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## LA THÈSE A ÉTÉ MICROFILMÉE TELLE QUE NOUS L'AVONS REÇUE

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

# MARK TWAIN'S LEADING LADIES: AN HISTORICAL, BIOGRAPHICAL, AND LITERARY ANALYSIS

by

SHELLEY A. RUSSELL



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The undersigned certify that they have read and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance a thesis entitled "Mark Twain's Leading Ladies: An Historical, Biographical, and Literary Analysis," submitted by Shelley A. Russell in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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To my parents, Gordon and Audrey,
and my brother, Cameron,
this thesis is
lovingly dedicated.

## Abstract

Surprisingly little has been written on Mark Twain's female characters. The lofty concept of boyhood, the uninhibited, watery quest for the male ego have seized the critic with an absorbing passion. Despite such critical myopia, however, some of Twain's most memorable characters are female. And their beauty and their power lie not in selfishness masquerading as independence, but in loyalty, loyalty to two immutable and interrelated ideals, family and country.

The moral bastions of what Twain himself labelled The Gilded Age, family and country define his three major female characters, as well as their minor prototypes and counterparts. Twain's young girls are defined by innocence and familial loyalty; Joan of Arc, their representative and one of Twain's greatest characters, is further defined by her nationalistic fervour, a fervour shared by her creator. His second female type, represented by Laura Hawkins, is defined by both rational loyalty to her family and irrational loyalty to her seducer. And Twain's third type, exemplified by Roxana, is defined by loyalty to her children. Twain's literary pattern of female characters thus comes full circle, and it is no accident that all three types are seduced, either figuratively or literally, by the

very forces that command their loyalty.

Twain differs from his contemporaries in his portrayal of women in one significant respect: his novels contain no Temptresses. In an era ravaged by the reform movement and increasing disillusionment with the [redacted] the American Dream, the "rags to riches" legacy, Twain held fast to [redacted] heritage, to the idealism of his childhood. That Twain was able to recreate that idealism through his marriage is wonderful. That that idealism was taken from him in the end is tragic. Yet in this respect, Twain fared no worse than his leading ladies.

I would like to express my most sincere appreciation to Dr. John Lauber. His encouragement and his unerringly incisive comments on various drafts of this thesis have helped bring it to fruition.

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# Chapter One
## Women in Nineteenth-Century American History

NORA: What do you consider my most sacred duties?
HELMER: Do I need to tell you that? Are they not your duties to your husband and your children?
NORA: I have other duties just as sacred.
HELMER: That you have not. What duties could those be?
NORA: Duties to myself.
HELMER: Before all else, you are a wife and a mother.
NORA: I don't believe that any longer. I believe that before all else I am a reasonable human being, just as you are--or, at all events, that I must try and become one. I know quite well, Torvald, that most people would think you right, and that views of that kind are to be found in books; but I can no longer content myself with what most people say, or with what is found in books. I must think over things for myself and get to understand them.

--Henrik Ibsen, The Doll's House

In order to secure a clear and genuine understanding of the role of women in Mark Twain's real and imaginary worlds and his relationship to them, it is first necessary to step back and view the role of women in the broader contexts of nineteenth-century American life and literature.

Before the outbreak of the American Civil War in 1861, middle- and upper-class American women held an unthreatening yet exalted position in the American imagination. They constituted the Cult of True Womanhood, embodying the four

cardinal attributes of piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity.[1] Woman was virtue incarnate. She was mother, daughter, sister, and wife. She was stability, a source of strength and comfort around which man could revolve and upon which he could depend. She was counterbalance to the instability of the business world where man reigned supreme. The popular ladies' magazines of the day, such as Godey's Magazine and Lady's Book, Ladies' Companion, and Mother's Magazine, as well as the gift books, The Young Lady's Book, Whisper to a Bride, and Sphere and Duties of Woman, supported and reinforced the image of woman as ideal creature, extolling her virtues and installing her on a celestial pedestal. Of course, mention was also made of what might happen if woman neglected her role, abandoned her piety, purity, submissiveness, or domesticity; her pedestal would crumble and America would follow in its wake. The Cult of True Womanhood was much more than a cult, a transitory fad; it was an authentic ideology, firmly implanted in America's collective unconscious.

However, the Cult, with its roots in the European chivalric tradition, flourished only in nineteenth-century America. Before 1820, in colonial America, women were allowed a more active role in society, a consequence of necessity rather than anything else; the nascent drive toward the American frontier demanded women, for social, economic, and demographic purposes.

The women who emigrated to America during the colonial

era came for a variety of reasons. Many emigrated with their husbands and children in search of economic and religious freedom. Some colonies offered land to women and children; thus, a married man was better off financially than a single man on the American frontier. Other women emigrated alone in search of a husband; the prospects were excellent. As one propagandist for the Carolina colony wrote,

> "If any maid or single woman have desire to go over, they will think themselves in the Golden Age, when men paid a Dowry for their wives; for if they be but civil, and under 50 years of age, some honest man or other will purchase them for their wives."2

Still others, female convicts from Britain in the tradition of Moll Flanders, came as indentured servants and were given their freedom after four to seven years of service. It has been estimated that half of the migrants to America during the colonial era were under indenture, and of these, fully one-third were women.[3] These female servants were not allowed to marry during their term of indenture, and if they became pregnant, were severely punished. Once their term of labour had expired, however, their master was contractually obligated to provide them with food, clothing, and frequently, land with which to begin a new life of freedom.

Life in the New World centred on farm and family. Men were responsible for sowing, cultivating, and harvesting the crops, and women, for transforming the raw materials into

usable commodities, as well as practising other "housewifely" arts. Women in the colonial era also practised a variety of trades, usually learned from their husbands or fathers, including those of innkeeper, blacksmith, wheelwright, newspaper publisher, and teacher. In addition, the professions of nurse, midwife, apothecary, and physician (excluding surgeon) were open to women, requiring no formal training. In fact, some evidence indicates that eighteenth-century women physicians were more skilled than their nineteenth-century male counterparts; the women focused on relieving the symptoms of disease rather than on expounding theories -- generally inaccurate -- about the origin of disease.

Single women in the colonies possessed virtually the same legal rights as judicially recognized men, with the exception of the right to vote and the right to sit on a jury. The legal rights of married women, on the other hand, came under the system of coverture derived from the British Common Law: their rights were covered by their husbands. The Common Law was slightly amended in America, however, to provide a married woman with three rights which she did not possess in Britain: the right to share her husband's home and bed, the right to be supported by her husband even if he abandoned her, and the right to be protected from violence at her husband's hand. Yet since a married woman was not allowed to sue on her own behalf in a court of law -- she could only be granted power of attorney by her husband and

on her husband's behalf -- those rights existed in theory only. All property acquired by a woman either before or during marriage legally belonged to her husband. The law of equity provided the only exception, allowing for marriage contracts or equitable trusts to be drawn up protecting a woman's dowry or inheritance. This solution, however, was usually only available to the upper class.

Marriage was practically universal in colonial America, with social disapproval and tax penalties being imposed on unmarried men and women. Although marriages were not usually arranged, young people were expected to marry within their own social class and with parental approval. Courtship patterns were relatively informal, especially in comparison to the nineteenth century. The custom of "bundling," whereby serious couples were permitted to sleep together, wrapped in heavy bedclothes, with a "bundling board" placed between them to discourage sexual intercourse, was common. Provision was also made for couples to enter into a pre-contract arrangement before marriage, swearing their troth in church; if pregnancy occurred after the contract had been sworn, no harm was done; the marriage date was merely advanced. Premarital sex was a fairly common occurrence: of the two hundred men and women admitted to the Congregational Church in Groton, Massachusetts between 1761 and 1775, approximately one-third of both sexes confessed to it.[4] Apparently, the "bundling board" was not too effective.

Although the Common Law made provision for divorce, it was extremely rare. Generally, unhappy couples were either granted a legal separation, in which the woman lost everything, including the children, or the woman ran away, usually west, in search of another husband; bigamy thus existed.

Adultery was considered the worst crime a woman could commit. Those convicted of the offence could generally expect a public whipping, branding, or dunking in the river; confession was reserved for men and women of the upper class. Sexual relations between single persons, excluding those involved in the pre-contract arrangement, also entailed penalties, including fines.

Colonial women played a major role in the Revolutionary War. The Daughters of Liberty, for example, an organization formed prior to the War, staged a successful boycott of heavily taxed British goods. In addition, approximately 20,000 women marched with the British and American armies during the War as paid and unpaid cooks, nurses, doctors, porters, and laundresses. Some women even fought as soldiers, disguising themselves in men's clothing, replacing their fallen husbands on the battlefield, or protecting their homes and settlements. A few of these heroines were rewarded with army pensions after the War. However, when the U.S. Constitution failed to include women in its charter, not a few were disappointed. Abigail Adams, perhaps sensing the inevitability of the injustice, best

expressed the female sentiment in a March 1776 letter to her husband, John Adams:

> "By the way, in the new code of laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make, I desire you would remember the ladies and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors! Do not put such unlimited power in the hands of husbands. Remember all men would be tyrants if they could. If particular care and attention is not paid to the ladies, we are determined to forment a rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representation."5

Mrs. Adams' "rebellion," however, would not be staged for nearly a century.

Woman's sphere and her role in American society began to diminish noticeably after the Revolutionary War and particularly during the first decades of the nineteenth century as commerce -- the exporting of raw materials to overseas markets and the importing of manufactured goods -- expanded. This expansion necessitated the movement of large numbers of American families from rural to urban milieux and created a large middle class in the American social hierarchy. Capital accumulated by that commercial middle class would later finance America's first factories.

The changes imposed on middle-class women as a result of their new position were numerous and indirectly sparked the genesis of the "woman movement" in the mid-nineteenth century. With the men away in the business world all day, the middle-class woman was isolated in her home, obliged to practise the "feminine arts" of mother and wife. More

importantly, however, woman's work in the home was no longer perceived as "real work" as she derived no income from it; women, therefore, were no longer equal partners with men, but rather their dependents.

Women's dignity was furthered wounded when factory goods replaced home-manufactured goods in the new economic setting, a trend which climaxed after the Civil War. In addition, many of the trades which women had practised during the colonial era now required formal training, training denied to women. Thus, for the unmarried woman forced to earn her own living, the only occupations open to her were those of domestic, seamstress, teacher, and later, factory operative, occupations which paid significantly less than those open to men. Even within the same profession, women were denied pay equity. While repudiating women's economic importance as members of American society, men granted a new level of emotional importance to middle- and upper-class women and the home, thereby creating the Cult of True Womanhood. Whereas previously men's and women's spheres had overlapped, they were now mutually exclusive. The Southern writer, Thomas Dew, succinctly described the nature of the two spheres:

> "[Man] leaves the domestic scenes; he plunges into the turmoil and bustle of an active, selfish world; in his journey through life, he has to encounter innumerable difficulties, hardships and labors which constantly beset him. His mind must be nerved against them. Hence courage and boldness are his attributes."6

Woman, on the other hand, is,

> "rather of a passive than active character. Her power is more emblematic of divinity . . . . Woman we behold dependent and weak . . . but out of that very weakness and dependence springs an irresistable [sic] power."7

Indeed, Coventry Patmore's "Angel in the House," a poem delineating the spheres' exclusivity and deeply admired by Twain and Livy, could legitimately be described as the Cult's bible. The sole exception to the mutual exclusivity of the two spheres in the American imagination existed in the West where frontier men and women led much the same sort of life as they had one hundred years earlier. It is not surprising, then, that the only four states to grant suffrage to women during the nineteenth century -- Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, and Idaho -- were frontier states.

The nature of male-female relationships altered significantly as a result of the redefinition of the spheres, especially after the 1840s and 1850s. Spending most of their time with members of the same sex did little to promote a sense of intimacy between men and women when they did meet. Distance and formality were the general rule. Much was written advocating "proper" patterns of behaviour for young men and women during courtship. Dr. William Alcott in his 1856 Physiology of Marriage, for example, listed numerous taboos, including "'the presence of exciting books'," "'rich delicacies'," and "'impure air'."[8] The chaperone was institutionalized in middle- and

upper-class circles during the 1850s; as a result, the incidence of premarital sex, a fairly common occurrence during the period of colonial "bundling," was considerably lessened, more from lack of opportunity than lack of desire. It is hardly necessary to remark that the infrequency of intimacy between the sexes during the nineteenth century did little to promote harmony within marriage.[9]

The clothing that women wore to assert their femininity from the early 1800s until around 1920 was similarly restrictive. In particular, the tightly laced corsets, designed to emphasize the requisite hourglass figure, were the more probable cause of much of the fainting and swooning attributed to women during this period than an innate delicacy. Language was also modified to avoid reference to human anatomy; as one historian remarks, "[g]enteel people ate the bosom of chicken, not the breast, and sat on chairs with limbs, not legs."[10]

Much sexual misinformation was promulgated by physicians during the nineteenth century as well. Masturbation, for example, was considered to cause insanity in the guilty party, and sexual intercourse during breastfeeding was considered harmful to the mother's milk. Sexual abstinence was also encouraged; intercourse once a month was considered proper.

The chronic invalidism of many middle- and upper-class American women during the late 1800s was also a byproduct of medical advice. It was due as much to a desire to abstain

from sexual intercourse as to a lack of physical activity. Hence, for some, femaleness was virtually considered an illness, and chronically invalid women, the feminine ideal. As Carol Hymowitz remarks, "[i]t is ironic that in a time when women were defined almost exclusively by their sexual roles as wives and mothers they were also being told that they lacked desire for sex."[11]

Two further ironies evolved from the period. The first involves the redefinition of childhood. Whereas in the colonial era, children were considered miniature adults with a tendency toward wickedness, children in the nineteenth century were perceived as creatures with a special gift to relish life. Since they possessed free will to pursue good or evil, it was up to women, as mothers, to teach them right from wrong. As Hymowitz again remarks, there was "a great irony in the fact that women, so controlled and restricted by the social patterns of nineteenth-century America, became themselves the instruments of social control in the lives of their children."[12]

The second irony involves the relationships which developed between women. Mothers and daughters, with so much time to spend together, were extremely close, and intimate relationships between women, usually begun in boarding school, very common. As Carol Rosenberg notes, "'[w]omen, who had little status or power in the larger world of male concerns, possessed status and power in the lives of other women'."[13] Naturally, women talked about

their lives when in the company of other women, and the talk soon changed to complaint, and finally to anger. Thus, "[i]t was no accident that the nineteenth century woman's movement was conceived at a ladies' tea party."[14]

Before we proceed to that tea party, however, we must first retrace our steps and outline some of the more general causes of the "woman movement." As previously noted, the expansion of commerce during the nineteenth century tended to isolate women in the home. With less demand for home-manufactured goods in the economy, women had more leisure time available to them. Reading became a favourite pastime. In Society in America, English author Harriet Martineau, describing her 1834-36 American tour, observes that,

> "in my progress through the country I met with a greater variety and extent of female pedantry than the experience of a lifetime in Europe would afford. . . . [This pedantry] was not to be despised in an oppressed class as it indicates the first struggle of intellect with its restraints, and it is therefore a hopeful symptom."15

Yet while America was indeed in advance of Europe in providing higher educational opportunities to women, its motives for doing so were not based on egalitarian sentiments; they were, rather, primarily a response to nineteenth-century economic conditions which demanded that the "gentler sex" enter the workplace, in most cases, as teachers.

In colonial America, girls received much the same

education as boys at the elementary level, a level which few of either sex proceeded beyond. Here they learned the rudiments of reading, writing, arithmetic, and occasionally, Latin, generally in coeducational institutions. The masters' schools at the secondary level did admit girls when space was available, such as during the summer, when they could study the classics and higher mathematics. Higher education for women, however, was not the norm during the colonial period. As the American Museum phrased it in August 1791, "'[l]earned women . . . have often been a proverb of reproach, feared by their own sex, and disliked by ours'."[16]

During the nineteenth century, the issue of higher educational opportunities for women in America was fervently debated from social, intellectual, and biological standpoints and, as the possibility of coeducational institutions at the secondary level or higher evolved, from a moral standpoint. Opposition to higher educational opportunities derived from the theories, endorsed by both science and religion, that women were inferior to men in cognitive ability and physically unsuited for the stresses engendered by higher education; moreover, if education were permitted them, marriage and birth rates in America would decline, and American society would suffer in consequence. In practice, however, the latter objection proved somewhat unfounded; Catherine Beecher's efforts to train and send female teachers to the western frontier communities were

thwarted by the large percentage of those women who abandoned their profession in order to marry and raise families, a drainage made almost inevitable by the disproportionate male-female ratios in the west. (In 1865, for example, there were three men for every woman in California and twenty men for every woman in Colorado.) Although the intellectual and biological arguments against higher educational opportunities for women had subsided by mid-century, the social and moral ones continued well into the twentieth century.

Despite these obstacles, significant progress was made during the nineteenth century toward improving educational opportunities for American women. As in the colonial era, elementary schools admitted both girls and boys, were generally coeducational, and emphasized reading, writing, and arithmetic, as well as inculcating certain character traits that were thought to be desirable. Secondary schools, to which many girls now aspired, were initially separate for the two sexes. For girls, the secondary school was at first a private affair. Called seminaries, these private institutions served frequently as preparatory schools for the profession of teaching, now deemed a suitably altruistic occupation for women. The first such seminary, Troy Female Seminary, was founded in 1821 by Emma Willard. Other seminaries soon followed. The first public high school for girls was founded in 1824 in Worcester, Massachusetts. Eventually, the high schools became

coeducational.

The prospect of college or university education for women sparked even more controversy than had that of secondary education. The social, intellectual, biological, and moral arguments, still very much in vogue, were repeated with renewed vigour; the social argument, for example, that possession of a higher education would somehow pervert women's minds and make them less likely to marry and carry on the great American tradition, was enhanced by its correlative that this would also make them less attractive to men. Despite the seemingly overwhelming onslaught of public opposition, however, women's colleges began appearing in the 1830s. These institutions, such as Georgia Female College, Van Doren's College for Young Ladies, Franklin Female College, and Brooklyn Collegiate Institute for Young Ladies, while far below the academic level of the men's colleges, did offer a degree upon completion of the program, usually something distinctively "feminine" like Mistress of Polite Literature.

The next step, colleges for women comparable to those for men, was taken in 1855 with the founding of Elmira Female College in western New York. Although its entrance requirements and academic standards were slightly below those of the men's colleges, its curriculum was modelled on Yale's, and it did offer a baccalaureate upon completion of the program, the first being ~~granted in 1859, the requisite~~ four years after Elmira's establishment. Criticism of

Elmira, however, was not scarce, most of it coming from those connected with the rival men's colleges. This remark from one college president was typical: "'A few dreamers I understand are trying to develop a college for women in the village of Elmira. The idea of giving a woman man's education is too ridiculous to appear credible'."[17] Martineau's remark about the struggle of intellect with its restraints, however, was clearly manifest, and the women's college continued its immutable development with the establishment of Vassar in 1865, Smith and Wellesley in 1875, and Bryn Mawr, later attended by Susy Clemens, in 1880. Despite their power to grant baccalaureates, though, many of these colleges possessed curricula still firmly entrenched within the ideology of the Cult of True Womanhood. All were traditionally and/or religiously oriented, and, with the exception of Smith, all maintained relatively low admission standards. Unfortunately, this was necessary in order to obtain sufficient numbers of students to make the institution cost-effective; the students were poorly prepared for college education primarily as a result of the poor training they had received in the secondary schools, where the teachers were generally overworked and underpaid. Smith's policy of high admission standards naturally distressed the Northampton merchants who had helped finance the institution.

Finally, as part of the widespread zeal for reform during the 1840s and 1850s, women sought and sometimes

obtained entrance to the men's colleges and universities. Oberlin was the first such institution to admit blacks -- a most radical step in the pre-Civil War era -- and women in 1837, mainly to increase revenues. By 1865, it had granted seventy-nine degrees to women. Antioch (which also had a woman on the faculty), Otterbein, Lombard, Lawrence, and the Universities of Wisconsin, Minnesota, and California were some of the institutions that followed suit during the 1850s and 1860s. Entrance to the prestigious men's universities was more difficult to secure. Again, most of the opposition came from men connected with those institutions. Remarks like the following from Cornell English and History professor, Goldwyn Smith, were typical:

> "I trust there is no foundation for the expectation, which I find is increasing, of the speedy introduction of female students into Cornell . . . . Its effect on Cornell could not be doubtful. We should sink at once from the rank of a University to that of an Oberlin or High School. Farewell, in that case, to all our hopes of future greatness for the institution--at least to all mine."18

A compromise was eventually effected whereby some women's colleges were annexed to the larger institutions. Harvard began the trend with the establishment of Harvard Annex in 1879 (renamed Radcliffe College in 1894), and was followed by such institutions as Evelyn College of Princeton, Barnard College of Columbia, and Pembroke College of Brown. It would not be until 1943, however, that Harvard would admit Radcliffe students to its classes.

Progress in achieving higher educational opportunities for women during the nineteenth century was only one of many factors that generated and fuelled the "woman movement" during the second half of the century. Another, perhaps more immediate factor was the abolitionist movement begun in the 1830s. The segregation of the sexes dictated by the expansion of commerce propelled women into the company of other women. Many of these women formed organizations to discuss significant social issues of the day such as abolition and temperance. Organizations like the Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society and the New York-based Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society, however, like the Daughters of Liberty a century earlier, were unpoliticized, seeking only to spread their message to other women and, in some instances, boycott products manufactured by slave labour. It was up to Sarah and Angelina Grimke, raised on a South Carolina plantation and witness to the horrors of slavery, to thrust the female abolitionist movement into the political arena.

