

...another one

(continued from page 4)

wrong to see the degradation of Jim as a reversion to racism by Twain. It is utterly wrong to see the use of the word "nigger" as anything other than ironic, like the use of "civilized" and many others.

Huck, an innocent rube (or so he thinks of himself--we know better) can't understand why this word, used by society as a term for the lowest of its members, is used to humiliate the only sane man in the book. It is just another of those things that Huck thinks shows his own stupidity.

Finally, Jim may revert to a kind of Step'nfetchit character by book's end, which is sad, but virtually the only way an African-American man had of coping with a murderous white society.

Twain didn't mean for us to be happy with it. Could Jim have survived without the role of the "good nigger"? You can bet your butt that not many independent and defiant blacks were given freedom. If you want to be free, you probably ain't suited for it, boy. That's irony. Like all of the best of Twain's writing, it makes us squirm.

J. Madison Davis
Professor of English

Correction

In the Students Abroad story last week, one student's name was not included. David Bowes, fourth semester, Division of Undergraduate Studies major, will also be studying abroad next semester in Exeter, England.



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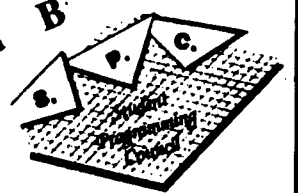
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