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I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Douglas Kent McKinstry entitled "Mark Twain's Mississippi River Geniuses." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in English.

Allison R. Ensor
Allison R. Ensor, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation
and recommend its acceptance:

Charles J. Maland

L. H. Stuenkel

Mark A. Christiansen

Accepted for the Council:

Lawminkel
Vice Provost and
Dean of the Graduate School

MARK TWAIN'S MISSISSIPPI RIVER GENIUSES

A Dissertation

Presented for the

Doctor of Philosophy

Degree

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Douglas Kent McKinstry

December 1987

DEDICATION

TO MY BELOVED WIFE,
DONNA UBRY McKINSTRY

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank those many people who helped me during the research and writing of this dissertation. Dr. Allison Ensor made valuable suggestions and provided steady guidance and encouragement. Dr. William Shurr, Dr. Charles Maland, and Dr. Mark Christiansen gave helpful advice and support.

Special thanks go to my parents, William and Martha McKinstry, and to my friend and teacher, Gurumayi. Most of all, I thank my dear wife Donna for her tireless and unselfish support throughout my doctoral studies.

ABSTRACT

Nineteenth-century America was a hotbed of old and new systems, theories, and beliefs regarding man's personality and intellectual potential. Leading social and literary figures openly admired and investigated a wide range of ideas pertaining to man's personal abilities. One such investigator was Mark Twain. This study, concerned with questions of personality and intelligence, is a celebration of human genius as it is evidenced in six of Mark Twain's most gifted and most realistic characters.

Huckleberry Finn, Tom Sawyer, Pudd'nhead Wilson, Beriah Sellers, the King, and the Duke will be analyzed and compared according to an index of particular intelligences elaborated by Howard Gardner in Frames of Mind: A Theory of Multiple Intelligence. Gardner's delineations of five distinct intelligences are crucial guidelines in the consistent analysis of Twain's characters. With the aid of such guidelines, a close examination of each character reveals fascinatingly complex and realistic gifts of genius.

Chapter I introduces Twain, his interest in intelligence, and also some working definitions provided by Gardner. In Chapter II, Huck Finn is the first character fully presented, and he is considered not only in terms of his superlative personal intelligence, but also in terms of his linguistic, spatial, and bodily-kinesthetic abilities. Next, in Chapter III, Tom Sawyer is analyzed. Tom's linguistic, logical, bodily-kinesthetic, and personal abilities are discussed, and he is appropriately compared and contrasted with Huck,

Pudd'nhead, the King, and the Duke. Similarly, Chapters IV through VI consider, respectively, Pudd'nhead Wilson, Beriah Sellers, and the King and the Duke. Like earlier sections, each of these chapters discusses the particular abilities of the character(s) in question. Wherever cross-comparison is useful, two or more characters are juxtaposed in light of their comparable or contrasting abilities.

The six geniuses chosen for this study present *real* human abilities in various vivid contexts. These characters embody not only the fascinating operations of human intelligence, but also, by virtue of their various personalities, they represent the wide range of ways in which genius can be wisely or foolishly spent.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. THE ROMANTIC OUTCAST AND SUBSEQUENT RAFTSMAN	46
III. THE KING OF ST. PETERSBURG	102
IV. THE EDUCATED GENIUS.	137
V. THE COCKEYED OPTIMIST.	175
VI. THE KING AND THE DUKE.	201
LIST OF WORKS CITED.	246
VITA	250

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study is a celebration of human genius as it is evidenced in specific characters of Mark Twain. Although Twain's fascination with human personality is self-evident, and a related interest in genius explicitly recorded by Twain himself, I am not primarily concerned with biographical or otherwise explicit indications of such an interest. Rather I wish to focus on Twain's characters themselves and to discover in them the fascinating operations of genius. Although this study takes its justification largely from the beauty and significance inherent in human intelligence, and then from one author's gallery of uniquely gifted personalities, I will introduce the study by examining not only Twain's clear ideas about such personalities, but also a broad background of related ideas that prospered within Twain's intellectual milieu. This examination will feature a special consideration of nineteenth-century America's hospitality to virtually all ideas, theories, and systems addressing human personality and potential. While Twain's intellectual contexts alone do not prove his concern with intelligence or genius per se, they do, along with his explicit admissions, help anticipate Twain's visible absorption in human personality and its attendant gifts. Moreover, I will take these intellectual contexts into consideration as I then establish a working definition of genius which, as this study

intends, will be fitted to six of Twain's most famous and most gifted characters. Since my focus is real human abilities, I exclude from any in-depth examination those characters such as the Mysterious Stranger and the Connecticut Yankee who inhabit fantastical and distinctly unrealistic novels. Nor does space permit the inclusion of every realistically intelligent character in the Twain canon. Rather, on the premise (to be elaborated later) that Twain's most realistic and most neatly unified fiction is contained in four novels set beside or along the Mississippi River, I have selected for this study six geniuses from Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, Pudd'nhead Wilson, and The Gilded Age. While critics commonly have referred to the intelligence of Tom Sawyer and Pudd'nhead Wilson, I include four other characters--Huck Finn, Beriah Sellers, the King, and the Duke--who each realistically exhibit one or more extraordinary mental abilities, or facets of genius. This, in summary, is what the present study undertakes: to identify and expound upon certain real qualities of individual genius as evidenced in six of Mark Twain's most realistic and most fascinating characters.

Twain's explicit interest in genius might well be introduced by a look at his interest in human personality generally. Naturally such a concern is irresistibly implied in Twain's large array of brilliantly colorful characters, which include, besides the six in this study, at least dozens of others either invented or based on real people. As Twain himself indicates in the Preface

to The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, his creation of story characters is based largely on actual models and on meticulous attention to the real attributes of human personality:

Most of the adventures recorded in this book really occurred; one or two were experiences of my own, the rest those of boys who were schoolmates of mine. Huck Finn is drawn from life; Tom Sawyer also, but not from an individual--he is a combination of the characteristics of three boys whom I knew, and therefore belongs to the composite order of architecture.

As a humorist, Twain perhaps leans on the long-discovered truth that human personalities can be well defined, characterized, and broken down into their particular components and qualities. Twain must have made the same observations about human intelligence, in which he definitely was interested.

Twain's documented interest in personality attributes, types, and superiorities not only confirms his general interest in intelligence, but it also reflects the enthusiasm with which nineteenth-century intellectual America embraced new theories and systems concerning man's intellectual and spiritual capacities. Certainly any of Twain's passing references to transcendentalism, spiritualism, mesmerism, astrology, phrenology, physiognomy, homeopathy, and so on, finds abundant echo in the raging intellectual temper of the period. Although a germ of truth might be argued for any and all of these "pseudosciences," the significant point is that Twain lived in an age whose infatuation with human faculties and potentials left no thinking person free of the fever, and moved leading literary figures to a variety of astonishing positions.

While Emerson and Thoreau and Whitman were touting Eastern mysticism, Hawthorne living in a utopian commune, Henry James exploring spiritualism, Horace Greeley and William Cullen Bryant and Edgar Poe investigating phrenology and animal magnetism, it is no wonder that Twain was powerfully drawn to such issues. Moreover, many noteworthy authors of the period, but Hawthorne and Poe especially, worked pseudoscience prominently into their fiction. As the social observer and critic Harriet Martineau indicated in 1838, America's intellectual voracity far exceeded Britain's and rendered the New World a hotbed of enthusiasm, hysterically hospitable to new ideas:

When Spurzheim was in America, the great mass of society became phrenologists in a day, wherever he appeared; and ever since itinerant lecturers have been reproducing the same sensation in a milder way, by retailing Spurzheimism, much deteriorated, in places where the philosopher had not been. Meantime the light is always going out behind as fast as it blazes up round the steps of the lecturers. While the world of Richmond and Charleston is working at a multiplication of the fifteen casts (the same fifteen or so) which every lecturer carries about, and all caps and wigs are pulled off, all fair tresses dishevelled in the search after organization, Boston has gone completely round to the opposite philosophy, and is raving about spiritualism to an excess which can scarcely be credited by any who have not heard the Unknown Tongues. If a phrenological lecturer from Paris, London, or Edinburgh should go to Boston, the superficial, visible portion of the public would wheel round once more, so rapidly and with so clamorous a welcome on their tongues, that the transported lecturer would bless his stars which had guided him over to a country whose inhabitants are so candid, so enlightened, so ravenous for truth. Before five years are out, however, the lecturer will find himself superseded by some professor of animal magnetism, some preacher of homeopathy, some teacher who will undertake to analyze children, prove to them that their spirits made their bodies, and elicit from them truths fresh from heaven. (Stoehr, Hawthorne's Mad Scientists: 21-22)

While Miss Martineau's account is accurate enough, it is primarily a bemused report; other accounts, like physician David Meredith Reese's dilation on 1838 New York City, reveal more condemning criticism of America's self-edification mania:

Every year, and indeed almost every month, brings to our city some imported mountebank; some foreign or domestic humbug; each of which in its turn is greedily swallowed while the rage of novelty lasts, until another more clamorous, or more showy, succeeds it. Meanwhile, however, each of these acquires proselytes; and as fanaticism is constitutional, the same individuals, in many instances, deliberately swallow them all. Indeed there are gentlemen and ladies in this city, who have been successively gulled by Matthias, Fanny Wright, the moon story, and the Crawcours. They have taken the pills of foreign and domestic quacks by the thousand, with Lobelia, Cayenne pepper, and vapour baths. They have swallowed Maria Monk, abolitionism, and homeopathia; and are now equally busy in bolting down Phrenology and Animal Magnetism. (22)

The inclusion of abolitionism, which thirty years later was concretely rewarded, suggests Reese may have undervalued the whole gamut of newfangled theories and practices. Certainly some of what surfaced was wild extravagance, honest error, or conscious fraud, perhaps especially where mesmerism and its offspring, spiritualism, were involved. But the mere attention which notable authors paid the pseudosciences, in their writing and in their personal lives, significantly suggests that so many leading intellectuals were not simply grasping at straws.