While living in Philadelphia, Angelina wrote a letter to William Lloyd Garrison, a prominent abolitionist of the day, supporting the efforts of some recently assaulted Boston abolitionists. In it, she stressed,

> "If persecution is the means which God has ordained for the accomplishment of this great end, EMANCIPATION, then . . . I feel as if I could say, LET IT COME, for it is my deep, solemn deliberate conviction, that this is a cause worth dying for."19

The great publicity surrounding the letter, published in Garrison's Liberator and subsequently reissued in pamphlet form, was enough to convince the exclusively male American Anti-Slavery Society that the Grimke sisters would be a valuable asset. In 1836, the Society invited the sisters to New York in order to meet and discuss the abolition question with women of the city. These discussions transformed the sisters almost overnight into celebrities, and they began to travel throughout the North, lecturing to huge audiences of both men and women, and thereby becoming the first respectable American women to speak in public. Inevitably, the issues of slave and female emancipation fused in the sisters' minds and in their lectures, the Grimkes addressed both concerns. As Angelina wrote in one of her pamphlets,

> "The denial of our duty to act, is a denial of our right to act; and if we have no right to act, then we may well be termed 'the white slaves of the North,' for like our brethern in bonds, we must seal our lips in silence and despair."20

This incisive analogy between the rights of blacks and those of women sparked condemnation of the Grimke sisters by church officials and the newspapers. Nevertheless, the sisters continued on the lecture circuit; the "woman movement" was just around the corner.

Before proceeding, it is necessary to define some terms now used by historians to classify the "woman movement" of the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. The term "woman movement" itself, as William O'Neill observes, was

applied in the nineteenth century to any activity that sought to enlarge woman's traditional sphere. "Feminism," a twentieth-century division of the "woman movement," encompasses women's legal and political rights and is further subdivided into "social feminism," which puts social reform ahead of women's rights, and "hard-core feminism," which puts women's rights ahead of all else. A "suffragist" is one who endorses equal suffrage, regardless of her views on other social questions.[21]

While the Grimke sisters were crusading for abolition and women's rights on the lecture platform, other women were also immersing themselves in those causes. And because two of these women, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, were denied seats at the World Anti-Slavery Convention in London in 1840, the idea for a women's rights convention, in order to "'form a society to advance the rights of women'," was born.[22] Eight years later in 1848, the same year that revolution was sweeping Europe, the first Women's Rights Convention, organized by Stanton and Mott, was held in Seneca Falls, New York. The main result of the Convention, the Declaration of Sentiments, began in a vein similar to the Declaration of Independence: "'The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her'."[23] The Declaration continued on to list specific grievances and followed with twelve resolutions, including universal

suffrage, which were passed by Convention delegates, the suffrage resolution by only a small margin. "Feminism," in the form of the Equal Rights Association, had been born.

Initially associated with the anti-slavery movement, the feminist movement split after the Civil War when newly emancipated black men were granted suffrage while women were not. The women who had worked so hard for abolition felt betrayed by their male colleagues. Those women, including Mott, who remained with the abolitionists formed the Boston-based American Woman's Suffrage Association (AWSA), which pursued suffrage as an end in itself, while those, including Stanton, who severed their ties with the abolitionists went on to form the more aggressive New York-based National Woman's Suffrage Association (NWSA), which pursued universal suffrage along with a variety of other social reforms, including the liberalization of marriage and divorce laws.

If women were to achieve equality with men, two things were essential: women had to have access to equal educational and vocational opportunities, and they had somehow to be relieved of the domestic obligations which bound most of them to home. Relief from domestic obligations could only be achieved through measures such as paid maternity leave which would not be introduced until the mid-twentieth century, or through a redefinition of marriage and family. The NWSA pursued the latter course which involved profound changes to the social order and to the

American way of thinking. The NWSA publication, Revolution, edited by Stanton and Susan Anthony, decried marriage as "'opposed to all God's laws'."[24]

Precedents for marriage reform already existed in the form of Mormon polygamy, Shaker abolition of marriage and all sexual relations, and John Humphrey Noyes' Oneida, New York community which practised "complex marriage" (spouse-swapping) and sexual equality as forms of socialism. The intensity with which the NWSA pursued the marriage question, however, would climax and then disappear altogether as a result of the Woodhull affair.

Victoria Woodhull and her sister, Tennessee Celeste Claflin, were stockbrokers with a penchant for anything radical. Feminism naturally appealed to them, as did the NWSA. With the financial and moral support of their mentor, Stephen Pearl Andrews, they published Woodhull and Claflin's Weekly, which advocated free love among other things. Woodhull received the support of the NWSA in 1871 when she persuaded a congressional subcommittee to hold hearings on women's suffrage and testified before it with great effect. Later, with passionate fervour, she called a mass meeting at Steinway Hall and declared herself a free lover. The result was catastrophic. The sisters fell on hard times, both financially and emotionally. Determined to strike back, Woodhull alleged that Henry Ward Beecher, her one-time lover and a famous preacher and advocate of women's suffrage, had been having an affair with the wife of Theodore Tilton,

Woodhull's friend and also her lover. Beecher survived the scandal as a result of his influential connections; Woodhull, Claflin, the Tiltons, and the NWSA did not.

The NWSA suffered most from the Woodhull debacle as a result of its close association with the sisters. The AWSA, on the other hand, suffered much less, having always been anti-Claflin. On the whole, however, the feminist movement underwent a temporary decline, a decline which in the long run owed more to the rampant conservatism of the Gilded Age than to the exploits of Victoria Woodhull. The era was ruled by the social purity movement, and such measures as the Comstock Act of 1873, which prevented sexual radicals like Noyes from using the mails, were frequently introduced. Although Stanton continued to advocate free divorce, most women activists shifted their attention to such concerns as abolishing prostitution and infidelity. Guided by the principle of sexual orthodoxy, the "woman movement," in the words of O'Neill, "was made respectable by accommodating it[self] to the Victorian ethos that had forced it into being,"[25] furthering its aims by linking them to the traditional myths of woman's sphere and function in society. The Cult of True Womanhood remained in the ascendancy. As Jane Addams was to write,

> "many women today are failing properly to discharge their duties to their own families and household simply because they fail to see that as society grows more complicated it is necessary that woman shall extend her sense of responsibility to many things outside of her own

> home, if only in order to preserve the home in its entirety."26

In the short run, this tactic was successful in securing universal suffrage: in 1914, the two million members of the General Federation of Women's Clubs endorsed suffrage; by 1917, the membership of the NWSA had increased to two million; and in 1920, women were granted the vote. In the long run, however, the tactic hurt the women's rights movement, draining personnel from the real social issues and creating ideological schisms and eventually, the collapse of feminism once the vote was achieved. It would not be until the mid-twentieth century that feminism would again become a viable political force.

## Endnotes

[1]Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860," American Quarterly, 18 (1966), 152.

[2]Quoted in Carol Hymowitz and Michaele Weissman, A History of Women in America (New York: Bantam, 1978), p. 3.

[3]Hymowitz, p. 8.

[4]Hymowitz, p. 11.

[5]Quoted in Hymowitz, p. 36.

[6]Quoted in Hymowitz, p. 66.

[7]Quoted in Hymowitz, p. 66.

[8]Quoted in Hymowitz, p. 69.

[9]See Myra C. Glenn, "Wife-Beating: The Darker Side of Victorian Domesticity," Canadian Review of American Studies, 15, No. 1 (Spring 1984), 17-33.

[10]Hymowitz, p. 70.

[11]Hymowitz, p. 71.

[12]Hymowitz, p. 75.

[13]Quoted in Hymowitz, p. 73.

[14]Hymowitz, p. 75.

[15]Quoted in William L. O'Neill, Everyone Was Brave: The Rise and Fall of Feminism in America (Chicago: Quadrangle, 1969), p. 9.

[16]Quoted in Robert E. Riegel, American Women: A Story of Social Change (Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1970), p. 16.

[17]Quoted in Riegel, p. 71.

[18]Quoted in Riegel, p. 76.

[19]Quoted in Hymowitz, p. 81.

[20]Quoted in Hymowitz, p. 82.

[21]William O'Neill, "Feminism as a Radical Ideology," in Dissent: Explorations in the History of American Radicalism,

ed. Alfred F. Young (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1968), pp. 275-76.

[22]Quoted in Hymowitz, p. 87.

[23]Quoted in Hymowitz, p. 95.

[24]Quoted in O'Neill, "Feminism as a Radical Ideology," p. 279.

[25]O'Neill, "Feminism as a Radical Ideology," p. 284.

[26]Quoted in O'Neill, "Feminism as a Radical Ideology," p. 284.

## Chapter Two
## Women in Nineteenth-Century American Literature

> If he does really think that there is no distinction between virtue and vice, why, sir, when he leaves our houses let us count our spoons.
>
> --Samuel Johnson, Boswell's Life of Johnson

Mark Twain, both as man and as author, is a nineteenth-century individualist. Bridging the gap between the romanticists and realists, he is not bound by either tradition. He cannot, moreover, be branded either a "literary" or a "popular" author as his works appeal to both audiences. He is generally acknowledged as a humorist, yet his humorous writings contain satire directed against society and its institutions. He is, in short, a "bundle of contradictions." Attempts to fit Twain's writings within an established framework are thus frequently doomed to failure. His major female characters, in particular, do not resemble their antecedents in literary history. Yet even if we cannot place them within an established tradition, it is still important to analyze that tradition in order to understand why Twain, either consciously or subconsciously, ignored it.

Before its succession in the twentieth century by the

myth of alienation, the myth of America as a New World Garden of Eden was the dominant myth of American culture. Dating back to the colonial era and explorers' accounts of the New World, the myth firmly established itself in the eighteenth century through such writings as Crevecoeur's Letters from an American Farmer (1782), which extols America as "the most perfect society now existing in the world," and Jefferson's "First Inaugural Address" (1801), which glorifies Americans as inhabitants of a "rising nation spread over a wide and fruitful land, traversing all the seas with the rich production of their industry . . . advancing rapidly to destinies beyond the reach of mortal eye."[1] The human archetype of the Edenic myth is the American Adam,

> an individual emancipated from history, happily bereft of ancestry, untouched and undefiled by the usual inheritance of family and race; an individual standing alone, self-reliant and self-propelling. . . . Adam was the first, the archetypal, man. His moral position was prior to experience, and in his very newness he was fundamentally innocent. The world and history lay all before him.2

In nineteenth-century America, the American Adam flourishes in a variety of fictional and self-professed non-fictional guises. He is Emerson's "self-reliant" man, Thoreau at Walden Pond, Whitman's "self," and Hawthorne at Brook Farm. He is defined by his close proximity to nature, a direct descendant of Rousseau's "natural" man. He is also a romantic and perhaps what most disturbs the logic of the

Edenic myth with its emphasis on the absence of historical baggage, the American vestige of English romanticism. Eve, however, is conspicuously missing from the American Edenic myth. As Judith Fryer notes, "[i]f Eve was the cause of the original Adam's downfall, the role of the New World Eve must be minimized. This time she must be kept in her place so that in the American version of the myth there will be no Fall."[3] The myth's rejection of Eve, however, was ignored by most nineteenth-century novelists; their works, appropriately, contain a variety of Eves. This chapter will seek to analyze those images of Eve depicted in the nineteenth-century American novel in order to provide a context for our subsequent analysis of Twain's Eves.

There is a plethora of criticism focusing on images of women in literature; the question of how women are portrayed in the nineteenth-century American novel has thus been amply discussed. Here, realism, the most important development in American literature during the nineteenth century, beginning with Howells' attempt to portray "the smiling aspects of American life" and climaxing with James' psychological fidelity, is almost universally used as a standard for character assessment. Eve's lack of mythic proportions, moreover, makes realism an appropriate standard by which to judge her character. However, critics of the question have reached no consensus to date. Those, for example, who perceive literature as a mirror of society tend to see Eve in the role of culture-carrier. As John Eakin remarks of

the New England novelists, Hawthorne, Stowe, Howells, and James,

> The design of their fiction in these years consistently reflects a belief that the portrayal of women, especially young women, and the narration of a certain kind of courtship fable about them affords the best available opportunity to assess the national character, to grasp the quality of the moral life in America.4

Other critics, such as Carolyn Heilbrun, see the women characters in these novels as stereotypes and the novels as male fantasies "of two or more men fleeing women, borne by natural forces down some river toward deliverance . . . ."[5] Yet while most critics seem to agree that the women characters contained in the nineteenth-century American novel are "more abstractly symbolic than humanly detailed" and that their portrayal is, with the exception of Edna Pontellier in Chopin's Awakening, dominated by the male voice, they must also concede that the male characters in these novels are similarly two-dimensional.[6]

We are thus confronted with certain images of Eve in the nineteenth-century American novel, many of them stereotypes. Those images have been variously classified by critics. Fryer, for example, proffers a fourfold typology comprised of American Princess, Temptress, Great Mother, and New Woman, while Cynthia Wolff classifies Eve as Sentimental Stereotype, Virtuous Woman/Sensuous Woman, American Girl, or Liberated Woman, and Philip Rahv clearly prefers Dark Lady to either Temptress or Sensuous Woman.[7] Faced with such a

diversity of typologies, the critic must make a choice. This critic, then, has chosen a sevenfold typology, based largely on those of Fryer and Wolff. Subsequent discussion of Eve as Sentimental Heroine, Virtuous Woman/Sensuous Woman, American Princess, Temptress, Single Woman, Great Mother, and New Woman will proffer a context for our analysis of Twain's Eves within the sphere of realism.

The image of Eve as pre-lapsarian Sentimental Heroine emerges in eighteenth-century literature.[8] In England, the image was supported by the Moral Sentiment school of philosophers, including Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, and Smith, who maintained that man engages in moral behaviour not as a rational but rather as an emotional response to suffering. The existence of suffering, in turn, implies a victim, and in the literature of that period, the victim is either a woman or child. Woman as victim, then, provides the basis for the image of the Sentimental Heroine.

The Sentimental Heroine is prized for her vulnerability, generally indicated by diminutive size -- adjectives such as "little" and "helpless" are frequently employed to project the image -- frail beauty, and an often fatal tendency toward weak health and consumptive illness. As victim, she is non-rational and highly emotional, prone to crying and swooning, yet incongruously incapable of either feeling or displaying anger. Her role as victim is best evinced in the love relationship, where she is characterized in terms of masochistic behaviour, and her male counterpart,

usually cast as a Byronic hero, in terms of sadistic behaviour; the Sentimental Heroine finds him attractive either because he is cruel or because she accepts his behaviour as "natural." She is permitted to feel love, especially unrequited or betrayed love, yet as a pre-lapsarian innocent, she is not permitted to feel sexual passion. As a private and domestic individual, never moved by public ambition, the Sentimental Heroine finds her niche within the home, there epitomizing the virtues of piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity associated with the Cult of True Womanhood. Since she is denied the sexual impulse, her role as wife is generally subsumed by her role as mother, assuming she does not first die in childbirth, as is common. Although intended as a tragic figure, the Sentimental Heroine evokes only pity from the reader, never terror; he can sympathize with her pain and suffering, but cannot admire her struggles because they are invariably internalized and thus impotent.

The image of Eve as Sentimental Heroine is most clearly delineated in eighteenth-century European literature as the heroine of Rousseau's Emile.[9] Significantly, the Sentimental Heroine is conspicuously absent from serious American literature, yet appears as the most common image of Eve in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century popular American literature, most notably in Rowson's 1791 novel, Charlotte Temple: A Tale of Truth. As "popular" as well as "literary" works, Twain's novels contain a number of Sentimental

Heroines. Huckleberry Finn's Emmeline Grangerford and The Gilded Age's Alice Montague, for example, adhere to the image, although, as minor characters, they do not concern us here.

The image of Eve as Virtuous Woman differs slightly from the image of Eve as Sentimental Heroine. First and most importantly, whereas the Sentimental Heroine is generally the only major female character portrayed in the novel, the Virtuous Woman always exists in combination with her foil, the Sensuous Woman. Moreover, as Wolff observes, novels that feature the Virtuous Woman/Sensuous Woman duo, while appearing to focus on that duo, actually focus on the male protagonist who is affected by the woman he describes.[10] Thus, the Virtuous Woman, derived from the Mary, Mother of Christ archetype in Christian mythology, represents the protagonist's superego and is consequently associated with and credited for the positive elements in his life, whereas the Sensuous Woman, derived from the Mary Magdalen archetype in Christian mythology, represents his id or libidinal impulses and is consequently associated with and blamed for the negative elements in his life. Originating in England in the novels of Walter Scott, the Virtuous Woman/Sensuous Woman combination made its debut in American literature around 1840.[11]

Second, the Virtuous Woman differs from the Sentimental Heroine in terms of physical characteristics: whereas the Sentimental Heroine may be dark or fair, the Virtuous Woman

is nearly always fair, with blond hair, blue eyes, and a light complexion, and the Sensuous Woman correspondingly endowed with dark hair, dark eyes, and an olive complexion. Moreover, whereas the Virtuous Woman is generally from either the "native" middle or upper class, the Sensuous Woman is often low-born, a gypsy, foreigner, or Jew.

Third, the Virtuous Woman differs from the Sentimental Heroine in terms of the narrative perspective: whereas the Sentimental Heroine is defined only in terms of masochistic submission and suffering, descriptions of the Virtuous Woman are suffused with praise, and those of the Sensuous Woman, with blame. Novels may also contain variations on the Virtuous Woman/Sensuous Woman combination. The Virtuous Woman, for example, may cease to be associated with the positive elements in the protagonist's life when she becomes so destructively critical that her disapproval renders him unable to act. Such is Hilda's effect on Kenyon in Hawthorne's Marble Faun before she consents to descend from her pedestal to marry him, although that novel cannot really be considered an example of the Virtuous Woman/Sensuous Woman dichotomy as Hilda and Miriam are vying for the attentions of different men. Similarly, the Sensuous Woman may receive gentler treatment from the narrator in popular or sub-literature where the novel's generic context has already made her moral position clear.

The Virtuous Woman/Sensuous Woman combination is most clearly evinced in nineteenth-century American literature by

Lucy and Isabel in Melville's Pierre; as the title suggests, the novel's narrative focus is directed toward the male protagonist rather than toward his female counterparts. Other examples of the combination include Yillah and Hautia in Melville's Mardi and Priscilla and Zenobia in Hawthorne's Blithedale Romance. Only in The Gilded Age did Twain attempt the Virtuous Woman/Sensuous Woman image in portraying the characters of Emily and Laura Hawkins. That attempt, however, was merely flirtatious; Emily's failure to reappear after Chapter 6 renders the image impotent.

The pre-lapsarian American Princess, like her ancestors, the Sentimental Heroine and Virtuous Woman, represents the espoused values of the community. However, whereas the Sentimental Heroine and Virtuous Woman/Sensuous Woman images are eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century European creations, the image of Eve as American Princess is, as the name suggests, an entirely American phenomenon, making its literary debut in the post-Civil War era. An accomplished, erudite woman, the Princess is, in part, a manifestation of the American "woman movement," of the enhanced educational opportunities afforded to women during the latter half of the nineteenth century. The Princess' educational attainments, however, are not designed for occupational endeavours, save perhaps teaching; rather, they assume a decorative function as "ornament[s] of prosperous society."[12] The Princess' purpose, like that of the Sentimental Heroine and Virtuous Woman, is to magnify the

men who support her; her education serves as a visible manifestation of their material success. Like the Sentimental Heroine, the American Princess may be light or dark in physical appearance. Most importantly, however, the Princess is distinguished from the Sentimental Heroine and Virtuous Woman in terms of her independence. While more threatening to men, the Princess, when she stands alone, is self-reliant as well as innocent; she embodies the spirit of Transcendentalism, although her autonomy is frequently more theoretical than actual; always attached to some species of Prince, the Princess is never given the opportunity to be truly independent. More often than not, the Princess is abroad, usually in Europe; there, bearing the torch of American culture, she meets and eventually marries her Prince. The Prince, however, is not necessarily a Prince in deed; the Princess' ability to distinguish between Prince and Fortune-Hunter is limited. Unlike the Sentimental Heroine and Virtuous Woman, the American Princess is denied the process of aging; as Wolff observes, "[i]f intellectual growth is denied, then the process of aging seems unnatural."[13] Consequently, the Princess flourishes as a girl, seldom assuming the role of mother within the pages of the novel, and marriage completes the image.

The image of Eve as American Princess is more central to James' novels than to those of any of his contemporaries. As Rahv remarks,

> James is not fully represented in his novels by any one single character, but of his principal heroine it can be said that she makes the most of his vision and dominates his drama of trans-atlantic relations. This young woman is his favorite American type, appearing in his work time and again under various names and in various situations that can be taken as so many stages in her career.14

The Jamesian American Princess reaches the height of her career as Isabel Archer in The Portrait of a Lady; indeed, Isabel exists as the most complex and complete image of the Princess in the nineteenth-century American novel. James' Daisy Miller in the novella by the same name and his Milly Theale in The Wings of the Dove, while also American Princesses, do not possess the same unique combination of innocence and self-reliance as Isabel. Isabel, however, is not allowed complete autonomy; although James makes her financially independent by endowing her with a large fortune, Isabel's ultimate fate, because of her gender, is marriage, and her freedom of choice extends only to "which of her possible suitors she will marry--which one will interfere least with her freedom."[15] Twain, of course, rejected the image of Eve as American Princess; his abhorrence of cultural shams appears the most likely cause of that rejection.

The image of Eve as post-lapsarian Temptress can be traced back to medieval tales of courtly love and beyond to Roman literature. Appearing with great frequency in the works of such writers as Milton, Coleridge, Keats, Trollope,

and Ibsen, the dark-haired Temptress makes her debut in American literature in the works of such early nineteenth-century writers as Cooper and Poe, where she is the American counterpart of the femme fatale of nineteenth-century Romantic literature. The Temptress is nearly always a tragic figure, and her tragedy is inherent in her defiance of societal norms; she is a deviant, standing outside the community. Her most definitive characteristic is her sexuality; she both allures and threatens the American Adam. For that reason, she rarely lives to the end of the novel. Finally, the Temptress usually lacks maternal guidance, a fact that at least partially legitimizes her deviance: she is without a proper role model.

