

THE VICTIMIZATION OF WOMEN IN TWAIN'S WORKS:
A STUDY OF THEME AND CHARACTERIZATION

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Norma Pearce
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Charles E. Walton

Approved for the Major Department

John E. Peterson

Approved for the Graduate Council

327691²

PREFACE

The following study deals with Mark Twain's mode of characterizing women. The purpose of this thesis is to point out that Twain adhered to the theme of victimization when he created a female character and to suggest that this utilization is consistent with Twain's constant battle against social injustice.

I gratefully acknowledge appreciation to my thesis director, Dr. Gary W. Bleeker, for his guidance and helpful suggestions, and I also wish to thank my second reader, Dr. Green D. Wyrick. Finally, I thank Dick, Nancy and Bryan for making it all worth-while.

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N. P.

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CHAPTER I

THE THEME OF VICTIMIZATION AS REFLECTED IN TWAIN'S WOMEN CHARACTERS

Throughout history, women have seldom been allowed to develop to their fullest potential. Traditionally, the woman who disintegrated into "genteel nothingness" was more readily accepted by society than the individualist.¹ Even Twain seemed to prefer his women on a pedestal. Certainly he professed to have a deep respect for women, and he commented that when he met a disrespectful man, "he always felt that he had learned nothing about women but a great deal about the man."² In fact, one reason he disliked his contemporary, Bret Harte, was because of Harte's cruel treatment of his wife.³ Yet, included in Twain's respect for women was an awareness of the human need to discover one's identity and to assume a meaningful role in society's scheme of things. This awareness is evident

¹ Betty Friedan, The Feminine Mystique, p. 94.

² Edward Wagenknecht, Mark Twain: The Man and His Work, p. 126.

³ Wagenknecht, p. 126.

in his then unpopular endorsement of women's suffrage. In a speech made at Hartford's Monday Evening Club, he comments in his own humorous fashion:

Our marvelous latter-day statesmanship has invented universal suffrage. That is the finest feather in our cap. All that we require of a voter is that he shall be forked, wear pantaloons instead of petticoats, and bear a more or less humorous resemblance to the reported image of God. He need not know anything whatever; he may be wholly useless and a cumberer of the earth; he may even be known to be a consummate scoundrel. No matter. While he can steer clear of the penitentiary his vote is as weighty as the vote of a president, a bishop, a college professor, a merchant prince. We brag of our universal, unrestricted suffrage; but we are shams after all, for we restrict when we come to the women.⁴

Then, he adds in a more serious vein:

I should like to see the time come when women shall help make the laws. If women had the ballot today, the state of things in this town would not exist.⁵

Twain's social consciousness could not ignore this and other glaring victimizations of women in real life. And in light of Twain's propensity for shattering stereotyped attitudes when he found that actual experience negated those attitudes,⁶ it is reasonable to assume that he, either consciously or subconsciously, consistently cast women as

⁴ Alfred Bigelow Paine, Mark Twain: A Biography, pp. 541-2.

⁵ Wagenknecht, p. 126.

⁶ Henry Nash Smith, The Development of a Writer, p. viii.

victims in his fiction in order to call attention to another of life's inequities.

W. J. Harvey agrees that this is one of the major purposes of literature. In his study of literary characters entitled "The Human Context," he suggests that fiction is made up primarily of a "web of relationships" in which characters become human crossroads whose destinies cross or mesh with each other rather than develop along straight lines of individuality.⁷ Various lives merge, and Harvey views the final result as a general comment on the world.⁸ Therefore, by depicting women as victims, Twain comments on conditions in a world which will allow such an outrage to exist.

A study of Twain's women reveals that six of his most memorable female characters--Aunt Polly in The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, Sandy in A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court, Roxy in Pudd'nhead Wilson, Mary Richards in "The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg," Marget in The Mysterious Stranger, and Joan in The Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc--have this one fundamental characteristic in common. All are drawn to dimensions which easily categorize them as victims, and each woman's

⁷ W. J. Harvey, "The Human Context," in The Theory of the Novel, p. 248.

⁸ Harvey, p. 248.

victimization is possible because of her innocence and misdirected sincerity. Moreover, her victimization is accomplished in one or two ways--by a male protagonist who takes advantage of that innocence and sincerity, or by the dictates of a contemporary society which adheres to its own strict and stilted version of right and wrong. Aunt Polly, for example, suffers through the heartache of raising a boy who is bent on defying her authority. Roxy suffers as a result of cruelty from her own son. Sandy must endure the whims, condescension, and disdain of Hank Morgan. Mary Richards is disgraced and destroyed by a stranger motivated by revenge. Marget must contend with a force she does not understand. Joan of Arc's idealism is no match for the evil Bishop Cauchon. But more significantly, each of the preceding women is a victim of the society in which she must live, without any hope of changing it.

Once this underlying theme of victimization is recognized, it becomes even easier to answer criticism that Mark Twain's female characters lack credibility. Some readers may exempt Roxy in Pudd'nhead Wilson, in whom they discover some fire and substance; others may exempt Joan of Arc because she is, after all, based on one of the most amazing females of all time. But even these two women are not universally accepted as credible characters. However, in light of each woman's victimization, the issue becomes not, "Is

a particular woman character credible?" but, "Is she credible when placed in the specific circumstances Twain has chosen to advance his story?" By this criterion, Twain's women are credible, indeed.

CHAPTER II

VICTIMIZATION BY MALE PROTAGONIST

Victimization is basic to Twain's characterizations of women. However, Twain does exhibit versatility in his use of victimization; a comparison of Aunt Polly, Sandy, Roxy, Mary Richards, and Marget reveals that each female is victimized by a different type of male--ranging from nephew to master to son to stranger to the Devil himself--in order to illustrate one or more distinct injustices that are completely different from the others. Furthermore, in the particular set of circumstances surrounding each victim, she is an entirely credible character.

To Tom Sawyer, Aunt Polly represents restriction and authority. Her function in the story is to thwart the imaginative boy so that his exploits will take on an even more romantic flavor. Yet Aunt Polly is destined to lose in any confrontation with Tom because she also serves as convenient foil and available victim. Because she loves him, and because she is inexperienced at handling children, Aunt Polly's victimization is inevitable and easily accomplished. Thus the clash between Aunt Polly's authoritarian

personality and Tom's rebellious nature is not surprising, but readily acceptable.

Immediately in The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, the reader is introduced to Tom's Aunt Polly through her monologue in which she berates herself for letting Tom get away,

Hang the boy, can't I never learn anything? Ain't he played me tricks enough like that for me to be looking out for him by this time? But old fools is the biggest fools there is. Can't learn an old dog new tricks, as the saying is. But my goodness, he never plays them alike, two days, and how is a body to know what's coming? He 'pears to know just how long he can torment me before I get my dander up, and he knows if he can make out to put me off for a minute or make me laugh, it's all down again and I can't hit him a lick. I ain't doing my duty by that boy, and that's the Lord's truth, goodness knows. Spare the rod and spile the child, as the Good Book says. I'm a-laying up sin and suffering for us both, I know. He's full of the Old Scratch, but laws-a-me! he's my own dead sister's boy, poor thing, and I ain't got the heart to lash him, somehow. Every time I let him off, my conscience does hurt me so, and every time I hit him my old heart most breaks. Well-a-well, man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble, as the Scripture says, and I reckon it's so. He'll play hookey this evening, and I'll just be obleeged to make him work, tomorrow, to punish him. It's mighty hard to make him work Saturdays, when all the boys is having holiday, but he hates work more than he hates anything else, and I've got to do some of my duty by him, or I'll be the ruination of the child.⁹

Through this monologue, background is supplied, the situation introduced, and the relationship between Aunt

⁹ Mark Twain, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer from The Complete Works of Mark Twain, American Artists Edition, I, 2-3. Subsequent references cited by page numbers within the text.

Polly as victim and Tom as tormentor is firmly established. This becomes a plausible relationship because of the presence of two vital ingredients--Aunt Polly's confusion about her role as guardian, and her willingness to be victimized.

It is evident from the first that Tom does not share Aunt Polly's confusion. On the contrary, Tom has Aunt Polly pegged correctly as a soft-hearted potential victim, and he is not the least bit afraid of her. In the second chapter, Tom explains to the small colored boy Jim, "She never licks anybody--whacks 'em over the head with her thimble--and who cares for that, I'd like to know. She talks awful, but talk don't hurt--anyways it don't if she don't cry" (13). On the other hand, Aunt Polly struggles through the entire book in a state of confusion as she wonders what ails Tom and laments that ". . . there ain't any making of that boy out" (283).

Since Aunt Polly is constantly at cross purposes with herself, it is comparatively easy for Tom to find the sensitive areas of confusion and then concentrate on these. Unfortunately, this particular boy would be a handful for an experienced mother of twelve. For an inexperienced spinster who lacks a workable knowledge of child psychology, as well as any practical experience in handling children, Tom represents disaster. Aunt Polly realizes that she needs guidance so she turns to the Bible and relies

heavily on scriptures and platitudes. However, after punishment is administered, Aunt Polly feels guilty and heart-broken, so the platitudes are neither reassuring nor practical.

One particularly sensitive area is Aunt Polly's devotion to "duty." After all, Tom is her dead sister's child and she feels a dutiful responsibility toward this orphan entrusted to her care. But she is not at all sure just what form this duty should take, and in at least one instance Tom turns her confusion to his own advantage. After dutifully dosing Tom with tonic, Aunt Polly finds she must reprimand him for giving that same tonic to the cat, causing the cat to behave astonishingly fitful. However, Tom explains he was doing it because the cat did not have an aunt to look after it and give it medicine. Of course this has the desired effect of making Aunt Polly feel ". . . a sudden pang of remorse. This was putting the thing in a new light; what was cruelty to a cat might be cruelty to a boy, too. She began to soften; she felt 'sorry' (108). In this way, Tom capitalizes on Aunt Polly's confusion and guilt.

Aunt Polly is also afraid to give an outright compliment for fear Tom will take advantage of her. After Tom presents a whitewashed fence to her, she says, "There's no getting around it. You can work when you're a mind to,

Tom." But then she dilutes the compliment by adding, "But it's powerful seldom you're a mind to" (21). Tom is not upset by this addition, however, because he understands her confused reasoning and knows how to twist it to suit himself. Thomas Blues, in his study, Mark Twain and the Community, suggests that Tom desires complete submission of the whole town of St. Petersburg and that "Aunt Polly is the most important link in his chain of victims."¹⁰ By controlling poor, confused Aunt Polly, Tom may be able to manipulate the whole confused village of St. Petersburg.

In another episode, Aunt Polly wrongfully accuses Tom of breaking the sugar bowl; when she realizes she has made a mistake,

. . . her conscience reproached her, and she yearned to say something kind and loving; but she judged that this would be construed into a confession that she had been in the wrong, and discipline forbade that. So she kept silence, and went about her affairs with a troubled heart. (25)

This, too, does not disturb Tom. Instead, he relishes a chance to dramatize the situation:

Tom sulked in a corner and exalted his woes. He knew that in her heart his aunt was on her knees to him, and he was morosely gratified by the consciousness of it. He would hang out no signals; he would take notice of none. He knew that a yearning glance fell upon him, now and

¹⁰ Thomas Blues, Mark Twain and the Community, p. 5.

then, through a film of tears, but he refused recognition of it. (25)

Coupled with Aunt Polly's confusion over her responsibility is the fact that she is a willing victim. This willingness is pinpointed by William Dean Howells in his early review of The Adventures of Tom Sawyer when he states that " . . . he [Tom Sawyer] makes himself a beloved burden to the poor, tender-hearted old aunt who brings him up with his orphan brother and sister, and struggles vainly with his manifold sins, actual and imaginary."¹¹ If the burden is "beloved," then the victim is willing. She wants to believe Tom, and she tries to do so. The first evidence of this fact occurs when Tom insists that the boys had pumped water on their heads to cool off instead of playing hookey to go swimming. Since Aunt Polly really wants to believe his story, " . . . she was half sorry her sagacity had miscarried, and half glad that Tom had stumbled into obedient conduct for once" (5).

Aunt Polly's willingness to believe is evident again when she goes out to check on the whitewashing of the fence after Tom has told her that he has finished. "She would have been content to find twenty per cent of Tom's statement true" (20). And still later, in the Jackson Island

¹¹ William Dean Howells, "Review of The Adventures of Tom Sawyer," The Atlantic Monthly, XXXVI (May, 1876), 621-622, quoted in Guy A. Cardwell, Discussions of Mark Twain, 4.

episode when Tom and his friends are missing, Aunt Polly defends Tom by insisting,

. . . he warn't bad, so to say--only mischeevous. Only just giddy and harum-scarum, you know. He warn't any more responsible than a colt. He never meant any harm, and he was the best-hearted boy that ever was. (130)

Neither will she allow Tom's brother to criticize. She admonishes Sid, "Not a word against my Tom, now that he's gone" (130). And she confesses to Mrs. Harper, "I don't know how to give him up! He was such a comfort to me, although he tormented my old heart out of me, 'most" (131).

