer* 180). Moreover, Tom tells Huck that Robin Hood is “one of the greatest men that was ever in England” (*Tom Sawyer* 180), for this boldest outlaw of Barnsdale and Sherwood, though being a desperado, is acclaimed as a noble robber, who only robs “sheriffs and bishops and rich people and kings” (*Tom Sawyer* 180) of their possessions and “never bother[s] the poor” (*Tom Sawyer* 180). In other words, he gives succor to the poor and “always divide[s] up [what he steals from the rich] with 'em perfectly square” (*Tom Sawyer* 180). Being enthralled by this ancient story and its legendary figure, Tom and Huck “play [the game of] Robin Hood all the afternoon” (*Tom Sawyer* 180). Through highlighting the two boys' admiration for Robin Hood's physical abilities and dauntless courage to infringe social laws, Mark Twain suggests that the two boys not only approve of the codes of masculinity established by the storybooks they read but also take in these principles of manliness as an integral part of their

life.

Like the stories of Robin Hood dominated by an atmosphere of heroism, the adventures of pirates, which show extreme forms of male qualities, prescribe four distinctive rules of masculinity: boldness and toughness, chivalry and dominance over women. These kinds of prescriptions, Mark Twain suggests, can be seen in the conversation among Tom, Huck, and Joe. After the three boys, who are determined to become pirates,¹ slip away from home and live on Jackson's Island, they start to cogitate on the lifestyles of pirates. Huck Finn, "the Red-Handed" (*Tom Sawyer* 101), first inquires what "pirates have to do" (*Tom Sawyer* 105). Tom, "the Black Avenger of the Spanish Main" (*Tom Sawyer* 101), replies that those adventurous and intrepid pirates he reads from his storybooks always engage in perilous but illegal enterprises such as arson attacks, plunder, and murder. For example, those pirates may "take ships and burn them, and get the money and bury it in awful places in their island where there's ghosts and things to watch it, and kill everybody in the ships—make 'em walk a plank" (*Tom Sawyer* 105). In spite of their audacious and provocative behavior, Joe Harper, "the Terror of the Seas" (*Tom Sawyer* 101), reminds the other two boys that those aggressive pirates "don't kill the women" (*Tom Sawyer* 105); instead, they are required to treat women in a chivalric manner, adorning their bodies and fingers with "gold and silver and di'monds" (*Tom Sawyer* 105). After hearing what Joe says, Tom agrees with his comrade and says, "they don't kill the women—they're too noble. And the women's always beautiful, too" (*Tom Sawyer* 105).

The third type of storybooks that instills a sense of masculinity into boys is the tales about the fugitives such as "Baron Trenck, Casanova, Benvenuto Chelleeny, Henri IV" (*Huck*

¹ Mark Twain suggests that there are three reasons why children are so fascinated by games. First, they can realize what the books describe through their games. Second, they can temporarily enjoy the power of adults through pretending to be adults. Due to the asymmetrical relation between adults and children, children are in a sense dominated and controlled by the adults; however, only through playing the adult games such as piracy and commanders can children temporarily enjoy a sense of domination. Third, only by doing something different from other children can Tom be admired or envied.

Finn 247), all of them having attempted daring escapes from prison. These thrilling stories introduce three different codes of manliness to their readers: stoicism, competence, and perseverance. For example, these stoical fugitives would patiently “saw the bed-leg in two, and leave it just so, and swallow the sawdust, so it can’t be found, and put some dirt and grease around the sawed place so the very keenest seneskal can’t see no sign of it’s being sawed, and thinks the bed-leg is perfectly sound” (*Huck Finn* 247). Moreover, when they are ready to escape from prison, they would “fetch the leg a kick, down she goes; slip off [their] chain, and there [they] are. Nothing to do but hitch [their] rope ladder to the battlements, shin down it, break [their] leg[s] in the moat—because a rope ladder is nineteen foot too short” (*Huck Finn* 247).

Performances in Circuses as the Second Cultural Factor that Constitute Codes of Masculinity:

Most of the children portrayed by Mary Twain are fascinated by the splendid and breathtaking performances in circuses. In the amour scene between Tom and Becky,² for instance, Tom tells his little girlfriend that “‘I been to the circus three or four times—lots of times. Church ain’t shucks to a circus. There’s things going on at a circus all the time. I’m going to be a clown in a circus when I grow up’” (*Tom Sawyer* 63). Like Tom, Huck is always captivated by the skillful tricks performed by clowns, acrobats, and animals in circuses. For example, these two boys have ever discussed what they are going to do with the treasures when they lie panting under the shade of a big elm. Tom decides to save part of the money, “buy a new drum, and a sure-’nough sword, and a red necktie and a bull pup, and get married” (*Tom Sawyer* 174) if he finds the hidden treasures, whereas Huck plans to spend the windfall on “pie and a glass of soda every day” (*Tom Sawyer* 173) and “go to every circus”

² Stephen Railton suggests that Mark Twain uses this amour scene to “mock the trials of the typical romance hero and heroine” (35).

(*Tom Sawyer* 173), in which he believes he will “have a gay time” (*Tom Sawyer* 173).³ Through watching the amusing performances in circuses, Mark Twain suggests that children would not only burn with ambition to become a clown, who can jump through the air or balance on a rope, but also enjoy a lot of pleasure, which is usually suppressed by their family, school, and church.

In addition to the entertainment value offered by circuses, children’s obsession with the performances in circuses, Mark Twain considers, is ascribed to their liking for the masculine ethos, which permeates every aspect of circuses. Mark Twain suggests that the circuses, whose performers usually do a risky stunt flying show, provide their young audience with a masculine role model, a model which symbolizes muscular bodies and roughness, athletic prowess and physical strength. These kinds of masculine codes, Mark Twain suggests, are clearly illustrated in the episode where Huck Finn goes to watch a fantastic show in “a real bully circus” (*Huck Finn* 162). As soon as Huck sneaks in the circus, he is almost overwhelmed by the splendid scene, in which he clearly notices the distinguishing features between men and women. For example, the male performers, who come into the arena riding horses, are described as a throng of rough-and-ready men. They are only clad “in their drawers and undershirts, and no shoes nor stirrups, and resting their hands on their thighs easy and comfortable” (*Huck Finn* 162). Moreover, they look “tall and airy and straight, with their heads bobbing and skimming along, away up there under the tent-roof” (*Huck Finn* 163). Unlike those male performers with striking masculine appearances, the female performers

³ Through the discussion about the ways in which Tom and Huck will spend the windfall, Mark Twain represents two different values on money and life. If Huck and Tom found the treasure, the one would like to satisfy his physical need while the other would like to satisfy his mental need. Huck wants to “have pie and a glass of soda every day” (*Tom Sawyer* 173) and “go to every circus” (*Tom Sawyer* 173). Tom wants to buy toys such as a drum, sword, red necktie, and a bull pup. He also wants to marry and save the money. Mark Twain considers that Huck’s Pap is the cause of his abandonment of saving money because his drunken father will take all his money away. In other words, the children’s family background affects their choices in their lives. Huck comes from an unhealthy family where his parents squabble and fight all the time. His parents’ discord causes his abhorrence of matrimony. His family background forces him to care much about how to survive in this world. In contrast to Huck’s lower-class social status, Tom, who comes from a middle-class family, knows how to enjoy and plan his life. Internalizing the value of pursuing material success to which the middle class adheres, Tom becomes more interested in money than Huck.