Holmes' Elsie Venner provides the clearest definition of the image of Eve as Temptress in the nineteenth-century American novel. The Temptress, Elsie, is obviously a stereotype, yet Holmes portrays her sympathetically. As that author observes, the novel's real purpose is to test the doctrine of Original Sin and to prove that Elsie, poisoned prenatally by a rattlesnake bite, is not morally responsible for her deviant behaviour and nature. Other nineteenth-century American Temptresses include Beatrice in Hawthorne's "Rappaccini's Daughter," who, like Elsie, is a symbol and not a fully realized character; Celia in Frederic's Damnation of Theron Ware, who differs from the typical Temptress only in terms of her red hair, Catholicism, and Greek ancestry; and Miriam in Hawthorne's

Marble Faun, who differs only in terms of her Jewish ancestry. All but Celia are portrayed sympathetically, yet none are allowed a happy fate; they either die prematurely, like Elsie and Beatrice, or suffer death-in-life like Miriam, grieving for the ruined Donatello. Twain avoided the image completely. Although some critics may argue that Laura Hawkins in his Gilded Age adheres to the Temptress image, her actions, as will be shown, are predicated more on familial loyalty than on self-aggrandizement. It is, moreover, Twain's avoidance of the Temptress image that distinguishes him most significantly from his literary contemporaries and reveals the magnitude of his gynophilia.

Appearing with great frequency in the nineteenth-century American novel, Eve as pre- or post-lapsarian Single Woman is usually a minor character and thus warrants only slight discussion. Middle-aged or older, the Single Woman is distinguished by her loyalty to the community and its mores; indeed, she *is* the community. Although an altruist, the Single Woman never allows her altruism to develop into a full-fledged career. Her career, if it may be termed such, is generally that of dressmaker, schoolteacher, governess, or domestic. Generally well-liked, the Single Woman keeps her opinions, if any, to herself.[16]

Hepzibah Pyncheon of Hawthorne's House of the Seven Gables figures as the most complex image of Eve as Single Woman in the nineteenth-century American novel; she is, uncharacteristically, a major character. Other Single Women

include Mrs. Bread and Mrs. Grose in James' American and Mrs. Wix in his What Maisie Knew. Twain's Single Women are, of course, well-known. They include Aunt Polly, the Widow Douglas, and the host of other spinsters and childless women that people his Mississippi novels.

The image of Eve as pre- or post-lapsarian Great Mother has, unfortunately, received scant attention from critics. This is, of course, entirely consistent with the traditional emphasis on father-son rather than mother-daughter relationships. Even those critics who do focus on the Great Mother image tend to proffer a rather narrow interpretation of that image. Fryer, for example, defines the Great Mother as an individual characterized by "a desperate determination to possess and control coupled with an equally desperate fear of a loss of control."[17] One may well question why, if such is universally the case, those mothers can be described as "Great." By ignoring those literary mothers, both natural and surrogate, who manage to bear and rear their children successfully without the spectre of desperation, Fryer sabotages her case. There are, in fact, two species of Mothers: one adheres to Fryer's definition and includes such characters as Madame de Bellegarde in James' American, Ida Farange in his What Maisie Knew, and Madame Ratignolle in Chopin's Awakening; the other, perhaps less visible species can legitimately lay claim to the appellation, Great Mother.

The Great Mother is defined almost exclusively by her

loyalty to her children, a loyalty that usually takes precedence over loyalty to herself. Her actions are thus consistently motivated by maternal considerations. The Great Mother, moreover, exists within the community; she is loyal to its institutions, its mores, and its rituals, except when they conflict with her maternal loyalties. Despite Victorian exaltation of motherhood, however, the image of Eve as Great Mother rarely appears in the nineteenth-century American novel. Although many novelists revelled in portrayals of the first species of Mother, it was left to Twain, almost alone among his contemporaries, to breathe life into the Great Mother image. Twain acted when others only spoke: despite her tainted genes, Roxana stands as a majestic tribute to Victorian motherhood.

Like the image of Eve as Great Mother, the image of her as pre- or post-lapsarian New Woman has been frequently misrepresented by critics. Again, two species are in evidence. The first and more critically popular species is essentially a caricature. Derived from the "bluestocking" archetype, this New Woman, as the epitome of Wollstonecraft's arguments for the rationality of women in her Vindication of the Rights of Woman, is generally described in terms of her intelligence and/or talent. Her quest throughout the novel is to secure meaningful employment of that intelligence or talent; of course, that she inevitably fails in her quest supports the nineteenth-century "medical" theory that woman's

intelligence, however great, simply cannot compensate for her biological inadequacy. She is, moreover, usually characterized as sexually perverse, whether through promiscuity or lesbianism. As a mother, this New Woman is a dismal failure. Her fate is generally premature death through illness, suicide, or murder, a poignant comment on the possibilities for a New Woman in the nineteenth century as perceived by male novelists.

In the nineteenth-century American novel, the first species of New Woman appears as Zenobia in Hawthorne's Blithedale Romance; Miss Birdseye, Olive Chancellor, Mrs. Farrinder, and Dr. Prance in James' Bostonians; and Eveleth Strange in Howells' Altrurian Romances. However, although Twain's tentative approval of feminism is implied through his "Curious Republic of Gondour," he did not attempt the image. Even Warner's image of the New Woman as Ruth Bolton of The Gilded Age is incomplete; by the end of the novel, Ruth's medical ambitions have been absorbed by her love for Philip Sterling.

The second and more realistic species of New Woman is, in fact, the missing American Eve; however, unlike the American Adam, whose impulses are limited to the masculine arena, the American Eve is essentially androgynous. Androgyny, as defined by Heilbrun, is "a condition under which the characteristics of the sexes, and the human impulses expressed by men and women, are not rigidly assigned"; it "suggests a spirit of reconciliation between

the sexes; it suggests, further, a full range of experience open to individuals who may, as women, be aggressive, as men, tender; it suggests a spectrum upon which human beings choose their places without regard to propriety or custom."[18] Limited only by historical circumstance, the New Woman as American Eve is a utopian vision, the novelist's perception of what a woman might become given ideal conditions. Unfortunately, conditions in nineteenth-century America were not ideal, and thus, Victoria Woodhull, who of all her sex, most closely approximated the androgynous ideal, was forced into penury and eventually, exile.

Prospects for the American Eve in nineteenth-century American literature were only slightly less daunting. She appears only twice: as Hester Prynne in Hawthorne's Scarlet Letter and as Edna Pontellier in Chopin's Awakening. Although neither woman fulfills her potential, both novelists reveal what that potential might have been. In the closing pages of The Scarlet Letter, Hester, and through her, Hawthorne, assures the wretched women of Boston,

> of her firm belief, that, at some brighter period, when the world should have grown ripe for it, in Heaven's own time, a new truth would be revealed, in order to establish the whole relation between man and woman on a surer ground of mutual happiness. Earlier in life, Hester had vainly imagined that she herself might be the destined prophetess, but had long since recognized the impossibility that any mission of divine and mysterious truth should be confided to a woman stained with sin . . . . The angel and apostle of the coming revelation must be a woman, indeed, but lofty, pure, and beautiful; and wise, moreover, not through dusky grief, but the ethereal medium

> of joy; and showing how sacred love should make us happy, by the truest test of a life successful to such an end!19

Edna, too, shares the vision. Like Hester, Edna possesses a desire for freedom and independence that goes beyond the limits of her sexuality; she needs to become the strong-winged bird that, in the words of Mademoiselle Reisz, "would soar above the level plain of tradition and prejudice."[20] Instead, however, Edna is the bird with the broken wing that reels above her in the final suicide scene, the bird of her own "pigeon-house," the bird that cannot soar because it is tied down by historical circumstance. Such indeed was the reality of not only nineteenth-century American literature, but also nineteenth-century American life. Even Twain subscribed to that reality in his personal relationships with women.

## Endnotes

[1]Hector St. John de Crevecoeur, Letters from an American Farmer (London: Dent, 1912), p. 41; Thomas Jefferson, "First Inaugural Address," in The Essential Jefferson, ed. Albert Fried (New York: Collier, 1963), p. 402.

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[3]Judith Fryer, The Faces of Eve: Women in the Nineteenth Century American Novel (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), p. 6.

[4]John Paul Eakin, The New England Girl: Cultural Ideals in Hawthorne, Stowe, Howells and James (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1976), p. 3.

[5]Carolyn Heilbrun, "The Masculine Wilderness of the American Novel," Saturday Review, 29 Jan. 1972, p. 42. See also Leslie Fiedler, Love and Death in the American Novel, rev. ed. (New York: Stein and Day, 1966).

[6]Linda Ray Pratt, "The Abuse of Eve by the New World Adam," in Images of Women in Fiction: Feminist Perspectives, ed. Susan Koppelman Cornillon (Bowling Green: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1972), pp. 155-56, 170; Cynthia Griffin Wolff, "A Mirror for Men: Stereotypes of Women in Literature," Massachusetts Review, 13 (1972), 207, 217.

[7]Fryer; Wolff; Philip Rahv, "The Dark Lady of Salem," in his Literature and the Sixth Sense (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1969), pp. 55-75.

[8]Wolff, 210-12.

[9]Rousseau, as one of the most vocal proponents of the idea of women as non-rational beings, roused Mary Wollstonecraft to write her Vindication of the Rights of Woman in refutation. That treatise, in turn, indirectly sparked the nineteenth-century "woman movement."

[10]Wolff, 208.

[11]Frederic I. Carpenter, "Puritans Preferred Blondes:

The Heroines of Melville and Hawthorne," New England Quarterly, 9 (1936), 253.

[12]Wolff, 215.

[13]Wolff, 216.

[14]Philip Rahv, "The Heiress of All the Ages," in his Literature and the Sixth Sense (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1969), p. 104.

[15]Fryer, p. 128.

[16]Dorothy Yost Deegan, The Stereotype of the Single Woman in American Novels: A Social Study with Implications for the Education of Women (New York: Octagon, 1969), pp. 83-114.

[17]Fryer, p. 152.

[18]Carolyn Heilbrun, Toward a Recognition of Androgyny (New York: Knopf, 1973), pp. x-xi.

[19]Nathaniel Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter (New York: W.W. Norton, 1978), pp. 185-86.

[20]Kate Chopin, The Awakening (London: The Women's Press, 1977), p. 138.

## Chapter Three
## The Personal Sphere

> I want to make a policy statement. I am unabashedly in favor of women.
>
> --Lyndon Johnson

"The connection of an artist's life with his work has always raised embarrassing problems," Hannah Arendt observes in her assessment of Isak Dinesen, "and our eagerness to see recorded, displayed, and discussed in public what once were strictly private affairs and nobody's business is probably less legitimate than our curiosity is ready to admit."[1] This remark is especially relevant to any attempt to assess Twain's life, and particularly his relationships with women, in regard to his works: Twain, like Dinesen, is principally a storyteller and as such, tends, like her, to mingle fact and fiction freely in his writings, alternately highlighting and camouflaging the more personal aspects of his life. We are thus confronted with a curious situation, and although Twain would probably have concurred that his personal sphere is "nobody's business" and best left in the private realm, his abundant autobiographical legacy, in the form of letters, notebooks, and autobiography, indicates and encourages the opposite interpretation, as does his tendency

to alter and camouflage those private aspects of his life which he wished to remain undisclosed to public scrutiny; in this he foresaw that the details of his private life might eventually enter the public domain. Even those "bawdy" writings, such as "1601" and "Some Thoughts on the Science of Onanism," which he did not intend for mass circulation, he nevertheless circulated privately among his friends. In justice to the predominantly public Mark Twain, then, we are sufficiently "legitimized" in our "eagerness" to spotlight his relationships with women and their relevance to and influence on his writings.

Mark Twain as Mr. Clemens was his own creation; his character was built and shaped around his relationships with women, particularly those he admired and above all, respected during his life. And, like many of the fictional females he created, like Becky Thatcher, Sandy, and Aunt Polly, the women Twain knew and was involved with emotionally share a common characteristic: they were "civilizers," members of the Cult of True Womanhood, both cause and consequence of the Victorian ethos, possessing that innate moral sensibility which Twain perceived lacking in his own personality; which he needed to become the societal pillar, Mr. Clemens; and which he courted and at least relied on, if not acquired vicariously, through contact with them. Indeed, Justin Kaplan's observation that Twain's relationships with women are frequently turned into money, a gauge of civilization, in his literary pattern of

associations -- Kaplan cites "The Golden Arm" as an example -- further evidences their "civilizing" effect.[2] In an attempt to assess their influence both on his life and writings, then, we will discuss chronologically several of the more important women in Twain's life: his mother, Jane Lampton Clemens; his early "loves" and friendships, Laura Hawkins, Emma Beach, and Laura Wright; his surrogate mother, Mary Mason Fairbanks; his wife, Olivia; his daughters, Susy, Clara, and Jean; and his surrogate daughters or granddaughters of the Juggernaut Club and Angel-Fish Aquarium.

Obviously, Twain's first relationship with a woman was with his mother, who served, along with Mary Mason Fairbanks and Olivia, as one of the three most important female influences on his life, if not on his writings. Twain's parents, Jane Lampton and John Marshall Clemens, were descended from plain pioneer stock, his mother from Kentucky, his father from Virginia. Both, however, shared a belief in their descent from eminence -- Jane from the Lambton branch of the earldom of Durham, and John from Geoffrey Clement, the regicide judge of the Puritan Interregnum -- a belief which, as Stephen Leacock observes, "is shared by all of us in North America who can give no exact account of our remote origin."[3] John Clemens also believed that his hundred thousand acres of Tennessee land, originally purchased for four hundred dollars, would someday yield a munificent sum, thrusting the socially aspirant

Clemens family to the top of the hierarchical ladder, an ambition shared by Mark Twain in his quest to become Mr. Clemens. While neither the dream of eminence nor the dream of the Tennessee land ever materialized in fact, they respectively provided the inspiration and basis for two of Twain's novels, The American Claimant and The Gilded Age, collaborated on with Charles Dudley Warner.

Like Mark and Livy, John and Jane Clemens were at first glance a thoroughly mismatched couple. Despite his numerous resolutions to become a good Christian, John Clemens was, like Mark, a religious apostate or freethinker, and Jane Clemens, while not overly zealous in religious matters, a relatively devout Presbyterian. Moreover, John Clemens was impractical -- at least according to Twain -- a wild speculator, one of the models for Colonel Sellers in The Gilded Age, while Jane Clemens was infinitely practical. Yet, like Mark and Livy in this too, les extremes se touchent, and there is little evidence to suggest their marriage was strained.

Twain, however, appears to have favoured his mother, if only because of a lack of rapport with his father. As Edward Wagenknecht observes,

> Little sympathy existed at any time between Mark Twain and his father. The boy's volatile temperament apparently lay beyond the range of the father's understanding, as also, in all likelihood, did [the temperament] of the mother from whom [Twain] inherited it.4

Whether the cause or effect of his filial sympathy, Twain appears to have borne a strong character resemblance to Jane Clemens:

> From her Mark Twain inherited many specific tastes and tendencies--his love of red, his tenderness toward all animals, especially cats, his quick, impulsive emotion, his lifelong habit of protecting the outcast and unfortunate.5

Twain also appears to have perceived in Jane Clemens something of his own creativity. His mother was in the audience at Keokuk, one of the stops on his 1884 lecture tour with George Washington Cable. After an evening visit with her shortly thereafter, he exclaimed, "What books she could have written!"[6] It is possible that Twain subconsciously blamed his father for the socio-economic circumstances which caused his mother's creative potential to die of inanition.

Perhaps the best evidence supporting Twain's close and sympathetic relationship with his mother, however, can be gleaned from a semi-autobiographical story he wrote entitled "The Autobiography of a Damned Fool." Composed between July and September, 1897 at his Weggis retreat in Europe, the unfinished story deals with the relationship between Thug Carpenter and his mother, and although Thug's actions dominate the plot in Chapter 1, the role of protagonist is quickly assumed by the mother. The narrator, a thinly veiled Twain, writes,

> She had to do all the [emotional] encouraging herself; the rest of the family were indifferent, and this wounded her, and brought gentle reproaches out of her that were strangely eloquent and moving, considering how simple and unaffected her language was, and how effortless and unconscious. But there was a subtle something in her voice and her manner that was irresistably pathetic, and perhaps that was where a great part of the power lay; in that and in her moist eyes and trembling lip.7

Twain continues, dropping his narrative veil completely in a moving tribute to his dead mother:

> I know now that she was the most eloquent person whom I have met in all my days, but I did not know it then, and I suppose that no one in all the village suspected that she was a marvel, or indeed that she was in any degree above the common. I had been abroad in the world for twenty years . . . before it at last dawned on me that in the matter of moving and pathetic eloquence none of them was the equal of that . . . obscure little woman with the beautiful spirit and the great heart and the enchanted tongue.8

Although William Macnaughton claims that "Clemens's increasingly sentimental memories of his dead mother either combine with or trigger a nasty hostility toward his brother, who, although inept, had remained close to, and had been defended by, the deeply admired parent,"[9] it seems more likely that Twain is blaming himself in this story for his own inability to remain either spatially or emotionally close to his mother, despite her overwhelming pride in his achievements, and attempting to atone for this by portraying her as an heroic figure, thereby reversing the pattern of worship. That the story was written seven years after Jane

Clemens' death and remained unfinished perhaps reflects Twain's realization that his tribute to her was made too late and was thus futile. Perhaps too, the unpleasant character of Thug Carpenter is modelled not on Orion, as Macnaughton assumes, but rather on Twain himself.

"Almost incredible as it appears," Dixon Wecter remarks, "the known facts suggest that [Twain] entered into marriage as a virgin of thirty-four."[10] Contrary to Wecter's conjecture, however, this suggestion is hardly incredible when examined in light of Twain's Victorian context and, with the exception of "1601," the almost total absence of sexual innuendo in his writings; even when mention of the sexual act is essential to the plot, as in Pudd'nhead Wilson, the act itself occurs before the story proper and is referred to only obliquely in the novel. Furthermore, even if Twain was party to premarital sexual activity, which Wecter implies would be a reasonable assumption, it is hardly likely that he would record or describe such experiences in his letters, notebooks, or autobiography, the only sources from which "known facts" could intelligently be derived. As Alexander Jones remarks,

> the "known facts" are merely negative. There is no incontrovertible proof that Twain engaged in pre-marital sexual relationships--but this means little, since few men are so indiscreet as to leave behind them a documented record of their wild-oat sowing. . . . Indeed, if one examines Twain's behavior during those years when he was foot-loose and fancy free, "drunk, perhaps, but not disorderly," the whole weight of probability is against Wecter's conception of Twain as a sort

of maiden-knight-errant.11

Most scholars, however, would concur with Wecter. Indeed, a brief survey of Twain biographies reveals that critics give scant attention to even his premarital, platonic love relationships. No critic to date has focused his attention on all three of Twain's known early loves and friendships -- Laura Hawkins, Emma Beach, and Laura Wright -- perhaps for fear of displacing the firmly established Mr. Clemens myth, a product of the Victorian ethos. Admittedly, Laura Hawkins and Emma Beach deserve only scant attention, due to their relatively minor influence on Twain's life and writings; Laura Wright, however, who has been completely neglected by Twain's major biographers, merits close attention, if only because she and the details of her relationship with Twain so frequently serve as models for his writings.

Laura Hawkins was Twain's childhood sweetheart in Hannibal. One anecdote about their "romance" has been preserved by Paine. He notes: "Once in a game of housebuilding [Twain] accidentally let a brick fall on the little girl's finger. She wailed her sorrow, of course, but it is recorded that Sam cried much the louder and the longer of the two."[12] Paine proceeds to assert that "Becky Thatcher in the book was Laura Hawkins in reality,"[13] an assertion with which Twain concurs in his Autobiography. However, while the details of Twain's childhood "romance" with Laura Hawkins may have served as the model for that

"romance" in Tom Sawyer, as well as its precursor in A Boy's Manuscript, the evidence, as we shall see in our discussion of Laura Wright, seems to suggest that she, and not Laura Hawkins, served as the actual model for Becky Thatcher. Similarly, while Laura Hawkins served as the namesake for that character in The Gilded Age, Laura Wright served as the actual model.

According to Kaplan, Twain's relationship with Emma Beach during the Quaker City expedition, like his earlier relationship with Laura Hawkins in Hannibal, was merely a "mock flirtation."[14] The daughter of Moses S. Beach, proprietor of the New York Sun, and seventeen years of age at the time of the cruise, Emma Beach was, along with Mary Mason Fairbanks and Emily Severance, one of Twain's three female friends aboard the Quaker City and the only unmarried one. Their relationship was one of pleasant companionship; Twain frequently played chess with Emma during the cruise and once won her admiration by rescuing a young boy from a group of men who had been tormenting him.[15] Twain also appears to have initially made some effort to coax Emma to reform him, especially in regard to his use of slang; however, perhaps because of her age, he quickly transferred his efforts in this matter to Mrs. Fairbanks.[16] In a letter to Emma after the cruise, however -- they corresponded for a short period -- he promised her not to joke about the Old Masters, "those dilapidated, antedeluvian humbugs," in his Innocents Abroad.[17] Of her, Twain observed, "one seldom

finds as good a girl as Emma, anywhere."[18]

Perhaps one of the reasons why Twain carried on only a "mock flirtation" with Emma Beach during the Quaker City cruise was his fresh recollection of the disappointment resulting from an earlier "shipboard romance" during his piloting days on the Mississippi. The girl was Laura Wright, daughter of a Warsaw, Missouri judge, and Twain's brief and disillusioning relationship with her was to haunt his dreams and echo in his writings throughout the rest of his life. Twain's first mention of the actual relationship is contained in a July 30, 1906 passage dictated for his Autobiography, in which he claims to have met Laura aboard the John J. Roe, a riverboat he was visiting to renew old acquaintances while his own boat was docked:

> [F]loating upon my enchanted vision, came that slip of a girl of whom I have spoken--that instantly elected sweetheart out of the remoteness of interior Missouri--a frank and simple and winsome child who had never been away from home in her life before, and had brought with her to these distant regions the freshness and the fragrance of her own prairies.19

To Twain, Laura Wright represented the innocence and magic of youth, qualities which he may have perceived himself lacking as a result of his travels in the world of experience. This is most clearly evidenced by a January 24, 1906 letter to the Missouri Gordons in which he describes her as "that unspoiled little maid, that fresh flower of the woods and prairies . . . life was a fairy-tale, then, it is

a tragedy now."[20]

Howard Baetzhold suggests that their initial meeting may not have been aboard the John J. Roe, as Twain claims, but rather at Laura's home in Warsaw, Missouri, where he began courting her.[21] Whenever the time of that first meeting, however, the relationship, although serious, was short-lived, and the reasons for its dissolution are not altogether clear. There is some suggestion that Twain's correspondence to Laura was being intercepted by her mother and that Twain, unaware of this, reasoned that Laura was deliberately ignoring him.[22] However, some doubt is cast on this hypothesis by Laura's statement in a January 26, 1917 letter to Paine: "I understand why Mr. C thought his letters were intercepted."[23] A more plausible explanation for the severing of the relationship, then, would be that perhaps Laura had met another suitor, possibly the very Mr. Dake whom she eventually married, and was more willing to pursue this than a long-distance relationship with Twain.

