

ENG 255: American Literature, Late Period
The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn Essay

In my lecture notes I suggested that Twain's representation of the river serves as a formal structural element (in each new episode, Huck makes forays into the world but always returns to the nurturing and pristine protection of the river) as well as an aesthetic one, tying him to his Romantic roots (the river is a prelapsarian garden, inspiring and purifying humans). Discuss the importance of the "frontier myth" to Twain's representation of the river. Frederick Turner Jackson declared in 1890 that the frontier was closed. What do you think he meant by this declaration?