Besides the fictional appearance of one or more so-called pseudosciences in the works of Hawthorne, Poe, Melville, Whitman, James, and Twain, a number of other prominent men gave personal recommendations to these arts that were sweeping America:

In 1847 Thomas Lake Harris had been a disciple of Andrew Jackson Davis, "the Poughkeepsie Seer," and so was involved in experiments with magnetic trances before embarking on his more messianic career at Mountain Cove and other stations of the Brotherhood. In general, however, the implications of pseudoscience were conceived as moral rather than mystical, even in a religious context. John Humphrey Noyes drew on phrenological terminology in formulating his theories of "Bible Communism" and "Complex Marriage," part of the Oneida experiment in communal living. Emerson called George Combe's phrenological Constitution of Man "the best sermon I have read for some time." The famous preacher Henry Ward Beecher, who had been the first to introduce Orson Fowler to phrenology (when both were undergraduates at Amherst), claimed that being without tools on a desert island would be "much the same plight that I should be [in] as a preacher if Phrenology and all that it has taught me of man, his character, his wants, and his improvement, were blotted from my mind. (28-9)

Stoehr evidently has less faith in phrenology and "pseudoscience" in general than did Beecher or probably any other interested figures of the day. As this passage indicates, phrenology was among the most celebrated discoveries of the period; certainly it was one of Twain's most avid investigations.

Twain's documented interest in phrenology, given the knowledge it purports to reveal, helps demonstrate his strong interest in intelligence and genius. According to the author of Heads and Headlines, Madeleine Stern,

In its simplest form, phrenology postulated that since the brain was the organ of the mind and shaped the skull which neatly cased the brain, there was an observable concomitance between man's mind--his talents, disposition, and character--and the shape of his head. To ascertain the former, one need only examine the latter. (x)

Clearly, whether Twain ultimately believed in phrenology or not, his vigorous attention to it reveals his strong interest in those

things that phrenology claimed to reveal, namely personality and intelligence. Phrenology was a promising tool for a nation of avid thinkers--Twain included--bent on investigating their own human makeup and potential:

The nineteenth-century American especially sought to know himself, for he--a sovereign individual--was a microcosm of that fabric. He heeded the injunction written in gold capitals upon the Temple of Delphos: "Know Thyself." (ix)

Like countless other Americans, famous or not, Twain regarded phrenology as the possible physical manifestation of man's most precious gifts, his moral and intellectual abilities.

Introduced to the United States public in 1832 by Dr. Johann Spurzheim, the comparatively new science of phrenology was largely popularized by Spurzheim's successor, Orson Fowler, who "devoted his life to nourishing it" (xv). With his brother Lorenzo, Orson Fowler took to the lecture circuit in the 1830's, and the two brothers proceeded to enlighten the eastern seaboard not only with erudite lectures but with impressively intricate physical demonstrations of applied phrenology:

The Fowlers, moving from upstate New York to Baltimore and on to St. Louis, were indeed making the country aware of this modern psychology. They went to Providence (where they examined Margaret Fuller), to Hawthorne's Salem, somewhat later to Mark Twain's Hannibal, feeling a multitude of heads, analyzing the foibles of a nation, and giving its writers a new vocabulary. (19)

So energetic and successful were the Fowlers' campaigns that, according to Stern,

about mid-century it indeed seemed that a phrenological bust might adorn every mantel and that the right to a phrenological examination might be regarded as one of the inalienable rights of every American. (81)

By this time, about 1850, a young Samuel Clemens was witness to these extraordinary promulgators of this extraordinary physical science of the mind. In The Autobiography of Mark Twain, the author vividly remembers the itinerant rage of the day:

In America, forty or fifty years ago, Fowler . . . stood at the head of the phrenological industry. . . . One of the most frequent arrivals in our village of Hannibal was the peripatetic phrenologist and he was popular and always welcome. He gathered the people together and gave them a gratis lecture on the marvels of phrenology, then felt their bumps and made an estimate of the result, at twenty-five cents per head. I think the people were almost always satisfied with these translations of their characters--if one may properly use that word in this connection; and indeed the word is right enough, for the estimates really were translations, since they conveyed seeming facts out of apparent simplicities into unsimple technical forms of expression, although as a rule their meanings got left behind on the journey. Phrenology found many a bump on a man's head and it labeled each bump with a formidable and outlandish name of its own. The phrenologist took delight in mouthing these great names; they gurgled from his lips in an easy and unembarrassed stream, and this exhibition of cultivated facility compelled the envy and admiration of everybody. By and by the people became familiar with these strange names and addicted to the use of them and they batted them back and forth in conversation with deep satisfaction--a satisfaction which could hardly have been more contenting if they had known for certain what the words meant. (69-70)

Of course Twain's fascination with phrenology would not die with the passing of his teenage years.

By 1863, long before Twain wrote the above reminiscence, the Fowler brothers, with a fabulous reputation in America and a growing one in Britain, established a "British branch" in London,

on Fleet Street, to which a multitude of locals and foreigners, Americans included, flocked with great interest. As Stern says,

Of those Americans none was more celebrated in reputation or more complicated in character than Mark Twain. Remembering the itinerant phrenologists of his Hannibal days, he was attracted by the Fowler name in London and decided to make what he called "a small test of phrenology for my better information." This test consisted in Twain's making two visits to the phrenologist, spaced three months apart, the first under an assumed name, the second under his famous nom de plume. The humorist claimed to have received conflicting analyses from the professor, and went away disenchanted not only with Fowler but with his science. Practicing deception, he did little more than deceive himself, for Lorenzo, authority on mnemonics, could never have forgotten Mark Twain's unmistakable features in a matter of three months. The author who came, pretending to test phrenology, was doubtless far more concerned with being tested, for Twain's interests ranged "through every subject from protoplasm to infinity," and not the least of his interests was, and would continue to be, the mind of man. (182-83)

Despite these satiric recollections in his Autobiography,

Mark Twain was not so prejudiced against phrenology that he would not at least once more in a later decade submit his skull to its probing test. Surely there is more of Mark Twain than of Lorenzo Fowler in the author's recollections. The Lorenzo Fowler who examined Walt Whitman with such perceptive skill and such profound influence turns into a mountebank devoid of sight and all but devoid of sense. And Mark Twain here reveals himself as one more interested in poking fun at a pseudoscience than in understanding it. Like a cat with a mouse, he worries his subject and, ashamed of its attraction for him, belittles the analyst along with the analyst. (Stern 185)

As Stern suggests, Twain's derision of phrenology may be more cosmic than serious; and other evidence reveals Twain's sincere subscription to at least some phrenological tenets, particularly the personality types which the Fowler brothers called "temperaments."

Twain's acknowledgement of phrenology's temperaments--which directly correspond to the four humours and the four astrological elements--not only affirms his interest in personality, but also points to the special mental aptitudes which describe genius itself. After all, even Twain's ripest satires of phrenology feature his alternate delight and disappointment over the diagnosed presence, then absence, of genius on his own skull:

Fowler received me with indifference, fingered my head in an uninterested way and named and estimated my qualities in a bored and monotonous voice. He said I possessed amazing courage, an abnormal spirit of daring, a pluck, a stern will, a fearlessness that were without limit. I was astonished at this, and gratified, too. (Twain, Autobiography: 71)

Clearly phrenology's greatest attraction for Americans, Twain included, was its practice of revealing, among other things, a client's most flattering personal potentials--born, of course, of his particular blend of "temperaments."

In "Mark Twain, Phrenology and the 'Temperaments': A Study of Pseudoscientific Influence," Alan Gribben documents Twain's fascination with temperaments, especially as evidenced in an 1855 notebook which Twain kept largely in response to phrenologist George Sumner Weaver's Mental Science. The notebook borrows freely from Weaver's book, although, says Gribben, "most of what Clemens transcribed is not concerned with phenology as such, but with the principles of an auxiliary theory, the division of mankind into four basic types of 'temperaments'" (46). Referring to a basic phrenological belief in external signs of human character, Gribben

makes the point that "the original developers of phrenology, ever schematic, had united this belief with the outline of the ancient physiological theory of cardinal humors" (46). Clearly revealing that Twain typed himself a "sanguine" personality, Gribben introduces one of Twain's letters to his mother and sister, written from Carson City in 1862, which

dispels any doubt that he definitely identified with this temperament or that he familiarized himself with rudimentary phrenological terminology. In the letter Clemens glowingly predicted bonanza success for a mine in which he owned shares. But he urged Pamela not to take his enthusiastic forecasts too seriously:

"Don't you know that people who are endowed with an uncongealable sanguine temperament--who never feel concerned about the price of corn--and who cannot, by any possibility, discover any but the bright side of a picture--are very apt to go to extremes, and exaggerate, with 40-horse microscopic power?" (50)

Gribben notes that in the 1855 journal Twain added to existing phrenological accounts of the sanguine type: "to the description of the 'sanguine' person he added several attributes to modify and extend certain points in order that they might apply more manifestly to himself" (49). Furthermore, Gribben finds "phrenological diction" in several of Twain's works--The Innocents Abroad, Roughing It, Life on the Mississippi, A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court--but he also observes Twain's decreasingly straightforward treatment of such locutions as the novelist matured: "In Tom Sawyer (1876) he began introducing phrenologists explicitly into his literature, always in a derogatory manner, and he commented unfavorably on them in Huckleberry Finn 1885" (67). Yet Gribben qualifies such usage:

These unsympathetic treatments of the subject, since they merely exposed the exploitation of a gullible public by charlatans, left open by implication the possibility of scientific validity for the discipline as a whole. (67)

Gribben suggests that Twain possibly never gave up phrenology in that he never quite contradicted its validity:

For someone like Clemens--who avidly collected the opinions of palmists, who rejoiced at each new experience of mental telepathy, and who maintained a skeptical but lifelong interest in spiritualism--phrenology and the temperaments quite understandably had an irresistible, recurring appeal. (68)

Thus, along with Madeleine Stern, Gribben makes an excellent case for Twain's active interest in personality--its particular types, expressions, and strengths.

The main point in this look at Twain's phrenology has been merely to introduce and document the notion that Twain found personality and intelligence--his own and other men's--fascinating subjects. For the purposes of this study, it matters not whether Twain finally admired phrenology or not, although evidence proves that he did for a while at least. What matters is Twain's unquestionable interest in personality types, aptitudes, and abilities. A biographical argument is built to support what is apparent everywhere in Twain's fiction--that his own greatest aptitude is the portraiture of colorful, often gifted, often aberrant personalities, like his own. Nevertheless, all the self-evident proofs in his fictional characters and the biographical proofs in his phrenological involvements only anticipate an

explicit proof of Twain's concern for the human gift of genius.