“with a lovely complexion” (*Huck Finn* 162) are depicted as “a gang of real sure-enough queens” (*Huck Finn* 162-63), who dress themselves in “clothes that cost millions of dollars, and just littered with diamonds” (*Huck Finn* 163). Moreover, these stunningly beautiful ladies, whose “rose-leafy dress[es]” (*Huck Finn* 163) are flapping softly around their hips, look like “the most loveliest parasol[s]” (*Huck Finn* 163). When the show begins, Huck sees how those robust and vigorous performers display their muscles and skillful movements of their bodies. Despite the fact that the horses, which those male performers are riding, are “leaning more and more” (*Huck Finn* 163) seriously, for instance, those strong performers, who “fold [their] arms” (*Huck Finn* 163) across their chests, are still able to control the fierce animals and safely sit astride the horses through balancing them with their long, powerful legs tautly encased in black leather. After this astonishing show, a performer, pretending to be an alcoholic, plunges into the ring and insists on riding a horse. The moment he mounts the horse, the horse starts to “rip and tear and jump and cavort around, with two circus men hanging on to his bridle trying to hold him, and the drunk man hanging on to his neck, and his heels flying in the air every jump, and the whole crowd of people standing up shouting and laughing till tears rolled down” (*Huck Finn* 164). After several futile attempts, this bold performer eventually “struggle[s] up astraddle and grab[s] the bridle, a-reeling this way and that; and the next minute he [springs] up and drop[s] the bridle and [bravely] [stands]” (*Huck Finn* 164) on the saddle. Before skipping off the horse, this intrepid performer whips that horse in order to make it gallop along the ring crazily. In short, through witnessing the staggering circus feats and acrobatics on horseback, Mark Twain suggests that children, like Huck and Tom, might not only receive the codes of masculinity but also know the criteria for being a healthy, strong, and athletic man.

Social Expectations of Boys as the First Social Factor that Reinforce the Notion of

Masculinity in the World of Boys:

Social expectation of boys is the first social factor that reinforces the notion of masculinity deeply entrenched in the culture of boys. Despite the fact that the social context of St. Petersburg is chiefly a matriarchal society where Mark Twain's children are required to adhere to a plethora of effeminate rules of conduct such as cleanliness, docility, gentility, and politeness, Mark Twain suggests that boys are always encouraged to obey the codes of masculinity and display their masculinity in their daily lives. This kind of expectation, Mark Twain suggests, is clearly illustrated in the episode of Tom's and Becky's exploring expedition in a cave, in which Tom comes up to a stoical and competent image of masculinity through showing his courage, calmness, and wit. For example, after Tom and Becky are aware that they are lost deep within McDougal's cave, Tom, who seems to undergo a metamorphosis into a mature man, remains calm and level-headed, always doing his best to protect and comfort his terribly frightened girlfriend. On hearing Becky "burst into such a frenzy of crying" (*Tom Sawyer* 217), Tom immediately sits next to her, tightly putting his arms around her. Under the aegis of Tom, Becky, who is like a terrified little lamb, "[buries] her face in his bosom, [clings] to him, pour[s] out her terrors, her unavailing regrets" (*Tom Sawyer* 217), but Tom always patiently consoles her by asking her to "pluck up hope" (*Tom Sawyer* 217). In addition to his calmness, Tom shows his wit and courage when facing the crisis of death. For example, after aimlessly wandering in that labyrinth, Tom knows that if he wants to find the way out of that dark cave, he must conserve the wick, so he "[takes] Becky's candle and [blows] it out" (*Tom Sawyer* 217). Moreover, although Tom and Becky are terribly suffering hunger and fatigue, Tom is smart enough to know the importance of economizing on their scanty provisions and remaining stationary by a source of water. When Becky tells Tom that she is starved to death, Tom takes their "wadding cake" (*Tom Sawyer* 219) out of his pocket and cuts it into several pieces. As soon as Becky sees the cake, she

stops groaning and eats the cake “with good appetite” (*Tom Sawyer* 219), whereas Tom, who only “nibble[s] at his moiety” (*Tom Sawyer* 219), suffers agonizing hunger pangs in order to save their insufficient food. After sharing the cake, Tom asks Becky to take a rest and then explores the side passages so as to find the way out of the cave. He uses his kite string as his guide and gropes his way through several passageways until he notices a human figure and shouts for help, but his human figure is the villain, Injun Joe, against whom Tom has ever informed. Being paralyzed with fear at the very thought of making eye contact with this wanted murderer, Tom rushes back to the place where Becky stays and “[is] careful to keep from Becky what it was he [has] seen” (*Tom Sawyer* 222). Nevertheless, “hunger and wretchedness rise superior to fears in the long run” (*Tom Sawyer* 222), so Tom finally puts his fear of starvation over that of Injun Joe. He plucks up his courage to search the passageways with his kite string until he “glimpse[s] a far-off speck that look[s] like daylight” (*Tom Sawyer* 224). On seeing the dim light, he drops his kite string and “push[es] his head and shoulders through a small hole, and [sees] the broad Mississippi rolling by” (*Tom Sawyer* 224). After this exploring adventure, Tom’s deeds of valor are greatly appreciated by Becky’s father, who not only “[has] conceived a great opinion of Tom” (*Tom Sawyer* 242) but also “[says] that no commonplace boy would ever have got his daughter out of the cave” (*Tom Sawyer* 242). Furthermore, Tom’s bravery and smartness catapult him into the limelight. Becky’s father, who admires Tom’s courage, recommends him to be “a great lawyer or a great soldier some day” (*Tom Sawyer* 242). He tells Tom 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). Through the approval given by the judge, Mark Twain suggests that boys in St. Petersburg are expected to be courageous, stoical, competent, and cool-headed.