After the boys have returned from Jackson's Island, Aunt Polly continues to believe in Tom. She decides that he would have alleviated her suffering if he could have by hinting of their running off. "Tom, I hoped you loved me that much," she says. "It would have been something if you'd cared enough to think of it, even if you didn't do it" (155). When Tom suggests that he did think of it in a dream, she eagerly grasps at this hope; she reprimands Sid for doubting Tom: "Shut up, Sid! A body does just the same in a dream as he'd do if he was awake!" (158).

Later, a whole chapter, "The Cruelty of 'I Didn't Think'" (166-169), is devoted to Aunt Polly's pathetic attempt to understand and forgive Tom's insensitivity. At least she keeps trying. After she finds out that Tom witnessed their anguish and suffering after all on the night

he returned, yet still chose not to comfort them, she says to Tom,

Oh, child, you never think. You never think of anything but your own selfishness. You could think to come all the way over here from Jackson's Island in the night to laugh at our troubles, and you could think to fool me with a lie about a dream; but you couldn't ever think to pity us and save us from sorrow. (166-167)

Nevertheless, Tom is able to convince Aunt Polly that he intended to leave a message on a piece of bark, but changed his mind when he heard everyone planning the funerals. He tells her about kissing her while she slept and then creeping back to the island. So after he leaves for school, Aunt Polly rushes to the closet to check his jacket pocket for the piece of bark. Yet she stops and says to herself, "No, I don't dare. Poor boy, I reckon he's lied about it--but it's a blessed, blessed lie . . ." (168). She is rationalizing that lies can be good or bad, and she forgives Tom's lie because it is what she wants to believe. Finally she does muster courage to check the jacket pocket, and " . . . a moment later she was reading Tom's piece of bark through flowing tears and saying, 'I could forgive the boy now if he'd committed a million sins!'" (169). Aunt Polly's faith in Tom is so rarely vindicated that this is a priceless moment for her. Thus she is willingly victimized.

Thomas Blues suggests that there is a pattern of victimization in Tom Sawyer that begins with the whitewashing scene and is repeated " . . . on a more serious scale in the flight to Jackson Island and back."¹² The fact that Tom can so easily persuade Aunt Polly of the virtuosity of his coming back to tell of their running away may be a reflection of the town which is also confused about virtue. Aunt Polly and the townspeople allow the triumphant return of the boys to completely obscure the rascality of their running away in the first place. In allowing such an interpretation, Aunt Polly and the townspeople become willing victims and also the objects of Twain's satire.

The primary reason Aunt Polly is so easily victimized is that she is by nature an unsophisticated, trusting soul. Aside from the action which attests to this fact, Twain's narrator refers to her on two occasions as "simple-hearted," which implies a naïveté. The first time occurs when the family is at the supper table and Aunt Polly tries to find out if Tom played hookey that afternoon and went swimming. She begins by asking him questions

. . . that were full of guile, and very deep--
for she wanted to trap him into damaging revelations. Like many other simple-hearted souls, it was her pet vanity to believe she was endowed with a talent for dark and mysterious diplomacy. (4)

¹² Blues, p. 5.

The second time occurs when the narrator suggests that Aunt Polly is easily coerced into buying every quack remedy on the market because " . . . she was as simple-hearted and honest as the day was long, and so she was an easy victim" (104). Time after time, then, the reader feels that he is watching a game in progress as Aunt Polly reaches a conclusion, renders a decision, or issues an ultimatum, only to have Tom figure an escape route and trick her into letting him do exactly what he had in mind doing all along. Only twice does she properly anticipate trouble. One instance occurs when she warns Jim not to let Tom talk him into whitewashing the fence (13-14), and the other occurs later in church when she sees that Tom is " . . . placed next the aisle in order that he might be as far away from the open window and the seductive outside summer scenes as possible" (43). But even in these instances Tom eventually outwits her. Aunt Polly is the perfect foil for this embryo con artist and no match for his strategy.

Throughout Tom Sawyer, there is evidence that Aunt Polly really loves Tom a great deal more than mere "duty" might dictate. This love, along with her naïveté, contributes to her willing victimization. On the night Tom witnesses the scene of anguish while the boys wait for him on Jackson's Island, he hears Aunt Polly lament about cracking him on the head with a thimble when he gave tonic to the

cat,

" . . . poor boy, poor dead boy. But he's out of all his troubles now. And the last words I ever heard him say was to reproach--" But this memory was too much for the old lady, and she broke entirely down Mrs. Harper gave a sobbing good night and turned to go. Then with a mutual impulse the two bereaved women flung themselves into each other's arms and had a good, consoling cry, and then parted Aunt Polly knelt down and prayed for Tom so touchingly, so appealingly, and with such measureless love in her words and her old trembling voice, that he was weltering in tears again long before she was through. . . . But at last she was still, only moaning a little in her sleep. (132-133)

This is not the reaction of a woman dedicated to duty alone, but of a woman who feels a genuine, deep affection for a child. Furthermore, Tom knows this, for after the boys return,

Tom got more cuffs and kisses that day--according to Aunt Polly's varying moods--than he had earned before in a year; and he hardly knew which expressed the most gratefulness to God and affection for himself. (153)

Later, during the cave episode, when Aunt Polly discovers that Tom did not stay with friends after the picnic, ". . . a marked anxiety came into Aunt Polly's face and she fell to crying and wringing her hands" (247). When the children are suspected lost in the cave, "Mrs. Thatcher was almost crazed; and Aunt Polly, also" (248). Days later, "Aunt Polly dropped into a settled melancholy, and her gray hair had grown almost white" (263). Then when the children are found, "Aunt Polly's happiness was complete,

and Mrs. Thatcher's nearly so" (264). This action implies that Tom's welfare is the primary source of joy in Aunt Polly's life. Howells concludes: "Tom's aunt is excellent, with her kind heart's sorrow and secret pride in Tom."¹³ Certainly, any woman who feels such devotion for a child would willingly submit to victimization. Therefore, Aunt Polly's characterization as victim and Tom's characterization as victimizer are entirely credible.

Unlike Aunt Polly, who is introduced in the first chapter of *Tom Sawyer*, Sandy is not introduced in *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* until chapter XI. "I hight the Demoiselle Alisande la Carteloise, an it please you,"¹⁴ the newly arrived young lady explains to the knights. Hank Morgan promptly dubs her "Sandy" because it is easier to say and more in keeping with his nineteenth century training.

When Sandy tells her tale about being held captive by three monstrous brothers along with her mistress and forty-four other young girls, "most of whom are princesses" (82), the reader recognizes another of Twain's victimized women

¹³ Cardwell, p. 5.

¹⁴ Mark Twain, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* from *The Complete Works of Mark Twain*, American Artists Edition, V, 84. Subsequent references cited by page numbers within the text.

characters. Like other noble women of her time, Sandy is blatantly victimized by the institution of chivalry in which a brave knight saves a "damsel in distress" from the traditional monster and thereby becomes her master.

Since Hank Morgan is assigned by King Arthur to rescue the other princesses and to take Sandy along for a guide, Hank becomes Sandy's current knight and master. Unfortunately, Hank Morgan has not been sufficiently indoctrinated in the chivalric tradition and his heart is not in this enterprise. Instead, Hank subjects Sandy to an additional victimization through his disdainfully condescending and patronizing attitude. While this attitude may be more subtle than outright physical abuse, and possibly harder to detect, the resulting victimization is nevertheless real to the victim. This fact is evidenced by the resentment which twentieth century women feel for male chauvinism and which contemporary Negroes feel for the white man's "protective" patronization of the black man. Therefore, Sandy becomes a double victim--first, of the obvious chivalric tradition, and second, of Hank Morgan's contemptuous patronization.

Hank's attitude is not at all hard to detect. His first description of Sandy pictures her as "a comely enough creature, and soft and modest, but, if signs went for anything, she didn't know as much as a lady's watch" (83).

Thus he reveals a feeling of superiority which, in his mind, justifies patronization. Such patronization is evident in Hank's general attitude toward all sixth-century citizens but is emphasized most forcefully in this relationship between male victimizer and female victim. However, there is a significant difference between the male-female relationships in Tom Sawyer or Pudd'nhead Wilson and in Connecticut Yankee because in Connecticut Yankee Twain manipulates the plot to allow Hank, the victimizer, to become gradually a victim of his own developing love and admiration for the innocent Sandy.

Sandy's extreme innocence is revealed in her initial encounter with Hank Morgan, and she retains this innocence throughout the book. When Hank asks if she has proof that she is telling the truth, Sandy replies, "Of a surety, no; and wherefore should I? Have I not a tongue, and cannot I say all that myself?" (84). This girl is completely oblivious to lying, and when Hank insists, "But your saying it, you know, and somebody else's saying it, is different" (84), Sandy simply does not understand. Finally Hank explodes, ". . . why do you look so innocent and idiotic!" (85). This remark is the key to Hank's initial relationship with Sandy in which he equates innocence and idiocy and applies them to everything Sandy does and says. William Spengemann suggests that the conflict between

Hank Morgan and Sandy does indeed represent a conflict between civilization and innocence.¹⁵ Ultimately, however, Sandy does teach Hank patience as he slowly learns to appreciate her kindnesses. Still, he never completely discards his patronizing attitude toward her.

Possibly the biggest complaint that Hank Morgan has for Sandy is that she cannot give precise answers to anything. This irritation is evident as Hank reflects:

It may be that this girl had a fact in her somewhere, but I don't believe you could have sluiced it out with a hydraulic; nor got it with the earlier forms of blasting, even; it was a case for dynamite. Why, she was a perfect ass; and yet the king and his knights had listened to her as if she had been a leaf out of the gospel. (87)

Yet, Hank does not let this condescending attitude toward Sandy's "idiocy" stop him from using her as a servant. He starts giving her orders immediately, and within two hours after they leave on their mission, he has her fetching water from a nearby stream and pouring it down inside his armor to relieve the heat. Sandy has been so victimized by her unstinting devotion to chivalric tradition that she never questions Hank's right to expect obedience from her. She keeps his welfare foremost in her mind at all times and never allows her own desires to intrude.

Still, Sandy's kindnesses do not counteract the irritation Hank feels for her, for not only does Sandy give

¹⁵ William C. Spengemann, Mark Twain and the Backwoods Angel, p. 88.

vague answers to questions, she also talks incessantly. Hank loses patience with her chatter, and again his condescending attitude is evident:

You couldn't think where Sandy was. . . . she had a flow of talk that was as steady as a mill, and made your head sore like the drays and wagons in a city. . . . She could grind, and pump, and churn, and buzz by the week . . . and yet the result was just nothing but wind. (98)

Obviously, Hank feels superior to this innocent creature. However, for the first time, there is a hint that he may be mellowing because he reluctantly adds, "She was a perfect blatherskite . . . but just as good as she could be" (98).

On two later occasions, Sandy's chatter comes in handy, and Hank is forced to reconsider his criticism of her. On one occasion she convinces several attacking knights that they must surrender to Hank Morgan because he possesses supernatural powers and is titled "The Boss." Then Hank must admit, "How much better she managed that thing than I should have done it myself! She was a daisy" (115). And again, at King Arthur's sister's castle, Sandy saves Hank from being thrown into the dungeon by arguing with the guard; Hank again admits that Sandy is way ahead of him in her deft handling of the enemy. In both instances, Hank's comments indicate a gradual turning in the tide of victimization. In fact, Hank begins to recognize that there may be some worth to this girl, and he no longer

refers to her "idiocy." Furthermore, when they meet the damsel Maledisant and he compares Sandy's chatter to the "railings and insult" that Maledisant churns forth, he decides that Sandy is not so hard to take after all since "Sandy's music was of a kindlier sort" (131).

By the time that Hank and Sandy arrive at the castle to save Sandy's mistress and the forty-four maidens held captive, he is able to react compassionately to her delusion that the pigsty, pigs, and swineherds are an enchanted castle, maidens, and ogres. One critic suggests that Hank has begun to despise his own feeling of superiority.¹⁶ Certainly earlier in the story he would have denounced as nonsense Sandy's illusion that a spell of enchantment is responsible for the change. But now he simply says,

My land, the power of training! of influence!
of education! It can bring a body up to believe
anything. I had to put myself in Sandy's place
to realize that she was not a lunatic. Yes, and
put her in mine, to demonstrate how easy it is
to seem a lunatic to a person who has not been
taught as you have been taught. (177)

Hank Morgan is obviously speaking for Twain when he claims "that man responds only as he has been taught to respond, and that everyone sees with a prejudiced eye."¹⁷ This is

¹⁶ James D. Williams, "Revision and Intention in Mark Twain's A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court," American Literature, XXXVI (November, 1964), 295.

¹⁷ Lewis J. Budd, Mark Twain: Social Philosopher, p. 209.

a mellower Hank Morgan, and Sandy becomes a little less the victim.