In Mark Twain in Eruption, where Twain is eulogizing a soon-to-die, real-life character and friend, Jim Gillis, the author is moved by his friend's extraordinary qualities to comment extensively on a subject which, as this study implicitly argues, was of central interest to Twain throughout his career:

I think Jim Gillis was a much more remarkable person than his family and his intimates ever suspected. He had a bright and smart imagination and it was of the kind that turns out impromptu work and does it well, does it with easy facility and without previous preparation, just builds a story as it goes along, careless of whither it is proceeding, enjoying each fresh fancy as it flashes from the brain and caring not at all whether the story shall ever end brilliantly and satisfactorily or shan't end at all. Jim was a born humorist and a very competent one. When I remember how felicitous were his untrained efforts, I feel a conviction that he would have been a star performer if he had been discovered, and had been subjected to a few years of training with a pen. A genius is not very likely to ever discover himself; neither is he very likely to be discovered by his intimates; in fact I think I may put it in stronger words and say it is impossible that a genius--at least a literary genius--can ever be discovered by his intimates; they are so close to him that he is out of focus to them and they can't get at his proportions; they cannot perceive that there is any considerable difference between his bulk and their own. They can't get a perspective on him, and it is only by a perspective that the difference between him and the rest of their limited circle can be perceived.

St. Peter's cannot be impressive for size to a person who has always seen it close at hand and has never been outside of Rome; it is only the stranger, approaching from far away in the Campagna, who sees Rome as an indistinct and characterless blur, with the mighty cathedral standing up out of it all lonely and unfellowed in its majesty. Thousands of geniuses live and die undiscovered--either by themselves or by others. But for the Civil War, Lincoln and Grant and Sherman and Sheridan would not have been discovered, nor have risen into notice. I have touched upon this matter in a small book which I wrote a generation ago and which I have not published as yet--Captain Stormfield's Visit to Heaven. When Stormfield arrived in heaven he was

eager to get a sight of those unrivaled and incomparable military geniuses, Caesar, Alexander and Napoleon, but was told by an old resident of heaven that they didn't amount to much there as military geniuses, that they ranked as obscure corporals only by comparison with a certain colossal military genius, a shoemaker by trade, who had lived and died unknown in a New England village and had never seen a battle in all his earthly life. He had not been discovered while he was in the earth, but heaven knew him as soon as he arrived there, and lavished upon him the honors which he would have received in the earth if the earth had known that he was the most prodigious military genius the plant had ever produced.
(359-60)

Given the evidence at hand, it is hardly necessary to suggest that Twain consciously equipped some of his characters with the rare and special abilities that he himself admired as gifts of genius. His attraction to personality types and strengths, to phrenological elaborations of mental ability; his literal reference to the workings of genius; and his gallery of colorfully talented characters, bespeak beyond doubt Twain's deliberate creation of certain extraordinarily capable personalities.

This study does not argue that all of Twain's geniuses go "undiscovered" as such, though for the most part they do. Their fellow characters never call them "geniuses": Twain seldom if ever refers to a character as a genius, but permits him (or her) to exhibit his or her abilities in the natural course of passing scenes. At any rate, regardless of just how undiscovered they remain, Twain's geniuses, and not Twain himself, are the focus of this work. As stated earlier, this study is a celebration of human genius as it happens to appear in the characters of one

writer artistically devoted to the subject. Thus this investigation aims to identify and analyze some fascinating geniuses-- incidentally "undiscovered" for the most part--in the works of one of America's foremost realists. For four reasons, realism being one of them, the scope of this study shall exclude all but six of Twain's brilliantly gifted characters.

In a study of Twain's geniuses, the exclusion of great intellects such as the Connecticut Yankee and the Mysterious Stranger (to name but two) must be justified. First of all, only realistic genius is the focus of this study, partly because this writer wishes to consider only real human abilities in more or less true-to-life situations, and partly because the preceding evidence of Twain's interest in genius indicates the same partiality in him. The Mysterious Stranger is more easily dismissed than the Yankee, for he is the very Devil come to earth; and his abilities, often grossly supernatural, are manifestations of purely fantastical, cosmical genius. The Connecticut Yankee more stubbornly begs inclusion, for all his ingenuity is as humanly possible as it is unrealistically situated. Hank Morgan's wits and devices are indeed exquisitely representative of "Yankee ingenuity," and of course the fantasyland he inhabits is a landscape gorgeously strewn with comic incongruities. As pleasing a work as it is, A Connecticut Yankee is not a rewarding focus in a study of realistic human abilities, if only because Hank Morgan's talents all are impossibly expressed, whether in showing up Merlin, King

Arthur, Lancelot, or hordes of Old English peasantry. Morgan is too fantastically situated to be included in a study of Twain's realistic characters--geniuses or otherwise. Thus the first criterion for inclusion in the present gallery is true-to-life genius expressed within a more or less realistic plot. The *Mysterious Stranger* misses on both counts, while the Yankee, though credibly endowed, struts on a richly incredible stage.

The second limiting criterion comes out of the first, in that Twain's most famous and characteristic realism, and the bulk of it as well, is neatly contained in four novels all set in or along the Mississippi River Valley. Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, Pudd'nhead Wilson, and The Gilded Age not only present a common geographical setting, none other than Twain's own famous stomping grounds, but also, perhaps because they are Twain's home base, embody the greatest portion of the romantic realism for which Twain the novelist is renowned. The four Missouri narratives easily constitute Twain's most coherent, consistent, and sustained celebration of human reality, American or otherwise. They are a convenient and logical quadruplicity. Thus the geniuses in this study not only are true-to-life, but for the sake of representative unity as well, they all belong to the Mississippi River Valley landscape which best characterizes Twain's realistic fiction. Like the first, this second parameter excludes a number of candidates such as the memorable talents Twain actually met in his travels or knew by

reputation: the humorist Josh Billings; the clever lawyer, politician, and orator, Thomas Fitch; Union Generals Grant, Sherman, and Sheridan; Twain's own physician, Dr. Fitzgerald; the brilliant Scots girl Marjorie Fleming; St. Joan of Arc--and so on. In view of the above actual persons, it should be noted that although this writer happily focuses on Twain's realistic fiction, Twain himself describes Huck Finn as a character "drawn from life," presumably from Twain's own life in Hannibal. Thus distinctions of real versus imaginary characters are moot, even though this work shall dwell contentedly in the regions of fictional, rather than historical, realism.

Still another justification--somewhat incidental--for excluding the likes of the Yankee, the Mysterious Stranger, and those numerous real talents whom Twain met or studied, is that unlike the six geniuses selected for this gallery, these others hardly go, or went, "undiscovered," as Twain's geniuses "most likely" do. Although this stipulation cannot be a properly limiting criterion since Twain merely says geniuses most likely go undiscovered, the distinction conveniently supports the selection already listed. Although Tom Sawyer and Pudd'nhead Wilson win some acclaim for their exploits, Tom's is mainly for his courage, and Pudd'nhead's is forestalled until the last two pages of his story. Most of Tom's real genius is but dimly discovered by others, and almost entirely by Huck, who of course never labels Tom a "genius" as such. As for Pudd'nhead, here is a classic undiscovered genius

who for twenty-three years and all but the last chapter of his saga labors quietly under a profoundly unfitting nickname and reputation. The other geniuses--Huck, Beriah Sellers, the King, and the Duke--are entirely less "discovered" than Tom, and ultimately less so than Pudd'nhead, who on his long-awaited glory day comes closest of all these characters to being a discovered and recognized genius. But the point remains that all six geniuses, Tom and Pudd'nhead included, are mainly and quite literally unacknowledged as such. Thus Twain's notions about essentially undiscovered superiority find strong corroboration in the six cases of superiority which make up this investigation.

Finally, the work of expounding six superlative intellects inevitably means in-depth character profiles across an entire index of intelligences, which means the eventual limitations of written space. Six human prodigies lifted from the Mississippi Valley require a good deal of elbow room, or ego room, however the metaphor fits. With Huck there is relatively little pride to contend with, and with Pudd'nhead just a trifle more; but these two take plenty of examination anyway, Huck because of great physical and moral conflicts, Pudd'nhead more for great learning and invention. Tom Sawyer is a vast study for his precocious imagination, theatrical wizardry, and, specifically, his obnoxiously ingenious "rescue" of Jim at the end of Huckleberry Finn. The King and the Duke take a long focus because their marvelous abilities are so enigmatically misspent. Similarly, Colonel Seller's talents are sufficiently

profuse and perverted to take a spacious explanation. Altogether, the examination of six amazing masterminds requires an investigation of generous proportions.

Though the gallery is selected and justified, it remains to establish working definitions and an overall organizing scheme. This study must employ not only a basic definition of genius, but also, as noted above, a consistently applied index of various forms or types of intelligence.

While undoubtedly thousands of subjective definitions of genius have been served up in the course of literary, political, and philosophical history, and while many of these, Twain's included, must have surfaced in the peculiar climate of nineteenth-century America, this study requires simply the basic definition of genius, which refers to superior and exceptional intelligence. The precise purpose of this work, after all, is to illustrate in six realistic characters the marvelous phenomenon of just such extraordinary ability. Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary provides the following applicable nuances of the word in question:

4. the peculiar structure of mind with which an individual is endowed; a particular natural talent or aptitude of mind which fits a man in an eminent degree for a certain study or course of life; as, a genius for history, for poetry, or painting. . . .

5. very high intellectual endowment; uncommon powers of intellect, particularly the power of invention or of producing great original works; as, Milton was a man of genius. . . .

6. A person having such endowment or ability; as, Shakespeare was a rare genius.

This entry goes on to list several synonyms for genius--"talent, wisdom, faculty, aptitude, ability, ingenuity, capacity, cleverness"--but in this study the approximate working definitions will simply be, as suggested above, "very high intellectual endowment; uncommon powers of intellect. . . . A person having such endowment or ability." Although the fourth definition and the appended synonyms will be used where applicable, the basic meaning of genius always will be, in effect, great intelligence or he who possesses great intelligence.

It so happens that none of the present characters is quite a literary genius (Milton et al.), although Tom Sawyer makes ingenious use of literature, and Huck Finn is the supposed author of his own story. However, as Twain himself indicates in his remarks about Jim Gillis and "undiscovered" genius in general, several kinds of genius or high intelligence certainly exist. Within the same passage Twain alludes to Jim Gillis' comic genius, to the inevitably "undiscovered" literary genius, to the architectural genius behind St. Peter's Cathedral, to the political genius of Lincoln, and to the military genius of Grant, Sherman, Sheridan, Caesar, Alexander, and Napoleon. Although genius arguably exists wherever exceptional intelligence is owned or exercised, the numberless manifestations of genius may be--and have been--indexed according to basic modes or forms of intelligence. Although this writer feels an irresistible need to analyze each of the present geniuses across a common index of intelligences, a contemporary

theorist on intelligence, Howard Gardner, points out that for centuries a debate has existed as to whether man's intellect can be sensibly compartmentalized or not.