Peer Pressure as the Second Social Factor that Reinforces the Notion of Masculinity in the World of Boys:

Mark Twain suggests peer pressure among the adolescent boys is the second social factor that buttresses the idea of masculinity in the world of boys. Under the influence of the masculine culture that emphasizes the importance of being strong, impregnable, brave, and independent, Mark Twain's teenage boys, who have internalized and approved of the codes of masculinity, would not only care whether they reach the desirable standards of manliness⁴ but also denigrate any emasculating feelings as "malignant tumors," on that ground that the masculine culture, which prevails in the world of boys, would always teach the male youngsters to repudiate and even annihilate the feminine qualities such as emotion, susceptibility, fragility, and tenderness. By virtue of demeaning women, the masculine culture would encourage boys to regard effeminate qualities as "undesirable, disgusting other," which is not allowed to intrude upon the realm of boys. Being required to fit into the straitjacket imposed by the masculine culture, any boy who shows his vulnerability or fragility will be definitely labeled as "a sissy" and even derided or disparaged by his peers; in other words, Mark Twain suggests that a boy who breaches the rules of masculinity will be despised and ostracized by his peer group.

This kind of peer pressure, Mark Twain suggests, is adumbrated in the episode of the three young pirates' adventure where they endeavor to repress their emotional feelings. Feeling mistreated by his aunt and humiliated by Becky, Tom decides to forsake his family and school and become a pirate. Just at this moment, he runs into Joe Harper, who is also going to leave his family, because his mother wrongly accuses him of and whips him for drinking the cream he has never tasted. After making a resolution "to escape from hard usage

⁴ This kind of anxiety is illustrated in the episode where Tom sees his curly hair as an effeminate symbol. Before going to the Sunday school, Tom "privately smooth[es] out the curls, with labor and difficulty, and plaster[s] his hair close down to his head; for he [holds] curls to be effeminate, and his own filled his life with bitterness" (*Tom Sawyer* 33).

and lack of sympathy at home by roaming abroad into the great world, [and] never to return” (*Tom Sawyer* 99), Tom and Joe together with Huck slip away to Jackson’s Island where they play the games of pirates and Indians, “hunt for turtle eggs on the bar” (*Tom Sawyer* 119), learn how to smoke, and watch in terror as the terrible thunderstorm tears apart the island. Although they are not annoyed by their family or school in the island, they start to feel homesick and want to go home when their conversation and enthusiasm are beginning to fade out.⁵ Tom starts to think about Becky while Joe is sorely missing his mother. Even Huck Finn, who is the most independent and freest boy in St. Petersburg, is also “dreaming of his door-steps and empty hogsheads” (*Tom Sawyer* 110). Despite their homesickness, none of them is “brave enough to speak his thought” (*Tom Sawyer* 110) because the three young pirates, who do not want to be tagged as a coward, are all ashamed of exposing their weakness.

When the three boys are missing their family, they hear the sound of a boat, on which the townspeople, assuming the boys have drowned, are searching for their corpses. The search carried out by the townspeople does invigorate the three boys and make them feel like heroes, but Tom and Joe start to “[grow] troubled and unhappy” (*Tom Sawyer* 112) when they consider their family are not able to “enjoy this fine frolic as much as they [are]” (*Tom Sawyer* 112). At this time, Joe “timidly venture[s] upon a roundabout ‘feeler’ as to how the others might look upon a return to civilization” (*Tom Sawyer* 112). But, Tom scoffs at Joe’s idea while Huck, “being uncommitted as yet, join[s] in with Tom, and the waverer [Joe] quickly ‘explained,’ and [is] glad to get out of the scrape with as little taint of chicken-hearted

⁵ In *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Mark Twain also offers another example of this contradictory feeling for the limits put on children’s freedom and happiness. Being terribly abused by his drunken father, Huck makes up his mind to escape his violence and slips away to Jackson’s Island where there are no drunken father, nagging widow, stern guardian, and religious education. He is able to spend peaceful days, live on plentiful berries and fish, and smoke as he likes. As the days pass, however, he starts to get “slow and dull, and [he] [wants] to get a stirring up, some way” (*Huck Finn* 65), so he risks going back to the town and “find[s] out what [is] going on” (*Huck Finn* 65-66). Through these two examples, Mark Twain adumbrates an ambivalent feeling about the adult authorities and constraints. Although the boys do untie the shackles of their daily life, they might eventually tolerate or even submit to them. They find it hardly possible to completely resist the constraints of the authorities, for the social constraints seem to have a mystical power to draw them back.

home-sickness clinging to his garments as he could” (*Tom Sawyer* 112). Thus, the mutiny in the three boys’ world is temporarily oppressed by the peer pressure. However, their stay in the island aggravates their homesickness. Tom, who misses his little girlfriend, “[finds] himself writing *Becky* in the sand with his big toe; he scratch[es] it out, and [is] angry with himself for his weakness” (*Tom Sawyer* 120). Joe, whose “spirits [have] gone down almost beyond resurrection” (*Tom Sawyer* 120), is terribly missing his mother, so he once again suggests that they should go home. Then picking up his own shirts, Joe is preparing to go home. When Tom sees Joe wading across the river, he starts to tease Joe about his pusillanimity and dependence upon his mother by saying that ““Oh, shucks! Baby! You want to see your mother, I reckon”” (*Tom Sawyer* 121). But, Joe makes a sharp retort and says ““Yes, I *do* want to see my mother—and you would, too, if you had one. I ain’t any more baby than you are.’ And Joe snuffled a little” (*Tom Sawyer* 121). Being unable to persuade Joe to stay in the island, Tom decides to “let the cry-baby go home to his mother” (*Tom Sawyer* 121) and insults Joe by reminding him that his ignominious retreat will “get laughed at” (*Tom Sawyer* 121).

Through describing the consequences of showing effeminate qualities such as emotion, dependence, cowardice, and frailty, Mark Twain suggests that the culture of masculinity inculcates in a boy a negative attitude towards womanish qualities, teaching them to “loathe the qualities of tenderness and vulnerability in himself” (Kindlon 210). When a boy does not show their emotions or does not complain about his predicament, he will be seen and accepted as a normal boy. But, provided he expresses his anxiety, fears, sentiment—the emotions usually denigrated as disparaging feminine characteristics, his peers might use abusive language to mock him, reminding him that his emotions and behavior are not de rigueur for a masculine boy. In other words, if a boy, like Joe, is tainted with these disgraceful traits, Mark Twain suggests that he will be humiliated by his peers and finally excluded from

his peer group. Hence, peer pressure among the teenage boys not only reinforces the idea of manhood but also acts as a catalyst for the formation of a masculine boy.