Once the errand of saving the maidens is successfully ended, Hank announces that he is going home, and Sandy states that she will go with him, for that, too, is part of her fate as rescued damsel in distress. In her mind, she must continue to fulfill the role of servant to her master. So Hank must take her along, and since he has earlier toyed with the idea of losing her to another knight, the reader expects him to do so. Yet he does not, and since Hank Morgan is the kind of dynamic character who creates his own circumstances, the reader can accurately assume that Hank does not want to lose Sandy in spite of all his complaining about her chatter. In fact, after exploding over her inability to understand one of his lengthy explanations, he decides instead,

It was not fair to spring those nineteenth-century technicalities upon the untutored infant of the sixth and then rail at her because she couldn't get their drift I was gradually coming to have a mysterious and shuddery reverence for this girl . . . because it was borne in upon me that I was standing in the awful presence of the Mother of the German Language. (204)

This is a tremendous admission for the conceited Hank Morgan. Furthermore, this passage suggests that Sandy's victimization is coming to an end since Hank's patronizing attitude is turning to respect.

Hank learns to appreciate Sandy more and more, and ultimately they are married. Sandy even unselfishly names their daughter "Hello Central" because Hank called it out in his sleep and Sandy thinks it must be some lost love. This is a tremendous concession for any woman, and Hank Morgan cannot help but be impressed. He lovingly describes their relationship:

Ah, Sandy, what a right heart she had, how simple, and genuine, and good she was! She was a flawless wife and mother; and yet I had married her for no other particular reasons, except that by the customs of chivalry she was my property until some knight should win her from me in the field Now I didn't know I was drawing a prize, yet that was what I did draw. Within the twelvemonth I became her worshiper; and ours was the dearest and perfectest comradeship that ever was. (407)

Thus, Twain allows his ignorant victim to become the innocent victimizer of the brash, arrogant Hank Morgan. The reader has witnessed a complete about-face on Hank's part, from his calling Sandy "idiotic" and "a perfect ass" in the early chapters, to his admission of love when Hank says that he always wrote to Sandy every day when they were separated, and that now he "kept up the habit for love of it, and of her . . ." (429).

Throughout Connecticut Yankee, all of Sandy's responses rely on the chivalric tradition of the sixth century, and basic to the man-woman relationship of that era is the subjection of the female to the male in everything

except in the realm of romantic love. Here the female is allowed a noble conquest over her knight, and Twain allows his princess to win her knight as well. But Sandy is never abrupt, never complaining, so why should Hank not love her? His only complaint is her incessant chatter. Yet it is never malicious chatter, and Hank ultimately decides it is more comforting than irritating. Besides, Sandy gives him a child of his own and becomes a "flawless mother" to that beloved child. So this innocent, kind, and guileless creature, who begins as servant and victim, becomes instead the master.

Representing the opposite response to the same type of problem is Roxy in Pudd'nhead Wilson. Both she and Sandy are victims of a form of slavery. Sandy is completely subservient to Hank Morgan and the chivalric tradition of Sixth Century England while Roxy is the property of the Driscolls and is a victim of Nineteenth Century American slavery of blacks by whites. Both types of slavery are accepted forms of behavior in the eras Twain pictures. Yet each female meets her fate in a different way. Sandy is a passive individual who allows others to rule her and acquiesces to her fate completely without question while Roxy is an active individual who schemes unashamedly and acts boldly in an effort to control the fate of her son as well as herself.

It is interesting to note that Twain allows only Sandy to "win." Through her passive acceptance and devotion to Hank Morgan, she ultimately encourages his love for her, and her life seems full and happy as a result. Therefore, her victimization does not have tragic overtones. On the other hand, Twain permits Roxy to "lose" even though the narrator's sympathy is with her. None of Roxy's plans work out right for her, and one of the themes of Pudd'nhead Wilson seems to be that the individual cannot buck society and its institutions. In fact, Mark Twain is reputed to have been suspicious of that person who conflicts with community standards,¹⁸ so his characterization of Roxy should not be surprising. Thus, Roxy's story begins and ends with her hopelessly cast as victim, first as the tragic victim of slavery, and finally as the hapless victim of her own deceptions, which is a much more profound type of victimization.

Roxy's victimization as a slave is described in Chapter II:

From Roxy's manner of speech, a stranger would have expected her to be black, but she was not. 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

¹⁸ Blues, p. 21.

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 soft hair which was also brown . . . Her face was shapely, intelligent, and comely--even beautiful. She had an easy, independent carriage--when she was among her own cast--and a high and "sassy" way, withal; but of course she was meek and humble enough where white people were. To all intents and purposes Roxy was as white as anybody, but the one-sixteenth of her which was black outvoted the other fifteen parts and made her a Negro. She was a slave, and salable as such. Her child was thirty-one parts white, and he, too, was a slave, and by a fiction of law and custom a Negro.¹⁹

Here, then, is a fair-skinned, brown-eyed, brown-haired girl who looks white but is classified as a Negro because of the accident of her birth and by the way she talks. The reader cannot escape the irony as well as the tragedy inherent in such conditions.

However, Roxy does not view her life as tragic and unfair until the episode in which she and two other Negroes are accused of stealing, and Percy Driscoll threatens to sell them "down the river" if one of them does not admit guilt. At this point, Roxy suddenly realizes the same fate may stalk her precious baby the rest of his life and the thought is unbearable to her. This is a plausible reaction since most parents will accept deprivation and

¹⁹ Mark Twain, Pudd'nhead Wilson from The Complete Works of Mark Twain, American Artists Edition, III, 11-12. Subsequent references cited by page numbers within the text.

degradation for themselves, but they draw the line when it affects their children. So Roxy begins to weave a pattern of deceptions which ultimately entrap her as the primary victim.

The initial deception of switching the babies is a difficult one for Roxy as she flings herself on her bed and tosses and turns and tries to think it through. Then she remembers some remote Bible story her preacher had told in which a similar deception had occurred, so Roxy decides that, "'Tain't no sin--white folks has done it!" (22).

From then on, the reader witnesses the steady and inevitable entrapment of Roxy. Roxy herself is surprised at how easily she is able to accept the deception. Thomas Blues suggests that Roxy identifies herself more with the white community than with the black community, and for this reason she easily succumbs to her own illusions.²⁰ Certainly, she has no trouble transferring her reverent tongue and humble manner from the real Tom to her son, Chambers, the usurper, while at the same time, she transfers "her motherly curtness of speech and preemptoriness of manner to the unlucky heir of the ancient house of Driscoll" (23). In fact, during these early years in the lives of the babies, Roxy could have switched the babies

²⁰ Blues, p. 66.

back to their original stations at any time without detection, but she becomes so caught up in her plan that she is never tempted to do so. She deliberately tests the townspeople, especially David Wilson, and finally flaunts the babies and exhibits pride in her accomplishment.

But the babies inevitably grow up, and Roxy's plan begins to sour. The narrator informs the reader that Roxy, at least at first, has a great deal of common sense and ability. However, she is also a "doting fool of a mother" (28), and it is this characteristic which weakens her position and dictates her downfall.

Unfortunately, by the fiction which Roxy herself creates, Chambers slowly becomes the master of his mother. Before Roxy realizes fully what is happening, the little deceptions practiced originally for other people's benefit become habit, and then automatic and unconscious affectations, until they become self-deceptions as well.

The mock reverence became real reverence, the mock obsequiousness real obsequiousness, the mock homage real homage; the little counterfeit rift of separation between imitation slave and imitation master widened and widened, and became an abyss, and a very real one--and on one side of it stood Roxy, the dupe of her own deceptions, and on the other stood her child, no longer a usurper to her, but her accepted and recognized master. (29)

Thus the victimization of Roxy by her own son is finalized, but it happens so gradually that poor Roxy is not

entirely aware of the monster she has created until that monster turns on her.

By the time the boys are fifteen, Roxy is painfully aware of the chasm that exists between her son and herself, for Chambers makes it clear to his mother that he finds the caresses of a "nigger" repulsive, and he orders her to keep her distance from him.

She saw her darling gradually cease from being her son, she saw that detail perish utterly; all that was left was master--master, pure and simple, and it was not a gentle mastership, either. (33)

At last, Roxy realizes that she is " . . . merely his chattel now, his convenience, his dog, his cringing and helpless slave, the humble and unresisting victim of his capricious temper and vicious nature" (33). This is a tragic development for Roxy. She has rescued her child from the horrors of slavery only to find her own position jeopardized. Yet she must take responsibility for the consequences since it was her decision alone to switch the babies and her lack of discipline in dealing with the child which allowed him to emerge the heartless, spoiled creature that he is. Chambers even calls her names and strikes her on occasion. This prompts Roxy to scheme a vengeance in which she exposes him to the world as an impostor, but she stops when she realizes that no one would believe her story because she has made the boy too powerful. This

revelation emphasizes to Roxy how foolish she has been; and at this moment, she knows that she has become the victim of her own actions and deceptions.

However, Roxy wins a temporary reprieve from her fate as victim. On his deathbed, Judge Driscoll sets Roxy free and she decides to become a chambermaid on a boat. For eight years, until she is forty-three, Roxy leads a free and happy life on the steamboat. Then tragedy overtakes her again and she is stricken with rheumatism in her arms and must resign. But, since she has banked part of her money in a New Orleans bank, she assumes she will be an independent woman. Unfortunately, the bank has crashed and her savings are lost and Roxy is cast once more as a pauper. Furthermore, this time she is homeless as well. Thus Roxy's fate has travelled full circle, and she once more becomes the victim.

This stage of her victimization becomes even more profound, however, when Roxy discovers her son is hopelessly in debt from his foolish gambling. She cannot bear to see him so dejected. The motherly love she feels for him prompts her to offer herself to be sold once more into slavery in order to pay his creditors. This extreme action represents the pinnacle of motherly devotion and sacrifice. Yet,

. . . poor Roxy was entirely deceived; and easily, for she was not dreaming that her own son could be

guilty of treason to a mother who, in voluntarily going into slavery--slavery of any kind, mild or severe, or of any duration, brief or long--was making a sacrifice for him compared with which death would have been a poor and commonplace one. (145)

This time, the horrors of slavery which are thrust upon Roxy are much worse than what she experienced as property of the Driscolls, for her son sells her "down the river" where slaves are not treated as kindly as in Missouri. She becomes the complete victim--victimized physically by slavery, victimized spiritually and emotionally by the knowledge that her son is the heartless master of her fate, and victimized mentally by the knowledge that she must bear the responsibility for it all. Ultimately Roxy escapes her slavery, but in the final analysis, she has been too clever for her own good.

Her plans and dreams have wrought nothing but tragedy, for herself, for Chambers, and for the real Tom as well. Her precious son is sold "down the river" after all, the very fate Roxy hoped to avoid when she instigated her first deception. The real Tom is untrained and unable to function as a white man, yet no longer a part of the black community. She has destroyed everything she had lived for by identifying herself and her son with the white community.²¹ And the narrator's description of the defeated

²¹ Blues, p. 69.

Roxy in the Conclusion of Pudd'nhead Wilson is the absolute antithesis of the youthful Roxy the reader met earlier in Chapter II:

Roxy's heart was broken. The young fellow upon whom she had inflicted twenty-three years of slavery continued the false heir's pension of thirty-five dollars a month to her, but her hurts were too deep for money to heal; the spirit in her eye was quenched, her martial bearing departed with it, and the voice of her laughter ceased in the land. In her church and its affairs she found her only solace. (202)

This is the final pitiful picture of an unwilling victim who must resign herself to absolute defeat after trying desperately to be architect and engineer of her own fate.

Pudd'nhead Wilson has been called "a tragedy of circumstances"²² in which personal identity is a crucial issue.²³ And while there is disagreement over the identity, motivation, and characterization of David Wilson, there is little disagreement among critics as to the identity and credibility of Roxy. Her function in this tragedy is threefold. Primarily, she represents a victim of slavery and its accompanying hushed practice of miscegenation. In her role as slave, she is completely indoctrinated into the belief of white supremacy and she expects no personal rights at all. Second, she is victimized by the training,

²² Robert Wiggins, "Pudd'nhead Wilson: A Literary Caesarean Operation," College English, XXV (December, 1963), 182.

²³ Philip C. Kohn, "Mark Twain, Aristotle, and Pudd'nhead Wilson," Mark Twain Journal, XV (Summer, 1970), 2.

or lack of training, of her own child. As a mother, she is the voice of maternal lamentation as she attempts to protect her child, and Twain uses her to advance his pet contention that "training is everything." Third, she is the victim of her own deceptions. Because she exists on the illusion of white purity, she understandably becomes her own victim as well as the victim of her son and of society. In all three functions, she is a plausible character with sound motivations and logical responses; Twain acquits her of her crime on the basis of her ignorance, which he attributes to environment and harmless intent.²⁴

There is another facet of importance to the character of Roxy. She grew in stature from a minor character in Twain's original story about the Siamese twins to a major role in the finished version. This tends to emphasize the impact of her victimizations and to enhance her credibility.