Howard Gardner's Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences is a recent, thoroughgoing, and innovative study whose basic argument is that "there is persuasive evidence for the existence of several relatively autonomous human intellectual competences, abbreviated hereafter as 'human intelligences'" (80). In introducing his argument, however, Gardner provides a brief cross-cultural history of views on intelligence, including those which question "the propriety of parceling intellect into parts" (8). Without exhaustively refuting those who, after British psychologist Charles Spearman's example, believe in "a general overriding factor of intelligence" (8), Gardner takes the position "that there exist at least some intelligences, that these are relatively independent of one another, and that they can be fashioned and combined in a multiplicity of adaptive ways by individuals and cultures" (9). Naturally Gardner is not the first theorist to posit distinct and independent intelligences, but he convincingly claims to have constructed a more formidable argument than his predecessors, who have been unconvincing, chiefly because they rely on only one or, at the most, two lines of evidence. Separate "minds" or "faculties" have been posited solely on the basis of logical analysis, solely on the history of educational disciplines, solely on the results of intelligence testing, or solely on the insights obtained from brain study. These solitary efforts have rarely yielded the same list of competences and have thereby made a claim for multiple intelligences seem that much less tenable. (9)

Before Gardner's unique authority is fully presented, the reader may wish to know this study's intended connection between Gardner and Twain.

The purpose in analyzing Twain's characters is certainly not to involve them in a mass of complicated theories of intelligence, nor is it to prove Gardner's theories, or anyone else's, superior to the rest. Gardner's Frames of Mind is simply an eminently readable, painstakingly formulated, current, original, and comprehensively winning catalog of human intelligences, most of which are irresistibly applicable to a study whose very purpose is to catalog the various abilities found in some of Twain's most brilliant characters. Elaborate and expansive though it is, Gardner's work will be used here only for the core delineations and definitions of the various intelligences it argues. It would be a mistake to suggest that Gardner's careful delineations--though deliberately chosen for this study--will be more than working definitions, necessary yardsticks for the consistent measurement and cross-comparison of Twain's mental giants. As was pointed out earlier, the central and sustained focus will be Twain's characters--not Twain himself, and certainly not any abstract conceptions of intelligence.

Although Gardner's definitions will function more or less like those taken from a standardized dictionary, the reader may also desire some explanation of Gardner's selection over his contemporaries, recent forerunners, and more distant predecessors who were contemporaries of Twain himself. For example, as Gardner

explains, Spurzheim's and Joseph Gall's phrenological doctrine featured

some thirty-seven different powers which included affective faculties, such as amateness, philoprogenitiveness, and secretiveness; sentiments like hope, reverence, and self-esteem; reflective powers and perceptual capacities, including language, tune (for music), as well as sensitivity to such visual properties as shape and color. (12)

Phrenology may have been the first documented American theory based on the idea of multidimensional intelligence; and indeed the notion of analyzing Twain's geniuses via a system which Twain himself explored is an attractive one.

Although phrenology is genuinely informative, there are several reasons why it would not be the proper method for "reading" Huck, Tom, and the others. Besides Twain's unstable dedication to phrenological doctrine, naturally there is a complete absence of skull measurements or diagrams for his characters, anyway; nor do phrenology's four "temperaments" have much capacity to describe the specific intellectual gifts even of living persons. Also, as Gardner points out, certain phrenological fallacies concerning brain size and skull shape and size render phrenology a partially suspect science at any rate. Nevertheless, Gardner, for one, links certain phrenological tenets to the most modern views on intelligence. For example, phrenology's "brain-behavior correlations" (13) are still being investigated today. And especially relevant to this study is phrenology's insistence on distinct types of personality and corresponding intelligence. More will be said on phrenology, for it is an interesting link between Twain's

views on intelligence and views held by prominent modern-day researchers. Thus, while phrenology itself cannot be the yardstick for measuring Huck's or Tom's intelligence, it seems to anticipate a prevailing modern view which would argue that Huck and Tom each have several kinds of intelligence as opposed to only a "general" intellectual quotient based on a number of narrowly defined skills.

It is interesting to note that Alfred Binet, one of the pioneers in intelligence-testing, helped carry phrenological concerns into the modern scientific era. Like the phrenologists, Binet exercised a certain interest in the human skull. In 1900 he went "off on one of his numerous tangents into a lengthy piece of work on the technique of the measurement of the living head" (Pintner 28). Naturally Binet was seeking a strong correlation between head size and intelligence, and he did not exhaust his interest in this subject until he had written "a number of articles all dealing with the results of his cephalometric research" (29).

Such experiments were not Binet's main focus or his first claim to notoriety. According to Cecil Reynolds and Alan Kaufman, Binet's "investigations of complex mental tasks" (604) already had challenged the work of Francis Galton, whose pronounced interest in genius might be relevant to this study--and more relevant generally--were his scale of abilities not based so much on sensory discrimination and coordination, qualities hardly measurable in literary characters and not generally considered synonymous to intelligence anyway. According to Reynolds and Kaufman, just as

Galton's sensory-motor indices were challenged by Binet's "complex mental tasks," Binet's work was later challenged by David Wechsler's scales, whose chief improvement over Binet's tests was their balancing of verbal and nonverbal subtests (607). Although it is not the place here to outline the massive intricacies involved in Binet's and Wechsler's dedicated studies of intelligence, these representative pioneers must at least be acknowledged. As any knowledgeable investigator of intelligence will admit, Binet and Wechsler (and Terman, Thurstone, Guilford, etc.) were energetic leaders in the wide field of intelligence-testing.

Because both Wechsler and Binet essentially believed the theory of a single, general intelligence quotient, their testing scales include too many subtests, or particular tasks, that cannot be applied to the analysis of literary beings. This extreme specificity is one problem with the single intelligence theory, and is why the enormous efforts of men such as Binet and Wechsler are not useful to the present study.

Thus it is this writer's determination that an index of so-called autonomous intelligences will be far more useful in analyzing Twain's geniuses than any index of particular and narrow skills that typify general-intelligence test scales. Now the question remains, why choose Gardner over other theorists who perceive man's intellect as divisible into separate intelligences? While Gardner certainly boasts an energetic, massively researched, and innovative approach to the study of discrete intelligences, and is critically

acclaimed for these virtues, he is by no means the groundbreaker in theorizing multidimensional intelligence. Gardner himself acknowledges two great forerunners, L. L. Thurstone and J. P. Guilford. Like Gardner, Guilford acknowledges Thurstone as the primary mover away from the general-intelligence theory:

During the 1930s L. L. Thurstone, at the University of Chicago, gave birth to a quite different direction in factor analysis. His general theory viewed intelligence as a multidimensional phenomenon, each dimension in space representing a unique mental ability. (Guilford 227)

Indeed Thurstone's primary mental abilities are almost as useful as Gardner's classifications. Including "verbal comprehension, numerical facility, spatial ability, perceptual speed, rote memory, induction, and deduction" (Guilford 228), Thurstone's seven primary abilities describe some of the same abilities as does Gardner's index, but without the vast information, synthesis, and overall sensibility which Gardner's updated research affords him; without the suggestions of the interconnectedness of these basic abilities; but especially without some newly elaborated abilities crucial to this analysis of Twain's characters.

Although Guilford expanded Thurstone's ideas on "creative thinking" (245), his efforts still have not yielded an index as inviting as Gardner's scale of Multiple Intelligences. Though a certain arbitrariness may be charged in the selection of Gardner over pioneering and prodigious theorists touting the same basic beliefs, it is not to be contested that his theory is representative of the

multidimensional viewpoint in general. Moreover, Gardner's work is not just representative: according to several different observers, it has uniquely winning virtues.

According to Gardner himself, his theory of Multiple Intelligence, though compatible with multifactorial viewpoints, surpasses them in breadth, depth, and coherence:

Where, then, does M. I. theory depart from the multifactorial point of view? First of all, the latter does not question the existence of general horizontal abilities, like perception and memory, which may cut across different content areas. Indeed, the multifactorial point of view exhibits a studied indifference to this issue, because some factors are indeed horizontal forms of memory or perception, while others reflect strict content areas, like spatial ability. Second, the multifactorial point of view does not make intellectual contact with biology but is strictly empirical, the result of correlations among test scores, and of nothing more. Third, and perhaps most crucial, the multifactorial approach does not allow one to sample the range of intellectual competences I have considered here. So long as one is content to use paper-and-pencil or brief interviewing techniques, lasting minutes rather than hours, there is simply no way to sample an individual's competence in such areas as bodily expression, muscular ability, or the forms of personal intelligence. Thus while laudably more pluralistic than the "g" [general intelligence] school, the multifactorial approach provides only that extremely partial glimpse of intelligence that reflects the Western scientific ethos. (321)

Clearly Gardner labels as "multifactorial" any theory whose posited mental abilities appear less well defined, less distinct, less consistently formulated, and, in general, less like real intelligences, than his own Multiple Intelligences. Although the present study scarcely addresses biology, two of the distinctions made in the above passage bear on the choice of Gardner as the guiding theorist.

First, unlike multifactorial theorists such as Thurstone and Guilford, Gardner studies the so-called "higher-level" (286) operations such as common sense, originality, and metaphorical capacity, whose apparently general natures defy categorization within individual intelligences. Although such capacities suggest some "central processor" (281) interconnecting several individual intelligences, Gardner frankly admits that no one, himself included, seems ready to describe or outline this processing mechanism in the detailed way that so-called autonomous intelligences have been delineated. Nevertheless, Gardner does anything but ignore these "horizontal" or higher-level capacities, discussing in detail how they manifest across his index of intelligences.

Second, and perhaps most important to this study, is the range of Gardner's index, for it includes at least two intelligences--the bodily-kinesthetic and the personal--which not only are brilliantly original profiles, but which also seem serendipitously suitable for analyzing the abilities of Twain's characters. These two profiles alone put Gardner's index quite apart from the strictly verbal and logical indices that have dominated intelligence tests since they first appeared over a hundred years ago. The bodily-kinesthetic intelligence figures prominently in all of the present characters, but especially in the conduct of the King and the Duke. The personal intelligences, mainly what Gardner calls the interpersonal intelligence, also help describe all six geniuses, for all exhibit a great facility for effective interaction with

others. Although interpersonal intelligence often may require verbal facility, it is not simply a verbal or logical skill, but one which also involves intuitive perception and manipulation of other people's unique psychologies. Thus Gardner's particular scale of abilities includes several strikingly original elaborations, at least two of which appear indispensable to a thorough analysis of Twain's gifted gallery.

In the midst of arguing Howard Gardner's special qualifications, I remind the reader that the great bulk of Gardner's own genius cannot be utilized in the confines of this work. Nevertheless, though this study focuses on Twain's characters and will use only the simplest definitions of Gardner's various intelligences, I conclude Gardner's justification with a few more recommendations.

