

ABSTRACT

The spirit of individualism has already been in American's vein before the formation of the nation itself. It is manifested in several ways throughout different epochs. This individualism spirit is nurtured by American literatures and pop cultures and appears to be celebrated in Mark Twain's popular children's literature, *The Adventure of Tom Sawyer* and *The Adventure of Huckleberry Finn*. It is often seen as a positive aspiration without realizing its impact on the socioeconomic inequality. Through historical materialist perspective, rugged individualism is perceived as one of dominant ideology in the U. S. that reflects the interest of the dominant class to preserve their status quo. This thesis aims to find the symbolizations of rugged individualism in *The Adventure of Tom Sawyer* and *The Adventure of Huckleberry Finn* and then analyze it using the historical materialist perspective. The researcher observed and compared the characteristics of the two main characters, Tom and Huck, which signify rugged individualism. In the finding, the researcher coined two similarities: the marginalized background and the self-made ethos. Tom and Huck also projected different traits whereas Huck's individualism made him wanted to live outside the society and live alone, Tom's rugged individualism made him believe he could free himself from poverty and mobile upward by taking a great risk and even lawless actions.

Keywords: *historical materialism, rugged individualism, children literature*