In contrast to Roxy's victimization by her own flesh and blood, Twain chooses another method in two of his later works--"The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg" and The Mysterious Stranger--by employing cynical, detached characters who serve to point out man's weaknesses. In "The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg," this cynical character

²⁴ Carolyn Mann, "Innocence in Pudd'nhead Wilson," Mark Twain Journal, XIV (Winter 1968-1969), 19.

is the shadowy Mr. Stephenson, who vows to avenge some unnamed affront done him by a Hadleyburg citizen. His intention is to expose as hypocrites all of the smug citizens of Hadleyburg since they so self-righteously believe they are incorruptible. Yet Stephenson victimizes one of the couples, Mary and Edward Richards, more than any others in the story, even though there is no reason to believe either of them was the culprit who wronged the stranger. Once again, then, the major female--this time the only female character to be developed at all by the author--falls prey to the male protagonist.

Twain's biographer, Alfred Paine, considers "The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg" to be a classic and possibly the greatest of all short stories, outranking even Poe's "House of Usher," Harte's "The Luck of Roaring Camp," Hale's "The Man Without a Country," and Kipling's "The Man Who Would Be King."²⁵ Furthermore, Paine labels "Hadleyburg" a "terrible arraignment of human weakness" and a "scathing sermon on self-righteousness."²⁶

To illustrate such weaknesses and self-righteousness, Twain uses Mary Richards as an object of ridicule as he satirizes her double standards and hypocrisy. She knows

²⁵ Alfred Bigelow Paine, "Introduction" to "The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg," Stormfield Edition, p. x.

²⁶ Paine, p. x.

she is a hypocrite, and yet she allows her husband and herself to become hopelessly enmeshed in the travesty. Mary Richards is weak, and this weakness causes her downfall. Moreover, because she is weak and cannot help her husband out of their dilemma, she adds the guilt for his death to her own sense of inadequacy and succumbs to death herself. Perhaps, death even represents an easy way out. At any rate, because all of these facets of Mary's personality are psychologically possible, Mary Richards is a plausible character.

There is no particular reason the stranger chooses to leave the money with Mary Richards except for the possibility that she is a conveniently available victim. The Richards belong to the town's group of nineteen principal citizens, but the reason for their inclusion is never adequately explained. A number of other citizens are identified by their titles--Lawyer Wilson, Banker Pinkerton, Deacon Billson, and Dr. Harkness--so it is easy to see why they are considered principal citizens. Edward Richards, however, is merely a wage-earner at Pinkerton's bank, and in his own opinion, nothing more than a slave to his boss. Apparently, then, the Richards are members of the elite by virtue of their honesty--certainly not because of their material possessions or great accomplishments.

As Mary sits alone reading the Missionary Herald by lamplight, the stranger knocks at her door. This initial encounter between Mary and the cynical stranger has been likened by at least one critic to the first encounter between the snake and Eve,²⁷ which of course connotes one victimizer and one victim. This is not an illogical evaluation since a number of scholars have commented on Twain's obsession with Satan,²⁸ and George Peirce Clark actually entitled his study "The Devil That Corrupted Hadleyburg."²⁹

At first, Mary Richards has no intention of keeping the money that the stranger leaves. In fact, she is afraid of it. Her initial comment is, "Mercy on us, and the door not locked!"³⁰ which is a strange reaction for someone living in a completely honest town, unless that person doubts the town's honesty as Mary does. So Mary locks the doors, pulls down the shades, and frets over the money

²⁷ George Peirce Clark, "The Devil That Corrupted Hadleyburg," Mark Twain Journal, X (Winter, 1956), 3.

²⁸ Gladys Carmen Bellamy, Mark Twain as a Literary Artist, p. 329; Albert Bigelow Paine, Mark Twain, A Biography, II, 1066; Edward Wagenknecht, Mark Twain: The Man and His Work, p. 207.

²⁹ Clark, p. 3.

³⁰ Mark Twain, "The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg" from The Complete Works of Mark Twain, American Artists Edition, XV, 3. Subsequent references cited by page numbers within the text.

until her husband arrives home, tired and miserable from an especially long day at the bank. At one point, after reading the message concerning who should get the money, Mary comments wishfully, "If it had only been my husband . . . for we are so poor, so old and poor!" (5). In fact, throughout the story, there is a recurring reference to the Richards's poverty and advancing age. This, of course, is designed to evoke sympathy for the plight of the Richards and to excuse their faulty reasoning, as well as to suggest their vulnerability and potential victimization. However, at this early stage of the story, Mary does not take Edward seriously when he suggests humorously that they simply keep the money and deny its existence if the stranger should return.

Then a strange thing happens. Edward and Mary Richards, once absolutely sure of their honesty, become so absorbed in their own rationalizations about the money that each forgets the other's presence, and each begins to consider keeping the money after all. This situation reveals that their honesty is actually a false honesty, based only on the premise of being found out. Unfortunately, the moment the Richards realize they may not be found out, honesty goes out the window. But Mary knows what an unhealthy turn her thoughts have taken and she laments, "God forgive me--it's awful to think such things--but . . .

Lord, how we are made--how strangely we are made!" (12). From this point on, her moral fiber is weakened and she gradually succumbs to the stranger's wishes by becoming his cooperating victim.

The real tragedy of this story is that the sins of Mary Richards do not seem commensurate with the punishment, and this adds to the overall sense of victimization. She recognizes her shortcomings and those of the town as well. It is she who accurately assesses the town as "honest, narrow, self-righteous, and stingy" (7), echoing the opinion of the dead Barclay Goodson, once considered the only generous man in town. And she realizes it is their extreme need which prompts them to take the money. She is weak, and her honesty is a sham. But does she deserve death? The really evil person would slough off the whole affair. None of the other townspeople is so profoundly affected by exposure of dishonesty. Yet Mary frets herself into her grave. Twain's cynical Mr. Stephenson emerges as a completely successful victimizer.

In The Mysterious Stranger, the cynical character is none other than Satan himself--at least, he is a nephew of the fallen angel by that name. The major female is twenty-year-old Marget, niece of Father Peter around whom most of the story revolves. Only twice does Marget encounter Satan, known to her as Philip Traum, but both

times she is his unknowing victim.

On the first occasion, Satan whisks himself and the narrator, Theodor Fischer, to Marget's house, and Marget is completely charmed:

I introduced Satan--that is, Philip Traum--and we sat down and talked. . . . she couldn't keep her eyes off him, he was so beautiful. . . . He seemed only interested in being friendly and telling lies. He said he was an orphan. That made Marget pity him. . . . I saw she liked Philip, and I knew she would. And when I told her he was studying for the ministry I could see that she liked him better than ever. And then, when he promised to get her admitted to the jail so that she could see her uncle, that was the capstone.³¹

The reader is aware that Marget is being victimized, but Marget is a trusting soul who has not been exposed to such lies before, so she believes everything Satan says and even asks Theodor later to bring Philip Traum back again.

The second encounter occurs when Marget is hostess of a party at her house and Philip Traum appears unexpectedly. He apologizes for intruding, but Marget urges him to stay, introduces him to all the guests, and treats him graciously. But before the party is over, Satan has endangered her by contributing evidence to indicate that her house is bewitched, a dangerous development in an era of nervous witch-burners.

³¹ Mark Twain, The Mysterious Stranger from The Complete Works of Mark Twain, American Artists Edition, VIII, 45-46. Subsequent references cited by page numbers within the text.

Then, Marget hears no more from Philip Traum for several weeks, and she translates his apparent disinterest as stemming from some inadequacy on her part. "That Satan, who was quite indifferent to her, had stopped going to her house after a visit or two had hurt her pride, and she had set herself the task of banishing him from her heart" (121). The reader knows that Satan is incapable of any emotional attachment to a human. But poor Marget, victimized by Philip Traum's charm, is mystified by his sudden cooling.

Finally, Satan accomplishes the ultimate victimization of Marget through her beloved uncle. He has promised Marget that her uncle will be permanently happy once the trial is over. Unfortunately, his method is to drive Father Peter insane, which comes as a complete surprise to everyone. He blandly explains to Theodor that "sanity and happiness are an impossible combination" (130). So he makes Father Peter happy, but at the expense of Marget's happiness; the last description of Marget casts her as another pitifully victimized female: "Marget flung herself on his [Father Peter's] breast and cried, and indeed everybody was moved almost to heartbreak" (128). Theodor sums it up, "There it was, you see. He [Satan] didn't seem to know any way to do a person a favor except by killing him or making a lunatic out of him" (131).

Of all Twain's women characters, Marget's victimization is the easiest to explain because she is never aware of Philip Traum's true identity. Traum/Satan remains "a supernatural visitant with a ruthless wisdom, a strange innocence, and a detachment which are beyond mortal compass,"³² while Marget's mortal background precludes complete understanding of the forces at work. Her function in the story, then, is to add emphasis to the hopelessness of human action. That a mere mortal is no match for the Devil goes without saying. When that mortal is a helpless, innocent, young female, one cannot escape the gross inequity in throwing two such individuals together.

Thus, the pattern of victimization by male protagonist is firmly established in Twain's various characterizations of women. Aunt Polly can subdue Tom only momentarily as he continues to have his way in each of their confrontations. Sandy remains subjugated to "The Boss," even though Hank Morgan eventually learns to love her. Roxy experiences absolute defeat by a selfish son. A cynical male stranger precipitates extreme embarrassment for Mary Richards, thereby causing her death. Marget cannot cope with the supernatural powers of Satan. Twain gave none

³² Coleman O. Parsons, "The Background of The Mysterious Stranger," American Literature, XXXII (March, 1960), 61.

of these women the knowledge, background, or personality to emerge victorious against such opponents.

CHAPTER III

VICTIMIZATION BY CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

Part of Twain's artistry is based upon his ability for imbuing society with a personality of its own. In all of his stories, he breathes life into the towns themselves, thus creating additional conflicts for his characters. He describes his method as taking ". . . some characters, one or two incidents, and a locality . . ." and allowing all these elements to blend and grow into a story.³³ W. J. Harvey agrees that "social setting is one of the most important of all human contexts" ³⁴ Therefore, examination of each female victim's relationship with her own contemporary society is vital to an understanding of Twain's themes and method of characterization. Here, too, he casts his women as victims.

As has been demonstrated earlier, Aunt Polly in Tom Sawyer is depicted as a confused woman. This confusion allows Tom to victimize her as easily as he does. Yet,

³³ Mark Twain, Mark Twain's Autobiography, p. 237.

³⁴ Harvey, p. 236.

Aunt Polly's confusion is inspired and abetted by a confusion within the community of St. Petersburg concerning acceptable standards of behavior. Since Aunt Polly is a product of her environment and a willing member of its society, she cannot escape victimization by the mores and customs of the St. Petersburg folk.

Henry Nash Smith characterizes St. Petersburg as "a village of absolute innocence,"³⁵ and Bernard De Voto labels it "an idyll, the enchanted village of Mark's remembrance."³⁶ Yet, this village in all its supposed innocence has undercurrents of violence and a questionable value system, elements which contribute handily to Aunt Polly's victimization. Walter Blair argues that Tom Sawyer is ". . . a working out in fictional form of a boy's maturing."³⁷ Blair traces the four subplots--Tom's romance with Becky, the Muff Potter incident, the Jackson's Island episode, and the Injun Joe story--and demonstrates that each ". . . eventuates in an expression of adult approval."³⁸ Then

³⁵ Henry Nash Smith, "Mark Twain's Images of Hannibal," in Discussions of Mark Twain, p. 94.

³⁶ Bernard De Voto, "The Phantasy of Boyhood: Tom Sawyer," in Mark Twain: Selected Criticism, p. 255.

³⁷ Walter Blair, "On the Structure of Tom Sawyer," Modern Philology, XXXVII (August, 1939), 84-85.

³⁸ Blair, p. 84.

Thomas Blues carries Blair's thesis one step further and suggests that the primary reason Tom's triumphs become possible is that Twain has transformed an adult world into the world of children, and that the village of St. Petersburg seems to respect victimization as a virtue and to applaud the victimizer.³⁹ Certainly, this is a topsy-turvy appraisal. Yet, evidence from the book substantiates this view. Foremost among the village's victims stands Aunt Polly.

Early in the book, St. Petersburg is described as a "poor little shabby village" in which "a newcomer of any age or either sex was an impressive curiosity" (?). This implies a childish type of curiosity in which the unsophisticated citizens are in awe of strangers. Later the narrator observes the adult community in church, and additional childish responses are depicted.