One is this bit of self-justification taken from the first chapter of Frames of Mind, in which Gardner reveals, among other things, a few other qualities which distinguish his research from previous work in the field:

My procedure is quite different. In formulating my brief on behalf of multiple intelligences, I have reviewed evidence from a large and hitherto unrelated group of sources: studies of prodigies, gifted individuals, brain-damaged patients, idiots savants, normal children, normal adults, experts in different lines of work, and individuals from diverse cultures. A preliminary list of candidate intelligences has been bolstered (and, to my mind, partially validated) by converging evidence from these diverse sources. I have become convinced of the existence of an intelligence to the extent that it can be found in relative isolation in special populations (or absent in isolation in otherwise normal populations); to the extent that it may become highly developed in specific individuals or in specific cultures; and to the extent that

psychometricians, experimental researchers, and/or experts in particular disciplines can posit core abilities that, in effect, define the intelligence. Absence of some or all of these indices, of course eliminates a candidate intelligence. In ordinary life, as I will show, these intelligences typically work in harmony, and so their autonomy may be invisible. But when the appropriate observational lenses are donned, the peculiar nature of each intelligence emerges with sufficient (and often surprising) clarity. (9)

Here, then, is another serendipitous compatibility: Gardner's wide range of subjects suggests the wide diversity of geniuses in this study--from a grade school dropout to an erudite law school graduate to a seventy-year-old con man. Gardner's stringent proving of his candidate intelligences is auspiciously mirrored in their applied description of such divergent, eccentric, and aberrant personalities as Twain depicts.

Another recommendation comes from Gardner's critics, in several reviews of Frames of Mind. Although none of these appraisals, however flattering, makes a better recommendation than the book's aforementioned qualifications, the following reviews can only strengthen Gardner's justification as a guiding theorist on intelligence. In more or less ascending order of fanfare, the assessments run thus:

Although Gardner has occasional difficulty making such a heterogeneous body of information coalesce into an organized, accessible form, the book's eclecticism is one of its main virtues. Since the number and classification of intellectual regions in the brain is still an open question, Gardner's relatively errant approach is worthwhile. (Singer 76)

Gardner (associated with Harvard's Project Zero and the Boston Veterans Administration Medical Center) offers a

broad-ranging discussion of neuroscience and cognitive psychology principles as seen from the perspective of a new theory of intelligence proposed by him. . . . This is a scholarly but lively book that should be carefully read by professionals in the field and all others who are concerned with how to improve intelligence by more effective education. (Adelman 1881)

For his attempt to integrate diverse approaches, Mr. Gardner deserves everyone's gratitude. The fact that he calls his proposal a theory should not frighten off a general reader. It is less a scientific theory than a line on which he hangs out his intellectual laundry. And interesting laundry it is. Mr. Gardner is an artful scribbler with a clinician's eye. In marginal and abnormal cases he can find clues to much that is hidden and perhaps universal. His curiosity is wide ranging, his judgment good, and his clinical bizzarerie interesting. The result is good reading for anyone with more than a passing interest in the complexities of the human mind. But how much of it will pass the critical tests of further research is debatable More than any of his earlier books, this one suggests the personal commitment that binds together and gives coherence to the multiple interests and multiple intelligences of Howard Gardner. (Miller 5)

Gardner's is a timely, wide-reaching, and in many ways brilliant book. His effort to bring together the data of neurology, exceptionality, development, and symbolic-cultural skills is not only heroic but makes extremely evocative reading. . . . To the extent that intelligence can be analyzed into components, this book is a creative and comprehensive effort to document the case. But as Gardner himself says, "These intelligences . . . are at most useful fictions, . . . sets of know-how." With this conclusion, I find myself in complete agreement. But his approach is so far beyond the data-crunching of mental testers that it deserves to be cheered. (Bruner 84)

The accolades speak for themselves, but George Miller's comments suggest a virtue not yet mentioned. Gardner's "abnormal cases" of intelligence describe perhaps every character in this study, possibly because genius dictates other abnormalities besides the

intellectual. At any rate, Huck, Tom, Pudd'nhead, Beriah Sellers, the King, and the Duke all are striking embodiments of genius, whose particular social or psychological aberrations indeed suggest "much that is hidden and perhaps universal" about the personality of genius. Gardner's unique comprehensiveness is bound to recognize the unpredictability of exceptional human intelligence.

A closing note on the relevance of Gardner's ideas refers back to phrenology, in which Gardner and Twain both have shown some interest. It is at least a harmonious concurrence, if not another recommendation as well, that the pseudoscience Twain engaged so energetically figures significantly, and not unfavorably, in Howard Gardner's introduction to this study. It has been seen that, for a while at least, Twain believed in phrenological types or temperaments, and that he took decided interest in the various cognitive and creative faculties which phrenology claims to ascertain. Of course Gardner is also interested in man's different faculties, and he pays phrenology at least more straightforward respect than Twain ever did. Gardner credits Franz Gall, one of phrenology's Western proponents, with several

pregnant ideas, among them this fascinating claim: there do not exist general mental powers, such as perception, memory, and attention; but, rather, there exist different forms of perception, memory, and the like for each of the several intellectual faculties, such as language, music, or vision. Though seldom taken seriously throughout most of the history of psychology, this idea proves to be highly suggestive and may well be correct. (13)

These "different forms" which Gall recognized correspond precisely to the "horizontal" and "higher-level" operations which Gardner

considers crucial to any comprehensive and consistent theory on intelligence. In short, Gardner credits phrenology with having more theoretical insight than virtually all the other theories he critiques. He also credits Gall with being "among the first modern scientists to stress that different parts of the brain mediate different function" (13). Gardner is not a modern-day phrenologist, but he acknowledges some merit in phrenological doctrine, just as Twain did. In a sense, Gardner's emphatic recognition of phrenology bridges by itself whatever chronological gap might exist between his views and Twain's. In other words, it is pleasing to note, finally, that besides Gardner's many other recommendations, he has the additional virtue of having apprehended man's intelligences in a manner significantly compatible with Twain's own views on the subject.

What remains now is the outlining of Gardner's intelligences, a reiteration of the working definition of genius, the calculated ordering of character profiles, and some final statements about the limitations of this project. As the project develops, further qualifications of these factors may be described.

Gardner sets forth six basic kinds of intelligence, five of which distinctly describe one or more of Twain's geniuses. The five intelligences that will be applied are called linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, and personal, though Gardner divides the last one into intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligences. The only core of abilities not applicable

is the musical: no one in the present gallery either demonstrates or is said to demonstrate what Gardner defines as musical intelligence. For that matter, the five workable intelligences will not each apply to all characters because this study's definition of genius requires demonstrably superior ability, which some of the present gallery cannot claim in all five areas considered.

However, for purposes of rounded discussion, in whatever area a particular character--say, Colonel Sellers--is not exceptionally capable, his moderate or inferior capacities may be evaluated in order to compare him to other characters or to comment on broader questions of personality and intelligence. For example, Colonel Sellers' spectacular absence of even ordinary logical foresight begs some analysis in view of his equally spectacular failure as a businessman, speculator, advisor, and family man. Similarly, the King's profound amorality demands some discussion of his at best perverted intrapersonal intelligence, which intelligence Gardner calls the "access to one's own feeling life" (239). In short, then, a character's inadequacies in a given area may be the subject of some commentary, despite the conspicuous absence of genius.

Now for the working definitions of the five intelligences which throughout this study will spell genius wherever characters manifest them with demonstrably remarkable excellence. In Gardner's chronology the first intelligence presented is linguistic; and its core definition, as far as this investigation is concerned, is

threefold. Although Gardner singles out four facets of linguistic ability, only the first three have much to say about Twain's characters:

First of all, there is the rhetorical aspect of language--the ability to use language to convince other individuals of a course of action. This is the ability that political leaders and legal experts have developed to the highest degree, but that every three-year-old desirous of a second helping of cake has already begun to cultivate. Second of all, there is the mnemonic potential of language--the capacity to use this tool to help one remember information, ranging from lists of possessions to rules of a game, from directions for finding one's way to procedures for operating a new machine.

A third aspect of language is its role in explanation. Much of teaching and learning occurs through language In addition, language supplies the metaphors that are crucial for launching and for explaining a new scientific development. (78)

All six characters in this study are gifted in one or more of these linguistic areas.

The next applicable intelligence Gardner examines is logical-mathematical, for which no simple core definition is given, but which Gardner fairly sums up in an introductory paragraph:

In contrast to linguistic and musical capacities, the competence that I am terming "logical-mathematical intelligence" does not have its origins in the auditory-oral sphere. Instead, this form of thought can be traced to a confrontation with the world of objects. For it is in confronting objects, in ordering and reordering them, and in assessing their quantity, that the young child gains his or her logical-mathematical realm. From this preliminary point, logical-mathematical intelligence rapidly becomes remote from the world of material objects. By a sequence to be described in this chapter, the individual becomes more able to appreciate the actions that one can perform upon objects, the relations that obtain among those actions, the statements (or propositions) that one can make about actual or potential actions, and the relationships among those statements. Over the course of development,

one proceeds from objects to statements, from actions to the relations among actions, from the realm of the sensori-motor to the realm of pure abstraction--ultimately, to the heights of logic and science. The chain is long and complex, but it need not be mysterious: the roots of the highest regions of logical, mathematical, and scientific thought can be found in the simple actions of young children upon the physical objects in their worlds. (129)

Given the length of this explanation, a shorter working definition will be required for documenting a particular character's exceptional logical-mathematical intelligence.

One move in this direction would be to focus on the most comprehensive description in the above passage, namely an individual's ability

to appreciate the actions that one can perform upon objects, the relations that obtain among those actions, the statements (or propositions) that one can make about actual or potential actions, and the relationship among those statements. (129)

Though this capsule is still a bit cumbersome, parts of it may be usefully applied to the present analyses. Nevertheless, a more straightforward equation must be available, one that succinctly denotes superior ability in this area. Without altering Gardner's basic focus, but considerably simplifying it, an adjusted equation for logical-mathematical genius might be demonstrably superior ability to reason soundly and acutely. This unavoidable abbreviation rules out neither the mathematical nuances in particular, nor the elaborations of logic in general, that are presented in Gardner's profile of logical-mathematical intelligence. As in the case of his other "competences," even if Gardner's fine

dilations on logic ultimately must be neglected in the present investigation, the working definition of logical genius always will be wholly consistent with, and in some cases derived from, Gardner's theory of logical-mathematical ability.