Whatever the reasons for the relationship's dissolution, however, reasons which Twain himself obviously never clearly understood, his memory of Laura Wright continued to haunt him in dreams recurring approximately every two years for the rest of his life. (The dreams' frequency was perhaps reinforced by two contacts between Twain and Laura after the relationship's dissolution: one indirect in 1880, when one of her pupils, Wattie Bowser, wrote a series of letters to Twain requesting biographical

information and containing several allusions to Laura, and one direct in 1906, when Laura, now financially disabled, wrote to request money for her and her son, money which Twain immediately provided.[24]) Although Twain was actually closer to twenty-two at the time of their relationship, the man in the dreams was always seventeen, and the woman, fifteen, and although the dreams featured various settings, events, and names, they consistently concluded with the woman's death or disappearance and the narrator's deep sense of loss and longing.[25] The most famous recorded example of the recurring dream is "My Platonic Sweetheart," originally entitled "The Lost Sweetheart," written in late July and early August of 1898. Offered successively to the Ladies Home Journal, Harper's, and the Century by Twain's American agent, H.H. Rogers, in August and September of 1898, and turned down by the first two periodicals, the story was withdrawn by Twain before the Century had had a chance to reply.[26] Perhaps Twain sensed that its subject matter was too personal and too revealing of himself for public consumption, or perhaps he merely tired of the story's rejection.

In addition to the recorded dreams, Laura Wright and, in some instances, the details of her relationship with Twain, served as models for a significant number of female characters and situations in Twain's writings. These include Laura Hawkins in The Gilded Age, Becky Thatcher in Tom Sawyer -- Baetzhold bases this supposition on the fact

that Laura Wright's father, like Becky's, was a judge, whereas Laura Hawkins' was not, and on the similarity between recorded descriptions of Laura Wright and Becky Thatcher -- Puss Flanagan in A Connecticut Yankee, Methuselah's "lost sweetheart" in a 1869-70 projected "Noah's Ark Book," Eve in Eve's Diary, the "lost love" of Aunt Martha in "The Refuge of the Derelicts," Hank Bkshp's lost microbe girl in "Three Thousand Years Among the Microbes," and finally, the dream-wife in a projected addition to the McWilliamses series, recorded in 1901, to be entitled "Divorce of the McWilliamses because of his dream-wife and family," a story which, if written, might have hinted at many of Twain's fears about his recurring dreams of Laura Wright in relation to Livy.[27] The numerous references to Laura Wright in Twain's writings, then, reveal both the seriousness of their relationship and the impact its dissolution had on Twain.

Mary Mason Fairbanks, whose friendship with Twain lasted more than thirty-two years, was the wife of Abel Fairbanks, publisher of the Cleveland Herald and co-owner of a printing establishment in that city. She was by all accounts an educated woman, an early graduate of Emma Willard's Female Seminary in Troy, New York, a former schoolteacher, and a proficient speaker of the French language, qualities which Twain no doubt admired. Seven years his senior, with two children, Mary Fairbanks was a semi-professional writer at the time of her initial meeting

with Twain on the Quaker City expedition, sending back accounts of the voyage, under the pseudonym of Myra, to be published in her husband's newspaper. Her initial impression of Twain is worth noting:

> We have D.D.'s and M.D.'s--we have men of wisdom and men of wit. There is one table from which is sure to come a peal of laughter, and all eyes are turned toward Mark Twain, whose face is perfectly mirth-provoking. Sitting lazily at the table, scarcely genteel in his appearance, there is something, I know not what, that interests and attracts. I saw to-day at dinner venerable divines and sage-looking men convulsed with laughter at his drolleries and quaint, odd manners.28

Curiously, this appears to be the only reference to Twain in all of Mrs. Fairbanks' letters to the Cleveland Herald.[29] Perhaps she feared further accounts of a "scarcely genteel" passenger would disturb the reverent quality of her Quaker City letters.

One of Twain's most amusing accounts of his impression of Mrs. Fairbanks is contained in a letter written to his family after the Quaker City cruise. He observes,

> She was the most refined, intelligent, & cultivated lady in the ship, & altogether the kindest & best. She sewed my buttons on, kept my clothes in presentable trim, fed me on Egyptian jam, (when I behaved,) lectured me awfully on the quarter-deck on moonlit promenading evenings, & cured me of several bad habits. I am under lasting obligations to her.30

Mrs. Fairbanks was Twain's surrogate mother both during the cruise and after, and it is curious that he would write his

own mother regarding this relationship; however, he probably did not intend to offend her, and she probably did not construe it this way either, being content that Twain had someone to take care of him while she was not present. Mrs. Fairbanks, however, unlike Jane Clemens, was also a friend, someone to whom Twain could confide his innermost qualms and longings without fear of ridicule. In addition to the numerous promises to reform that dominate most of Twain's letters to Mrs. Fairbanks, there are also hints of his personal side. In a December 12, 1867 letter to her, for example, Twain, in response to Mrs. Fairbanks' advice to him to marry, writes,

> The idea is good. I wish I had a chance to try it. But seriously, Madam, you are only just proposing luxuries to Lazarus. That is all. I want a good wife - I want a couple of them if they are particularly good - but where is the wherewithal? It costs nearly two letters a week to keep me. If I doubled it, the firm would come to grief the first time anything happened to the senior partner.[31]

Another passage in a December 24, 1867 letter reveals Twain's longing for family life and is devoid of humour, evidencing both the intensity of this longing and his increasingly close relationship with Mrs. Fairbanks. He writes, "What do you mean by poking your babies at me & telling me about your home happiness? - do you want to make a fellow feel anymore mean & discontented than he <u>does</u> feel?"[32] Finally, there is some indication of the type of wife Twain did desire in the December 12, 1867 letter, a

description that fits Livy and may explain why Mrs. Fairbanks went to such lengths to recommend Twain to the Langdons: "I wouldn't have a girl that I was worthy of. She wouldn't do. She wouldn't be respectable enough."[33] Certainly, this remark is humorous and reminds one of a similar remark made by Hyacinth Robinson in James' Princess Casamassima: "'Do you think I'd marry anyone who would marry me? . . . The kind of girl who'd look at me is the kind of girl I'd never look at.'"[34] Interestingly, however, this description of an unworthy husband married to a worthy wife, a prevailing cultural pretense, corresponds to Twain's assessment of the Fairbanks' marriage, in which Mrs. Fairbanks is described as "a Pegasus harnessed with a dull brute of the field. Mated but not matched."[35] It further corresponds to Twain's view of men in general, noted in a letter to one of the members of his Juggernaut Club: "Some day I may admit males [to the Juggernaut Club], but I don't know - they are capricious and inharmonious, and their ways provoke me a good deal."[36]

After convincing the Langdons of Twain's suitability as a husband for their daughter, Mrs. Fairbanks did not abdicate to Livy her role as Twain's surrogate mother. Instead, she was present at the wedding, as would be expected, writing that Twain "filled the role of bridegroom with charming grace and dignity,"[37] in a letter published in the Cleveland Herald, and followed that up with an extremely detailed account of the Clemens' wedding trip and honeymoon,

which Kaplan suggests was tantamount to an "invasion of privacy."[38] Kaplan further suggests that Livy initially had some difficulty accepting Twain's close relationship with Mrs. Fairbanks and that the Clemenses settled in Hartford rather than Cleveland as originally planned due to this "jealousy."[39]

Nevertheless, correspondence and frequent visits between "Mother" Fairbanks and "Cub" or "Reformed Prodigal" Twain continued over a period of thirty-two years until Mrs. Fairbanks' death on December 8, 1898. Her influence on Twain's writing career, however, was negligible, the role of critic and "censor" being assumed by Livy soon after their marriage. Although Mrs. Fairbanks' Quaker City letters to the Cleveland Herald helped Twain pad out his Innocents Abroad,[40] her disapproval of Twain's idea for A Connecticut Yankee failed to persuade him to neglect the scheme.[41] Finally, it should be noted that of all Twain's novels published during Mrs. Fairbanks' lifetime, her favourite was The Prince and the Pauper, which she hailed as his "masterpiece in fineness."[42]

As with Jane Clemens, Twain's fondest recorded recollection of Mrs. Fairbanks is contained in a letter written to her children, Charley and Mollie, after receiving word of her death. It reads as follows:

> The tidings that my dear & honored Mother Fairbanks had gone to her rest filled me with grief for your great loss & mine, & deep sympathy went out to you in your desolation. She was a

> beautiful spirit, & her approval & her love were an enrichment to any who were privileged to win them, & I am grateful to know that I was one who for a generation held an unchallenged place in her favor. I was never what she thought me, but was glad to seem to her to be it. She was always good to me, & I always loved her.43

Twain's courtship of and marriage to Olivia Langdon, the semi-invalid girl of Elmira, New York, daughter of rich Congregationalist parents, and ten years Twain's junior, reads like a faifytale romance. He first saw her face in "an ivory miniature," painted by S.R. Fanshaw in 1864, on display in her brother's stateroom on the Quaker City. Apparently, it was infatuation at first sight, despite the fact that some critics have described the face in the miniature as plain.[44] In a letter to Livy written during their engagement, Twain summarized his impression of another portrait she had sent him:

> Oh, Livy darling, I could worship that picture, it is so beautiful. . . . But its beauty startles me--it somehow makes me afraid. It makes me feel a sort of awe--and affects me like a superstition. For it is more than human, Livy--it is an angel-beauty--something not of earth--something above the earth and its grossness.45

Forty years later, Twain would write in regard to his first sight of Livy in the Bay of Smyrna, "from that day to this she has never been out of my mind."[46]

That Twain met Livy at all is pure coincidence, as much a coincidence as the fact that he was born and died in the years of Halley's Comet. As Twain himself observed on the

occasion of their birthdays, which again coincidentally fell three days apart in late November, their marriage was,

> [an] event which was happening when I was a giddy schoolboy . . . unconscious that on that day, two journeys were begun, wide as the poles apart, two paths marked out, which, wandering & wandering, now far & now near, were still narrowing, always narrowing toward one point & one blessed consummation.47

The journey began in earnest on Christmas Day, 1867, when Twain, after quitting his frustrating appointment in Washington as private secretary to the Nevada senator, William M. Stewart, returned to New York to spend a fortnight with his Quaker City roommate, Dan Slote. The Langdons also happened to be in town at the time, and a meeting with the family, and Livy in particular, took place at the St. Nicholas Hotel on December 27. Twain subsequently called on Livy on New Year's Day 1868 at the home of the Langdons' friend, Mrs. Berry, where Livy, along with her friend, Alice Hooker, was holding court. According to Twain's Autobiography, he stayed there from ten in the morning until eleven at night. His first formal date with Livy was either on January 2 or 3, when they attended a Dickens reading at Steinway Hall. In July of 1868, Twain accepted Charles' invitation to stay with the Langdons at their home in Elmira. The relationship between Twain and Livy there began its immutable course.

As a result of his relationship with [illegible], Twain was able to formulate some rather serious reflections on love,

reflections which occasionally dot his humorous writings. One notebook entry, for example, reads, "Love seems the swiftest but is the slowest of all growths. No man and woman really know what perfect love is until they have been married a quarter of a century."[48] Hank Morgan, in A Connecticut Yankee, on the other hand, seems able to formulate such an opinion of perfect love after a relatively brief interval with Sandy. He states,

> People talk about beautiful friendships between two persons of the same sex. What is the best of that sort, as compared with the friendship of man and wife, where the best impulses and highest ideals of both are the same? There is no place for comparison between the two friendships, the one is earthly, the other divine.49

There is no doubt that Livy's death on June 5, 1904 affected Twain very deeply. His writings prior to her death certainly surpass those written after, which, for the most part, remained unfinished. One wonders, in fact, whether Twain would have become a great writer at all had it not been for his union with Livy. Certainly, this must be kept in mind when assessing Livy's "censorship" of his writings. Just how deeply Twain was affected by Livy's death can be gleaned in part from the following letter, written to his friend, Mr. Fitz-Simon, who was about to be married. It reads,

> Marriage--yes, it is the supreme felicity of life. I concede it. And it is also the supreme tragedy of life. The deeper the love the surer the tragedy. And the more disconsolating when it

> comes.
>
> And so I congratulate you. Not perfunctorily, not lukewarmly, but with a fervency and fire that no word in the dictionary is strong enough to convey. And in the same breath and with the same depth of sincerity, I grieve for you. Not for both of you and not for the one that shall go first, but for the one that is fated to be left behind. For that one there is no recompense--For that one no recompense is possible.50

The extent to which Livy "censored" Twain's writings has certainly been exaggerated by a number of critics. The most notorious example of this critical tendency is Van Wyck Brooks' Ordeal of Mark Twain, in which Livy is portrayed as the "simple Delilah" who virtually castrated Twain's writings with the weapons of Puritanism and capitalism and thereby caused him to become a mere humorist rather than the great satirist he was intended to be.[51] Fortunately, this critical tendency has disappeared lately, being replaced by a much milder assessment of Livy's role as "censor." Indeed, Twain himself remarks that he frequently encouraged Livy's "censoring" by,

> interlard[ing] remarks of a studied and felicitously atrocious character purposely to . . . see the pencil do its fatal work. I often joined my supplications to the children's for mercy, and strung the argument out and pretended to be in earnest. They were deceived, and so was their mother. It was three against one, and most unfair. But it was very delightful, and I could not resist the temptation. Now and then we gained the victory and there was much rejoicing. Then I privately struck the passage out myself.52

Obviously, Livy's "censorship" of Twain's writings, like Mrs. Fairbanks' attempts to "reform" him, was regarded

and practised more as a private family game than the serious endeavour some critics have described and was, for the most part, limited to matters of etiquette rather than to those of form or subject. In her editorial comments on Twain's manuscript of Following the Equator, for example, she urged him to "Change breech-clout. It's a word you love and I abominate. I would take that and 'offal' out of the language."[53] Twain responded with a chiding editorial comment of his own: "You are steadily weakening the English tongue, Livy."[54] Livy also concerned herself with the accuracy of Twain's descriptions. Another comment on the same manuscript reads, "Perhaps you don't care, but whoever told you that the Prince's green stones were rubies told an untruth. They were superb emeralds. Those strings of pearls and emeralds were famous all over Bombay,"[55] to which Twain replied, "All right, I'll make them emeralds, but it loses force. Green rubies is a fresh thing. And besides it was one of the Prince's own staff liars that told me."[56]

The "censorship" game was mutual, as evidenced by the following passage contained in a January 16, 1869 letter, in which Twain pokes fun at Livy's difficulties with spelling:

> "Sicisiors" don't spell scissors, you funny little orthographist. But I don't care how you spell, Livy darling--your words are always dear to me, no matter how they are spelt. And if I fancied you were taking pains, or putting yourself to trouble to spell them right, I shouldn't like it at all. If your spelling is never criticised till I criticise it, it will never be criticised at all.57

Occasionally, Livy objected to the subject matter of Twain's writings. This was the case, for example, with his "Gospel," What is Man?, and although Twain was aware of her objection, he did not allow it to influence his opinions as set forth in the book:

> Since I wrote my Bible--which Mrs. Clemens loathes, and shudders over, and will not listen to the last half nor allow me to print any part of it, Man is not to me the respect-worthy person he was before; and so I have lost my pride in him, and can't write gaily nor praisefully about him any more.58

Livy, like Mrs. Fairbanks and the Clemens' daughters, yet curiously unlike most readers of Twain's era, clearly preferred his historical novels, The Prince and the Pauper and Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc, to the vastly superior Huckleberry Finn. However, as Wagenknecht remarks, in what must be considered one of the most fitting critical tributes to Livy,

> that is no discredit to her. . . . What [Twain] would have been like had he married another woman, we shall never know. But it would have been very unreasonable to expect any woman of his time to do more for him than Olivia Langdon did. Very few could have done so much.59

The Clemens' first child, Langdon, born November 7, 1870, was, "like his father at birth, frail [four and a half pounds], sickly, and at least a month premature."[60] The boy did not live to celebrate his second birthday, dying of diphtheria on June 2, 1872. Twain blamed himself for his

son's death, believing him to have died from pneumonia, contracted from a long drive in an open carriage during which Twain allowed the fur blankets to slip from the child unnoticed while in the midst of "a reverie." "I have always felt shame for that treacherous morning's work," Twain remarked later, "and have not allowed myself to think of it when I could help it."[61] When he did think of it, however, Twain felt fully responsible for Langdon's death, once admitting to Howells in a fit of helpless rage, "Yes, I killed him."[62] At other times, Twain was able to rationalize his sense of responsibility, as during Langdon's funeral, where, as Lilly Warner wrote to her husband, George, "Mr. Clemens was all tenderness but full of rejoicing for the baby, said he kept thinking it wasn't death for him but the beginning of life,"[63] mirroring his statement during Livy's final illness that "[o]n these terms [death-in-life] life is not worth having if it ever is."[64] Certainly, Twain's feeling of responsibility for Langdon's death must explain, at least in part, why later he was so excessively protective -- Twain would have termed it "devotion" -- of his daughters, even for a Victorian patriarch.

Susy, born Olivia Susan on March 19, 1872, appears from all accounts to have been Twain's favourite daughter, the image of Livy in terms of moral sensibilities -- "much more than her mother she demanded purity, gentility, high sentiment"[65] -- and the image of Twain in terms of creative

gifts -- "She was a poet," Twain said of Susy after her death. "Every now and then in her vivacious talk she threw out phrases of such admirable grace and force, such precision of form, that they thrilled through one's consciousness like the passage of the electric spark."[66] She later served as the model for Joan in Twain's Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc.

Twain's "devotion" to his daughters -- his second daughter, Clara, the only one to survive him, was born in June 1874, and his third daughter, Jean, in July 1880 -- and above all to Susy, was certainly excessive and not always perceived as "devotion" by them. "As they grew up they saw in him a Victorian sternness. He seemed determined to keep them away from men."[67] In some respects, Twain's daughters were afraid of him, as he himself learned in 1886 and revealed in a quasi-serious letter to Howells: "Yesterday a thunderstroke fell on me. I found that all their lives my children have been afraid of me! have stood all their days in uneasy dread of my sharp tongue and uncertain temper."[68] Obviously, this knowledge affected Twain deeply, as evidenced by his use of the word "thunderstroke," the same word he later used to describe his reaction to Susy's death. By most standards, however, Twain was a good father; his excessive "devotion" and zealousness can perhaps be attributed to an indirect attempt to negate his own insecure relationship with his father as well as an attempt to atone for his perceived responsibility for Langdon's death.

Little has been written regarding Twain's friendships with the young girls in his Angel-Fish Aquarium and Juggernaut Club during his later years. Except for brief mention of these affiliations and their members by his biographers -- and it is interesting to note that Dorothy Quick, Elizabeth Wallace, and Carlotta Wells are the only three members mentioned at all -- the only surviving realistic accounts of these friendships are those written by the girls themselves, such as Quick's Enchantment. The explanations offered by Twain's biographers for these clubs are exceptionally trite, painting a picture of Twain as Adam after the Fall, desiring to return to the old Eden to renew his strength, an unfortunately typical critical response to Twain as the Great American Writer, who must necessarily be linked to the old myth of America as the New World Garden. Wagenknecht, for example, observes, ". . . after his own girls had grown up or died, he turned to other little girls for solace, as if through them he wished to recapture the past."[69] This explanation, however, hardly accounts for the enthusiasm and intensity with which Twain pursued these friendships, or for the lengths to which he went to establish them worldwide through his Juggernaut Club.

The actual explanation for Twain's desire to formulate friendships with little girls is really quite simple and is suggested by an entry in his Autobiography, written in response to a letter received from Laura Wright, thanking him for a cheque he had sent to ease her financial burden:

> And so I am a hero to Laura Wright! It is wholly unthinkable. One can be a hero to other folk, and in a sort of vague way understand it, or at least believe it, but that a person can really be a hero to a near and familiar friend is a thing which no hero has ever yet been able to realize, I am sure.70

Twain's desire to formulate friendships with the little girls in his Angel-Fish Aquarium and Juggernaut Club, then, derived in large measure from his desire to be absolved of his hero status, to be regarded as a dear and personal friend by those who most genuinely admired his work, who admired it for what it was and not for who wrote it. That Dorothy Quick's view of Twain in her book, Enchantment, shifts from regarding him as a hero to regarding him as a friend further evidences this explanation.

It was noted at the beginning of this chapter that Twain was variously involved in relationships with a number of women. That those relationships influenced both his life and his writings has now been conjectured. To what extent that influence affected Twain's portrayal of women in his writings and the realism of those portrayals will be discussed in the following chapters.

## Endnotes

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[2]Justin Kaplan, Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1966), p. 310.

[3]Stephen Leacook, Mark Twain (New York: D. Appleton, 1933), p. 9.

[4]Edward Wagenknecht, Mark Twain: The Man and His Work (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1935), p. 8.

[5]Wagenknecht, p. 9.

[6]Quoted in Kaplan, p. 265.

[7]Mark Twain, "Hellfire Hotchkiss," in Mark Twain's Satires & Burlesques, ed. Franklin R. Rogers (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), p. 201.

[8]Twain, "Hellfire Hotchkiss," pp. 201-02.

[9]William R. Macnaughton, Mark Twain's Last Years as a Writer (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1979), p. 50.

[10]Dixon Wecter, Introd., The Love Letters of Mark Twain, ed. Dixon Wecter (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949), pp. 3-4.