First of all, Sunday morning in St. Petersburg is described: "The sun rose upon a tranquil world, and beamed down upon the peaceful village like a benediction" (29). The picture is one of serenity. Yet, once the people are inside the church there is a great deal of disrespect, and the serene mood is shattered. The choir "tittered and whispered all through the service" (44); "many a head by and by began to nod" (47) as various members of the congregation fought sleep; when the crowd watches the antics of

³⁹ Blues, p. 5.

the poodle and the beetle, "the whole church was red-faced and suffocating with suppressed laughter" (49). The narrator pronounces that "It was a genuine relief to the whole congregation when . . . the benediction [was] pronounced" (49). Here then is a picture of the adult population which sounds more like a description of playful, wiggly children. The good citizens of St. Petersburg are evidently confused about certain standards of adult behavior. Aunt Polly, who would like to instill respect in her young nephew, simply cannot counteract the effects of what he sees these adults do.

Besides simple disrespect, the townspeople are guilty of more violent forms of expression. When information concerning Dr. Robinson's murder reaches the townspeople, they are "electrified with the ghastly news" (98). They spread the word through the village with telegraph-like speed and are completely absorbed by the excitement of it all. They are eager to convict Muff Potter on circumstantial evidence alone, and various citizens express a desire to tar and feather Injun Joe for body-snatching, if only they were not so afraid of him. Furthermore, when Muff Potter is finally brought to trial, the townspeople respond like vultures, eager to get on with the trial because they have already decided his guilt. There are even rumors that they might lynch Muff Potter if he should get free.

All of this evidence points to a village of violence; yet the surface description of the village indicates a population of peaceful souls. Such ambivalent reactions and responses cannot avoid influencing the impressionable child-like citizens, especially the insecure Aunt Polly and the romantic Tom Sawyer. So the village, represented by the combined personalities of all its citizens, perpetuates the state of confusion which entraps Aunt Polly.

The townspeople are confused on other issues as well. During the Jackson's Island episode when the boys are missing and the townspeople do not know they are safely enjoying a spree as pirates, the mourners enter the church and listen to the clergyman eulogize the boys. He dwells on their "sweetness" (151), and the good citizens of St. Petersburg decide that they were wrong when, only a few days earlier, they had judged the boys' pranks as "rank rascalities, well deserving of the cowhide" (152). People break down and weep when the preacher continues his eulogy; then, when the boys make a dramatic reappearance, the "sold" congregation sings a joyous hymn and admits "they would almost be willing to be made ridiculous again to hear Old Hundred sung like that once more" (153). Aunt Polly's lectures to Tom about consideration for others cannot compete against the values of the townspeople which apparently negate any sense of responsibility and applaud

theatrics instead.

Then too, the townspeople ignore the impropriety of the proprietor of the Temperance Tavern who keeps liquor in a locked room at the back of his tavern. Normally, the townspeople would express shock and disapproval of such arrangements, but they are too wrapped up in the drama of searching for the lost children in the cave to give it more than a fleeting thought. And in the Muff Potter episode, the fickle townspeople waste no time in taking him to their bosom once he is found innocent, and in fact "fondled him as lavishly as [they] had abused him before" (198). Obviously, the townspeople's attitudes change according to where their interests and sympathies lie at the moment. To Aunt Polly, who needs and seeks definite guidelines, this vacillation is worse than no help at all.

Finally, the last chapter of Tom Sawyer sums up the inconsistent and childish attitudes of the St. Petersburg folk. After the boys find the money in the cave, the narrator states:

The reader may rest satisfied that Tom's and Huck's windfall made a mighty stir in the poor little village of St. Petersburg. So vast a sum, all in actual cash, seemed next to incredible. It was talked about, gloated over, glorified, until the reason of many of the citizens tottered under the strain of the unhealthy excitement. Every "haunted" house in St. Petersburg and the neighboring villages was dissected, plank by plank, and its foundations dug up and ransacked for hidden treasure--and not by boys, but men--pretty grave, unromantic men, too, some of them. (285)

Again, the citizens respond like irresponsible, eager children. Nowhere does the sane voice of reason prevail. Furthermore, these childish people no longer criticize Tom and Huck, but, instead, admire and court them.

The boys were not able to remember that their remarks had possessed weight before; but now their sayings were treasured and repeated; everything they did seemed somehow to be regarded as remarkable; they had evidently lost the power of doing and saying commonplace things; moreover, their past history was raked up and discovered to bear marks of conspicuous originality. (285)

This, then, is the confusion rampant in St. Petersburg, which serves to entrap Aunt Polly even more than her own naïveté and inexperience do. She is not a strong-willed individual, so she sways with the tide of opinion. Unfortunately, St. Petersburg opinion is childish and inconsistent. Tom is able to escape occasionally from the St. Petersburg influence by leaving the confines of the village.⁴⁰ Poor Aunt Polly, however, has no momentary reprieve from its influence because she is one of the adults of the community, and she knows no other direction in which to go. She is victimized into accepting whatever St. Petersburg standard happens to be in vogue at the moment.

The story of Sandy is set in sixth-century Camelot, centuries away from Aunt Polly's St. Petersburg. The universal opinion of Connecticut Yankee, summed up by Albert

⁴⁰ William B. Dillingham, "Setting and Theme in Tom Sawyer," Mark Twain Journal, XII (Spring, 1964), 8.

Bigelow Paine, is that this book "is nothing less than a brief for human rights and human privileges" ⁴¹

Since Twain refused to allow either his English or his American publishers to change a single word in it, one must assume that he intended for the reading public to hear what he had to say on a number of issues whether that public wanted to or not. ⁴² Certainly, one of those issues was the victimization of females by the chivalric tradition. For this reason, Sandy's characterization is so important. Years of conditioning have rendered her completely subservient to its institutions, and throughout Connecticut Yankee, everything she does and says is governed by the chivalric code which enslaves her. Thus, Twain uses her victimization as a vehicle of burlesque as he ridicules sixth-century England; so if one accepts the premise of Twain's story of knighthood, he must also accept Sandy, whose reactions are in perfect harmony with the time and place depicted.

The action that involves Sandy takes place in Camelot and the surrounding English countryside. Curiously, Camelot has a dual personality. It is at times cruel and inhuman;

⁴¹ Albert Bigelow Paine, "Introduction" to A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court, Stormfield Edition, p. xix.

⁴² Stephan Leacock, "An Appreciation" in A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court, Stormfield Edition, p. xi.

but at other times, it is a dreamy, idyllic land of innocence.⁴³ Sandy reflects this innocence, and Twain uses her to demonstrate the vulnerability of such innocence when the backward institutions of Camelot assert themselves. Sandy is a victim of the chivalric code which Twain denounces, and she was created to demonstrate the inequities of such a system.

Sandy has been conditioned into accepting Camelot's world of two classes--nobles and slaves. There may be various levels of each, but division is distinct between those with noble bloodline and those without. The plight of the slave is described early in the story by Hank Morgan:

The most of King Arthur's British nation were slaves, pure and simple, and bore that name, and wore the iron collar on their necks; and the rest were slaves in fact, but without the name; they imagined themselves men and freemen, and called themselves so. The truth was, the nation as a body was in the world for one object, and one only: to grovel before king and Church and noble (63)

Fortunately, Sandy is of noble birth, so her plight is not as desperate and hopeless as the slaves and freemen just described. Still, she is a victim of her own nobility because she is not allowed a free choice in what she does. Instead, Camelot's chivalric code dictates certain specified beliefs she must accept, and it expects her to conform to established standards of behavior. Hank is impressed

⁴³ Spengemann, p. 104.

with how rigidly Sandy and the citizens of Camelot cling to their preconceived notions:

Inherited ideas are a curious thing, and interesting to observe and examine. I had mine, the king and his people had theirs. In both cases they flowed in ruts worn deep by time and habit, and the man who should have proposed to divert them by reason and argument would have had a long contract on his hands. For instance, those people had inherited the idea that all men without title and a long pedigree, whether they had great natural gifts and acquirements or hadn't, were creatures of no more consideration than so many animals, bugs, insects (63-64)

The more obvious aspect of Sandy's victimization is revealed in her story about being held captive. Yet, no one is surprised by this revelation, and everyone but Hank readily believes all the details of ogres and captive princesses because this is a common occurrence in knightly circles. Neither is anyone surprised when Hank asks Alisande if her parents are living and she replies, "I know not if they be yet on live, sith it is many years that I have lain shut up in the castle" (84). Life has little value in the sixth century, freedom is at a premium, and communication is almost non-existent. Thousands of people languish in dungeons without even knowing what crime they are accused of committing. Many are actually held captive so long that their captors cannot remember the charges. Therefore, losing track of one's parents seems minor when compared to the tragic examples of injustice dealt the slaves and

freemen, and Sandy is not aware that in another time and in another place this would be a sad admission.

The way in which Sandy is expected to live is another example of her victimization by contemporary standards. For days, she and Hank Morgan travel through the countryside, both riding the same horse. Chivalric tradition precludes carrying any food. Instead, they must find food and shelter along the way. The first night out, they contend with the additional discomfort of a storm. Hank comments, "I found a good shelter for the demoiselle under a rock" (100), but whether or not this accommodation is comfortable is open to question.

Sandy's indoctrination into the institution of chivalry includes attaching herself to whatever knight is the current victor in a contest for her favor. She blithely agrees, ". . . it was customary for the girl to desert to the conqueror" (131). Ladies are taught that they "belong" to the current "man of prowess." Whether or not he is a "man of brains" is immaterial, and Hank sums up this philosophy:

The fact is, it is just a sort of polished up court of Comanches, and there isn't a squaw in it who doesn't stand ready at the dropping of a hat to desert to the buck with the biggest string of scalps at his belt. (119)

Certainly this code has overtones of victimization since the lady's personal desires are never considered. She must

accompany whichever knight is the better fighter. Furthermore, according to Hank, these knights are not even truthful unless one understands the formula for calculating the truth:

As a matter of fact, knights errant were not persons to be believed--that is, measured by modern standards of veracity; yet, measured by the standards of their own time, and scaled accordingly, you got the truth. It was very simple: you discounted a statement ninety-seven per cent.; the rest was fact. (127)

Finally, Sandy marries Hank because that is what society expects. Hank freely admits that his decision to marry her is based upon public opinion, and only later does he realize that he loves the girl. But whether or not Sandy loves Hank is considered irrelevant. Marriage simply represents the expected behavior, according to chivalric code.

Current superstitious beliefs also victimize Sandy. Along with other sixth-century Englishmen, Sandy is a devout follower of Merlin the Magician. One reason she readily accepts Hank Morgan is that his magic powers apparently surpass even Merlin's. The first time Sandy sees Hank light up his pipe, she actually stops talking for a while as she watches the fascinating fire and smoke. When she witnesses Hank's display with explosives, she bravely threatens his enemies with destruction. And, finally, when the two arrive at the castle to rescue the princesses from the ogres, Sandy jumps to the conclusion that enchantment

is at work to make the castle appear to Hank as a pigsty, the princesses as pigs, and the ogres as swineherds. She believes all these things so sincerely that Hank wisely allows her delusions to prevail. Sandy remains a victim of the chivalric code of Camelot and of the supernatural beliefs of other sixth-century English citizens to the end of the story.

Place also plays a vital role in Pudd'nhead Wilson. Twain devotes three pages at the beginning to the description of Dawson's Landing; the village has a personality of its own which dominates the personalities of its individual inhabitants. The predominant tone in this introduction to the village is one of peace and tranquillity, much like that found in Tom Sawyer's St. Petersburg. There are "modest dwellings whose whitewashed exteriors were almost concealed from sight by climbing tangles of rose vines, honeysuckles, and morning-glories" (1). In many of the homes, cats are sleeping blissfully in the sun, contributing symbolically to the mood of contentment. The sole business street is six blocks long, while "the hamlet's front was washed by the clear waters of the great river . . ." (2). This reference to the river suggests expansion and a ripening civilization,⁴⁴ but it is a slow and deliberate process

⁴⁴ F. R. Leavis, "The Moral Astringency of Pudd'nhead Wilson," in Discussions of Mark Twain, pp. 85-86.

and the overall impression is that "the town was sleepy and comfortable and contented. It was fifty years old, and was growing slowly--very slowly, in fact, but still growing" (3).

Henry Nash Smith suggests that the visual image of Dawson's Landing is at odds with the "somber tone of the story;"⁴⁵ yet, the narrator's comment that "Dawson's Landing was a slaveholding town . . ." (3) may serve to foreshadow conflict to come. These six words express the root cause of the ensuing conflict that is responsible for Roxy's desperate decision to switch the babies, a decision which sends Tom, Chambers, Judge Driscoll, and Roxy herself down the road to tragedy.

The childish citizens of St. Petersburg maintain a folksy atmosphere in which rich and poor, black and white, live together in an easy intimacy; this relaxed relationship is transformed into something sinister and destructive by the people in Dawson's Landing.⁴⁶ If tension exists between the races in St. Petersburg, it is conveniently ignored. However, in Dawson's Landing the overriding consideration in every action is white superiority, and Roxy is the primary victim of the system. Slavery of blacks is an accepted fact of life in Dawson's Landing, and since Roxy has "black"

⁴⁵ Smith, "Mark Twain's Images of Hannibal," p. 100.