Moving to spatial intelligence, one again finds, as with the linguistic intelligence, a core definition that is workable and readily usable:

Central to spatial intelligence are the capacities to perceive the visual world accurately, to perform transformations and modifications upon one's initial perceptions, and to be able to re-create aspects of one's visual experience, even in the absence of relevant physical stimuli. (173)

As with the other abilities, though a basic definition of spatial intelligence will be employed, so may other explanations which Gardner presents. For example, says Gardner,

A final facet of spatial intelligence grows out of the resemblances that may exist across two seemingly disparate forms, or, for that matter, across two seemingly remote domains of experience. In my view, that metaphoric ability to discern similarities across diverse domains derives in many instances from a manifestation of spatial intelligence. For example, when the gifted essayist Lewis Thomas draws analogies between micro-organisms and an organized human society, depicts the sky as a membrane, or describes mankind as a heap of earth, he is capturing in words a kind of resemblance that may well have occurred to him initially in spatial form. Indeed, underlying many scientific theories are "images" of wide scope: Darwin's vision of the "tree of life," Freud's notion of the unconscious as submerged like an iceberg, John Dalton's view of the atom as a tiny solar system, are the productive figures that give rise to, and help to embody, key scientific conceptions. It is possible that such mental models or images also play a role in more mundane forms of problem solving. In each case, these images have likely arisen in visual form, but each of them could have been created--or appreciated--by an individual who is blind. (176-77)

As will be shown, all characters in the present gathering feature some sort of extraordinary spatial intelligence.

While a good portion of the next intelligence, the bodily-kinesthetic, focuses on such individuals as dancers, swimmers, artisans, ballplayers, and instrumentalists, "who are able to manipulate objects with finesse," Gardner also focuses on "other individuals in whom use of the body proves central, such as inventors or actors" (207). The core components of bodily intelligence, then, are "control of one's bodily motions and capacity to handle objects skillfully" (206). Since most of the bodily-kinesthetic genius to be witnessed indeed does involve invention or thespianism, a preliminary working definition is not complete without more detailed description of these gifts.

Regarding the actor's intelligence, Gardner alludes to the research of British psychologist Sir Frederic Bartlett:

According to Bartlett's analysis, all skilled performances include a well-honed sense of timing, where each bit of a sequence fits into the stream in an exquisitely placed and elegant way; points of repose or shift, where one phase of the behavior is at an end, and some calibration is necessary before the second one comes into play; a sense of direction, a clear goal to which the sequence has been heading; and a point of no return, where further input of signals no longer produces a result because the final phase of the sequence has already been activated. (208)

Before this delicate timing, Gardner discusses--in connection with gifted acting--observation, imitation (mimesis), concentration, memory, emotional intuition, and the titular kinesthesia--"the capacity to act gracefully and to apprehend directly the actions

or the dynamic abilities of other people or objects" (228). These talents will be elaborated in their appropriate places, but together they suggest a good preliminary definition of the actor's portion of bodily intelligence.

As in numerous other contexts, when Gardner defines the inventor's special abilities he argues particular combinations of intelligences. Thus, while "the inventor does not merely use materials in culturally established ways but actually rearranges materials in order to create an object better fitted to the task that he is confronting" (231), neither does the same inventory employ only bodily intelligence. Gardner illustrates ways in which invention depends on bodily, spatial, and logical-mathematical abilities combined. As noted, the working combination of intelligences is a significant part of Gardner's overall focus, and will be a focus in this study as well.

Thus the facets of bodily-kinesthetic intelligence relevant to Twain's geniuses will be only those abilities required by the actor or the inventor, though these abilities describe a wide range of competences as well as all six characters under investigation. Referring again to combined intelligences, Gardner describes two basic acting techniques which effectively introduce the remaining intelligences in his survey:

On the other hand, some acting techniques de-emphasize the need to re-create the felt mood, and stress instead attention to surface details. In the terms of this study, I might suggest that an "emotion-centered" acting technique highlights the intrapersonal intelligence, while the latter "surface" form mobilizes interpersonal intelligence. (227)

As "players," the present company are fairly divided between these two techniques, though of course the personal intelligences encompass more than playacting, invention, or any other single facet of bodily-kinesthetic genius.

For the purposes of this introduction, Gardner's personal intelligences conveniently conclude his list of abilities, for these intelligences particularly well describe a principle of personal awareness and conduct by which I mean to order the introduction and analysis of Twain's characters. Reversing Gardner's chronology, one sees that all six geniuses have, first of all, good interpersonal intelligence, which permits them

to read the intentions and desires--even when these have been hidden--of many other individuals and, potentially, to act upon this knowledge--for example, by influencing a group of disparate individuals to behave along desired lines. We see highly developed forms of interpersonal intelligence in political and religious leaders (a Mahatma Gandhi or a Lyndon Johnson), in skilled parents and teachers, and in individuals enrolled in the helping professions, be they therapists, counselors, or shamans. (239)

The King and Duke both, but the King mainly, have tried their hand at quasi-religious monomania; they and Pudd'nhead have been, respectively, phony and genuine professional "helpers"; the King and Duke have presumed to be something akin to therapists; and they, Colonel Sellers, Pudd'nhead Wilson, and even Tom Sawyer have counseled others. Admittedly, Gardner may have no literary types in mind; but Twain's characters decisively fit, or do not fit, their intellectual parts, here and elsewhere.

One of several places they glaringly miss the mark is in intrapersonal intelligence, whose

most advanced level . . . allows one to detect and to symbolize complex and highly differentiated sets of feelings. One finds this form of intelligence developed in the novelist (like Proust) who can write introspectively about feelings, in the patient (or the therapist) who comes to attain a deep knowledge of his own feeling life, in the wise elder who draws upon his own wealth of inner experiences in order to advise members of his community. (239)

Only Huck, Tom, and Pudd'nhead show this kind of promise, and only the boys do so with any sort of revealing view of their introspection. One can assume Pudd'nhead has done a great deal of introspection, but little if any is shown. He has neither the first-person exhibitionism of Huck nor the omnisciently invaded privacy of third-person hero Tom Sawyer.

As for Colonel Sellers, the King, and the Duke, the verdict is far worse. Their intrapersonal intelligence, hardly what one can call genius, is brilliantly captured in Gardner's estimation of the lower octave consciousness:

In its most primitive form, the intrapersonal intelligence amounts to little more than the capacity to distinguish a feeling of pleasure from one of pain and, on the basis of such discrimination, to become more involved in or to withdraw from a situation. (239)

Sellers, the King, and the Duke are as adeptly primitive in their pleasure-seeking as functional sociopaths can get. In their perverted ways, they even appear to meet Gardner's core definition of intrapersonal intelligence:

Access to one's own feeling life--one's range of affects or emotions: the capacity instantly to effect discriminations among these feelings and, eventually, to label them, to enmesh them in symbolic codes, to draw upon them as a means of understanding and guiding one's behavior. (239)

The King and the Duke especially display an amazing range of emotions, though these mostly are counterfeit joys and sorrows. Both frauds certainly discriminate among their myriad falsified feelings and employ them along various avenues of personal misbehavior. Sellers similarly perverts an inner world, even though his feeling nature is partly genuine and decent. Nevertheless, however brilliantly these three harness their real or simulated emotions, their conduct is selfish, criminally insensitive, and divorced from the life of real introspection and self-knowledge, which are the fruits of personal genius. Indeed the King's and Duke's talents are so profoundly misdirected, so perverted and corrupted in comparison to Huck's or Tom's or Pudd'nead's gifts, as to suggest a kind of organizing continuum of personally endowed or deficient characters.

In fact I have tried to balance this entire investigation, and moreover to organize its particular character subjects, according to what may be the single greatest intellectual capacity known to man, that is, his capacity to feel love, sympathy, and moral duty. Although Gardner's personal intelligence is only one of six indexed abilities, it fairly encompasses what I consider to be as noble a form of genius as men can have. And in the context of this study, it is not a man but a fourteen-year-old boy who

exhibits extraordinary love, sympathy, and moral awareness, in sufficient measure that his personal profile warrants the label of genius.

Several points must be clarified regarding Gardner's definitions of personal intelligence as they will be used in describing and ordering Twain's characters. The first is that personal intelligence as Gardner defines it does not explicitly refer to love, compassion, or morality, but does imply these qualities. Thus while Gardner lists the "wise elder," "therapists," "counselors," and "religious leaders (a Mahatma Gandhi)" as embodiments of personal intelligence, I am expanding Gardner's equations to include the specific abilities to feel love, compassion, sympathy, and a sense of moral duty. Although these are my own derivations, they do not seem extravagant in the context of Gardner's describing personal intelligence by such examples as the "wise elder" who advises his community or "religious leaders" such as Mahatma Gandhi, or by such terms as "caring" and "altruism" (245). Nevertheless, the point remains that I am expanding Gardner's literal definitions of personal intelligence to include what I perceive to be some related concepts and labels.

A second point refers to the particular facets of personal intelligence by which I have determined the introduction of characters in this study. While the King and the Duke may be well endowed with those aspects of personal intelligence which permit a person to deceive and manipulate others, these frauds are abysmally

deficient in the higher forms of personal intelligence (embodied by Gandhi, the wise elder et al.) which I believe can be equated with the ability to feel love, compassion, and moral duty. Thus the so-called personal-intelligence continuum by which I have ordered the introduction of characters is based on the higher-octave concepts of love, compassion, and morality which I have extrapolated from Gardner's definitions.

A third point refers to the working distinction between intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligences as far as questions of love and moral duty are concerned. In whatever sense Gardner or I may use the terms, intrapersonal intelligence refers principally to an understanding of one's own self, while interpersonal intelligence refers to one's understanding others. Clearly most if not all expressions of love, compassion, moral duty, and the like involve both kinds of awareness: the intrapersonal ability to know oneself deeply, and the interpersonal ability to direct this knowledge outward, toward other people. Combined, these two arguable underpinnings of love and morality will take the general label of personal intelligence.

Thus Huck Finn and his rogue companions represent, respectively, two ends of a spectrum or continuum based approximately on measures of Gardner's personal intelligence. As noted, no one should argue that such attributes as love, compassion, and moral duty do not conceivably belong to, or grow out of, the personal intelligence; yet somehow these tags describe Huck's intrapersonal

genius more readily than, say, the ability "to detect and to symbolize complex and highly differentiated sets of feelings (239). It may indeed be the case that Huck cannot yet articulate or "symbolize" his acutely discriminating feelings about himself and others, but still he can be seen to manifest extraordinary intra-personal, as well as interpersonal, abilities.