[11]Alexander E. Jones, "Mark Twain and Sexuality," PMLA, 71 (1956), 600.

[12]Albert Bigelow Paine, A Short Life of Mark Twain (Garden City: Garden City Publishing, 1920), p. 26.

[13]Paine, p. 26.

[14]Kaplan, p. 44.

[15]Dixon Wecter, Introd., Mark Twain to Mrs. Fairbanks, ed. Dixon Wecter (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1949), p. xvii.

[16]Kaplan, p. 44.

[17]Quoted in Kaplan, p. 68.

[18]Quoted in Wecter, Mark Twain to Mrs. Fairbanks, p. 14.

[19]Mark Twain, The Autobiography of Mark Twain, ed. Charles Neider (New York: Harper & Row, 1959), p. 87.

[20]Quoted in Howard G. Baetzhold, "Found: Mark Twain's 'Lost Sweetheart'," American Literature, 44 (Nov. 1972), 417, 417 n.

[21]Baetzhold, 417.

[22]Baetzhold, 419.

[23]Quoted in Baetzhold, 421.

[24]Baetzhold, 416, 420.

[25]Baetzhold, 414.

[26]Baetzhold, 414 n.

[27]Baetzhold, 422-29.

[28]Quoted in Wecter, Introd., Mark Twain to Mrs. Fairbanks, p. xxi.

[29]Wecter, Introd., Mark Twain to Mrs. Fairbanks, p. xxi n.

[30]Quoted in Wecter, Introd., Mark Twain to Mrs. Fairbanks, p. xxii.

[31]Quoted in Wecter, Mark Twain to Mrs. Fairbanks, pp. 7-8.

[32]Quoted in Wecter, Mark Twain to Mrs. Fairbanks, p. 12.

[33]Quoted in Wecter, Mark Twain to Mrs. Fairbanks, p. 8.

[34]Henry James, The Princess Casamassima (London: Macmillan, 1921), I, p. 139.

[35]Quoted in Kaplan, p. 44.

[36]Quoted in Mark Twain, "Mark Twain's Private Girls' Club," Ladies Home Journal, 29 (Feb. 1912), 23.

[37]Quoted in Kaplan, p. 113.

[38]Kaplan, p. 113.

[39]Kaplan, p. 99.

[40]Kaplan, p. 68.

[41]Kaplan, pp. 295-96.

[42]Quoted in Kaplan, p. 239.

[43]Quoted in Wecter, Mark Twain to Mrs. Fairbanks, p. 279.

[44]Wecter, Introd., The Love Letters of Mark Twain, p. 2.

[45]Quoted in Wagenknecht, pp. 155-56.

[46]Quoted in Wecter, Introd., The Love Letters of Mark Twain, p. 2.

[47]Quoted in Wecter, Introd., The Love Letters of Mark Twain, p. 1.

[48]Quoted in Wagenknecht, p. 156.

[49]Mark Twain, A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court (New York: W.W. Norton, 1982), p. 233.

[50]Quoted in Wagenknecht, p. 157.

[51]See Van Wyck Brooks, The Ordeal of Mark Twain (New York: Meridian, 1955).

[52]Quoted in Wagenknecht, p. 172.

[53]Quoted in Wagenknecht, p. 166.

[54]Quoted in Wagenknecht, p. 166.

[55]Quoted in Wagenknecht, p. 166.

[56]Quoted in Wagenknecht, p. 166.

[57]Quoted in Wecter, The Love Letters of Mark Twain, p. 53.

[58]Quoted in Wagenknecht, p. 173.

[59]Wagenknecht, p. 173.

[60]Kaplan, p. 122.

[61]Quoted in Kaplan, p. 149.

[62]Quoted in Kaplan, p. 149.

[63]Quoted in Kaplan, pp. 149-50.

[64]Twain, "Mark Twain's Private Girls' Club," 54.

[65]Kaplan, p. 308.

[66]Quoted in Kaplan, p. 308.

[67]Kaplan, p. 308.

[68]Quoted in Kaplan, p. 307.

[69]Wagenknecht, p. 27.

[70]Twain, The Autobiography of Mark Twain, p. 89.

## Chapter Four
## The One Undamned: Mark Twain's Joan of Arc

> The people yearn for some personality who, in a world of twisted bodies and souls, will represent again the lines of the incarnate image. . . . in an inconspicuous village a maid is born who will maintain herself undefiled of the fashionable errors of her generation: a miniature in the midst of men of the cosmic woman who was the bride of the wind.
>
> --Joseph Campbell, The Hero with the Thousand Faces

While attending a New York performance of The Prince and the Pauper around 1905, Twain purportedly remarked to James Walsh that,

> the Archbishop of Orleans had assured [Twain] that Saint Joan would surely see to it that anyone who wrote so beautifully about her would get into heaven. Mr. Clemens said that he replied to the Archbishop that if entrance into heaven would assure him of a place near her in the after-world and if it would separate him as far as possible from those who had been her enemies, he would be perfectly satisfied.1

This remark, coming nine years after the publication of Twain's Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc and fifty-seven years after his initial, chance encounter with the Joan of Arc legend as a thirteen-year-old printer's apprentice in Hannibal, is testimony to the author's

lifelong idolatry of the Maid, an idolatry in some respects similar to his "worship" of Olivia. Indeed, in addition to the fact that Personal Recollections stands as the only work that Twain felt worthy of dedication to his wife, a love letter written by Twain during their courtship specifically connects Joan to Livy, "observing that though his frail lady might not lead men into battle she could, in her own exquisite way, command all the powers of Joan of Arc."[2] Joan, however, although she possesses many of the qualities that Twain so admired in his wife, is not the fictional counterpart of Livy. Indeed, in several respects, especially those of strength and acumen, Joan's character lies far beyond the Cult of True Womanhood, of Victorian femininity, if, in fact, it is not opposed to it. Nevertheless, Twain was indubitably attracted to the Maid, to her innocence and the power of that innocence, and to her intense loyalty to family, friends, and a seemingly undeserving France.

Twain proclaimed Personal Recollections his favourite work; on his seventy-third birthday, he wrote,

> I like the Joan of Arc best of all my books; & it is the best; I know it perfectly well. And besides, it furnished me seven times the pleasure afforded me by any of the others: 12 years of preparation & 2 years of writing. The others needed no preparation, & got none.3

Moreover, if we accept Twain's comment at its face value, the novel was a labour of love rather than a commercial

venture, "written for love & not for lucre."[4] However, that Twain was not interested in writing for lucre at a time when his two speculative ventures, the Paige Typesetter and the Webster Publishing Company, were failing seems incongruous. Furthermore, as James Cox points out, "Joan, as originally conceived, was a companion piece to The Prince and the Pauper, which amounts to saying it was a genteel historical narrative designed to make money."[5] No doubt, then, although Twain was probably sincere in esteeming Personal Recollections his favourite work, an estimation supported by the novel's dedication, his contention that the work was solely a labour of love is somewhat debatable. Twain would have been fool indeed, a veritable Colonel Sellers, not to recognize the commercial possibilities of his pet venture at a time when money was fast becoming a scarce commodity in the Clemens household. His contention, then, as well as his anonymous serialization of the novel, stand as additional testimony to his idolatry of the Maid, an idolatry which Twain, at least publicly, would not acknowledge to be tainted by money.

However much critics may choose to believe or disbelieve Twain's claims as to his motives for writing Personal Recollections, they are almost unanimous in their estimation of the novel. Leslie Fiedler judges it "unreadable to all but the most grossly sentimental," and William Spengemann, in a similar vein, describes it as "unashamedly sentimental."[6] Even the usually sympathetic

Albert Stone obliquely compares it to Janet Duckey's Joan of Arc, which he characterizes as "saccharine, churchly, genteel."[7] Bertram Mott, Jr. presents what is perhaps the harshest condemnation of the novel: "As a work in the Twain canon, Joan of Arc is a failure. Its conflict is vapid -- Joan has no worthy foe; its characterization is ineffectual -- protagonist and antagonist are absolutes, the narrator inconsistent."[8] Albert Bigelow Paine, in fact, appears the only Twain scholar to share the author's estimation of his novel.

Paine, in fact, is reasonably correct in his estimation although Personal Recollections is much longer than is necessary and its characterization, with the exception of Joan, grossly sentimental, the novel is structurally and thematically sound. However, like critical condemnation of The Gilded Age, in that case warranted, condemnation of Personal Recollections extends erroneously to moral condemnation of its characters. Like Laura Hawkins, Joan is accorded a biased reception by critics. Bernard Shaw launches the most vituperative attack:

> Mark Twain's Joan, skirted to the ground, and with as many petticoats as Noah's wife in a toy ark, is an attempt to combine Bayard with Esther Summerson from Bleak House into an unimpeachable American schoolteacher in armor. Like Esther Summerson she makes her creator ridiculous . . . .9

Frank Harris, a most sympathetic Twain reader at the best of times, vociferously objects that that author "makes a

Puritan maiden of the great Frenchwoman."[10] Other critics, however, find some redeeming qualities in Twain's characterization of the Maid. Although one early reviewer protests that "[Twain] makes [Joan's] arguments into long-winded discourses,"[11] perhaps subconsciously recalling Sandy in A Connecticut Yankee, Neil Bell appropriately concedes that,

> It is only when under the stress of great emotion and stirred by her love of God and her devotion to France that sudden glowing inspiration endows her with words beyond her normal usage; and it is in his awareness of this, and of its provenance and its infrequency, that Mark Twain excels all other writers who have tried to draw a true likeness of the Maid.12

And while Helen Salls is quick to note the sentimentality suffusing Twain's depiction of the Maid, she also perceives the realism that lurks behind it:

> Sentimentalized as she is--a figure dainty as a Dresden statuette, and debonair as a princess--she appeals to us as an impulsive, lovable, very human little fighting saint after all. . . . Southey, Calvert, and Mark Twain, in vastly different ways, . . . pay homage to Joan the mystic; of these, only Mark Twain presents her at all consistently as a real woman, vivacious and sensitive as well as tender and brave.13

Stone ultimately concurs with Salls' estimation, observing that the depiction "fits with the twin tendencies towards sentimentality and realism which characterize virtually all of Twain's fiction."[14] Despite their disagreement over whether Twain has portrayed Joan realistically, however,

nearly all the critics have noted his insistence on her essential girlhood, her "immaculate girlishness" as one critic has phrased it.[15] In order to arrive at a just estimation of Twain's portrayal of Joan, then, we must first understand his conception of girlhood and his earlier depictions of that girlhood.

Twain's depictions of girlhood evolved from a tradition of writings about children, a tradition established by Rousseau and Wordsworth in Europe in the eighteenth century and a tradition which surfaced in American literature around the middle of the nineteenth century, largely as a result of Emerson's Transcendentalist essays. As Stone observes, "[i]t was through Emerson more than any other writer and lecturer that New Englanders in mid-nineteenth-century America were made aware of the Romantic image of the child as natural saint and natural aristocrat."[16] Although images of boyhood dominated the American literary landscape during these years, images embedded in such classics as Aldrich's Story of a Bad Boy and, of course, Twain's Adventures of Tom Sawyer, images of girlhood were available for Twain to draw on, beginning with Hawthorne's 1835 sketch, "Little Annie's Rambles," and continuing in the works of such writers as Henry James and Stephen Crane. Twain's conception of girlhood, no doubt based at least partially on his experiences in raising his three daughters and on his involvement with the Angel-Fish, was an idyllic one, and it is in his insistence on this idyl to the exclusion of any

blemish, particularly sorrow and sexuality, that he differs most significantly from his contemporaries. One passage in his Autobiography illustrates this superbly; in an attempt to rationalize Susy's death, Twain muses,

> Susy died at the right time, the fortunate time of life, the happy age -- twenty four years. At twenty four, such a girl has seen the best of life -- life as a happy dream. After that age the risks begin: responsibility comes, and with it the cares, the sorrows, and the inevitable tragedy.17

Like Susy, Twain's young girls, with two exceptions, remain eternally young, that is, innocent. With one of the exceptions, loss of innocence is indirectly associated with "the inevitable tragedy." And with Laura Hawkins, the other exception, loss of innocence effects "the inevitable tragedy"; Laura dies of "heart failure"; the dream is shattered. As Jami Parkison remarks,

> Twain's portrait of Joan of Arc is the model of beauty and innocence, as opposed to the turbulent portrait of Laura. . . . Unlike Laura, who leaves her youth with the bitterness of a disillusioned dream, Joan never loses her innocence and, consequently, never loses her dream. The price of defiance, however, is death: Laura commits suicide, and Joan is executed, thus insuring [sic] her martyrdom and her eternal innocence.18

Twain's earlier portraits of girlhood are sketchy at best. Neither Amy Lawrence, nor Becky Thatcher, nor Emmeline Grangerford comes close to approximating Joan. They exist primarily as insignificant foils to the boys who dominate the works. They act, if they act at all, on the

plot's periphery. They are members of the Cult of True Girlhood, the juvenile, feminine retainers of the status quo which their male counterparts seek to circumvent or escape. They are initiates of the Cult of True Womanhood; their very frailty endears them to its members. Although these young girls possess many of Joan's qualities -- innocence, virginity, sensitivity -- their characters are not developed beyond the confines of these qualities. Their function is merely decorative. And although Twain's portrait of Joan owes much to his refinement of the portrait of the young girl through these, her precursors, it is developed far beyond the dictates of the Cult of True Girlhood. To be sure, Joan, unlike her precursors, is an historical figure; this, however, does not completely account for the magnitude and magnanimity of her character.

Not to view Twain's Personal Recollections as a quasi-historical document, albeit a document tinged with Twainian inconsistencies and ingrained ambiguities, is to commit the unpardonable sin. As Twain himself remarked to Livy and Susy, "[t]his is to be a serious book. It means more to me than anything I have ever undertaken."[19] That Twain initially published the serial version anonymously, fearing the presence of his name would cause it to be read from a humorous or satirical perspective, as something qualitatively comparable to Voltaire's Pucelle, and revealed his identity only after Personal Recollections had won a serious reception further confirms his intention.

Like A Connecticut Yankee, although not to be thematically identified with it, Personal Recollections invokes the idea of progress. Twain, "cradled in the Civil War, baptized by the Bessemer process and married too early in life to the Republican party," still perceived progress in terms of the Jeffersonian ideal, as a return to simplicity.[20] For Twain, Joan of Arc, at least as depicted in the Armagnac tradition, existed as the incarnation of simplicity, the very image of "omnipotent innocence."

Because Personal Recollections was, for Twain, a quasi-historical endeavour, he went to great lengths to ascertain the "truth" of Joan's life. Accordingly, he plunged fervently into a plethora of biographies of the Maid, spending a total of twelve years researching and two years writing the novel.[21] That Twain wrote in the Armagnac rather than the Burgundian tradition is irrelevant.[22] The histories of the Hundred Years' War available in the nineteenth century were, in keeping with that period's romanticism, chiefly Armagnac ones. Considering Twain's infatuation with Joan, moreover, it is not likely he would have read much beyond the first page of a Burgundian history had he chanced on one.

Nevertheless, Twain's choice of narrator to tell Joan's story is a poor one. Critics concur almost unanimously that Twain, in using the Sieur Louis de Conte as first-person narrator, unsuccessfully attempted to replicate in him Huckleberry Finn's dual voice of innocence and naivety

meshed with experience and hindsight. Yet de Conte, despite his attempts at detachment, is wholly incapable of distancing himself from the emotional vortex which is Joan. De Conte's, and Twain's, failure in this respect diminishes somewhat the realistic impact of Joan's character. As Susan Harris remarks, "[the novel] does not succeed in adequately characterizing [Joan], largely because the first-person narrator cannot conceive of her in other than saintly terms."[23] Harris, in fact, proceeds to argue that de Conte as first-person narrator eventually eclipses Joan to become the novel's central character:

> [de Conte] shifts the emphasis of his story, making himself, not Joan, the central character of the tale, and his alienation, rather than her elevation, its central theme. In fact, the story de Conte tells about Joan becomes far less important than the story he tells about the evolution of his own estrangement from the society that condemned her.[24]

This, of course, is one of the traps which any author who uses the first-person narrative technique is likely to encounter. Yet the very fact that de Conte is unable to distance himself from Joan renders him unsuitable as the novel's central character. Indeed, his frequently embittered prophetic thoughts and utterances throughout Personal Recollections prevent him from ever becoming the focus of the reader's attention; the reader cannot interest himself in the estrangement of a character whose estrangement is already evident. And although de Conte's

inability to detach himself emotionally from Joan may diminish the realism of her character, it heightens that character's credibility; if de Conte, writing sixty-one years after Joan's death, is unable to view her dispassionately, then she was indeed extraordinary. Modern tenets of realism have no place in what is essentially the history of a saint. The reader must content himself with applying standards of credibility, and Twain could not have chosen a more appropriate candidate to convey that credibility. What the critic must assess, then, once he has abandoned the spectre of realism, is the extent to which Twain succeeded and succeeded consistently in suffusing Joan's character and escapades with credibility, the extent to which he has made her live in the reader's imagination.

Twain consistently emphasizes Joan's essential girlhood. In his essay, "Saint Joan of Arc," written after Personal Recollections, Twain insists, "[a]nd always she was a girl,"[25] and proceeds to berate those artists who would deny her that girlhood:

> How strange it is!--that almost invariably the artist remembers only one detail--one minor and meaningless detail of the personality of Joan of Arc: to wit, that she was a peasant girl--and forgets all the rest; and so he paints her as a strapping middle-aged fisherwoman, with costume to match, and in her face the spirituality of a ham. He is slave to his one idea, and forgets to observe that the supremely great souls are never lodged in gross bodies.[26]

Significantly, Twain insists most vociferously on the Maid's

virginity. In his copy of Michelet's Histoire de France, where that historian comments on Joan's alleged amenorrhea, for example, Twain makes the following marginal notation: "'The higher life absorbed her & suppressed her physical (sexual) development'."[27] As Stone remarks, "[t]he notion that the Maid was believed to have remained a child in body as well as in spirit must have pleased [Twain] and added force to his iterations of her immaculate girlishness."[28] Indeed, at least some truth is evident in Fiedler's typically Freudian assertion that, "in [Joan], Twain was able to invest the baffled virgin-worship of the Protestant American male--remaking her, in her suffering and tragic triumph, into the image of Clarissa Harlowe, of whom, to be sure, he may never have heard."[29]

Like his mentor, de Conte alludes frequently to Joan's essential girlhood. When he realizes what fate Cauchon and his cohorts have planned for Joan, for example, de Conte observes,

> I have believed that Joan had the idea that her deliverance was going to come in the form of death. But not <u>that</u> death! Divine as she was, dauntless as she was in battle, she was human also. She was not solely a saint, an angel, she was a claymade girl also--as human a girl as any in the world, and full of a human girl's sensitivenesses and tendernesses and delicacies. And so, <u>that</u> death! No, she could not have lived the three months with that one before her, I think.[30]

De Conte, however, also perceives Joan as a woman, although his allusions to her womanhood are usually prefaced by or

combined with allusions to her girlhood. In Book I, Chapter 4, for example, de Conte muses,

> All their lives those men had seen their own women-folks hitched up with a cow and dragging the plow in the fields while the men did the driving. They had also seen other evidences that women have far more endurance and patience and fortitude than men--but what good had their seeing these things been to them? None. It had taught them nothing. They were still surprised to see a girl of seventeen bear the fatigues of war better than trained veterans of the army.31

Joan's womanly compassion is similarly etched:

> [O]ur men had mortally wounded an English prisoner who was too poor to pay a ransom, and from a distance she had seen that cruel thing done; and had galloped to the place and sent for a priest, and now she was holding the head of her dying enemy in her lap, and easing him to his death with comforting soft words, just as his sister might have done; and the womanly tears running down her face all the time.32

De Conte's allusions to Joan's womanhood, however, are not inconsistent with either his or Twain's insistence on her essential girlhood. First, it should be noted that Joan matures over the course of the novel and as her age increases, so does the frequency of de Conte's allusions to her womanhood, allusions, moreover, generally prefaced by or combined with allusions to her girlhood. Second, that Joan possesses and demonstrates the more androgynous attributes of strength and acumen in no way diminishes her skill in the traditionally feminine pursuits associated with both the Cult of True Girlhood and that of True Womanhood. During

her trial, for example, she is asked,

> "Did you learn any trade at home?"
> "Yes, to sew and to spin." Then the invincible soldier, victor of Patay, conqueror of the lion Talbot, deliverer of Orleans, restorer of a king's crown, commander-in-chief of a nation's armies, straightened herself proudly up, gave her head a little toss, and said with naive complacency, "And when it comes to that, I am not afraid to be matched against any woman in Rouen!"88

Third, de Conte never denies Joan's sexual innocence. In fact, critics who observe that this issue is not treated in the novel have failed to note Joan's anguished cry on the day of her death: "'Oh, cruel, cruel, to treat me so! And must my body, that has never been defiled, be consumed today and turned to ashes?'"[34] Finally, de Conte's frequent allusions to Joan's womanhood can be explained by the fact that he was, and still is, very much in love with her and obviously finds Catherine Boucher, an older Becky Thatcher, a poor substitute. In fact, the critic does not need to determine whether Joan is more properly a member of the Cult of True Girlhood or the Cult of True Womanhood. She possesses characteristics of both Cults, but these, even in combination, do not define her adequately.