III

The Masculine Urchins' Submission to the Codes of Masculinity:

The Masculine Urchins' Minds:

Mark Twain suggests that the codes of masculinity, which permeates every aspect of the masculine urchins' daily lives, might determine how they behave and what they play. Affected by the dominant ideas of what a manly and independent boy is, these masculine boys would either consciously or unconsciously submit to the rules of masculinity prescribed by the culture of boys. Their submission to the masculine culture, Mark Twain suggests, is epitomized in their minds, behavior, and games. For instance, Mark Twain suggests Tom Sawyer is a boy who is always self-conscious about his body image. Before Tom is going to the Sunday school, he always "privately smooth[es] out the curls, with labor and difficulty, and plaster[s] his hair close down to his head; for he [holds] curls to be effeminate, and his own fill[s] his life with bitterness" (*Tom Sawyer* 33). Considering his curly hair effeminate, Tom Sawyer always makes strenuous effort to avoid being contaminated by this effeminate quality. Like Tom Sawyer, who is aware of his masculine identity, Huck Finn is also dominated by the masculine codes. Even if Huck Finn is disguised as a girl, as illustrated in the episode where he slips back to the town in order to inquire about the latest news of St. Petersburg, Mark Twain suggests that Huck's awkward gestures unwittingly reveals his male identity. Putting on the gown found in the frame-house, Huck disguises himself as a girl and goes to knock at the door of a woman's shack in order to ask her what is happening in the town. Although Huck endeavors to remind him that "[he] wouldn't forget [he] [is] a girl" (*Huck Finn* 66), his masculine identity is still detected by the three ways he does household

chores. First, his male identity is discerned by the way in which he uses a needle and thread. The woman, who discovers Huck's real gender, reminds him that "when you [Huck] set out to thread a needle, don't hold the thread still and fetch the needle up to it; hold the needle still and poke the thread at it; that's the way a woman most always does, but a man always does t'other way" (*Huck Finn* 72). Second, the woman sees through Huck's ruses by the way he uses leads to hit a rat. She tells Huck that a girl who wants to "throw at a rat or anything" (*Huck Finn* 72) would "hitch [herself] up a tiptoe and fetch [her] hand up over [her] head as awkward as [her] can, and miss [her] rat about six or seven foot" (*Huck Finn* 72). Moreover, when a girl is going to throw leads at a rat, her arm is as stiff as "a pivot there for it to turn on" (*Huck Finn* 72). In contrast to a girl's clumsy way to hit a rat, however, Huck's way to throw leads at a rat is "from the wrist and elbow, with [his] arm out to one side, like a boy" (*Huck Finn* 72). Third, Huck unfolds his gender identity through the way he catches things in his lap. Unlike a girl, who "catch[es] anything in her lap" (*Huck Finn* 72) by "throw[ing] her knees apart" (*Huck Finn* 72), Huck catches the lump of lead by "clap[ping] [his knees] together" (*Huck Finn* 72), which the woman says is a boy's way to catch anything in his lap. Through highlighting these three masculine gestures, Mark Twain suggests that Huck Finn, whose behavior is determined by the codes of boys, is a successful product of the masculine culture.

The Masculine Urchins' Behavior:

In addition to their minds, the masculine urchins' behavior, Mark Twain suggests, usually reflects their masculinity. In the beginning of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, for instance, Tom Sawyer, who is a restless and repulsive boy, shows an extreme form of masculine behavior to a newcomer in the town. He uses violence to suppress the arrogance of

that newcomer.⁶ While meandering along the streets of the town, Tom feels astounded at the new arrival's apparel, for the newcomer is well-dressed on a weekday. Tom discovers that the new boy's "cap [is] a dainty thing, his close-buttoned blue cloth roundabout [is] new and natty, and so [are] his pantaloons" (*Tom Sawyer* 13). Moreover, the newcomer wears shoes, "a necktie, [and] a bright bit of ribbon" (*Tom Sawyer* 13). In stark contrast to this newcomer's finery, Tom's obtrusive shabby outfit makes him look like a ragamuffin scavenging in a garbage dump. Being jealous of the newcomer's beautiful dress, Tom provokes that new boy into a fight. Then, Tom says:

TOM. "I can lick you!"

THE NEWCOMER. "I'd like to see you try it."

TOM. "Well, I can do it."

THE NEWCOMER. "No you can't, either."

TOM. "Yes I can."

THE NEWCOMER. "No you can't."

TOM. "I can."

THE NEWCOMER. "You can't."

TOM. "Can!"

THE NEWCOMER. "Can't!" (*Tom Sawyer* 14)

When Tom and the new arrival finish shouting insults at each other, they begin to scuffle. The two boys are "rolling and tumbling in the dirt, [and] grip[ping] together like cats" (*Tom Sawyer* 16). After a few minutes of fight, they "tug and [tear] at each other's hair and clothes, punch and scratch each other's nose, and cover themselves with dust and glory" (*Tom Sawyer* 16). Finally, Tom defeats his opponent, sitting astride the arrogant newcomer and "pounding

⁶ Wayne Martino and Maria Pallotta-Chiarolli argue that "bullying [is] much more than physical intimidation—it involve[s] emotional abuse" (35), and that boys may talk about "the abusive ways of relating and the role of the dominant group in perpetuating such bullying practices" (35).

him with his fists” (*Tom Sawyer* 16) until the new boy surrenders himself to Tom’s violence.⁷ Through the illustration of the two boys’ street brawl, Mark Twain suggests that boys might resort to violence to quench their burning jealousy or anger, and that a boy’s strength, which is seen as a potent weapon to show his masculinity and superiority, may determine his rank and importance among his male peers.

The Masculine Urchins’ Games:

Under the cover of night dotted with small, bright stars, a pack of fledgling gangsters unhitch a skiff and float down the river several miles to a steep cliff on a hillside where the chief of the gangsters, Tom Sawyer, shows his accomplices a small, hardly noticeable hole and guides them through the narrow passage to a room-like cave, which he declares to be the robber headquarters of “Tom Sawyer’s Gang” (*Huck Finn* 20). Getting out of a piece of paper on which he has written his two solemn oaths, Tom proclaims that anyone who wants to join his “high-toned” (*Huck Finn* 21) gang must abide by the rules he mostly plagiarizes from his pirate and robber books; otherwise, he will give the non-conformist a horrendous punishment. He demands that, for instance, all members are required to “take an oath, and write his name in blood” (*Huck Finn* 20), “stick to the band, and never tell any of the secrets” (*Huck Finn* 20). Provided anyone divulges the secret or betrays the band, he will have the betrayer’s “throat cut, and then have his carcass burnt up and the ashes scattered all around, and his name blotted off of the list with blood and never mentioned again by the gang, but have a curse put on it and be forgot, forever” (*Huck Finn* 21). Despite the fact that the regulations agreed on by internal consensus in the gang are acclaimed as “a real beautiful oath” (*Huck Finn* 21), there are some dissenting voices among those little gangsters when Tom interprets the meaning of ransom. With great aplomb, he says ransom means “we [the boys] keep them

⁷ Rob Gilbert and Pam Gilbert suggest that one of the most disturbing features of a boy is the coalescence of “masculinity and violence” (76).