After Huck Finn, in more or less descending order of personal strength, will come Tom Sawyer, Pudd'nhead Wilson, Beriah Sellers, the Duke, and the King (though these last two are treated in the same chapter). Since this study is all about genius, an organizational scheme based on one important facet of genius is as worthy a construct as any other. Though the personal profile will be given some convenient additional tags or descriptors, love, sympathy, and moral duty share a self-evident and arguably fundamental relevance to any discussion of genius. Above all else, perhaps, the personal continuum demonstrates the fascinating variety of forms which even rare intelligence can assume. From the angelic proportions of Huck Finn, whose moral intelligence guides him infallibly, to the demonic dimensions of the King and Duke, who do not understand human worth at all, the scale of personal capacity points not only to the wonders of human personality and intelligence, but also towards the mysteries of good, of evil, and of their endless unique combinations within the body and mind of man. And yet, however fundamental the personal intelligence proves to be, it is but one of five absorbing intelligences that, herewith, shall describe a gallery of six uniquely absorbing literary creations.

CHAPTER II

THE ROMANTIC OUTCAST AND SUBSEQUENT RAFTSMAN

In the Mark Twain canon Huckleberry Finn first surfaces in a story belonging to someone else: The Adventures of Tom Sawyer. Tom's centrality in this book is remarkable in one way at least: from the outset his fertile cleverness is the prime mover of everything that unfolds. A brief consideration of Tom's special lime-light may clarify the singular esteem with which he and his gang regard the "outcast" Huck Finn.

Aunt Polly's early soliloquy, Twain's foundational tribute to Tom's ingenuity, justifies by its immediacy what will become the permeating brilliance of Tom's personality. The first few lines suggest Tom's depths:

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. (2-3)

Striking in its duration and suddenness, this testimony (only partially given here) nevertheless is easily surpassed by the actual talents, many and varied, which Tom exhibits throughout the rest of the book. But because Tom's ingenuity gets a hefty fanfare from the outset, and remains until the finish a kind of spectacle

unto itself, his intelligence is as much the principal subject of his book as Huck Finn's great moral struggle is the main subject of his story. So it is in view of Tom's limelilt mental capacities in The Adventures of Tom Sawyer that the reader must appreciate the flattering light in which the illustrious Sawyer boy, not to mention many lesser adolescent minds of St. Petersburg, regards the "romantic outcast" Huck Finn. Although Tom's limelight in his own book virtually eclipses Huck's several talents which blossom eight years later in Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (1884), this unrivalled dominance of Tom's calls special attention to a boy whom even Tom envies "like the rest of the respectable boys" (48). Although Huck's special abilities never much shine in Tom's story, his "gaudy outcast condition" puts Huck into the extraordinary and unique adolescent role whose peculiar fruition will come only with his own great adventures.

One can better appreciate the extraordinary qualities of Huck's later adventures by considering the wild isolation into which Twain takes some trouble to place Huck in the earlier novel. Although Twain has the other boys idealize Huck's freedom, the outcast's actual circumstances are impressively divorced from ordinary juvenile experience:

Huckleberry came and went, at his own free will. He slept on doorsteps in fine weather and in empty hogsheads in wet; he did not have to go to school or to church; he could go fishing or swimming when and where he chose, and stay as long as it suited him; nobody forbade him to fight; he could sit up as late as he pleased; he was always the first boy that went barefoot in the spring and the last

to resume leather in the fall; he never had to wash, nor put on clean clothes; he could swear wonderfully. In a word, everything that goes to make life precious, that boy had. So thought every harassed, hampered, respectable boy in St. Petersburg. (48)

Perhaps the cheerful airs in Tom Sawyer dictate a general well-being for all youths; nevertheless, it is to Huck's overall intellectual credit that he actually can be happy in these circumstances since they are acutely adverse by an ordinary standards of human existence.

Huck is effectively an orphan since his Pap is more monster than human, and usually absent anyway. Huck drifts about St. Petersburg without an adult benefactor of any kind; moreover, he is no less than sensationally shunned by the adult world. At schoolmaster Dobbins' provocation Tom blurts such a damning admission as only a brave and true friend could muster: "I STOPPED TO TALK WITH HUCKLEBERRY FINN!" (53). As usual Twain is having some fun, the capital letters momentarily stretching Huck to mythic dimensions and making light of a fairly pitiless reality--namely, adult society's grim denunciation of Huck:

The master's pulse stood still, and he stared helplessly. The buzz of study ceased. The pupils wondered if this foolhardy boy had lost his mind. The master said:

"You--you did what?"

"Stopped to talk with Huckleberry Finn."

There was no mistaking the words.

"Thomas Sawyer, this is the most astounding confession I have ever listened to. No mere ferule will answer for this offense. Take off your jacket."

The master's arm performed until it was tired and the stock of switches notably diminished. Then the order followed:

"Now, sir, go and sit with the girls! And let this be a warning to you." (53-4)

Ignoring its comic elements, one may observe that this scene is once more both a grim and exhilarating tribute to Huck Finn's fabulous notoriety. It is exhilarating since it glamorizes Huck, glamorizes Tom in his association with Huck, exalts Huck in giving him such a distinguished friend as Tom, and rewards Tom's loyalty by sending him straightaway to the briar patch. It is grim because it is the abjectly cruel way things are in the real world, even in St. Petersburg. Huck is a pariah, an untouchable; and the understated violence and pain Tom suffers is palpable proof of Huck's remarkable status as a boy famously to be set apart, avoided, and in all ways distinguished.

While the foundation of Huck's future greatness is laid down in Tom Sawyer in the form of his incomparable independence, this book offers little of Huck's wit, cleverness, or imagination since such provinces are decidedly Tom's to begin with, and not to be very much Huck's until his own adventures have commenced. Nor, generally, do Huck's powers of observation, his shrewd practicality and common sense, or his deep love of life find any but passing notices in Tom's story. Except for a few flourishes--as in Chapter 6 where Huck's comment on devils' fear of Sunday elicits from Tom a most rare "I never thought of that," and in Chapter 29 where Huck is a lifesaving spy on the vindictive Injun Joe--Huck's intelligence is obscured by Tom's consistent spot at center stage. In the one instance (in Chapter 30) when Huck has an opportunity to spew a good lie, something which he does excellently and often

in Huckleberry Finn, he can come up with nothing to convince the inquisitive Welshman, who laughs "loudly and joyously" at Huck's feeble attempt. In his own adventures Huck falters a few times--up against Dr. Robinson and the lawyer Levi Bell, and when facing Joanna Wilks--but these lapses are outnumbered by many brilliant dissimulations. In Tom Sawyer, with but one good opportunity to be a brilliant liar, Huck fails, and like most other characters comes off rather dim-witted in comparison to Tom Sawyer, the star intellect of his own adventures.

Perhaps Huck's one gift anticipated in Tom Sawyer is his strength of compassion, which causes him, against his dread of Injun Joe, to save the Widow Douglas from Injun Joe's wrath. This bit of altruistic valor, which sends Injun Joe to the cave where at last he will die and leave St. Petersburg in peace, and which wins Huck the same "sivilized" home with the Widow from which his own adventures are launched in Huckleberry Finn--this bit of brave compassion is greatly amplified in the later novel, mainly with Huck's long and excruciating struggle with Jim's fate as a runaway slave. Although Huck's saving the Widow is perhaps no extraordinary deed, it marks the boy's greatest moment in a story clearly dedicated to the greatness of someone else, himself a boy, who in Huck's story will in turn play second fiddle or less.

Critics have not failed to observe those faculties of Huck's which are in full bloom within his own story, though heretofore no study has considered Huck's intelligence elaborately

or alongside that of Twain's other realistic protagonists. Although Robert Regan says little about Huck's or Tom's mental abilities per se, he does observe that "it is precisely in intellectual gifts that both boys excel--Tom in the ratiocinative, Huck in the perspicacious" (128). Gladys Bellamy is equally direct about Huck, who "has a strong, vivid, natural imagination--not an artificial one, such as Tom's" (341). T. S. Eliot also concedes Huck no imagination in the sense Tom has it, but calls it Huck's "vision" instead: "He sees the real world . . . Huck is the passive observer of men and events" (63, 65). Scores of critics have commented on Huck's moral sensitivity, an example being Martin Shockley, who traces Huck's increasing moral awareness, his "intuitive morality which demands that he acknowledge Jim's humanity" (75). And Walter Blair is perhaps the most generally praising, citing besides Huck's ignorance, his refined intelligence: "A boy so sensitive and so shrewd was bound to record scenes and actions with insight; but since he was unabashedly uncouth, he was bound to do so naturally and unpretentiously" (439). Surely every adult reader sees Huck's intelligence, but the purpose in this study is to discover and expound upon the full brilliance--the several facets of genius--residing in six of Twain's most realistic characters, beginning with Huck. If Huck has been called a genius, his genius heretofore has not been more than a passing focus within some other working thesis. On close examination, though, Twain's orphaned raft boy holds a handsome store of intellectual

talents, gifts that may not be as prepossessing or as dazzling as Tom's or Pudd'nhead's, but which are fascinatingly superior human attributes nonetheless.

Although later chapters will move across Howard Gardner's index of intelligences in about the same order in which Gardner presents them, the chapters on Huck and Tom will follow a different order for several reasons. First, because Huck and Tom appear prominently in each other's adventures, and are strikingly different characters from one novel to the next, both chapters will consider the two sides of the featured character more or less separately. This natural division also permits Gardner's intelligences to be introduced naturally and, as it were, more organically than otherwise, for they shall be grounded in the generic, common-sense constructs of intelligence which naturally operate before a particular theory such as Gardner's is imposed. These working definitions get their first literal application in the realm of Huck Finn's adventures.

In more or less ascending order of extraordinary intellectual qualities, we begin with Huck's love of Nature, of the land, sea, and airy skies. This particular awareness of Huck's may not qualify as genius in any of its definitions, except perhaps as "a strong leaning or inclination" (Webster's et al.); however, by dint of repetition, Twain makes the boy out to be strongly attuned to the real world around him. Huck's sensitivity to the beauties of the outer world gives credence to his more arresting

and more famous sensitivity to the inner regions of himself and others, and in general depicts Huck as one capable of refined thinking, poetic appreciation, and even philosophic meditation. Here Gardner's intrapersonal intelligence may be reintroduced, for Huck's sensitivity to the outer world at least reflects his vast store of fine sensibilities, his precocious introspection, and thus, according to the definition, the "access to one's own feeling life--one's range of affects or emotions" (239). More will be said about Huck's intrapersonal intelligence, but one sees even here the contemplative cast of Huck's vision:

It's lovely to live on a raft. We had the sky, up there, all speckled with stars, and we used to lay on our backs and look up at them, and discuss about whether they was made, or only just happened. (158)

Although the dialogue between Huck and Jim takes some crude turns--"I judged it would have took too long to make so many"--this and numerous other passages significantly describe Huck's mind as one capable of delicate feelings and perceptions.