⁴⁶ Florence B. Leaver, "Mark Twain's Pudd'nhead Wilson," Mark Twain Journal, X (Winter, 1956), 14.

blood in her veins, she is considered property instead of a human with human rights and emotions.⁴⁷

Unfortunately, Roxy herself helps perpetuate the myth of white superiority because she has been conditioned over the years to believe that "white" blood is better than "black" blood. This prevailing attitude is a constant threat to Roxy. Yet Roxy accepts it as fact, just as strongly as any of the white citizens. Therefore, she endorses her own victimization by agreeing with the citizenry of Dawson's Landing.

It is evident that Roxy is proud of her white appearance, because the first time she is introduced in the book she chides the Negro Jasper by telling him that she has ". . . somep'n' better to do den' 'sociat'n' wid niggers as black as you is" (10). Later, she reaffirms this notion of white superiority when she chastises her son for refusing to duel in true Southern gentleman fashion. White people believe in the nobility of dueling, so Roxy believes in dueling; and she pronounces,

It's de nigger in you, dat's what it is.
 Thirty-one parts o' you is white, en on'y one
 part nigger, en dat po' little one part is yo'
 soul. 'Tain't wuth savin'; 'tain't wuth
 totin' out on a shovel en throwin' in de
 gutter. (123)

⁴⁷ George M. Spangler, "Pudd'nhead Wilson: A Parable of Property," American Literature, XLII (March, 1970), 29.

Since her son was fathered by a distinguished white man, Roxy sincerely believes that he has disgraced his birth, and she laments, "Ain't nigger enough in him to show in his fingernails, en dat takes mighty little--yit dey's enough to paint his soul" (124). But this attitude should not be surprising because it is merely an echo of Judge Driscoll's sentiments about lineage which Roxy has learned to accept as gospel,

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? . . . A coward in my family! A Driscoll a coward! Oh, what have I done to deserve this infamy! (105-106)

Without a doubt, bloodline is important to these people whether they be white aristocracy or black slaves.

Moreover, this myth of superiority is carried even further by the people of Dawson's Landing since they believe that not only is the white man superior, but if he should hail from Old Virginia and ". . . could also prove descent from the First Families of that great commonwealth," he "was exalted to supremacy" (101). Whites and blacks alike believe this fiction without question; when Roxy tells her son the circumstances of his birth, she feels no need to apologize for the obvious miscegenation,

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 . . . Dey ain't

another nigger in dis town dat's as high-bawn
as you is. (75)

There is another facet of white superiority which Roxy has been victimized into absolving. Percy Driscoll, Roxy's original owner, prides himself on being exceedingly humane with people of his own race. Yet he is only "fairly humane toward slaves and other animals" (14). This touch of irony re-emphasizes the attitude rampant in Dawson's Landing which categorizes slaves as nothing more than property. Certainly, slaves are not considered human. In fact, Percy Driscoll's idea of compassion toward his slaves is to agree to sell them locally rather than "down the river" where they might be mistreated. Furthermore, Roxy has been conditioned into accepting this kind of reasoning. Instead of being outraged, she and the other Negroes express sincere gratitude when Driscoll magnanimously makes such a shameful offer, and it never occurs to any of them that the feelings of a black slave should be considered at all:

The culprits flung themselves prone, in an ecstasy of gratitude, and kissed his feet, declaring that they would never forget his goodness and never cease to pray for him as long as they lived. They were sincere, for like a god he had stretched forth his mighty hand and closed the gates of hell against them. He knew, himself, that he had done a noble and gracious thing, and was privately well pleased with his magnanimity; and that night he set the incident down in his diary, so that his son might read it in after years, and be thereby moved to deeds of gentleness and humanity himself. (17)

It has been suggested that the reason Roxy feels sympathy for the white point of view is that she is a combination of black and white in one body.⁴⁸ Therefore, her indoctrination of white superiority is easily accepted. Certainly, this last quoted passage indicates willing submission, and this particularly pitiful scene itself indicates once more how profoundly Roxy has been sold contemporary standards of behavior and belief.

Thus, Roxy has been victimized by the culture and attitudes of Dawson's Landing which covers its deceit and avarice by a facade of honor and exalted lineage.⁴⁹ Leslie Fiedler finds in Pudd'nhead Wilson "the melancholy conviction that to be born is to be doomed."⁵⁰ One might add that to be born part black into a society dedicated to white supremacy makes the trauma of birth an even greater tragedy.

Like Dawson's Landing, another town which is dedicated to an illusion is the town of Hadleyburg in "The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg." This town believes that it is

⁴⁸ Barbara A. Chellis, "Those Extraordinary Twins: Negroes and Whites," American Quarterly, XXI (Spring, 1969), 111.

⁴⁹ Smith, Mark Twain: The Development of a Writer, p. 137.

⁵⁰ Leslie A. Fiedler, "As Free as Any Cretur . . .," in Mark Twain: A Collection of Critical Essays, p. 137.

. . . the most honest and upright town in all the region around about. It had kept that reputation unsmirched during three generations, and was prouder of it than of any other of its possessions. It was so proud of it, and so anxious to insure its perpetuation, that it began to teach the principles of honest dealing to its babies in the cradle, and made the like teachings the staple of their culture thenceforward through all the years devoted to their education. Also, throughout the formative years temptations were kept out of the way of the young people, so that their honesty could have every chance to harden and solidify, and become a part of their very bone. (1)

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 the mere fact that a young man hailed from Hadleyburg was all the recommendation he needed when he went forth from his natal town to seek for responsible employment. (2)

At first, Mary Richards is the only citizen in Hadleyburg who does not subscribe to this illusion, and it is she who convinces her husband of its sham. Early in the story, Mary speaks to Edward about the quality of Hadleyburg's honesty:

. . . it's been one everlasting training and training and training in honesty--honesty shielded, from the very cradle, against every possible temptation, and so it's artificial honesty, and weak as water when temptation comes . . . (15), and it is my belief that this town's honesty is as rotten as mine is; as rotten as yours is. It is a mean town, a hard, stingy town, and hasn't a virtue in the world but this honesty it is so celebrated for and so conceited about; and so help me, I do believe that if ever the day comes that its honesty falls under great temptation, its grand reputation will go to ruin like a house of cards. (16)

Thus Mary recognizes Hadleyburg's honesty as something

superficial, and she doubts its strength under stress. Thomas Blues suggests that this doubt is the real reason that Mary and Edward cannot survive since they must rely on the illusion to function as people and to sustain life.⁵¹

Unfortunately, Mary is completely subservient to public opinion, and whatever genuine instincts she might have are smothered by her inability to buck the townspeople of Hadleyburg. It is this subservience which enslaves Mary and casts her as Hadleyburg's victim. From the very first of the story when Mary endorses her husband's reluctance to speak up to save Reverent Burgess's reputation, this subservience is apparent. "It was a great pity," she tells Edward, "but--why, we couldn't afford it, Edward--we couldn't indeed. Oh, I wouldn't have had you do it for anything!" (9). Furthermore, her relief is evident when Edward tells her that Reverend Burgess does not suspect that he could have helped him. Thus, Mary becomes the advocate of "the lie of silent assertion" which Twain despised.⁵² Moreover, Mary's subconscious may very well realize this and contribute to her apparent willingness to die.

After the publicity of the money, Hadleyburg wakes up "world-celebrated--astonished--happy--vain" (18), as

⁵¹ Blues, p. 56.

⁵² Mark Twain, "My First Lie and How I Got Out of It" from The Complete Works of Mark Twain, American Artists Edition, XV, 161.

all nineteen of the town's principal citizens gloat over this new evidence of Hadleyburg's honesty. But the moods of Hadleyburg are as illusive as quick silver for by the end of the week, this gloating changes to content, and then the content changes gradually to sighing and worrying as the citizens of Hadleyburg search their brains for a clue to the remark which could mean such a fortune.

When the letters arrive revealing the mysterious remark, the various recipients lose no time in submitting their versions to Reverend Burgess to be announced at the town meeting. Mary is correct in her early assessment of the town's sham honesty, but she cannot make herself reveal the truth about herself and her husband because of her intense fear of public disfavor which overpowers all of her emotions and influences all of her decisions. When Edward tries to explain their case at the town meeting, Mary stands beside him crying. Still, she makes no attempt to set the record straight when the crowd rejects Edward's offer of the truth. And, later, when Mary suddenly realizes that their letter will not be read after all, her relief is profound as she whispers, "Oh, bless God, we are saved!" (50).

Still later, when the townspeople vote to auction the gold pieces and to give the proceeds to the Richards, Mary is again torn between revealing the truth and

succumbing to the "lie of silent assertion." She whispers,

It is another temptation, Edward--I'm all
in a tremble--but, oh, we've escaped one tempta-
tion, and that ought to warn us to-- . . . And
yet, Edward, when you think--nobody susp-- (55)

These five words--"when you think nobody suspects"--furnish the cornerstone to Mary's character. Otherwise, she would not be so distressed later when she thinks she recognizes the stranger who brings the checks as the same one who left the original gold pieces.

The Richards try to reconcile themselves to their own dishonesty, but they cannot do so because public opinion is so overwhelmingly important to them. The narrator suggests, "they were to learn, now, that a sin takes on new and real terrors when there seems a chance that it is going to be found out" (64). They fear that Burgess intends to destroy them later, that Stephenson means somehow to trap them with the checks, that their servant Sarah is spying on them so she can reveal to the townspeople some unnamed sin.

George Spangler suggests that the overriding theme of "Hadleyburg" is not so much that "a cloistered virtue is worthless" as it is "all men have their price."⁵³ The original price for the Richards's honesty may have been the money, but the price that continues to purchase their

⁵³ George M. Spangler, "Locating Hadleyburg," Mark Twain Journal, XIV (Summer, 1969), 20.

honesty is this fear of public opinion which causes both Mary and Edward to fret themselves to death. Unfortunately, Mary and Edward know the townspeople of Hadleyburg lack compassion. These "honest" citizens who were incited to mob action in their misunderstanding about Reverend Burgess years before, and who gleefully pounce on all the letter-writers at the town meeting, cannot be expected to show any sympathy toward the Richardses. It is this revelation which allows the town of Hadleyburg to exact the ultimate victimization--untimely death--from the major female character and her husband. Therefore, Hadleyburg is just as much a victimizer as the mysterious Mr. Stephenson himself. Twain has succeeded in exposing the town as a victimizer and Mary as a weak victim as he ridicules her double standards and hypocrisy.

The issue of honesty also concerns the villagers of Eseldorf in The Mysterious Stranger. Fourteenth-century Eseldorf is described by Theodor Fischer as a paradise for boys, largely because they are not "overmuch pestered with schooling" (4) in this little Austrian village since it is considered dangerous for the common people to possess much knowledge. But for Marget, Father Peter's niece, it is not a paradise at all.

When the story opens, Marget and her uncle have already been victimized by the citizens of Eseldorf who

charge Father Peter with the wild statement that "God was all goodness and would find a way to save all his poor children" (5). The bishop interprets the remark as heresy and takes Father Peter's parish away from him. Marget and her uncle have fallen on hard times. Then, however, Satan arranges for Father Peter to find his lost wallet full of money, and the fickle townspeople befriend Marget and her uncle once more. Suddenly Marget is popular again. She is invited to a party, and one by one her students reappear. But when the astrologer accuses Father Peter of stealing the money found in the billfold, the people of Eseldorf do not hesitate to believe the astrologer. Poor Father Peter is imprisoned, and the money is sealed up and given to the law for safe-keeping. Young Theodor laments,

So Marget's new happiness died a quick death. No friends came to condole with her, and none were expected; an unsigned note withdrew her invitation to the party. There would be no scholars to take lessons. How could she support herself? (39)

Marget is once more the victim of a capricious Eseldorf that does not seem to understand the meaning of genuine friendship. Only the three boys--Nikolaus Bauman, Seppi Wohlmeyer, and Theodor Fischer--want to show their friendliness for Marget, but their parents will not let them for fear they will offend the community.

Later, these same fickle townspeople readily suspect Marget of witchcraft when she invites forty of her "friends" to a party and serves a bountiful banquet with only meager funds. Theodor offers an apology for the disgraceful behavior of these people:

In any community, big or little, there is always a fair proportion of people who are not malicious or unkind by nature, and who never do unkind things except when they are overmastered by fear, or when their self-interest is greatly in danger Eseldorf had its proportion of such people and ordinarily their good and gentle influence was felt, but these were not ordinary times--on account of the witch-dread--and so we did not seem to have any gentle and compassionate hearts left (64)

These guests at Marget's party are easily convinced by the astrologer that there may be substance to his insinuations about Marget's witchcraft, and

. . . there was a tumultuous rush for the door which swiftly emptied the house Marget was pale and crying. . . . Outside, the guests, panic-stricken, scattered in every direction and fled in a pitiable state of terror; and such a tumult as they made with their running and sobbing and shrieking and shouting that soon all the village came flocking from their houses to see what had happened (71)

Thus, Marget is victimized by Eseldorf, "village of asses." These townspeople remain loyal only so long as there is no danger of guilt by association. Only Wilhelm and the old nurse Ursula do not desert Marget. Even the three boys, who would like to be counted as Marget's friends, are too weak to oppose public opinion.