[the captives] till they're dead" (*Huck Finn* 21). Being unsatisfied with Tom's unconvincing explication, Ben Rogers immediately retorts that "I think that's foolishness. Why can't a body take a club and ransom them as soon as they get here" (*Huck Finn* 22)? Instead of being struck dumb by Ben's quip, Tom stifles the voices of dissent quickly by emphasizing the importance of following the rules prescribed by the storybooks:⁸

Because it ain't in the books so—that's why. Now, Ben Rogers, do you want to do things regular, or don't you?—that's the idea. Don't you reckon that the people that made the books knows what's the correct thing to do? Do you reckon *you* can learn 'em anything? Not by a good deal. No, sir, we'll just go on and ransom them in the regular way. (*Huck Finn* 22)

Children's game as the gang is, it can be viewed as a childish form of a society in which a set of rules and regulations specify clearly what the boys can do and cannot do under given circumstances. In order to play their game "in the regular way" (*Huck Finn* 22), the gang strongly disapproves of and even smothers any voices or ideas different from the generally

⁸ Despite the fact that Mark Twain's children have won critics' accolade for their unconstrained idiosyncrasies, critics neglect a paradoxical problem of their freedom: when the children enjoy a certain kind of freedom, they may consciously or unconsciously submit themselves to another kind of authority. For instance, after kidnapped by his father, Huck can enjoy his freedom to do nothing but lounge around the shack without being disturbed by civilization, but the price he pays for this kind of freedom is the submission to his father's threat and violence. This paradox is also shown in Tom Sawyer's gang: if Huck wants to enjoy the freedom of being a gangster, he must give in to Tom's demands, adapting himself to the civilized life. Mark Twain suggests it is this vacillation between rebellion against and obedience to the authorities that permeates the two novels. Although Tom is portrayed as a rebellious boy, who likes to cause a lot of trouble in the family, school, and church, he never wavers in his loyalty to the authorities of the storytellers, the slavery institute, and the constraints of the middle-class values. For instance, as Huck complains that he cannot tolerate his new civilized life, Tom comforts him, saying that "if you'll try this thing [the civilized life] just a while longer you'll come to like it" (*Tom Sawyer* 244). Moreover, he cajoles Huck into going back to the widow by deliberately excluding him from his gang. He insists that he "can't let [Huck] into the Gang if [Huck isn't] respectful" (*Tom Sawyer* 244), for there should not be any "pretty low characters in it" (*Tom Sawyer* 245). Despite the fact that Tom loathes the orderly life and likes to break the rules, his mind and games seem to be constrained by the middle-class values. Compared with Tom, Huck not only breaks the restraint of Christianity and the temptation of money but also dares to help a run-away slave to get his freedom. Nonetheless, he always follows Tom's instruction, as illustrated in their scheme to rescue Jim, and obeys his orders no matter how absurd they are. Hence, Huck is less encumbered by the constraints of the authorities, but he seems to be obsessed by Tom, a middle-class child who is an unchallengeable authority. In fact, tightly kept under control of various forms of authorities, Mark Twain's wild children are not totally free from constraint or manipulation. In spite of their desire to get rid of these enforced restraints, Mark Twain implies that it is hardly possible for the wild children to be completely unconstrained by authority because they would like to return to the regulation-filled environment when they are really unaffected by it.

accepted standards. Even if its members are deeply suspicious of the feasibility of the rule, the boys still feel obliged to follow Tom's command with blind obedience, never bothering to question what his purpose might have been, for they do not "want to go to doing different from what's in the books, and get things all muddled up" (*Huck Finn* 22). Hence, the gang is governed by a code of behavior, ethics, and morals which the boys believe can ensure the success of their game.

Following the rules prescribed by Tom's storybooks, the masculine gangsters like to "hop out of the woods" (*Huck Finn* 24), waylaying the hog-drivers or women who take "garden stuff to market" (*Huck Finn* 24). Although they neither rob anybody nor kidnap anybody for a ransom, these naughty boys, who are eager to show how manly they are, "would go to the cave and powwow over what we [have] done, and how many people we [have] killed and marked" (*Huck Finn* 24).⁹ In addition to the pretentious interception, the boys pretend that they are killing "a whole parcel of Spanish merchants and rich A-rabs" (*Huck Finn* 24), both of who would go camping in "in Cave Hollow with two hundred elephants, and six hundred camels, and over a thousand 'sumter' mules, all loaded down with di'monds" (*Huck Finn* 24). Tom announces that there are "a guard of four hundred soldiers" (*Huck Finn* 24), so they are able to lie in ambush and then launch a raid against their enemies. However, the real target they attack is only a Sunday-school picnic. Instead of assaulting any Spanish or Arabs, the boys only chase some of the elementary school children "up the hollow" (*Huck Finn* 24). Although the young gangsters disperse when the Sunday-school teacher charges towards them at full speed, they once again display their youth energy and

⁹ Through the gang, Mark Twain portrays two different types of children. Huck, who is a practical boy, would do an experiment to prove the fantastic things he learns from Tom. Tom, who lives in his fantastic world, would endeavor to fulfill what he has read from the books. In contrast to Tom's impracticability, Huck tends to care about the advantages when playing the gang. For example, there are three contrasting points between Huck and Tom. First, Huck sees no advantages of playing the gang. Tom likes to lie, but his lies are derived from what he has read. In a sense, this naïve boy is living in his imaginary world, believing that what he read is true. Second, Huck thinks it useless to scour the lath and broomsticks. Unlike Huck, Tom is engrossed in the gang play. He does see the lath and broomsticks as their swords and guns. He seldom cares about the practicability. Third, Huck considers the genies of an old tin lamp or an iron ring are the fools who always profit people. Tom argues that due to the enchantment, Huck does not see the Arabs and the elephants.

physical strength.