To realize Joan as Twain must surely have realized her is to recognize her as not only human, but also as a symbol of ideal humanity. She strides through Personal Recollections as an elaborate symbol, simultaneously pagan and Christian -- and Twain never pretends to reconcile the two -- always shifting, always immutable. She is not only

her parents' child, but also Nature's child. The initial section of the novel detailing Joan's childhood is permeated with references to Nature, invariably associated with Joan, and these continue throughout the narrative. As de Conte so effusively observes, Joan is the "born child of the sun, natural comrade of the birds and of all happy free creatures."[35] She possesses the "seeing eye," a gift of Nature:

> And her eyes--ah, you should have seen them and broken your hearts. Have you seen that veiled deep glow, that pathetic hurt dignity, that unsubdued and unsubduable spirit that burns and smolders in the eye of a caged eagle and makes you feel mean and shabby under the burden of its mute reproach? Her eyes were like that. How capable they were, and how wonderful! Yes, at all times and in all circumstances they could express as by print every shade of the wide range of her moods. In them were hidden floods of gay sunshine, the softest and peacefulest twilights, and devastating storms and lightnings. Not in this world have there been others that were comparable to them.[36]

Most significantly, however, Joan is associated with the fairy tree, itself a symbol of both paganism and Christianity. The tree symbolizes not only home for travelers, but also hope, and Joan quickly comes to symbolize the tree in that she symbolizes hope for the French people and ultimately, for the human race. The imagery is unmistakable:

> She looked girlishly fair and sweet and saintly in her long white robe, and when a gush of sunlight flooded her as she emerged from the gloom of the prison and was yet for a moment still framed in the arch of the somber gate, the massed multitudes

of poor folk murmured "A vision! a vision!"[37]

Several critics have noted that just as Twain has failed to reconcile paganism and Christianity in the novel, so has he failed to reconcile the Catholic and Protestant theologies; as Stone remarks, Personal Recollections is "[a] devotional exercise for a Roman Catholic girl couched in profoundly Protestant terms."[38] Other scholars, however, have perceived Joan not only as an "inviolable symbol of innocence," but also as a symbol of Christ.[39] Their theory is predicated on two scraps of evidence: first, Twain's observation in the Preface that Joan is "the most noble life that was ever born into this world save only One,"[40] and second, a notation that Twain scribbled on the page following the front cover of the Countess de Chabannes' biography of the Maid:

> "Several great historical trials:
> Christ before Pilate
> Joan's two trials
> That man in the time of Mary(!)"[41]

In fact, Roger Salomon goes so far as to suggest the following:

> Twain seems to be saying that actually the Sanhedrin had a better case against Jesus when they turned him over to Pilate than did the Ecclesiastical Court against Joan when they released her to Warwick. By implication she was more historically "innocent"--more "unselfish" and less caught up in remorseless causality.[42]

Certainly, Twain, in these two examples, parallels Joan with

Christ. However, attempts to identify Joan with Christ, especially attempts predicated on such insignificances, are invariably doomed because of the novel's pagan elements, the frequency of which does not decrease as Personal Recollections moves toward its fiery conclusion.

Whether one is pagan or Christian, Protestant or Catholic, he can still believe in Twain's Joan, for she is ideal humanity. Unfortunately, Personal Recollections will not receive the recognition it deserves until critics are able to see beyond Twain's excellence as a humorist and satirist; until women are accorded their rightful place, as both characters and writers, in literary history; until the cult of realism willingly accepts its elder brother, the cult of romanticism; and until mankind consciously realizes and accepts, as Twain did, the lessons and heroes of history and seeks actively to apply them to the current moral and political jeopardy. Joan is certainly one of Twain's mysterious strangers, his only undamned mysterious stranger, his only undamned member of the human race; as the Sieur Louis de Conte, a.k.a. Samuel Clemens, observes, "Ah, yes, she was great, she was wonderful. It took six thousand years to produce her; her like will not be seen in the earth again in fifty thousand. Such is my opinion."[43]

## Endnotes

[1]James J. Walsh, "Mark Twain and Jo[redacted]," Commonweal, 22 (23 Aug. 1935), 408.

[2]James M. Cox, Mark Twain: The Fate of Humor (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), p. 250.

[3]Quoted in Albert Bigelow Paine, Mark Twain: A Biography (New York: Chelsea House, 1980), II, p. 1034.

[4]Quoted in Albert E. Stone, Jr., The Innocent Eye: Childhood in Mark Twain's Imagination (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), p. 203.

[5]Cox, p. 256.

[6]Leslie Fiedler, Love and Death in the American Novel, rev. ed. (New York: Stein and Day, 1966), p. 296; William C. Spengemann, Mark Twain and the Backwoods Angel: The Matter of Innocence in the Works of Samuel L. Clemens (n.p.: The Kent State University Press, 1966), p. 118.

[7]Albert E. Stone, Jr., "Mark Twain's Joan of Arc: The Child as Goddess," American Literature, 31 (1959-60), 9.

[8]Bertram Mott, Jr., "Twain's Joan: A Divine Anomaly," Etudes Anglaises, 23 (1970), 255.

[9]George Bernard Shaw, Pref., Saint Joan, in The Theatre of Bernard Shaw, ed. Alan S. Downer (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1970), II, p. 666.

[10]Frank Harris, "Memories of Mark Twain," in his Contemporary Portraits, 4th ser. (New York: Bretano's, 1923), p. 165.

[11]Rev. of Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc, by Mark Twain, Bookman (London), 10 (Jul. 1896), 124.

[12]Neil Bell, "Mark Twain's Joan of Arc," Mark Twain Journal, 11, No. 3 (Fall 1961), 5.

[13]Helen Harriet Salls, "Joan of Arc in English and American Literature," South Atlantic Quarterly, 35 (1936), 176, 184.

[14]Stone, "Mark Twain's Joan of Arc: The Child as Goddess," 9.

[15]Stone, "Mark Twain's Joan of Arc: The Child as Goddess," 6.

[16]Stone, The Innocent Eye: Childhood in Mark Twain's Imagination, p. 13.

[17]Quoted in Toby Tanner, "The Literary Children of James and Clemens," Nineteenth-Century Fiction, 16 (Dec. 1961), 216.

[18]Jami Parkison, "A Woman's Mark Twain," Mark Twain Journal, 21, No. 4 (Fall 1983), 32.

[19]Quoted in Roger B. Salomon, Twain and the Image of History (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), p. 168.

[20]Quoted in Salomon, Twain and the Image of History, p. 18.

[21]Paine, II, p. 958.

[22]The Armagnac tradition idealizes Joan and France's campaign against the English, whereas the Burgundian tradition depicts Joan as a witch and exalts the English campaign during the Hundred Years' War.

[23]Susan K. Harris, Mark Twain's Escape from Time: A Study of Patterns and Images (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1982), p. 17.

[24]Susan K. Harris, pp. 17-18.

[25]Mark Twain, "St. Joan of Arc," in his Literary Essays, Vol. 22 of The Writings of Mark Twain (New York: Gabriel Wells, 1923), p. 381.

[26]Twain, "St. Joan of Arc," p. 382.

[27]Quoted in Stone, The Innocent Eye: Childhood in Mark Twain's Imagination, p. 209.

[28]Stone, The Innocent Eye: Childhood in Mark Twain's Imagination, pp. 209-10.

[29]Fiedler, p. 295.

[30]Mark Twain, Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1896), II, p. 170.

[31]Twain, Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc, I, pp. 109-10.

[32]Twain, Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc, II, p. 18.

[33]Twain, Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc, II, p.

136.

[34]Twain, Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc, II, p. 271.

[35]Twain, Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc, II, pp. 124-25.

[36]Twain, Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc, II, p. 134.

[37]Twain, Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc, II, p. 275.

[38]Stone, "Mark Twain's Joan of Arc: The Child as Goddess," 13.

[39]Spengemann, p. 106.

[40]Twain, Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc, p. xviii.

[41]Quoted in Roger B. Salomon, "Escape from History: Mark Twain's Joan of Arc," Philological Quarterly, 40 (1961), 82n.

[42]Salomon, "Escape from History: Mark Twain's Joan of Arc," 83.

[43]Twain, Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc, II, p. 143.

## Chapter Five
## A Loyal Lobbyist: Mark Twain's Laura Hawkins

> The reason novelists nearly always fail in depicting women when they make them act, is that they let them do what they have observed some other woman has done at some time or another. And that is where they make a mistake; for a woman will never do again what has been done before. It is this uncertainty that causes women, considered as materials for fiction, to be so interesting to themselves and to others.
>
> --Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner, The Gilded Age

In 1903, while residing at the old Appleton house in Riverdale and caring for his ailing wife, Twain read an article in the New York Herald that parallels thematically certain elements in his Gilded Age:

> "Rosie Quinn, who was convicted of murder in the second degree on April 8, for drowning her baby in the lake in Central Park, will be sentenced by Judge Scott to-day in the Criminal Branch of the Supreme Court. Only one sentence, that of life imprisonment, may be imposed, and, although her counsel, Moses A. Sachs, will ask for a new trial, it is not probable it will be granted. . . .
>
> The girl is a most pitiable creature. She seems crazed by the happenings of the last few weeks, and is utterly unable to comprehend the enormity of her crime, or the hopelessness of the doom which is hanging over her. She is like a child, docile, quiet, undemonstrative. She will only say:--
>
> 'It was a dear love-affair for me.'"1

Twain penned his outrage in an article, "Why Not Abolish It?" which he immediately submitted to Harper's Weekly. The article, published May 2, 1903, is worth quoting at length:

> The law is stern with the assassin, but gentle with the seducer; stern with the murderer of the body, but gentle with the murderer of all that can make life worth the living--honor, self-respect, the esteem of friends, the adoring worship of the sacred home circle, father, mother, and the cradle-mates of the earlier and innocent years. You may drag down into the mud and into enduring misery and shame the trusting and ignorant young flower of this household, and crush the heart of every creature that loves it and lives in the light of its presence; you may murder the spirit and consign to a living death and intolerable wretchedness all these--and if in certain cases you can prove consent the law will not deal unkindly with you. . . .
>
> If a man and wife are drowned at sea, and there is no proof as to which died first, the law--in some European countries and in two of our States--decides that it was the wife. She is the weaker vessel. It is usually so in the matter of seduction. She is young, inexperienced, foolish, trustful, persuadable, affectionate; she would harm no one herself, and cannot see why any one should wish to harm her; while as a rule the man is older and stronger than she is, and in every case without exception is a scoundrel. The law protects him now; it seems to me that it ought to protect her, instead.
>
> I think it ought to abolish "consent"--entirely. I think it should say there is no age at which consent shall in the least degree modify the seducer's crime or mitigate its punishment. "Consent" means previous persuasion--and there the crime begins. It is the first step, and responsible for the whole, for without it there would be no second. I would punish the beginner, the real criminal, and punish him well; society and civilization can be depended upon to punish with a ten thousand times exaggerated and unjust severity his thoughtless victim. If I were a law-maker I should want to make this law quite plain.
>
> I should want it to say nothing about "consent"--I should take the persuasion for granted, and that persuasion is what I would

> punish, along with the resulting infamy. I should say simply that commerce with a spinster, of whatever age or condition, should be punished by two years of solitary confinement or five years at hard labor; and let the man take his choice. He has murdered the honor and the happiness of a whole unoffending family, and condemned it to life-long shame and grief, and while he ought to be flayed alive, and the law ought of rights to provide that penalty, I know that no jury would vote it; I could not do it myself, unless mine were the family. And so I would make the penalty as above. A jury would vote that, for the judge would be thoughtful enough to appoint upon it none but fathers of families--families with young girls in them, the treasures of their lives, the light of their homes, the joy of their hearts.2

Twain directs his condemnation here not at the act itself -- premarital sexual relations -- but at the verbal persuasion that culminates in the act and at the laws that turn a blind eye to such persuasion; his concern is not abstract morality, but the integrity of the concrete family unit which is destroyed by acts of immorality and public exposure. That the newspaper article noted Rosie's father had ceased all communication with his daughter could only have fuelled Twain's attack.

Leland Krauth points out that all of Twain's writings, from Tom Sawyer to his Autobiography, display a preoccupation with the family unit, a unit that Twain ultimately accepted as the key to his identity.[3] It is probable, then, that in reading about the case of Rosie Quinn, Twain, in a curious reversal of mimetic theory, recalled the case of Laura Hawkins, heroine of his Gilded Age. Indeed, Laura's initial and ill-fated dalliance with

Confederate Colonel George Selby in the novel parallels to some extent the affair of Rosie Quinn without, of course, the resultant pregnancy and infanticide. Thus, that both Laura's character and the novel's ultimate theme are defined in terms of the familial motif is no coincidence.

The novel itself originated as a familial challenge, the circumstances of which have been amply documented by Albert Bigelow Paine:

> At the dinner-table one night, with the Warners present, criticisms of recent novels were offered, with the usual freedom and severity of dinner-table talk. The husbands were inclined to treat rather lightly the novels in which their wives were finding entertainment. The wives naturally retorted that the proper thing for the husbands to do was to furnish the American people with better ones. This was regarded in the nature of a challenge, and as such was accepted--mutually accepted: that is to say, in partnership. On the spur of the moment Clemens and Warner agreed that they would do a novel together, that they would begin it immediately.4

The dinner-table challenge was delivered at a propitious juncture in Twain's literary career. He had already the outlines of a new novel in his consciousness, a novel that would feature as its main character a composite of that "gentle visionary," James Lampton, his mother's cousin, and John Quarles, his uncle, with the bulk of characteristics being drawn from the former relative. Reluctant to commence such an ambitious venture alone, however, Twain welcomed with enthusiasm the offer of his friend and confidant, Charles Dudley Warner.

Immediately is perhaps too conservative a term to describe the speed with which Twain hastened through the first eleven chapters of the novel, handing over to Warner 399 pages of manuscript within a few weeks. Warner quickly set to work on the next twelve chapters, and the novel, begun in February 1873, was finished by April.

The Gilded Age was coauthored in the best sense of that word; scarcely four chapters separate the quantity of writing done by Twain from that done by Warner. Despite its authors' enthusiasm, however, The Gilded Age can best be described in Henry James' words as "a loose, baggy monster." Although both Twain and Warner regarded the completed manuscript highly, both later concurred, as Twain was to write, that their collaboration was effected "'in the superstition that we were writing one coherent yarn, when I suppose, as a matter of fact, we were writing two incoherent ones'."[5]

Critics are even less accommodating. Krauth, for example, labels the novel "a vast aesthetic failure [in which] the plot runs as erratically as the railroad [Colonel Sellers] lays out on his dining room table," and even the usually empathetic Henry Nash Smith is forced to concede that "the authors could find no way to construct a plot except by stringing together . . . devices borrowed from popular fiction."[6] And while Trygve Thoreson concurs in condemning The Gilded Age as an "exasperatingly disjointed production," the ordinarily prudent James Cox, although

acknowledging that disjointedness, errs in attempting to mitigate Twain's responsibility for the plot; accepting as truth Twain's claim that Colonel Sellers was his only real invention in the novel, Cox emphatically declares that "there is no question that Sellers is Mark Twain's property and the plot is Warner's."[7] Although Colonel Sellers is indeed principally Twain's invention, he is not that author's only invention. Both Paine and Ernest Leisy have amply evidenced this in their chapter-by-chapter breakdowns of the novel.[8] And, as Thoreson observes, there is no doubt that Laura, at least, exists "as the book's one character who is equally the creation of each man."[9]

Moreover, many of the novel's characters, including Laura, are modelled on well-known figures of the Age whom Twain and Warner were acquainted with through journalistic accounts of those figures' endeavours. Others, like Colonel Sellers as previously noted, are composites of individuals whom the authors encountered through their personal lives.[10] Senator Dilworthy, for example, is modelled on Senator Samuel Pomeroy of Kansas who, in early 1873, was investigated by the Senate on charges of bribery. Moreover, as Louis Budd notes, John Braham, Laura's defense lawyer, "openly parodied the John Graham who protected [Boss] Tweed with foxy calm but broke into sobs over his own pleadings for mercy to his client."[11] And, despite Thoreson's claim, Laura Hawkins is modelled to some extent on the notorious Laura Fair, whose murder trial between November 1870 and

September 1872 was dutifully chronicled by the newspapers. Like Laura Hawkins, Laura Fair was eventually acquitted on the rather dubious grounds of temporary insanity, and like Laura too, Mrs. Fair later made a brief and unsuccessful appearance on the lecture circuit. While the fact that Twain and Warner modelled many of their characters on real-life figures in no way enhances the stature of The Gilded Age, it does account, to some extent, for the novel's immense popularity. First issued in December 1873, The Gilded Age was in its third edition by January 1874, with sales of 26,000 by the end of that month and 40,000 by the end of the following month.[12] Readers, no doubt, revelled in their ability to identify the parodied individuals and circumstances of recent history. Unfortunately, however, the novel's popularity among the general public of the Age, together with the Laura Fair parallel, has probably impeded critical recognition of Laura Hawkins as one of Twain's most memorable and realistically portrayed female characters.

Laura Hawkins, the self-destructive heroine of The Gilded Age who, along with Joan and Roxana, emerges as one of Twain's most fully realized female characters, bears little resemblance except in name to Twain's childhood sweetheart, Laura Hawkins of Hannibal. As Paine notes, Twain used the name "merely for old times' sake, and because in portraying the childhood of Laura Hawkins he had a picture of the real Laura in his mind."[13] Critics, however, have refused to yield to sentimentality in their estimation

of Laura. Henry Canby, for example, labels her "one of the most deplorable melodramatic heroines ever contrived," while Dixon Wecter designates her a "pasteboard female" and "political siren."[14] Those critics, however, err in their analyses of Laura Hawkins. She is neither a deplorable melodramatic heroine nor a pasteboard female; she is, if anything, so unpredictable as to defy analysis. And it is this very unpredictability that effects the realism of her character; as the narrator of The Gilded Age observes in Chapter 21, it is women's unpredictability that causes them, "considered as materials for fiction, to be so interesting to themselves and to others."[15]

Despite the unpredictability of Laura's character, she does share with Twain's other female characters one definitive characteristic: a commitment to family. Unlike Laura's commitment, however, the familial commitments of many of those characters are rather superficially delineated. For example, Sandy, Hank Morgan's child-bride in A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court, exhibits, at best, a spasmodic commitment to family life. Twain's attempt to posit family life as one of the novel's central values is thus unsuccessful. As Krauth remarks, "[g]iven the ambiguities of Morgan's character, the gift of family is one more sign of Twain's confused ambivalence toward his materials. . . . by the end of the Yankee the family is cut off from the world; it is a lost Eden, a longed-for refuge from chaos."[16] Thus, whereas A Connecticut Yankee is a

structurally unified novel and Sandy, a character with no apparent sense of purpose, The Gilded Age is a structurally disunified novel with a heroine whose sense of purpose easily surpasses that of any other character in the book.

Laura's sense of purpose, however, frequently leads her beyond the confines of conventional morality. As Trygve Thoreson points out, Twain was not unacquainted with women who flirted beyond the corsets of the Cult of True Womanhood.[17] During his journalistic sojourns of the 1860s and early 1870s, Twain encountered women from all walks of life: genteel ladies, disreputable tramps, and disreputable tramps in genteel guise. Fashionable accounts of these latter pretenders, in particular, he did not hesitate to burlesque in his newspaper sketches of the period. For example, the nose of one woman, a Miss C.L.B., is admirably burlesqued in "The Pioneers' Ball," a piece Twain wrote for the November 26, 1865 Golden Era: "'[She] had her fine nose elegantly enameled, and the easy grace with which she blew it from time to time, marked her as a cultivated and accomplished woman of the world; its exquisitely modulated tone excited the admiration of all who had the happiness to hear it'."[18] Thus, although Twain might have confined himself to Cult graduates in his quest for a respectable wife, he was not at all the naive prig whom some critics have described. As Thoreson remarks, "Twain adhered to the nineteenth-century ideal of womanhood, to be sure; he could also see the disparity between the ideal and the reality."[19]

Female lobbyists in the latter half of the nineteenth century were the reality. As a style of political interest group behaviour, lobbying originated in Great Britain but rapidly became an intrinsic part of the American political system. As Mark Nadel observes, "the term lobbying originally referred to those seeking special favors from the government by huddling with legislators in the lobbies of Congress and state legislatures; it was in general use by the 1830's."[20] By mid-century, lobbying had become a thriving trade, alarming those, like Twain, who would maintain the integrity of American politics. A passage contained in an 1852 letter from James Buchanan to Franklin Pierce evidences this point:

> "The host of contractors, speculators, stockjobbers and lobby members which haunt the halls of Congress are desirous . . . on any and every pretext to get their arms into the public treasury [and] are sufficient to alarm every friend of his country. Their progress must be arrested."21

It did not take long for women to enter the political arena as lobbyists. As Allan Nevins observes in his analysis of American society between 1865 and 1878, they were "seen everywhere, making the streets and hotels disreputably gay."[22] Many of these women were, in fact, high-class prostitutes, exerting their political influence in the nation's bedrooms.[23] Nevertheless, they were able to maintain a veneer of respectability while plying their trade with all the audacity of Babylonian whores.

Twain was amply aware of the iniquitous nature of Washington's female lobby effort. In the winter of 1868-69, he encountered, as Bryant French observes, "the female rascal who would work and bribe 'with all her might,' not, however, as a voter or elected representative but as a behind-the-scenes manipulator."[24] Despite the seductive availability of models, however, Twain chose, in The Gilded Age, to portray Laura as a victim rather than a manipulator of political iniquity. To be sure, Laura is a successful lobbyist, endowed with all the charm, wealth, and subterfuge of her real-life counterparts. However, her readiness to use those accoutrements for political ends stems primarily from her commitment to family and only partially from a desire for personal gain, itself a consequence of early victimization.

That Laura is portrayed as victim from the opening chapters of The Gilded Age is entirely consistent with the authors' aim to depict a period of American history in which materialism and a lust for power created victims in all sectors of society. Only those who, like Philip Sterling, relied on themselves, practised the Puritan Work Ethic, and thus maintained their personal integrity could hope to escape the clutches of the Age. Laura, however, while no Sterling hero, is not only a victim but also a survivor of victimization. Her ability to survive all but the final blow is predicated on her intense commitment to family. It is this, an unvarying loyalty that extends, unfortunately,

beyond the immediate family circle to those who would seduce and betray her, which sets Laura apart from the novel's other characters and which culminates in her ultimate betrayal at the hands of a society that once had wooed her. Moreover, as an orphan, an outsider, Laura is a double victim: through a vengeful twist of fate, the family that Laura apotheosizes is not her own.