It is, therefore, evident that each of these towns-- St. Petersburg, Camelot, Dawson's Landing, Hadleyburg, and Eseldorf--was created by Twain to make a specific point. Twain allows the towns to victimize the major female character in each story. St. Petersburg encourages and applauds Tom Sawyer's antics, thus causing Aunt Polly additional difficulty in handling her nephew. Camelot expects Sandy to abide by the chivalric code which enslaves her, while Dawson's Landing reminds Roxy every step of the way that her drop of black blood renders her inferior to its white citizens. Hadleyburg's untested honesty proves to be a sham that entraps Mary Richards. And on circumstantial evidence alone, the fickle citizens of Eseldorf readily suspect Marget of witchcraft. Of these five women, only Roxy tries to control her own fate, and she is rebuffed by an unsympathetic town. Thus, each female character is doomed to victimization by the society in which she must live.

CHAPTER IV

THE NATURAL VICTIM: JOAN OF ARC

Writers do not agree on their characterizations of Joan of Arc. A comparison of various interpretations of this famous story reveals that she has been cast as a mental case,⁵⁴ a religious fanatic,⁵⁵ a shrewd tactician,⁵⁶ and an outspoken debater.⁵⁷ While Twain's characterization may include all of these elements, he dwells primarily on the simple speech and unassuming charm of a lovable peasant girl by designating Joan's childhood friend, the Sieur Louis de Conte, as narrator. One critic suggests that:

Throughout the whole story of Joan's life it is her simplicity, her peasant's good sense, her naturalness, her warm humanity, her close kinship with the common people, that Mark Twain insists

⁵⁴ Anatole France, Vie de Jeanne d' Arc, quoted in Neil Bell, "Mark Twain's Joan of Arc," Mark Twain Journal, XI (February, 1961), 5.

⁵⁵ Andrew Lang, The Maid of France and Hilaire Belloc, Joan of Arc, quoted in Bell, p. 5.

⁵⁶ W. P. Barrett, The Trial of Jeanne d' Arc, quoted in Bell, p. 5.

⁵⁷ George Bernard Shaw, Saint Joan, quoted in Bell, p. 5.

upon over and over again and that one finds so stressed in no other book about her.⁵⁸

Since Twain does characterize Joan in such girlish terms, she seems a perfect foil for evil and is, thus, a likely candidate for victimization by various individuals and circumstances alike.

Twain divides his fictionalized version, The Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc, into three books which follow a chronological progression. Book I, entitled In Domremy, deals with Joan's early life in the village with her playmates and family. Book II, In Court and Camp, is devoted to that portion of her life from the time she leaves her home village on her quest until she is captured. And Book III, Trial and Martyrdom, dramatizes the final tragic end of her life.

Continuity among the three sections is achieved by a continuous thread of victimization which builds as the story unwinds. The first book casts Joan as potential victim as she convinces her playmates and friends, then her family, and finally those in authority that she is sincere in her efforts to free France from English domination. Book II consists of a series of skirmishes in which she repeatedly outwits her opponents, only to fall at the battle of Clairoix. Book III depicts the outright trickery

⁵⁸ Neil Bell, "Mark Twain's Joan of Arc," p. 6.

used at the trial to convict and murder this noble young girl. Therefore, Book I sets the stage and prepares the audience for victimization, Book II delineates a physical victimization, and Book III adds emotional and mental victimization as well.

Twain uses this victimization of the protagonist for two major purposes--to demonstrate in down-to-earth human terms Joan's greatness of character through various brave and heroic acts committed against great odds, and to dramatize an allegorical struggle between good and evil. At the same time, Twain is able to satirize the French and to expose the injustices of both Church and State.

Joan's bravery is evident from childhood. Even as a small girl, she is the champion of the meek, never hesitating to speak out in the interest of fair play. In an early episode Joan actually confronts a madman and takes an axe away from him as onlookers stand by aghast. She explains she did it, "Because it was necessary to get him to his cage; else he would kill someone. Then he would come to the like harm himself."⁵⁹ The narrator himself calls the reader's attention to the fact that this is evidence of Joan's disregard for her own safety:

⁵⁹ Mark Twain, The Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc from The Complete Works of Mark Twain, American Artists Edition, XVII, 45. Subsequent references cited by book, chapter, and page numbers within the text.

It is noticeable that this remark which implies that Joan was entirely forgetful of herself and her own danger, and had thought and wrought for the preservation of other people alone, was not challenged, or criticized, or commented upon by anybody there, but was taken by all as a matter of course and true. It shows how clearly her character was defined, and how well it was known and established. (II.IV.46)

Her bravery is again evident when she faces each disbelieving audience. First, she charms the King and his noblemen "with her sweetness and simplicity and unconscious eloquence" (II.V.135). Then, she convinces a committee of Bishops that her mission is legitimately commanded by God. These Bishops come every day to question her, all the time hoping to trap her. Yet she does not falter, and because she is so frank and childishly sincere, the Bishops send her on to the learned doctors of theology in Poitiers for their decision. Again Joan is subjected to daily questioning and badgering, and again she meets victimization with bravery:

. . . Joan was as sweetly self-possessed and tranquil before this grim tribunal, with its robed celebrities, its solemn state and imposing ceremonies, as if she were but a spectator and not herself on trial. (II.VIII.160)

One by one these learned men surrender, pronouncing finally, "This child is sent of God" (II.VIII.166). Thus, Twain uses all of these confrontations--with the King, the Bishops, and the doctors of theology--to demonstrate Joan's brave responses to attempts at victimization.

None of these scenes would be as effective if she were cast in any role other than potential victim.

Once Joan is on the battlefield, Twain again uses the theme of victimization to demonstrate her bravery in conflict with both the known enemy, the English, and the unknown enemy, her own soldiers. In many ways, her battles with the English are the easier for Joan discovers that her battle philosophy of "storm and assault" brings the enemy readily to surrender. Her battle against victimization by her own soldiers, however, is not so easily won.

Joan's initial army which is commissioned by the King naturally includes many men who are professional soldiers and statesmen, renowned for meritorious victories of their own. And just as naturally, it is almost impossible for these men to respect the judgment of Joan's military tactics since she is but a peasant girl, unschooled in either politics or warfare. They feel justified in questioning the wisdom of various maneuvers and at times disobey her orders entirely. Since Joan's generals have gotten into the habit of disobeying the King when it suits them, it is an easy transition to disobey a young girl. Their reasoning is that if the King sometimes makes foolish decisions, certainly a young girl cannot be wise at all times, especially a young girl trained merely for tending sheep rather than for waging war. This is not a surprising attitude for

hard-headed, practical, war-worn military leaders, and Twain uses this clash of battle philosophies to demonstrate Joan's subsequent victimization and ultimate bravery against formidable odds. The generals distrust Joan's plan to attack immediately since their own logic suggests it is best to cut supply lines and starve the enemy, a plan requiring months to consummate. Each time Joan mentions assault, her generals balk and delay her. So she is their unwilling victim, and it is a miracle that she survives as long as she does.

Thrice Joan is wounded, and Twain uses these episodes to demonstrate her bravery against a double victimization of the wound itself, plus the treachery of her men who use the wounds as an excuse to send her away from the battlefield. The first wound, in her foot, is inflicted at the battle for the bastille of the Augustins. While Joan is off tending to this injury, her generals undermine her battleplan for the seige of Orleans. When Joan realizes what is happening, she resumes her march in spite of the pain.

The second wound occurs at the assault on the Bastille of Tourelles when an iron bolt strikes Joan between her neck and shoulder. Joan lies hour after hour on the grass with the iron bolt still in her, insisting that the fight continue, and directing her men accordingly.

Again her leaders sound retreat and Joan must countermand their orders in her weakened condition.

Finally, the third wound happens just outside the walls of Paris when Joan is struck down by a crossbow bolt. Her men panic. Yet she insists they take Paris, and she tries to direct the army in spite of the seriousness of her injury. But the King refuses to sanction the attack, and Joan is forced to submit because she is helpless. She is carried away against her will by her own men, and Paris remains in English hands. The narrator sadly laments,

Joan had Paris and France in her grip and the Hundred Years' War under her heel, and the King made her open her fist and take her foot away. (II.XLI.92)

Henceforth, Joan is commissioned to lead minor skirmishes only. During one such sortie, the men again panic, break and run. Joan is dragged from her horse and taken away to the Duke of Burgandy's camp as a prisoner. Thus the narrator ends Book II,

We will draw down the curtain now upon the most strange, and pathetic, and wonderful military drama that has been played upon the stage of the world. Joan of Arc will march no more. (II.XLI.99)

The significant word in this quotation is "pathetic" with its connotation of victimization, for Joan has been victimized in one way or another throughout her entire military career: first, by the advisers to the Governor of Vaucouleurs, then by the King and his nobles, then by her

own generals. Finally, her complete physical victimization is accomplished by imprisonment at the hands of the Duke of Burgandy. By concentrating on Joan's victimization, Twain re-emphasizes the incontestible fact of Joan's bravery and greatness of character.

When Joan is brought to trial, Twain envisions her victimization in even more profound terms as he traces the steady decline of her mind and spirit. In so doing, he adds to her noble stature, for this young girl withstands enormous pressures which slowly deteriorate her mental and emotional capacities. Joan submits to trial after trial of agonizing accusations and willful subversion of the truth as the English strive to degrade and destroy the influence of her noble name. By dwelling on all the unfair aspects of the trial, Twain succeeds in exalting her unequalled bravery.

The numerous victimizations of Joan of Arc are also used by Twain to dramatize an allegorical struggle between good and evil. Indeed, Book I sets the stage with a description of a village at the mercy of mysterious forces, a clan of fairies who play with the children and mourn when a child dies, and a mystic tree that keeps the children enthralled with its power of prophecy. Against this background, Joan is pictured as an innocent and impressionable young girl.

After a series of childhood episodes, Joan emerges as a young lady, and the narrator lovingly describes her:

She was sixteen now, shapely and graceful, and of a beauty so extraordinary that I might allow myself any extravagance of language in describing it and yet have no fear of going beyond the truth. There was in her face a sweetness and serenity and purity that justly reflected her spiritual nature. She was deeply religious, and this is a thing which sometimes gives a melancholy cast to a person's countenance, but it was not so in her case. Her religion made her inwardly content and joyous; and if she was troubled at times, and showed the pain of it in her face and bearing, it came of distress for her country; no part of it was chargeable to her religion. (I.V.52)

This passage is significant for two reasons. First of all, "sweetness, serenity and purity" suggest vulnerability, and vulnerability suggests potential victimization which Twain uses to advantage. Second, Joan's "goodness" is established. Since the narrator mentions her beauty in other passages as well, this may be a reflection of the medieval notion that beauty is equated with goodness. Thus, Joan signifies the "good" character in an allegorical struggle between good and evil, both because of her physical beauty and because of her innocent purity.

Evil is represented in a number of ways. In Book I, it may be merely the forces of government which uphold unfair laws and customs. In Book II, it takes on more distinct forms in the persons of the King's followers and advisors. Later, evil manifests itself in Joan's own

generals as their treachery comes to light. And throughout the action, there is the possibility of evil as represented by the King himself. Certainly, there are times when he thwarts Joan's plans by refusing to cooperate. However, the most impressive dramatization of evil versus good occurs in Book III, Trial and Martyrdom.

Since the King is silent and makes no offer to help this young girl, Joan's captor, the Duke of Burgandy, finally sells her to her enemy, the English. The English have sent a French Bishop, Pierre Cauchon of Beauvais, to claim her and to try her in the name of the Church. The narrator comments satirically that Joan has been "sold to a French priest by a French prince, with the French King and the French nation standing thankless by and saying nothing" (III.I.106).

Gradually, more information is revealed about Pierre Cauchon, and he emerges as Evil personified. He has been promised the Archbishopric of Rouen if he succeeds in getting custody of Joan, so his motivation is based on greed. Once he gains custody, he begins "packing his jury for the destruction of the Maid" (III.III.115). He chooses a court filled with French names, but with interests and sympathies which are English. Then, the reader is told that Cauchon

. . . could not properly preside in this new court, for more than one reason: Rouen was not

in his diocese; Joan had not been arrested in her domicile, which was still Domremy; and finally this proposed judge was the prisoner's outspoken enemy, and therefore he was incompetent to try her. (III.III.116)

Yet, Cauchon overcomes all these obstacles by forcing territorial letters to be granted giving him permission to proceed.