IV

The Effect of the Masculine Urchins' Submission to the Codes of Masculinity:

An Effeminate Ethos Embodied in the Disciplinary Practices versus a Masculine Culture Exemplified in the World of Boys:

Effeminate Codes of Conduct Prescribed by the Disciplinary Practices:

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the multiple authorities impose two disciplinary approaches upon their children in the hope of shaping them into well-mannered and obedient persons. The first approach they adopt is a set of control mechanisms, through which adults are able to exercise meticulous control over children's bodies, minds, time, and activities. The second approach they use to discipline children is a discourse on model children, through which adults are capable of inculcating children with its dominant ideas about how a child can win people's respect and approval. Despite their effectiveness in manipulating children, Mark Twain suggests that the core values of the two disciplinary practices, which are fully appreciated by St. Petersburg's matriarchy, are saturated with an effeminate ethos. For example, the codes of conduct prescribed by the control mechanisms embody the most cloyingly genteel virtues such as docility and cleanliness, devoutness and gentleness. Children who are under the sway of the control mechanisms are expected to take in all of these feminine qualities as an integral part of their life. When they are at home, school, or church, for instance, they are always requested to obey rules of decorum and meet the adults' demands. They are also required to follow a strict dress code and pay attention to their personal hygiene, always keeping themselves or their surroundings clean and neat. Moreover, they are encouraged to adhere to the stringent Christian doctrines and memorize the verses of the Holy Bible in the expectation of being pious and kindhearted Christians who are always

ready to show their true concern and sympathy for people in despair. In addition, they are expected to become quiet and submissive children who not only comply with the regulations made by their parents but also make no adventures or troubles. Like the codes of conduct prescribed by the control mechanisms, the basic tenets of the discourse on model children include a plethora of womanly qualities such as compassion and benevolence, compliance and gentility. Children who want to become a model child must not only emulate the success of those role models in their Sunday-school books but also carry out what they have read into practice. When they discover that an old blind man is being pushed over in the mud, for example, they must show their kindness and run to help him up. If they find a lame, hungry dog that does not have any place to stay, they are expected to bring it home and then feed it well. Furthermore, while speaking with a stranger, they must be careful about their diction. Instead of talking in a rude and offensive way, they are encouraged to speak in a polite and graceful way. In short, through the manipulation of the two disciplinary practices, Mark Twain suggests that children might be successfully molded into a civilized and respectable people, but they might be emasculated by those effeminate codes of conduct.

The Masculine Urchins' Defiance of the Effeminate Codes of Conduct:

Those effeminate codes of conduct embodied in the disciplinary practices, Mark Twain suggests, are utterly repugnant to the wild children such as Tom Sawyer, Huck Finn, and Joe Harper. Being unable to tolerate the strict standards of behavior and dress, those wild boys portrayed by Mark Twain have no choice but to ignore or even challenge them. In the opening of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, for example, Mark Twain not only draws a clear distinction between model children and rebellious teenagers by explicitly announcing that one of his most conspicuous protagonists, Tom Sawyer, “[is] not the Model Boy of the village” (13) but also creates a tension between these two distinctive types of children by

deliberately stating that this recalcitrant rebel loathes “the model boy” (13) with all his heart. Unlike the model children who are always submissive to the multiple authorities, Tom Sawyer always takes delight in breaching the rules of decorum and causing considerable distress or offence to his aunt. For instance, in order to escape the punishment imposed by his vigilant aunt, Tom hoodwinks his gullible friends into whitewashing a fence for him by waxing lyrical about the pleasure of this physical work. Being taken in by Tom’s magical eloquence, those credulous boys not only plead with Tom to let them do this hard manual labor but also give their toys to this treacherous boy for the privilege of this arduous work. By the time the fence has been put on three coats of whitewash, Tom has spent a carefree afternoon and won a motley collection of miscellaneous treasures. In addition to lack of respect for the discipline imposed by his aunt, Tom does not care about his personal hygiene or cleanliness. His repugnance for tidiness can be seen in the episode of his preparation for attending the Sunday school, in which he is always forced to wash his greasy face, comb his disheveled hair, put on his clean clothes, and then wear his pointed black shoes. Moreover, unlike the model children who like to either stay at home studying or go to church praying, Tom prefers to engage in various kinds of outdoor recreational activities. He likes to evade the school and go to the outskirts of the town to play the games of Robin Hood and Indians with his comrades. He is also willing to risk his life searching for hidden treasures in a haunted house with his bosom friend, Huck Finn. In short, unlike the model children who always meekly obey the standards of acceptable behavior, this annoying troublemaker always finds it hard to accept the womanish codes of conduct that derive from the disciplinary practices.

Like Tom Sawyer, the juvenile outcast of St. Petersburg, Huck Finn, finds it difficult to completely comply with the strict rules of conduct prescribed by the disciplinary practices. After being adopted by the Widow Douglas, Huck suffers terribly the encumbrance of being

civilized, for the civilized lifestyle which is saturated with the feminine codes of conduct is in direct conflict with his previous way of living. For example, after hurled into the protection of the widow, this urchin is forced to wear clean apparel, sleep in sheets, eat with a knife and fork, and receive the religious edification. He is required to quit his bad habits such as smoking, spitting, yelling, cursing, and gaping. He is also discouraged from being a hyperactive and troublesome child who likes to play dangerous adventures or cause a disturbance to his guardians; instead, he is encouraged to stay at home poring over the Scriptures. Provided he does want to do outdoor activities such as swimming and fishing, he has to get the widow's permission in advance; otherwise, he will be definitely castigated for his inappropriate demeanor and casual manners. In spite of the fact that this ragamuffin has striven hard to keep a stiff upper lip and endure the hardship caused by his new civilized life, he finally absconds from the widow's house and stays hidden in "some old empty hogsheads down behind the abandoned slaughter-house" (*Tom Sawyer* 243) when he finds it hardly possible to adapt himself to the respectable lifestyle. After he goes missing, he causes a lot of trouble to the widow and the townspeople because they not only "hunt for him everywhere in great distress" (*Tom Sawyer* 242) but also "drag the river for his body" (*Tom Sawyer* 242-43). If Tom did not go searching for this missing boy in the abandoned slaughter-house and then inveigle this young unkempt refugee into going back to his decent but dull life, Huck would backslide into his old ways of living, in which he could smoke his pipe, speak or behave rudely, and dress himself "in the same old ruin of rags that had made him picturesque in the days when he was free and happy" (*Tom Sawyer* 243).