The reader first encounters Laura, orphaned by the Amaranth explosion, as "a little black-eyed girl of five years, frightened and crying bitterly . . . struggling through the throng in the Boreas's saloon calling her mother and father."[25] That no one answers her calls, until the Hawkinses discover her, sets the stage for later developments in Laura's character. From this point forward, Laura ceases to call. Against the overwhelming onslaught of catastrophes that beset her in later life, Laura remains mute, relying on her own inner resources for solace. In this respect, she can be identified with Philip Sterling, also a survivor. However, neither Ruth Bolton nor Alice Montague, Laura's apparent foils in the novel, exhibits the same collected demeanor: whereas Ruth frequently calls attention to herself by flaunting her medical ambitions, Alice calls attention to herself with equal frequency by feigning nonchalance while feeling only self-pity. Laura's self-possession, however, is genuine, a subconscious attempt to maintain her personal integrity. Once again, then, Laura is an outsider, set apart from the female milieu by her

possession of essentially androgynous traits.

It is curious that Twain, after introducing the five-year-old Laura in Chapter 5, reintroduces her only a chapter later at a seventeen. For an author who revealed in depictions of girlhood, this twelve-year hiatus in Laura's life is indeed unusual. The reader can only speculate that Twain omitted Laura's childhood because of his awareness of the size of the novelistic enterprise still before him.

In reintroducing the seventeen-year-old Laura to the reader in Chapter 6, Twain appears to posit the conventional Sensuous Woman/Virtuous Woman dichotomy between Laura and her surrogate sister, Emily Hawkins:

> Emily and Laura were about the same age--between seventeen and eighteen. Emily was fair and pretty, girlish and diffident--blue eyes and light hair. Laura had a proud bearing and a somewhat mature look; she had fine, clean-cut features, her complexion was pure white and contrasted vividly with her black hair and eyes; she was not what one calls pretty--she was beautiful.26

The dichotomy, however, does not extend beyond this point for two reasons. First, the reader rarely encounters Emily throughout the remainder of the novel; she, like her brother, Clay, fades into anonymity as the adopted Hawkins children pursue their Washington careers. Second, the dichotomy is only apparent: Laura does not adhere consistently to the Sensuous Woman mold. She is, in fact, a composite of the Virtuous Woman and Sensuous Woman images.

Even in the above passage, the contrast between her "lily-white" skin, typically associated with the Virtuous Woman image, and black hair and eyes, associated with the Sensuous Woman image, is quite evident.

Laura's anomalous combination of virtue and sensuality, coolness and passion, is, in fact, amply delineated. Her passions, however, generally appear only in response to her family: "[Laura's] eyes beamed affection under her mother's caress. Then she straightened up, folded her white hands in her lap, and became a splendid iceberg."[27] These momentary displays of affection, however, are strangely incongruous with the narrator's consistent portrayal of Laura as an outsider to the Hawkins' family circle:

> The girls would not have been permitted to work for a living under any circumstances whatever. It was a Southern family, and of good blood; and for any person except Laura, either within or without the household, to have suggested such an idea would have brought upon the suggester the suspicion of being a lunatic.[28]

If only because the narrator emphasizes and re-emphasizes Laura's role as an outsider, a mysterious stranger, her familial loyalty must necessarily be accepted as legitimate.

Initially, Laura's familial loyalty extends most obviously to her adoptive father. In a strong but collected display of filial loyalty, Laura quickly corrects Clay's considerate attempt to usurp her position at Squire Hawkins' deathbed:

> [Clay] ventured once to let the midnight hour pass without calling Laura, but he ventured no more; there was that about her rebuke when he tried to explain, that taught him that to let her sleep when she might be ministering to her father's needs, was to rob her of moments that were priceless in her eyes; he perceived that she regarded it as a privilege to watch, not a burden.29

When the Squire dies, Laura is devastated; again, however, she manages to conceal her turbulent passions beneath an "iceberg" exterior:

> Laura had bent down and kissed her father's lips as the spirit left the body; but she did not sob, or utter any ejaculation; her tears flowed silently. Then she closed the dead eyes, and crossed the hands upon the breast; after a season, she kissed the forehead reverently, drew the sheet up over the face, and then walked apart and sat down with the look of one who is done with life and has no further interest in its joys and sorrows, its hopes or its ambitions.30

Laura thus concludes her vigil with the same precision that walked her through it.

Nonetheless, Laura's almost suicidal depression over the death of her adoptive father, comparable in some respects to that depression which later results from her unsuccessful attempt at the lecture circuit, quickly evaporates. Her natural father is apparently alive. Laura's will to live, predicated on familial loyalty, is thus also kept alive:

> The recent wearing days and nights of watching, and the wasting grief that had possessed her, combined with the profound depression that naturally came with the reaction of idleness, made

> Laura peculiarly susceptible at this time to romantic impressions. She was a heroine, now, with a mysterious father somewhere.31

Laura, however, is guided by illusion in the search for her real father.

The narrator consistently points to popular romantic fiction as the cause of Laura's susceptibility to illusions. In her search for her natural father, in her brief flirtation with Ned Thurston, and later, in her misalliance with Colonel Selby, romantic fiction is targeted as the source of Laura's tribulations. In the first instance, Laura looks to romance for guidance in her filial search: "She could not really tell whether she wanted to find [her father] and spoil it all or not; but still all the traditions of romance pointed to the making the attempt as the usual and necessary couse to follow."[32] Laura's reaction to Ned Thurston's defection is similarly inspired by popular fiction: "'The coward! Are all books lies? I thought he would fly to the front, and be brave and noble, and stand up for me against all the world, and defy my enemies, and wither these gossips with his scorn! Poor crawling thing, let him go. I do begin to despise this world!'"[33] And Laura's immediate fascination for Colonel Selby stems from his resemblance to the heroes of popular romance: "She had read of such men, but she had never seen one before, one so high-bred, so noble in sentiment, so entertaining in conversation, so engaging in manner."[34] It

is Colonel Selby's seduction and initial betrayal of Laura that finally causes her to accept the fact that all books of the type that had so enthralled her are indeed lies.

As Laura's reading habits mature to the point where she is able to ridicule the bookstore clerk without his knowledge, so does her character.[35] She effects her entrance into Washington society with a sophistication and worldliness alien to the decidedly unworldly Laura of Hawkeye. Nevertheless, Laura's Washington worldliness, while sufficient for the purpose of lobbying, fails to establish her in the eyes of society as a lady. The narrator, in fact, feels compelled to assume the role of apologist for Laura's conversational aptitude:

> [Laura] was not a person of exaggerated refinement; indeed, the society and the influences that had formed her character had not been of a nature calculated to make her so; she thought that "give and take was fair play," and that to parry an offensive thrust with a sarcasm was a neat and legitimate thing to do. She sometimes talked to people in a way which some ladies would consider actually shocking; but Laura rather prided herself upon some of her exploits of that character. We are sorry we cannot make her a faultless heroine; but we cannot, for the reason that she was human.36

Laura is indeed human, unpredictable, and it is this, as the authors implicitly point out in their veiled plea for realism, that effects that realism in her character.

The realism of Laura's character asserts itself most visibly in her dealings with various members of her family. It is here that the reader perceives the passion and warmth

of the old Laura, passion and warmth invariably concealed within an "iceberg" demeanor in societal situations. When Laura's surrogate brother Washington describes to her his plans for spending the as-yet-unacquired millions from the sale of the Tennessee acreage,

> Laura laughed a good old-fashioned laugh that had more of her former natural self about it than any sound that had issued from her mouth in many weeks. She said:
>
> "You don't change, Washington. You still begin to squander a fortune right and left the instant you hear of it in the distance; you never wait till the foremost dollar of it arrives within a hundred miles of you"--and she kissed her brother good-by and left him weltering in his dreams, so to speak.37

Only one character, however, Laura's soul-mate in the art of survival, is able to pierce the veil and perceive the real Laura who hovers behind it. After Philip Sterling confronts Laura as advocate for his friend, Harry Brierly, and sees "the tears in her eyes that contradicted the hardness of her language," he "went away with his heart lightened about Harry, but profoundly saddened by the glimpse of what this woman might have been."[38]

Any chance that Laura has to become what Philip perceived she might have become is lost when she murders Colonel Selby. Up to this point, Laura has been able to aid her family financially at an unprecedented level. Thus, she has been able to display her loyalty to that family in the only way she knows how or at least in the only way that her position has allowed her. In prison, however, Laura's

defences break down as she realizes her predicament and the effect that predicament will have on her family:

> During the night subtle electricity had carried the tale over all the wires of the continent and under the sea; and in all villages and towns of the Union, from the Atlantic to the territories, and away up and down the Pacific slope, and as far as London and Paris and Berlin, that morning the name of Laura Hawkins was spoken by millions and millions of people, while the owner of [illegible] sweet child of years ago, the beautiful [illegible] of Washington drawing-rooms--sat shivering on her cot-bed in the darkness of a damp cell in the Tombs.39

Like Rosie Quinn, Laura has unwittingly injured by her actions the only people for whom she has ever really cared. Even Mrs. Hawkins' tender ministrations to Laura in prison and during the trial are not enough to ease the murderess' emotional burden.

Regardless of the verdict -- and the authors themselves appear confused in this regard -- the sentence remains the same: death by suicide. In the "guilty" scene, Laura is transferred to the Hospital for Lunatic Criminals and immediately contemplates an egoistic suicide: "She recalled Braham's speech, she recalled the testimony regarding her lunacy. She wondered if she were not mad; she felt that she soon should be among these loathsome creatures. Better almost to have died, than to slowly go mad in this confinement."[40] The "not guilty" scene, however, is the more convincing, for it is in this scenario that Laura commits an altruistic and thus, thematically consistent

suicide: loyalty to her family necessitates her death. Appropriately, Laura's thoughts revert to her childhood before she dies:

> She saw herself again in the budding grace of her twelve years, decked in her dainty pride of ribbons, consorting with the bees and the butterflies, believing in fairies, holding confidential converse with the flowers, busying herself all day long with airy trifles that were as weighty to her as the affairs that tax the brains of diplomats and emperors. She was without sin, then, and unacquainted with grief; the world was full of sunshine and her heart was full of music. From that--to this!
>
> "If I could only die!" she said. "If I could only go back, and be as I was then, for one hour--and hold my father's hand in mine again, and see all the household about me, as in that old innocent time--and then die! My God, I am humbled, my pride is all gone, my stubborn heart repents--have pity!"41

The mechanics of Laura's suicide are unimportant. That Twain and Warner had the jury of inquest return a verdict of "heart disease" makes Laura's death no less a suicide. Any other conclusion would be unrealistic.

Laura's life thus comes full circle, from childhood back to childhood. There can be no doubt that the novel's principal theme is that of familial loyalty and the consequences of one's abnegation of his duties in this regard. Laura, moreover, is a fully realized and realistic character. It is only unfortunate that the novel in which she finds herself, like that in which Joan finds herself, fails to meet the same criteria. Only in Pudd'nhead Wilson do both the novel and its heroine triumph.

## Endnotes

[1]Quoted in Mark Twain, "Why Not Abolish It?" Harper's Weekly, 47 (2 May 1903), 732.

[2]Twain, "Why Not Abolish It?" 732.

[3]See Leland Krauth, "Mark Twain: At Home in the Gilded Age," Georgia Review, 28 (1974), 105-13.

[4]Albert Bigelow Paine, Mark Twain: A Biography (New York: Chelsea House, 1980), I, pp. 476-77.

[5]Quoted in Paine, I, p. 477.

[6]Krauth, 107; Henry Nash Smith, Mark Twain: The Development of a Writer (Cambridge: Belknap, 1962), p. 71.

[7]Trygve Thoreson, "Mark Twain's Unsentimental Heroine," South Carolina Review, 14, No. 2 (Spring 1982), 24; James M. Cox, Mark Twain: The Fate of Humor (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), p. 129.

[8]See Paine, I, p. 477 n. and Ernest E. Leisy, "Mark Twain's Part in The Gilded Age," American Literature, 8 (1937), 445-47.

[9]Thoreson, "Mark Twain's Unsentimental Heroine," 24.

[10]For a full discussion of models, see Bryant Morley French, Mark Twain and The Gilded Age: The Book That Named an Era (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1965).

[11]Louis J. Budd, Mark Twain: Social Philosopher (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1962), p. 51.

[12]Paine, I, p. 500.

[13]Paine, I, p. 68 n.

[14]Henry Seidel Canby, Turn West, Turn East: Mark Twain and Henry James (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1951), p. 97; Dixon Wecter, Sam Clemens of Hannibal (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1952), p. 179.

[15]Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner, The Gilded Age: A Tale of To-day, in The Writings of Mark Twain, ed. Albert Bigelow Paine (New York: Gabriel Wells, 1922), V, p. 215.

[16]Krauth, 111-12.

[17]See Trygve Thoreson, "'Virtuous According to Their Lights': Women in Mark Twain's Early Work," Mark Twain Journal, 21, No. 4 (Fall 1983), 52-56.

[18]Quoted in Thoreson, "'Virtuous According to Their Lights'," 53.

[19]Thoreson, "'Virtuous According to Their Lights'," 52.

[20]Mark V. Nadel, Corporations and Political Accountability (Lexington: D.C. Heath, 1976), p. 43.

[21]Quoted in Nadel, p. 43. Pierce (1804-69) served from 1853 to 1857 as the 14th President of the United States and was succeeded by Buchanan (1791-1868), who served from 1857 to 1861 as the States' 15th President.

[22]Allan Nevins, The Emergence of Modern America, 1865-1878 (New York: Macmillan, 1928), p. 96.

[23]French, p. 113.

[24]French, p. 111.

[25]Twain, The Gilded Age, V, p. 39.

[26]Twain, The Gilded Age, V, p. 60.

[27]Twain, The Gilded Age, V, p. 61.

[28]Twain, The Gilded Age, V, p. 63. Several decades later, Twain would attempt to deny his own daughter, Clara, her desire for a concert career, as well as shudder at Susy's unfulfilled aspirations to become an opera singer.

[29]Twain, The Gilded Age, V, p. 89.

[30]Twain, The Gilded Age, V, p. 92.

[31]Twain, The Gilded Age, V, p. 98.

[32]Twain, The Gilded Age, V, pp. 98-99.

[33]Twain, The Gilded Age, V, p. 102.

[34]Twain, The Gilded Age, V, p. 182.

[35]Twain, The Gilded Age, VI, pp. 47-53.

[36]Twain, The Gilded Age, VI, pp. 29-30.

[37]Twain, The Gilded Age, VI, p. 37.

[38]Twain, The Gilded Age, VI, p. 132.

[39]Twain, The Gilded Age, VI, p. 157.

[40]Twain, The Gilded Age, VI, pp. 268-69.

[41]Twain, The Gilded Age, VI, p. 299.

## Chapter Six
## Mammies and Mummies: Mark Twain's Roxana

> . . . in the white South of Mark Twain's memory, the Negro women became the Mammies who were the real mothers in a society so obsessed with purity that it divested the ordained mothers of passional vitality.
>
> --James Cox, Mark Twain: The Fate of Humor

Of the three women who influenced Twain most significantly -- Jane Lampton Clemens, Mary Mason Fairbanks, and Olivia Langdon -- two exerted that influence through their roles as mothers, natural or surrogate. (There is little evidence to suggest that Twain's view of the third woman, Livy, was predominantly filial, although he most certainly acknowledged her as the mother of his children.) It thus seems entirely appropriate that Twain should cast his most remarkable and memorable fictional female, Roxana, as a mother.

Roxana, however, unlike Jane and "Mother" Fairbanks, is a mulatto, branded a slave by virtue of a distant miscegenational coupling. Indeed, in the case of Roxana, as in that of her prototype, Aunt Rachel of "A True Story," nature would ordinarily ordain nurture. Yet it is Roxana's awareness of her position in the sterility that defines

Dawson's Landing and her endurance despite such awareness that effect the realism of her character. Certainly, Roxana differs little from either Joan or Laura in her ability to confront seemingly overwhelming odds while maintaining her sense of dignity and self.

Critics concur unanimously in designating Roxana Twain's most memorable female character. Leslie Fiedler enthusiastically describes her as "no gross, comfortable, placid source of warmth, all bosom and grin, but a passionate, complex, and beautiful mulatto, a truly living woman distinguished from the wooden images of virtue and bitchery that pass for females in most American novels," while Bernard DeVoto characterizes her as "unique and formidable."[1] Even Henry Nash Smith must grudgingly admit that Roxana "is the only fully developed character, in the novelistic sense, in the book."[2]

Because of the paucity of realistically portrayed women in Twain's galaxy of characters, Roxana has generated a perhaps disproportionate share of feminist criticism. That she is not only a woman but also a mulatto has further increased her allure. Mary Ellen Goad typifies the feminist response when she remarks,

> Twain successfully raised the imaginative curtain between his women and their sexuality only with Roxy. . . . Not only does Twain give her physical beauty, he also blesses Roxy with passions no other Twain women possess. . . . Freed from the lily-white stereotype that Twain had created, Roxy could achieve a fictional life that no other female character in Twain's work approaches.3

Judith Bérzon, in her detailed analysis of the mulatto in American fiction, describes Roxana as "a highly intelligent all-but-white woman of great dignity."[4] Only Rolande Ballorain deviates from the general consensus when she dismisses,

> Roxana, majestic, 'full of character,' 'shapely, intelligent, comely, even beautiful,' full of drive, enterprise, the masterworker of the situation, challenging all conventions. But black--all male critics insist on this (yet they never add about Jim, 'but' he is black).5

In their eagerness to idealize Roxana, however, the critics neglect one very significant issue: loyalty, one of the principal themes inherent in Pudd'nhead Wilson. Above all, Roxana exemplifies loyalty, loyalty to herself, to her son, and paradoxically, to the society that ostracizes her. And it is this enduring characteristic that positions Roxana in line with Joan and Laura, Jane and Mary, and Twain's view of women in general. In short, Twain's creation of Roxana was no accident.

A product of the Victorian era and its ethos, Twain always displayed the appropriate reverence for women, a reverence, albeit, frequently suffused with humour. In an 1868 speech delivered to the Washington Newspaper Correspondents Club, for example, Twain observes,

> Human intelligence cannot estimate what we owe to woman, sir. She sews on our buttons; she mends our clothes; she ropes us in at the church fairs; she confides in us; she tells us whatever she can find out about the little private affairs of the

> neighbors; she gives us good advice--and plenty of it; she gives us a piece of her mind, sometimes, and sometimes all of it; she soothes our aching brows; she bears our children--ours as a general thing. In all the relations of life, sir, it is but a just and a graceful tribute to woman to say of her that she is a brick.6

That Twain would suffuse such obvious admiration with humour, however, also evidences his adherence to the Victorian masculine code; to acknowledge explicitly one's reliance on women while implicitly denying that reliance was expected in the higher social circles and indeed, commonly practised. Motherhood, however, was apparently exempted from this practice. Later in the same speech, "Woman--The Pride of Any Profession and the Jewel of Ours," Twain abandons his humorous perspective:

> But, jesting aside, Mr. President, woman is lovable, gracious, kind of heart, beautiful --worthy of all respect, of all esteem, of all deference. Not any here will refuse to drink her health right cordially in this bumper of wine, for each and every one of us has personally known, and loved, and honored, the very best one of them all--his own mother!7

The respect and esteem so explicit in this toast is, of course, entirely consistent with the respect and esteem that Twain accorded his own mother. The toast's application, however, was limited. In the Victorian era, romantic notions of motherhood extended only to middle- and upper-class white mothers; lower-class white mothers and black mothers at any level in the social hierarchy were summarily excluded. Moreover, since the very concept of

romanticism implies commonalty as well as a certain distance between the observer and the idealized, it is quite clear why Twain's middle- and upper-class white mothers fail in terms of realism and why his black and lower-class white mothers do not. Just as romanticism implies commonalty and distance, so realism implies individualism and proximity. The only maternal characters, therefore, whom Twain could portray realistically were those beneath the pedestal, those whom he could observe in close proximity, those for whom, in effect, he was able to abandon the artificialities of cultural protocol. Ironically, then, Twain was inhibited in his creativity by the very culture that had provided him with the resources to foster that creativity.

As Fiedler observes, "America is boyhood," innocence in an unmechanized Garden.[8] That Twain rarely betrayed that perspective by allowing his boys to mature is frequently observed by scholars. That Twain also refused, however, to betray the Cult of True Womanhood by allowing his middle- and upper-class white mothers to mature, to confront the exigencies of real life, is a less frequent observation. Yet the evidence clearly points to this conclusion. While Aunt Rachel and Roxana may be vibrant both in appearance and in moral character, Aunt Polly, Mrs. Thatcher, the Widow Douglas, and the host of other natural and surrogate mothers that people Twain's Mississippi novels are static, one-dimensional characters who function as retainers of a rather dubious status quo. Their role is one of moral

outrage, discipline, and ensuing guilt. Any maternal sympathies they may hold toward their charges are shrouded in cultural protocol; real love is either absent or so distorted as to render it unrecognizable. They run their respective households with a brisk and easy efficiency; they cope, if they cope at all, through tears and weak remonstrances. This is, of course, entirely consistent with their inviolable membership in the white Cult of True Womanhood, a Cult which obviously does not embrace Twain's black or poor-white mothers. It indeed seems that Twain, possessing a strong conception of the qualities that constitute real motherhood, yet aware of the dangers of circumventing the Victorian ethos in his depictions of middle- and upper-class white women who happen to be mothers, chose instead to portray that conception through Aunt Rachel, Roxana and, to a certain extent, Mother Utterback.

The character of Mother Utterback provides the tenuous link between Twain's static, one-dimensional, middle- and upper-class white mothers and his dynamic, multi-dimensional, black mothers. One of Twain's few poor-white mothers, Mother Utterback, replete with her six homespun daughters, appears in "Captain Montgomery," a frontier reminiscence Twain submitted for the January 28, 1866 issue of the Golden Era.