Joan begs for counsel to conduct her case, and Cauchon illegally refuses it. Cauchon prepares a list of charges which are nothing but "suspicious and public rumors" (III.III.119). He makes sure that the good character reports from Domremy and Poitiers are destroyed before the trial begins. Then he employs an ecclesiastic named Nicolas Loyseleur to go to Joan's prison cell at night; disguised as a cobbler, Loyseleur visits Joan and tells her he is really a priest. While Joan unburdens her heart in confession, Cauchon listens at a hole in the wall to hear any evidence he might interpret as damaging. So in all the pre-trial actions, there is not one kind or fair act from Cauchon. Joan is completely victimized, and Twain uses each step in her victimization to build suspense in this allegorical battle between Good/Joan and Evil/Cauchon.

On February 21, 1431, the first trial begins and Joan, "after languishing in dungeons, away from light and air and the cheer of friendly faces, for nearly three-quarters of a year" (III.IV.124), is pitted against a court

of fifty distinguished ecclesiastics gathered to reach one verdict--guilty. Surely a nineteen-year-old peasant girl is no match for such opponents. But her spirit is not yet broken, her mind is not asleep, and she steadfastly refuses to be tricked into answering those questions regarding revelations from God since her Voices have forbidden her to do so. In this way, Twain allows Good to maintain a momentary advantage.

At the first day's proceedings, Cauchon's evil intent is again emphasized. He has clerks stationed to take down Joan's answers, with orders to twist the meanings to suit his case. This maneuver fails, however, because the clerks become sympathetic to Joan's cause. Again Twain allows Joan's goodness to win a temporary battle, which is consistent with his interpretation of a constant conflict between Good and Evil where Good may win occasional skirmishes, only to be defeated in the final confrontation.

Joan/Good proves to be a surprisingly difficult girl to prosecute. The evil Cauchon had assumed that Joan would be hopelessly entangled, defeated, and convicted in a matter of hours. Yet the proceedings string out into days, instead. By the tenth of March, the first public trial ends, and the second, a secret trial, begins. By this time, Joan is described as "listless and far away, and her answers showed that she was dazed and not able to keep

perfect run of all that was done and said" (III.XI.182). Here, then, is evidence that the diabolical plan of Evil is beginning to conquer Good.

After the second trial, Cauchon asks an able lawyer from Normandy for an opinion; his reply significantly upholds the claim of victimization:

He said that the whole thing was null and void . . . 1, because the trial was secret . . . ; 2, because the trial touched the honor of the King of France, yet he was not summoned to defend himself . . . ; 3, because the charges against the prisoner were not communicated to her; 4, because the accused, although young and simple, had been forced to defend her cause without help or counsel. (III.XIII.197-198)

This opinion reflects once more the completely unfair advantage of the evil forces over the good forces. Of course, Cauchon does not reveal this opinion. Instead, he drives the lawyer away through threats of drowning and immediately sets to work on a new mass of charges for Joan's third trial.

In this new list of charges, every fact of Joan's life is distorted by Cauchon:

It calls her a sorceress, a false prophet, an invoker and companion of evil spirits, a dealer in magic, a person ignorant of the Catholic faith, a schismatic; she is sacrilegious, an idolater, an apostate, a blasphemer of God and His saints, scandalous, seditious, a disturber of the peace; she incites men to war, and to the spilling of human blood; she discards the decencies and proprieties of her sex, irreverently assuming the dress of a man and the vocation of a soldier; she beguiles both princes and people; she usurps

divine honors, and has caused herself to be adored and venerated, offering her hands and her vestments to be kissed. (III.XIII.201)

By presenting such a perversion of the truth, Twain reveals to the reader the reasoning of an evil mind. But even with these charges, the third trial ends without definite results, and the malignant Bishop immediately plans a fourth. By now it is apparent that the trials will continue until Cauchon/Evil gets the result he wants--complete defeat of Joan/Good.

Between the third and fourth trials, Joan falls seriously ill. Yet, Cauchon prepares a new indictment listing twelve charges which are outright lies. Joan's health is broken, but Cauchon's threatening and storming continue because her spirit is not yet conquered. Even when the court renders its final guilty plea the last of May, Joan still refuses to confess to lies. Finally, however, she is tricked into signing a confession and the great crime against her is accomplished. The reader has witnessed Evil's steady victimization and defeat of Good.

Still more treachery awaits. Cauchon is not satisfied with Joan's imprisonment. He wants her life and soul as well. So at his direction, the guards steal Joan's female apparel while she sleeps and when she awakens she finds nothing but the male apparel which she has promised on threat of excommunication from the Church never to wear

again. She asks for her clothes; the guards refuse, so Joan puts on the male attire they have left because

. . . she saw that she could not save her life if she must fight for it against treacheries like this; so she put on the forbidden garments, knowing what the end would be since she was weary of the struggle (III.XXII.261)

The forces of Evil have broken the spirit of Good at last by a steady pyramiding of unfair victimizations which Twain uses allegorically.

Thus, the curtain descends on one of the worst miscarriages of justice ever recorded in human history. Twain's book is largely fact. Still, his imagination brings forth intimate little episodes which may have happened, and throughout the story Joan is depicted as the epitome of goodness as she is victimized and betrayed by various evil forces. Documentation reveals that Joan's life follows exactly the pattern of Twain's philosophy that it is impossible for Good to be victorious over Evil. Perhaps Twain viewed the whole story of Joan of Arc as the supreme vindication of such a philosophy.

Delancey Ferguson suggests that the reason Twain loved Joan of Arc the best of all his books was because he loved Joan.⁶⁰ Certainly, she was one of the most amazing females of all time, and apparently she was Twain's

⁶⁰ Delancey Ferguson, Mark Twain: Man and Legend, p. 263.

favorite historical personage as well. Since Twain often expressed an awe and reverence for good, this may help explain his fascination with the Maid of Orleans. At any rate, he uses Joan's victimizations to enhance her reputation and to demonstrate the tragic triumph of Evil over Good, but at the same time expresses a prophetic hope that eventual Good may come out of the whole affair.

Finally, there is further significance to Twain's characterization of Joan of Arc. At least one critic believes that Twain would not have gained fame and fortune if he had not had her for inspiration.⁶¹ Certainly there is a sentimental strain detectable in his book about Joan's life. In fact, Twain admits that he wrote the book for the sheer love of it and does not care if it sells or not.⁶² Furthermore, it is the only book he considered worthy of a dedication to his wife.⁶³

Can it be possible, then, that Twain's reverence and love for Joan is based not only on her "goodness," but also on his innate sympathy for her natural victimizations since victimizations of women play so prominent a role in his stories? Moreover, perhaps the reason he picked the

⁶¹ T. E. Holloway, "Mark Twain's Turning Point," Mark Twain Journal, VIII (Summer-Fall, 1948), 3.

⁶² Holloway, p. 2.

⁶³ Holloway, p. 2.

Sieur Louis de Conte to tell Joan's story is that de Conte is as infatuated with Joan as Twain. Twain seems to be ridiculing de Conte for his excessive sentimentality, not because he downgrades Joan's life or de Conte's love for her, but because this is one of the techniques of Twain's humor. Whenever he finds himself getting too serious, he ends the mood by throwing in a humorous punchline or observation, almost as if he is apologizing to his readers for taking himself so seriously. This may be his way of apologizing for his own infatuation.

Nevertheless, the sentimental de Conte, much more than a dispassionate observer, evokes more sympathy for Joan by dwelling on the melodramatic aspects of her life. In this way, victimization is more vividly and effectively dramatized in Joan of Arc than in any other of Twain's stories. Twain admits he started the book on six occasions with disappointing results, and only after he delegated de Conte as narrator did he find the right chemistry between narrator and subject.⁶⁴ This is, no doubt, a reflection of Twain's own love affair with the Maid of Orleans.

⁶⁴ Paine, Mark Twain: A Biography, p. 959.

CHAPTER V

VICTIMIZATION AND FEMALE CHARACTERIZATION

Twain's social conscience would not allow him to ignore injustice. He seemed to have an innate sympathy for the injured, and this sympathy may have contributed to his choice of continually characterizing women as victims. By exposing his women characters to victimizations which they cannot combat, Twain attacks a variety of serious issues. But, at the same time, Twain ridicules the foibles and idiosyncracies of these women and thereby intensifies their credibility as victims since they exhibit human traits with which the reader may sympathize and identify. Furthermore, the women's actions are psychologically motivated. The result is believable women characters who would be expected to act just as they do.

While Twain pictures Aunt Polly as somewhat pious and overly dedicated to her duty as an aunt, he also allows her the luxury of vanity since she buys spectacles built for style instead of service. Moreover, there is evidence of a childish delight in theatrics when Aunt

Polly peers out over these spectacles, or laughs at some of Tom's antics while trying to forgive the others. She is also forgetful, gullible, and readily moved to deep distress and anguish when Tom is missing. All of these human traits the reader recognizes and understands. So when Aunt Polly is victimized by Tom's outrageous exploits, the reader sympathizes with her plight and believes in her credibility.

Sandy's biggest fault is that she chatters incessantly. Twain exploits this tendency in order to ridicule the wordy prose of some of his predecessors. Furthermore, Sandy is somewhat pretentious, with delusions of grandeur. This is reflected in her distress at the prospect of sitting down to eat with the "freemen" on the road. She has been taught that princesses do not mingle with the common folk, and Twain uses this episode to emphasize the inequity of England's feudal system. Moreover, Sandy's faults tend to humanize her and make her victimization easier to accept.

Through Roxy, Twain suggests a misdirected, though human, sexual drive. Certainly, she is the proud mother of a distinguished white man's child. In this way, Twain examines the hushed, but not unusual, practice of miscegenation during the era of slavery in America. Like Aunt Polly, Roxy is also vain when she expresses a desire for her baby and herself to be dressed in nice clothes after their drowned bodies are fished out of the river. Roxy

is vain about the white blood in her veins as well, allowing Twain to re-emphasize the myth of white supremacy. Then, prompted by a mother's concern for her child, she commits a crime. And later, prompted by that child's cruelty, she responds with a vengeance by plotting his exposure. Because Roxy's emotions seem real and human, her victimization by her son seems even more tragic and credible.

Mary Richards is more afraid of being found out than of committing a wrongful act. This is a human response the reader may not applaud but will at least recognize and understand. Furthermore, Mary rationalizes that her poverty excuses her actions and that she and her husband will hurt no one by taking the money. This tendency to search for a reason for dishonesty is another trait readily identifiable as human; it allows Twain to satirize Hadleyburg's questionable honesty, while at the same time it contributes to the credibility of Mary's victimization.

Marget's credibility is enhanced by several girlish traits. When she meets Philip Traum, she finds his conversation fascinating and is then moved to pity when he tells of being an orphan. She is embarrassed at not having enough food to invite Philip/Satan to supper and later just as pleased to be able to entertain lavishly when food is more plentiful. Her girlish pride is hurt when Philip

abruptly stops calling. She deliberately tries to forget him by concentrating on Wilhelm, a common antidote for unrequited love. Furthermore, Marget feels remorse when she hears of Wilhelm's "dissipation" over jealousy of Philip Traum and is glad for the chance to ask him to defend her uncle since this will afford her a chance to make amends. She is completely distressed with her uncle's insanity and is puzzled over its cause. All of these responses are logical human responses and serve to make Marget even more believable as a victim.

Joan is characterized as an inexperienced young girl, so her many victimizations fall into place quite naturally. She responds like a young girl on several occasions when she asks about old friends and expresses a desire to see her family once more. Since she is young, idealistic and mortal, she cannot endure indefinitely the physical and mental torture of imprisonment; she ultimately capitulates to confessing what her enemies want to hear. Finally, since she is especially afraid of death by fire, the reader understands her extreme woe and momentary panic at being told this is how she must die. By giving Joan these girlish tendencies and fears, Twain succeeds in increasing her credibility as victim. At the same time, he indicts the English church for its profound cruelty and the French people for their inexcusable infidelity.

Besides giving his women victims completely human traits, Twain also develops their characters according to sound psychological principles. Aunt Polly is dedicated to her duty to Tom since he is her dead sister's child. Because she takes her duty seriously, she tries to do what is right even though she is confused about what really is right and proper in handling children. Sandy has led a sheltered life and is impressed with Hank Morgan's acts of magic and apparent bravery. She has been so indoctrinated into the philosophy of the chivalric code that she never questions him nor the system under which she must live. Roxy is motivated by a mother's love for her child and an intense desire to exempt that child from slavery. Mary Richards is poor, so her responses are based on this desperate need for more money. Marget is totally inexperienced in combatting evil. She is naturally dazzled by Satan's flamboyance when contrasted with Wilhem's mild-mannered reticence. Furthermore, she has been without necessities so long that she is understandably proud to be able to give a party and be included in Eseldorf society once more. Finally, Joan is motivated by a positive, unwavering religion and a sincere belief in the Voices that guide her. She is convinced that her destiny is to lead France to victory.

In view of all this evidence, one cannot escape the recurrent theme of victimization in several of Twain's works. Moreover, an analysis of Twain's women characters reveals that each female displays deep, human responses and consistently behaves in a sound, psychological fashion--a mode which makes for well-motivated, credible characters throughout.

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