V

**The Causes of the Masculine Urchins' Disobedience to the Multiple Authorities:
Social Contradictory Demands as the First Cause of the Masculine Urchins'**

Disobedience to the Multiple Authorities:

Despite the fact that these rebellious children, who fail to meet adults' expectations, do need some discipline which ensures they are able to regulate their improper behavior, Mark Twain suggests that adults are only aware of the masculine boys' recalcitrance over the standards of acceptable behavior without understanding the roots of their non-compliance. Mark Twain considers that their disobedience is ascribed to the social contradictory demands on a boy, the demands for a state of being neither absolutely feminine nor masculine. Those mutinous boys described in Mark Twain's two famous juvenile novels are usually confronted with a need to manage a paradox, a situation in which they are requested to abide by both the effeminate codes of conduct formulated by the disciplinary practices and the masculine rules of behavior determined by the culture of boys. On the one hand, the rules set by the disciplinary practices require the boys to be obedient and docile, clean and quiet, pious and submissive, charitable and compassionate. On the other hand, the masculine culture exemplified in the world of boys constantly reminds them of being stoical and aggressive, strong and rebellious, competent and brave, independent and successful. In other words, they are required to possess both the womanly and manly traits in their lives. When those wild boys, who have internalized the codes of masculinity,¹⁰ are confronted with this embarrassing situation, Mark Twain suggests that they might feel puzzled as to how they can cope with these contradictory demands, on the ground that the core beliefs in the disciplinary practices always clash with what they strongly advocate. In spite of being enmeshed in the conflict between the need for obedience to the laws of decency and the loyalty to the conventional masculine images, those wild and obstreperous boys, who place a premium on maintaining

¹⁰ In "*Tom Sawyer* and American Cultural Life: Anxieties and Accommodations," Peter Messent suggests that "Tom Sawyer is a junior version of the confidence man or 'man of confidence,' the 'man-on-the-make' adept at 'manipulating surface impressions for selfish gain'" (73). Peter Messent also argues that Tom Sawyer "disrupts the rituals of both church and school" (73). He considers Tom's "'rebellions' are, though, ultimately safely contained within the fabric of ongoing village life, and the sentimental frame of the boy books which represents it" (73).

their gender identity, would eventually choose to embrace the masculine codes of conduct, through which they are able to find models of appropriate male behavior. Since the masculine codes of conduct such as aggression, bravery, and rebellion are in direct conflict with the rules of decorum such as gentility, meekness, and obedience, Mark Twain suggests that these wild boys' support for the masculine culture brings about their disobedience to the constraints of the multiple authorities.

Emotional Illiteracy as the Second Cause of the Masculine Urchins' Disobedience to the Multiple Authorities:

In spite of the fact that the masculine urchins, who eagerly accept the dominant gender politics, are able to meet the social expectation of how a "normal, manly" boy should behave, Mark Twain suggests that their support for the dominant male culture would shape these masculine children into emotional illiterates. Their emotional illiteracy, Mark Twain implies, would not only result in their disobedience to the multiple authorities but also cause misunderstanding and conflict between children and adults. In order to maintain their masculine images, the wild boys, who approve of the codes of masculinity, feel a need to defend themselves against any unwelcome intrusion of feminine characteristics into their fortress of masculinity. Driven by "psychological self-protection" (Kindlon xvi), these wild boys feel obliged to express or even exaggerate their youthful bravado so as to meet the social standards of a masculine man; that is, they must devote their energy to being action-oriented, energetic, courageous, composed, and strong. Despite the fact that they make strenuous effort to sustain their masculine images, this kind of psychological self-defense, Mark Twain suggests, would lead to boys' denial of their emotional feelings because they are being taught that revealing sensitivity is commensurate with recognizing cowardice; in other words, the wild boys are being told that if they "are real masculine" (Martino 83), they must

hide their emotions. Owing to the masculine culture that impedes boys' emotional development, the wild boys portrayed by Mark Twain usually undergo a cruel process, in which they are systematically "steered away from [their] inner world" (Kindlon 4) and trained to hide their fears and feelings. In this process of emotional denial, these rebellious boys would be gradually transformed into a throng of children, who may find it difficult to figure out what other people think or want through "conversation, facial expression, or other subtle body language" (Kindlon 195), for the masculine culture neither encourages them to cultivate their sympathy and empathy nor teaches them to read any outward signs given by other people. Due to the lack of adequate emotional training, these masculine boys, who are not versed in language expression, might also be incapable of knowing how to show their need for such delicate feelings as love, respect, care, and intimacy. Furthermore, since they are not encouraged to disclose their anxiety, fear, and sadness, they might either keep reticent or tell lies to conceal their genuine feelings. Hence, Mark Twain suggests these wild boys, who are deprived of the opportunities to develop their emotional maturity, are usually left alone to cope with the challenges, threats, and trepidation in their daily lives without any emotional resources. When they are tempted to express their inner feelings, the codes of masculinity would remind them of the importance of being brave, calm, and manly. Internalizing these masculine codes, the wild boys may self-consciously pull away their emotions from their unpleasant situations. Being embroiled in "the struggle between [their] need for [emotional] connection and [their] desire for [emotional] autonomy" (Kindlon 3), they are usually suffering a confused state called "an emotional divide" (Kindlon 3).

This kind of emotional detachment, for instance, is clearly illustrated in the episode of Tom's nightmare. By the day Muff Potter will be convicted of murder, Tom's harassed conscience urges him to break the oaths he swears with Huck and confesses the truth to the

lawyer,¹¹ telling the lawyer that Injun Joe is the murderer. Although Tom spends splendid days and everyone extols his integrity, he is terribly frightened at night, fearing that Injun Joe would revenge his testimony. Being tormented by his inner turmoil, Tom not only tosses and turns for hours before dropping off but also makes many a nightmare about Injun Joe's infestation. Being prohibited from showing such feminine qualities as fear, anxiety, and worry, Tom must conceal his panics; otherwise, he would breach the codes of boys. Seeing Tom's depression and weird behavior, Aunt Polly thinks he must get sick. She gives him an awful-tasting serum called "Pain-Killer" (*Tom Sawyer* 95), but Tom feeds the medicine to his aunt's cat. When Aunt Polly discovers Tom's naughtiness, she reprovcs him for his ill behavior without really understanding the root of his deviant behavior. Through this example, therefore, Mark Twain suggests that boys' emotional detachment may cause misunderstanding between parents and children. Boys must conceal their inner feelings and their concealment, Mark Twain suggests, always lead to their disobedience to their parents.