Mother Utterback's loyalty to her daughters is never questioned. And while she is certainly a ridiculous figure,

Twain does not ridicule her. Rather, he implicitly burlesques the genteel tramps who have deigned to ridicule her. Moreover, Twain appears to admire Mother Utterback's unsophisticated openness, particularly in sexual matters. In a blunt and humorous outburst, Mother Utterback exclaims to one of her daughters: "'You, Sal, you hussy, git up f'm thar this minit, and take some exercise! for the land's sake, ain't you got no sense at all?--settin' thar on that cold rock and you jes' ben married last night, and your pores all open!'"[9] Of course, Smith chooses to attribute the sexual explicitness inherent in Mother Utterback's command to "a gifted storyteller with a recognized repertory, an artist of the sort who keep an oral narrative tradition alive."[10] That Twain was also a gifted storyteller with a recognized repertory apparently escapes Smith's notice. Moreover, as Trygve Thoreson observes, "Sexuality to such a character [as Mother Utterback] would be a natural part of her environment, and she treats sex in a way suitable to her own free and easy world. Twain sees no sin in that."[11] Sexuality, however, is an unnatural part of Roxana's environment, and thus she is not as candid about it as Mother Utterback. In Dawson's Landing, sexuality has been perverted by moral hypocrisy, and Roxana is loyal to her town's moral code.

Before we proceed to an analysis of Roxana's loyalty, it is necessary to examine "A True Story," a dramatic narrative whose protagonist, Aunt Rachel, is Roxana's

prototype and Twain's most realistic portrayal of woman as mother -- significantly, black mother -- before Pudd'nhead Wilson.

Anthologized in Twain's Sketches Old and New, "A True Story, Repeated Word for Word as I Heard It" was reviewed favourably by William Dean Howells one year after its initial publication in the December 1874 issue of the Atlantic Monthly: "[t]he rugged truth of the sketch leaves all other stories of slave life infinitely far behind, and reveals a gift in the author for the simple, dramatic report of reality which we have seen equalled in no other American writer."[12] The story is "ruggedly true" in that it is realistic; "A True Story" is patterned after life, however, only to the extent that the experiences of Aunt Rachel are modelled on those of Auntie Cord, the cook at Quarry Farm where the Clemenses frequently spent their summers. Yet in addition to claiming for the narrative the status of history, the subtitle serves two other functions. First, it presages the dramatic, vernacular nature of the story; with the exception of the brief frame, "A True Story" is related exclusively by Aunt Rachel. Second, the subtitle, as William Gibson points out, "warn[s] the reader not to expect humor as [the story's] central feature."[13] "A True Story," however, does contain humour, humour which even its author was apparently unaware of, when he attached to the manuscript the following note to Howells: "I enclose also 'A True Story' which has no humor in it."[14] Indeed, as

shall be illustrated, the story's humour, like that in Pudd'nhead Wilson, is intrinsic to its "truth," to its use of the vernacular.

The parallels between Aunt Rachel and Roxana are unmistakable; one could assume that Twain relied on his portrait of Aunt Rachel in fashioning Roxana's character and experiences, even though the two mothers differ in age. First, like Roxana, Aunt Rachel is striking in physical appearance and, by implication, moral stamina: "[s]he was of mighty frame and stature; she was sixty years old, but her eye was undimmed and her strength unabated."[15] Second, like Roxana, Aunt Rachel is proud of an ancestry that posits her above the common black. This pride is illustrated by the humorous, homespun anecdote that reveals Aunt Rachel's sense of dignity and her frustration with the partygoers' chaotic revelry: "'Look-a-heah! . . . I want you niggers to understan' dat I wa'n't bawn in de mash to be fool' by trash! I's one o' de ole Blue Hen's Chickens, I is!'"[16] Third and most importantly, however, Aunt Rachel, like Roxana, displays a fierce loyalty toward her children, particularly toward her youngest son, Henry. Aunt Rachel recounts the events of the slave auction:

> "Dey put chains on us an' put us on a stan' as high as dis po'ch--twenty foot high--an' all de people stood aroun', crowds an' crowds. An' dey'd come up dah an' look at us all roun', an' squeeze our arm, an' make us git up an' walk, an' den say, 'Dis one too ole,' or 'Dis one lame,' or 'Dis one don't 'mount to much.' An' dey sole my ole man, an' took him away, an' dey begin to sell my

> chil'en an' take dem away, an' I begin to cry; an' de man say, 'Shet up yo' damn blubberin',' an' hit me on de mouf wid his han'. An' when de las' one was gone but my little Henry, I grab' him clost up to my breas' so, an' I ris up an' says, 'You sha'n't take him away,' I says; 'I'll kill de man dat tetches him!' I says."17

Aunt Rachel's emotional intensity is inversely proportionate to the age of those being removed from her family circle. She pays little attention to her husband's sale yet is willing to endanger her own life for little Henry. Roxana similarly jeopardizes her situation again and again in loyalty to her undeserving son, Thomas a Becket Driscoll.

Curiously overlooked by Twain scholars, loyalty stands as one of the principal themes of Pudd'nhead Wilson. Indeed, the novel's characters can be differentiated and examined on the basis of whether the objects of their loyalty are abstract or concrete. Intangible objects of loyalty in the novel are invariably cultural practices, and all the characters, including Roxana, adhere to and honour them. Roxana, however, is the only character who exhibits faith in individuals as well, in her natural son and by implication, in herself, and it is this more than anything else that sustains her as the only realistically portrayed character in the novel. The other characters, by exhibiting loyalty exclusively toward intangible cultural practices, become so identified with those practices as to render themselves abstract.

Dawson's Landing itself exhibits conformity in terms of

both architecture and landscaping:

> In 1830 it was a snug little collection of modest one and two-story frame dwellings whose white-washed exteriors were almost concealed from sight by climbing tangles of rose vines, honeysuckles, and morning-glories. Each of these pretty homes had a garden in front fenced with white palings and opulently stocked with hollyhocks, marigolds, touch-me-nots, prince's-feathers, and other old-fashioned flowers; while on the window-sills of the houses stood wooden boxes containing moss-rose plants and terra-cotta pots in which grew a breed of geranium whose spread of intensely red blossoms accented the prevailing pink tint of the rose-clad house-front like an explosion of flame.18

The town is also defined, however, in terms of its adherence to the practice of social stratification. Dawson's Landing contains three classes of citizens: the First Families of Virginia (F.F.V.s), the slaves, and those who are neither F.F.V.s nor slaves -- the amorphous middle class. Each class observes the practices appropriate to its position in the social hierarchy, practices that frequently reflect moral hypocrisy.

The most hypocritical of the town's three social classes, the F.F.V.s are defined by their loyalty to two long-established practices. The first, miscegenation, is associated with sexual hypocrisy. The vast majority of the F.F.V.s' children are illegitimate, borne and raised in silence by the female slaves. The act of conception usually involves rape, for consent is assumed and victims have no recourse to a system of justice designed solely to uphold the rights of their assailants. The assailants' wives are

also silenced, blinding themselves to the fact of miscegenation in the knowledge that their social position has necessitated it. The second practice, the duel, is associated wtih legal hypocrisy. When Tom informs Judge Driscoll of his legal victory against Luigi, the Judge is enraged: "'You cur! You scum! You vermin! Do you mean to tell me that blood of my race has suffered a blow and crawled to a court of law about it?'"[19] In the moral code of the F.F.V.s, the family's honour takes precedence over law. As the narrator observes, "Honor stood first; and the laws defined what it was."[20]

Pudd'nhead Wilson, the novel's title and only developed middle-class character, is loyal to the practice of the American Dream, the "rags to riches" legacy. A college graduate with some post-graduate work to his credit, Wilson arrives in Dawson's Landing from the East "to seek his fortune," to pursue the elusive American Dream.[21] Irrevocably branded a "pudd'nhead" on his first day in town, Wilson does not attempt to re-evaluate his plans: "With Scotch patience and pluck he resolved to live down his reputation and work his way into the legal field yet."[22] Whether conscious or subconscious, the self-deception that results from Wilson's blind adherence to the practice of the American Dream postpones his career for twenty years. That Wilson eventually achieves his goal, moreover, in no way acquits his loyalty of charges of absurdity.

Consistent with his social aspirations, Wilson's

actions also demonstrate his loyalty to the F.F.V.s. When, for example, Tom accuses him of being "'the biggest fool I ever saw'," Wilson can only gush, "'Thank you'."[23] And, like Judge Driscoll, Wilson is incensed by Tom's abnegation of his responsibility to uphold the family honour: "'You degenerate remnant of an honorable line! I'm thoroughly ashamed of you, Tom!'"[24] Wilson's loyalty to the practice of the duel is, of course, entirely consistent with his occupation.

Roxana is a member of the slave class and thus not only accepts the practices of the upper and middle classes but also exhibits loyalty to people, to her natural son and through this, to herself. As the narrator continually reminds us, however, Roxana is no ordinary slave; indeed, excepting the fact of her tainted genes and upbringing, she would, for all intents and purposes, be white, a member of the middle class if not an F.F.V.:

> Only one-sixteenth of her was black, and that sixteenth did not show. She was of majestic form and stature, her attitudes were imposing and statuesque, and her gestures and movements distinguished by a noble and stately grace. Her complexion was very fair, with the rosy glow of vigorous health in the cheeks, her face was full of character and expression, her eyes were brown and liquid, and she had a heavy suit of fine soft hair which was also brown . . . . Her face was shapely, intelligent, and comely--even beautiful.25

In contrast to Rowena, whom the narrator quickly dismisses as "nineteen, romantic, amiable, and very pretty, but

otherwise of no consequence," Roxana is a multi-dimensional and dynamic character.[26] In contrast to Mrs. Percy Driscoll and her confidantes in the Cult of True Womanhood, Roxana is a survivor:

> On the 1st of February, 1830, two boy babes were born in [Percy Driscoll's] house; one to him, the other to one of his slave girls, Roxana by name. Roxana was twenty years old. She was up and around the same day, with her hands full, for she was tending both babies.
>
> Mrs. Percy Driscoll died within the week. Roxy remained in charge of the children.[27]

Mrs. Driscoll's inability to survive even the birth of her child stands in sharp contrast to Roxana's required ability to deliver her baby and resume work almost immediately.

Unfortunately, Roxana is loyal to the practice of miscegenation. Despite the effect that practice has had on her upbringing and social situation, Roxana, the "imitation white," is inordinately proud of her miscegenational descent.[28] As she emphatically declares to Tom,

> "My great-great-great-gran'father en yo' great-great-great-great-gran'father was Ole Cap'n John Smith, de highest blood dat Ole Virginny ever turned out, en his great-great-gran'mother or somers along back dah, was Pocahontas de Injun queen, en her husbun' was a nigger king outen Africa."[29]

Roxana's pride naturally extends to Tom's ancestry, as evidenced by her revelation of his natural father:

> "You ain't got no 'casion to be shame' o' yo' father, I kin tell you. He wuz the highest quality in dis whole town--ole Virginny stock.

> Fust famblies, he wuz. Jes as good stock as de Driscolls en de Howards, de bes' day dey ever seed. . . . Does you 'member Cunnel Cecil Burleigh Essex, dat died de same year yo' young Marse Tom Driscoll's pappy died, en all de Masons en Odd Fellers en Churches turned out en give him de bigges' funeral dis town ever seed? Dat's de man."[30]

Such loyalty to the practice of miscegenation is, of course, entirely consistent with Roxana's character. It is ironic, however, that Roxana, who is a servant, though not a cook, is shown by Twain as "cooking" facts to suit her prejudices and ego as a mother. Otherwise known as rationalization, this mental process is integral to any fully realized character.

Roxana, however, has no need to rationalize her loyalty to the other upper-class practice, the duel. Her unqualified approval of this practice is amply evidenced by her contempt for Chambers' refusal to fight Luigi: "'En you refuse' to fight a man dat kicked you, 'stid o' jumpin' at de chance! En you ain't got no mo' feelin' den to come en tell me, dat fetched sich a po' low-down ornery rabbit into de worl'? Pah! it makes me sick!'"[31] Roxana's own secondary involvement in the duel not only emphasizes her loyalty to that practice but also distinguishes her once again from women of the middle and upper classes.[32] Like Laura Hawkins, Roxana possesses some essentially androgynous traits, traits that further enhance the realism of her character.

Given Roxana's loyalty to the practices of the upper

class, her loyalty to the middle-class practice of the American Dream comes as no surprise. Like David Wilson, Roxana believes firmly that diligence and persistence will be rewarded, in Roxana's case, through financial independence: "She said in the start that she had 'put shoes on one bar'footed nigger to trample on her with,' and that one mistake like that was enough; she would be independent of the human race thenceforth forevermore if hard work and economy could accomplish it."[33] In the end, however, Roxana's financial aspirations give way to the demands of motherhood.

Roxana's eight-year adventure as a chambermaid aboard the Grand Mogul and Vicksburg packet, which provides the inspiration for her thoughts on the American Dream, also provides her with ample anecdotes with which to impress her fellow slaves. Roxana's first stop upon her return to Dawson's Landing is Judge Driscoll's kitchen:

> She was received there in great form and with vast enthusiasm. Her wonderful travels, and the strange countries she had seen and the adventures she had had, made her a marvel, and a heroine of romance. The negroes hung enchanted upon the great story of her experiences, interrupting her all along with eager questions, with laughter, exclamations of delight and expressions of applause; and she was obliged to confess to herself that if there was anything better in this world than steamboating, it was the glory to be got by telling about it.[34]

Roxana's delight in relating her anecdotes, however, is not based on altruism; rather, like most individuals, Roxana

revels in the attention that this activity creates. The admiration and perhaps, envy of her fellow slaves heightens her sense of self-worth and excites her ego. Roxana, because of her "imitation whiteness," prefers to consider herself a caste above the common slave. As she observes to Jasper, "'I got somep'n' better to do den 'sociat'n' wid niggers as black as you is'."[35] This arrogance, in fact, further enhances the realism of Roxana's character.

Throughout the novel, however, the realism of Roxana's character is evinced most clearly through her loyalty to her son and master, Tom. That Tom's often vicious actions frequently jeopardize the strength of that loyalty further enhances the realism of Roxana's character. Initially, however, Roxana's loyalty to Tom appears counterfeit, a learned obeisance:

> [B]y the fiction created by herself, he was become her master; the necessity of recognizing this relation outwardly and of perfecting herself in the forms required to express the recognition, had moved her to such diligence and faithfulness in practising these forms that this exercise soon concreted itself into habit; it became automatic and unconscious; then a natural result followed; deceptions intended solely for others gradually grew practically into self-deceptions as well; the mock reverence became real reverence; the mock obsequiousness real obsequiousness, the mock homage real homage. . . . He was her darling, her master, and her deity all in one, and in her worship of him she forgot who she was and what he had been.36

Consciously, Roxana denies her maternal loyalty: "She saw herself sink from the sublime height of motherhood to the

somber depths of unmodified slavery. The abyss of separation between her and her boy was complete."[37] Yet, that Roxana refers to Tom as "her boy" and later as "her nigger son," and inwardly fumes over her subordination to him reveals both the vitality and slavery of motherhood.[38]

Roxana's ability to deceive herself in the name of maternal loyalty is demonstrated in other ways as well. Again and again, Roxana manages to forgive Tom his treachery by selectively remembering only those acts which would evidence his goodness. On her return from New Orleans, for example, Roxana muses:

> Time had worn away her bitterness against her son, and she was able to think of him with serenity. She put the vile side of him out of her mind, and dwelt only on recollections of his occasional acts of kindness to her. She gilded and otherwise decorated these, and made them very pleasant to comtemplate.39

Roxana, however, is in for a surprise: Tom curtly rejects her upon her return. Her tumultuous emotions following the rebuff range from disappointment, to humiliation, to hurt, and finally to rage:

> [T]he fires of her old wrongs flamed up in her breast and began to burn fiercely. She raised her head slowly, till it was well up, and at the same time her great frame unconsciously assumed an erect and masterful attitude, with all the majesty and grace of her vanished youth in it.40

The roles are reversed; Roxana has become the master, and Tom, as though preternaturally aware of his real parentage,

the cowering slave.

Once Tom is informed of his genetic heritage, he never recovers fully his previous arrogance. His deference to Roxana, however, in no way diminishes her maternal loyalty but rather, strengthens that loyalty. Although both Roxana and Tom have become slaves to each other, Roxana rightfully assumes the role of protector:

> When Roxana arrived, she found her son in such despair and misery that her heart was touched and her motherhood rose up strong in her. He was ruined past hope, now; his destruction would be immediate and sure, and he would be an outcast and friendless. That was reason enough for a mother to love a child; so she loved him, and told him so.41

Even after Tom commits the seemingly unpardonable sin of selling his mother down the river, Roxana finds it in herself to forgive him briefly: "She was pleased--pleased and grateful; for did not that expression show that her child was capable of grieving for his mother's wrongs and of feeling resentment toward her persecutors?--a thing which she had been doubting."[42] Roxana's thoughts of forgiveness, however, soon turn to plans, plans designed to save her own skin as much as her son's. Thus, Roxana's loyalty to herself, initially predicated on her maternal loyalty, takes precedence over that loyalty in the end. This is, of course, entirely consistent with the redistribution of power that occurs between her and Tom.

Roxana's loyalty to individuals, to herself and her

son, together with the varying range of her emotions, effects the realism of her character. Like Joan and Laura, Roxana is adept in the art of survival and like them too, she maintains an immutable loyalty toward the institution of the family, a loyalty obviously shared and deeply admired by Twain.

Joan, Laura, and Roxana, Mark Twain's three major female characters, are unique creations. Although Twain might have followed literary precedent and the dictates of his "conscience" in fashioning his minor female characters, he followed a free rein in portraying his three, most memorable heroines. Nevertheless, each woman is an appropriate reflection of the nineteenth-century American cultural milieu. Each possesses that independence and vision that would culminate in 1920 in universal suffrage. Simultaneously, each displays that familial loyalty so intrinsic to the Victorian era and its ethos. Through Joan, Laura, and Roxana, leading ladies in the truest sense of that word, Twain left a progressive record of the women of his age, their tribulations and their triumphs, a record inevitably more accurate than history because it is so magnificently individualized.

Endnotes

[1]Leslie Fiedler, Love and Death in the American Novel, rev. ed. (New York: Stein and Day, 1966), p. 404; Bernard DeVoto, Mark Twain's America (Boston: Little, Brown, 1935), p. 293.

[2]Henry Nash Smith, Mark Twain: The Development of a Writer (Cambridge: Belknap, 1962), p. 179.

[3]Mary Ellen Goad, "The Image and the Woman in the Life and Writings of Mark Twain," Emporia State Research Studies, 19, No. 3 (Mar. 1971), 65.

[4]Judith R. Berzon, Neither White nor Black: The Mulatto Character in American Fiction (New York: New York University Press, 1978), p. 41.

[5]Rolande Ballorain, "Mark Twain's Capers: A Chameleon in King Carnival's Court," in American Novelists Revisited: Essays in Feminist Criticism, ed. Fritz Fleischmann (Boston: G.K. Hall, 1982), p. 151.

[6]Mark Twain, "Woman--The Pride of Any Profession and the Jewel of Ours," in Mark Twain Speaking, ed. Paul Fatout (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1976), p. 20.

[7]Twain, "Woman," p. 24.

[8]Leslie Fielder, "Come Back to the Raft Ag'in, Huck Honey!" Partisan Review, 15, Part I (1948), 665.

[9]Mark Twain, "Captain Montgomery," in The Washoe Giant in San Francisco, ed. Franklin Walker (San Francisco: George Fields, 1938), p. 105.

[10]Smith, p. 9.

[11]Trygve Thoreson, "'Virtuous According to Their Lights': Women in Mark Twain's Early Work," Mark Twain Journal, 21, No. 4 (Fall 1983), 54.

[12]Quoted in Philip Foner, "A True Story," in Critical Approaches to Mark Twain's Short Stories, ed. Elizabeth McMahan (Port Washington: Kennikat, 1981), p. 38.

[13]William Gibson, "The Artistry of 'A True Story'." in Critical Approaches to Mark Twain's Short Stories, ed. Elizabeth McMahan (Port Washington: Kennikat, 1981), p. 42.

[14]Quoted in Gerald J. Fenger, "Telling It Like It Was,"

in Critical Approaches to Mark Twain's Short Stories, ed. Elizabeth McMahan (Port Washington: Kennikat, 1981), p. 41.

[15]Mark Twain, "A True Story: Repeated Word for Word as I Heard It," in Sketches New and Old, Vol. 7 of The Writings of Mark Twain, ed. Albert Bigelow Paine (New York: Gabriel Wells, 1922), p. 240.

[16]Twain, "A True Story," p. 246.

[17]Twain, "A True Story," pp. 242-43.

[18]Mark Twain, Pudd'nhead Wilson, in his Pudd'nhead Wilson and Those Extraordinary Twins, Vol. 16 of The Writings of Mark Twain, ed. Albert Bigelow Paine (New York: Gabriel Wells, 1923), p. 1.

[19]Twain, Pudd'nhead Wilson, p. 105.

[20]Twain, Pudd'nhead Wilson, p. 102.

[21]Twain, Pudd'nhead Wilson, p. 5.

[22]Twain, Pudd'nhead Wilson, pp. 8-9.

[23]Twain, Pudd'nhead Wilson, pp. 110-11.

[24]Twain, Pudd'nhead Wilson, p. 111.

[25]Twain, Pudd'nhead Wilson, pp. 11-12.

[26]Twain, Pudd'nhead Wilson, p. 40.

[27]Twain, Pudd'nhead Wilson, p. 5.

[28]Twain, Pudd'nhead Wilson, p. 60.

[29]Twain, Pudd'nhead Wilson, p. 124.

[30]Twain, Pudd'nhead Wilson, p. 75.

[31]Twain, Pudd'nhead Wilson, p. 123.

[32]Twain, Pudd'nhead Wilson, pp. 125-26.

[33]Twain, Pudd'nhead Wilson, p. 57.

[34]Twain, Pudd'nhead Wilson, pp. 58-59.

[35]Twain, Pudd'nhead Wilson, p. 10.

[36]Twain, Pudd'nhead Wilson, pp. 28-29.

[37]Twain, Pudd'nhead Wilson, p. 33.

[38]Twain, Pudd'nhead Wilson, pp. 33-34.

[39]Twain, Pudd'nhead Wilson, p. 57.

[40]Twain, Pudd'nhead Wilson, p. 64.

[41]Twain, Pudd'nhead Wilson, p. 142.

[42]Twain, Pudd'nhead Wilson, p. 153.

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