VI

Two Distinctive Types of Disobedient Children Portrayed by Mark Twain:

Tom Sawyer as a Wayward and Self-Centered Boy:

The masculine urchins' emotional illiteracy, which might lead to their disobedience to the authorities, is clearly illustrated in the episode of Tom's false dream, in which Tom finds it hard to express his genuine feelings. Mark Twain suggests that emotional detachment of wild boys might become an obstacle to the intimate development between parents and children. After Tom returns from Jackson's Island, for example, his aunt bitterly upbraids him for causing her so much trouble and for not giving her any hint that he is not dead. She wishes that he "could have come over and give [her] a hint some way that [he] warn't dead,

¹¹ Frustrated by his comrade's betrayal and disloyalty, Huck loses his confidence in human nature. For him, even the most formidable oaths could not keep the promise and maintain the integrity.

but only run off” (*Tom Sawyer* 133), but instead of telling her the truth of his return, he tells her a dream that is so precise and detailed that she is amazed by the power of his vision and forgives him for not having returned home. Through telling her his dream, Tom vividly relates everything he sees and hears after he sneaks back to his home. Shocked by the details of Tom’s dream, Aunt Polly forgives him for not having given her any hint. However, Aunt Polly discovers Tom’s secret after Mrs. Harper tells her that Tom has ever returned home. She reproves Tom for his selfishness and says, ““Oh, child, you never think. You never think of anything but your own selfishness. You could think to come all the way over here from Jackson’s Island in the night to laugh at our troubles, and you could think to fool me with a lie about a dream; but you couldn’t ever think to pity us and save us from sorrow”” (*Tom Sawyer* 142). Feeling sorry for what he has done, Tom apologizes to his aunt and finally tells her that he has meant to give her a piece of bark, which he “[has] wrote on to tell [her] [they’d] gone pirating” (*Tom Sawyer* 143). After Tom leaves the house, Aunt Polly fumbles for his jacket pocket where she finds a piece of bark with Tom’s handwriting. After reading his message, she cries and says, ““I could forgive the boy, now, if he’d committed a million sins!”” (*Tom Sawyer* 144).

Mark Twain suggests what Aunt Polly wants is Tom’s tenderness, thoughtfulness, and concern about his family, but a boy is neither encouraged nor allowed to show these effeminate qualities, so a boy’s emotional indifference brings about the misunderstanding or even the tension between parents and boys. For instance, when Aunt Polly asks Tom if he would give her a hint that he is not dead, he replies that “I—well, I don’t know. ‘Twould ‘a’spoiled everything” (*Tom Sawyer* 133). Although Tom secretly gives her a hint by the piece of bark, he chooses to conceal his thoughtfulness, so his indifference not only breaks her heart but also widens the gap between his aunt and himself.

Huck Finn as a Rebellious but Considerate Boy:

Like Tom Sawyer, Huck Finn, who is forced to conceal his emotional turmoil by the masculine culture, seldom openly reveals his inner feelings, but he always takes other people's feelings whenever he challenges the authorities. Unlike Tom, whose happiness relies upon other people's misfortune, Huck may cause someone's trouble, but the main reason why he rebels is that he wants to help his friend.¹² For instance, although Huck challenges the authority of slavery institute and tells a lot of lies to protect one of his best friends, Jim, he is always tortured by his conscience. He considers that if someone does no harm to him, there is no reason for him to cause that person any trouble. Being unable to confess his inner turmoil, Huck goes back to the raft and decides to "write a letter to Tom Sawyer and tell him to tell Miss Watson" (*Huck Finn* 221) where Jim is. But he gives up that thought because he first thinks about the predicament of Jim. He considers that if he informs against Jim, Miss Watson would be "mad and disgusted at his rascality and ungratefulness for leaving her, and so she'd sell him straight down the river again" (*Huck Finn* 221). Even if Miss Watson is kind enough to forgive Jim, Huck believes that his betrayal will cause Jim to feel extremely

¹² Tom is at once thoughtless and wicked. Although he knows Jim has got his freedom, he conceals this important piece of news to have fun in his preposterous scheme. He does not mean to set Jim free. For one thing, he is not so much a thoughtful person as a self-centered boy. His happiness lies in other people's hardship. For instance, not only does he manipulate and victimize Jim, but he also causes Sally and Silas a lot of turmoil in their life. In *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Tom likes to imagine his death so as to cause his family's and friends' grief. Unlike Huck, this smug-looking boy is selfish, domineering, and haughty. His shortcomings become the obstacle for him to help Jim in earnest. For another, influenced by the social values at that time, Tom also takes it for granted that slaves are not human beings. In his cruel manipulation of Jim, he has been degraded to the level of a slave owner or trafficker, for he never sees Jim as a human being; instead, he toys with him brutally. Concerning his attitude towards slaves, he is as sinister as the slave owners and traffickers. Owing to his attitude towards slaves affected by his social atmosphere, it is impossible for Tom to set a nigger free. Furthermore, Tom does not establish a firm bond with Huck, as Huck does during his raft journey, so he does not take Jim's life very seriously. Most importantly, Tom's main concern is not to free Jim from the shed but to get his own pleasure and self-satisfaction from the game-like scheme. He is elated that not only does he lay out a perfect plan but he also fulfills what he has read before. In other words, egoism and hedonism are the main cause of his devotion to saving Jim. Despite his delicate plan, therefore, Tom does not mean to help Jim; rather, Jim's imprisonment furnishes him a good chance for fun. Although Huck is Tom's accomplice, it is unfair to condemn Huck for his manipulation of Jim. Unlike Tom, he does sincerely help Jim though he blindly cooperates with Tom to cause much trouble to Jim, Sally and Silas. His implicit obedience to Tom's orders results in his loss of original shrewdness, obliteration of the previous memories, and moral confusion. For Huck, Tom is like an unchallenged authority on the ground that Tom himself represents the middle-class values respected by Huck. Huck considers he knows less than Tom because of his humble social status, so his sense of inferiority makes him accede to Tom's requests. Hence, out of his deference to Tom's profound knowledge, Huck subordinates his principles to Tom's orders without being aware of his cruelty to Jim.

embarrassed and ashamed, for “everybody naturally despises an ungrateful nigger, and they’d make Jim feel it all the time, and so he’d feel ornery and disgraced” (*Huck Finn* 221). According to his own moral principles, moreover, he has no reason to betray someone who does no harm to him. Since he thinks Miss Watson never does him harm, he feels ashamed of his disloyalty. He confesses that he must show his gratitude to her because she is willing to civilize him and teach him how to behave well. Being in a quandary over whether to help Jim or not, Huck believes that his predicament must be “the plain hand of Providence slapping [him] in the face and letting [him] know [his] wickedness [is] being watched all the time from up there in heaven” (*Huck Finn* 222). Being distressed by his dilemma, Huck decides to write a letter to Miss Watson, telling her “Jim is down here two mile below Pikesville, and Mr. Phelps has got him and he will give him up for the reward if you send” (*Huck Finn* 222). Nevertheless, he once again thinks about the happy time he has spent with Jim, so he finally resolves to challenge the slavery institute and then says to himself: ““All right, then, I’ll go to hell”” (*Huck Finn* 223). Despite the fact that Huck Finn is a disobedient boy, who violates the social norms, he is a considerate and kind person. Mark Twain suggests that Huck’s disobedience, if compared with Tom’s, does not annoy other people; instead, Huck’s noble deeds are usually embedded in his recalcitrance.