Another of Huck's less emphatic talents, but one which, like his other talents, is incongruous with the extreme rusticity of his vernacular, is Huck's general perspicacity, psychological insight, and, as T. S. Eliot noted, ability to observe:

It didn't take me long to make up my mind that these liars wasn't no kings nor dukes, at all, but just low-down hum-bugs and frauds. But I never said nothing, never let on; kept it to myself; it's the best way; then you don't have no quarrels, and don't get into no trouble. If they wanted us to call them kings and dukes, I hadn't no objections, 'long as it would keep peace in the family; and it warn't no use to tell Jim, so I didn't tell him. If I

never learnt nothing else out of pap, I learnt that the best way to get along with his kind of people is to let them have their own way. (165)

Huck's acute perception of what goes on around him not only suggests a certain spatial intelligence, but in this instance refers to the core capacity of the outer-directed, or interpersonal, intelligence, which is "the ability to notice and make distinctions among other individuals and, in particular, among their moods, temperaments, motivations, and intentions" (239). Huck's interpersonal ability may not be his greatest gift, but undeniably his eye for human foibles is penetrating. Recalling dinner at the Wilks' house, Huck says:

Mary Jane she set at the head of the table, with Susan along side of her, and said how bad the biscuits was, and how mean the preserves was, and how ornery and tough the fried chicken was--and all that kind of rot, the way women always do for to force out compliments; and the people all knowed everything was tip-top, and said so--said "How do you get biscuits to brown so nice?" and "Where, for the Tand's sake did you get these amaz'n pickles?" and all that kind humbug talky-talk, just the way people always does at a supper, you know. (220-21)

Although there is more to interpersonal intelligence than the passive observation of others' psychology, this is one of its facets, and one which anticipates Huck's more active precociousness in this area.

In doing Huck's intelligence inventory, sooner or later one must see that Huck's grasp of passing events, replete with the neatest possible recollection of atmospheres and conversations, involves extraordinary attention to detail. If one considers the

sheer vividness of Huck's representing the above scenes from personal memory, one concedes an uncommon brilliance, especially since Huck seems to be remembering the precise words and tones rather than recreating them in imagination. A narrator's brilliant recall cannot be ignored in the study of his mental abilities, especially since Gardner's guiding index lists memory or mnemonics under both linguistic intelligence and those "horizontal" capacities common to several types of intelligence. The issue of Huck's recall is addressed early on since it bears on his dual role as Twain's narrator and Twain's character.

Huck's larger role as Twain's sole storyteller naturally requires astonishingly verbatim (or else well-created) dialogues and amazingly voluminous visual recall, two critical problems if fitted onto any ordinary boy character. Huck's phenomenal recall, everywhere evident in his story, is an artistic liberty which nevertheless poses an analytical problem. If we accept from Huck the character all that Huck the narrator submits for our perusal, then Huck is a photographic (and spatial) genius of the highest order. If we allow a discrepancy between Huck's two personas, then Huck is two people instead of one, and somewhat beyond realistic analysis. In only one instance does Huck introduce a long speech as anything less than the verbatim original; when the second and presumably true pair of Wilks brothers arrive, Huck is struck by the old gent's apparently genuine English vernacular and, perhaps for this reason, cannot duplicate his opening speech:

Pretty soon he begun to speak, and I see, straight off, he pronounced like an Englishman, not the king's way, though the king's was pretty good, for an imitation. I can't give the old gent's words, nor I can't imitate him; but he turned around to the crowd, and says, about like this. . . . (249)

This being Huck's only admittedly approximate recollection, one supposes either that the old gent's vocabulary realistically exceeds Huck's grasp, or that in all other (verbatim) transcriptions Twain merely foregoes the awkward disclaimer of his narrator's perfect memory. Although one need not belabor in the cause of character analysis the narrator's crucially vivid recall, one fairly includes this dazzling memory work in Huck's column of exceptional assets.

Indeed Gardner's basic definition of mnemonic ability hardly does justice to Huck: "There is the mnemonic potential of language--the capacity to use this tool to help one remember information, ranging from lists of possessions to rules of a game, from directions for finding one's way to procedures for operating a new machine" (78). In the one instance where his verbatim recall is in any way accounted for, Huck offers a plausible explanation for remembering the Duke's remodeled Hamlet soliloquy: "I learned it, easy enough, while he was learning it to the king" (179). At its face value, such easy learning indicates a powerful retentiveness, although this particular achievement needs less explanation than numerous longer passages in which Huck provides presumably word-for-word dialogue. In both instances where Huck's

recall is somehow qualified, Twain offers the peculiar cause for qualification, rendering Huck's many other vast transcriptions either the products of a wonderfully acute character-narrator, or the mere flesh and bones artificially introduced to many long narratives. In any case, Huck's cool replication of landscapes, events, and dialogues is precisely that "vision," as T. S. Eliot called it, on which the brilliant life of this novel depends. Whether viewed as real human capacity or just narrative contrivance, as a force within the story or artificially working upon it, Huck's total recall is one fact indispensable to the composition of Huckleberry Finn.

Since memory or mnemonics already has been introduced as a "horizontal" capacity shared by several intelligences, the reader should also be reminded that the intelligences themselves considerably overlap, or work together. Howard Gardner says:

For instance, in the case of the actor or the performer, skill in personal intelligences--and also in many cases in musical or linguistic intelligence--is part and parcel of successful performance. Nearly all cultural roles exploit more than one intelligence; at the same time, no performance can come about simply through the exercise of a single intelligence. (207)

The point is a crucial one, for throughout this study of Twain's characters, more than one intelligence may be discerned in every expression of their genius. In many instances I will point out the multiple intelligences involved, though in other instances only the primary operative ability will be discussed. For clarity's sake, overcomplicated combinations of intelligences will not be introduced.

One manageable combination of abilities has to do with what now may be seen as Huck's multifaceted "vision" of reality, the down-to-earth orientation which distinguishes him from the ultra-romantic Tom Sawyer. Huck's lack of gusto for Tom's gratuitous flights of fancy goes together with his clear "vision" of the world (spatial intelligence), his psychological insight into others (interpersonal), his love of Nature (intrapersonal), and even his high sense of moral duty (personal intelligence), for all these abilities require clear perception of the actual rather than of the imaginary.

Even when Huck's vision deviates from the real, it does so for the sake of Huck's desperately real needs. For example, in Chapter VII Huck ingeniously distorts visual reality in order to escape his brutal imprisonment by Pap Finn. This stroke of genius depends on keen visualization, facile logic, and two higher-level operations which Gardner labels as "common sense" and "originality." These capacities clearly work together or perhaps overlap in Huck's brilliant strategy-making, but the two so-called intelligences may be emphasized.

The primary energy at work seems to be Huck's visualization, which comes under spatial intelligence, whose reiterated definition runs thus:

Central to spatial intelligence are the capacities to perceive the visual world accurately, to perform transformations and modifications upon one's initial perceptions, and to be able to re-create aspects of one's visual experience, even in the absence of relevant physical stimuli. (173)

Huck could hardly illustrate this definition more handsomely, for his accurate perception of the visual world as well as his ability to re-create it in imagination permit him, without the ready suggestion of local stimuli, to inflict such transformations on the visual world as to paint upon it a ghastly picture of robbery and murder. Huck saws his way out of Pap's hut, takes Pap's provisions to the concealed canoe, carefully covers his tracks, puts the sawed cabin log back together, checks again for tracks, deliberately kills a wild pig, drags it back to the cabin, and then does things he wishes Tom Sawyer could see:

I took the axe and smashed in the door--I beat it and hacked it considerable, a-doing it. I fetched the pig in and took him back nearly to the table and hacked into his throat with the ax, and laid him down on the ground to bleed--I say ground, because it was ground--hard packed, and no boards. Well, next I took an old sack and put a lot of big rocks in it,--all I could drag--and I started it from the pig and dragged it to the door and through the woods down to the river and dumped it in, and down it sunk, out of sight. You could easy see that something had been dragged over the ground. I did wish Tom Sawyer was there, I knowed he would take an interest in this kind of business, and throw in the fancy touches. (40-1)

Huck's own fancy touches are not finished. He pulls out some of his hair, fixes it to a bloodied ax, and leaves the apparent murder weapon in the corner. Then, making sure to leave no bloody tracks to the real carcass, Huck drags the pig to another place on the river, well removed from where his own body will be searched. He then returns to the cabin, rips open a sack of meal, and carries the leaking sack to a nearby lake, thus leaving along the way an

"accidental" track of murderer's booty. As a final touch to the stage he has set, Huck drops Pap's whetstone, "so as to look like it had been done by accident" (41).

This elaborate scenario, entirely dreamed up and pre-packaged by Huck, is similar to the staging Tom does for Jim's "rescue," but is also different in two significant respects. First, and more importantly, Huck's is a desperate effort to escape his brutally dangerous Pap, whereas Tom's foremost effort, as always, is to have fun pretending to do something heroic. Another difference, related to the first, is that Jim's "rescue" is a fully staged performance, whereas Huck's "murder" consists only of the stage and its telltale visual props. Thus, while Tom engages his stage primarily as an actor, Huck is merely the all-seeing author, director, and stage manager. Huck's staged murder is the brilliant work of spatial intelligence primarily, for he envisions and then produces perhaps the only scenario that could persuade his sadistic father to leave his son in peace.

The logical intelligence should be highlighted here as well, for it is as easily isolated in the present episode as anywhere else in Huck's adventures. Huck's logical exertions may not be the work of genius, but they warrant inclusion here for the sake of introducing the working definitions of logic, and for the sake of later comparisons between Huck and other characters. Moreover, though the following passage comes after Huck's "murder" has been staged, it demonstrates the inevitable combination of intelligences, in this case logical and spatial:

I made fast to a willow; then I took a bite to eat, and by-and-by laid down in the canoe to smoke a pipe and lay out a plan. I says to myself, they'll follow the track of that sackful of rocks to the shore and then drag the river for me. And they'll follow that meal track to the lake and go browsing down the creek that heads out of it to find the robbers that killed me and took the things. They won't ever hunt the river for anything but my dead carcass. They'll soon get tired of that, and won't bother no more about me. All right; I can stop anywhere I want to. Jackson's Island is good enough for me; I know that island pretty well, and nobody ever comes there. And then I can paddle over to town, nights, and slink around and pick up things I want. Jackson's Island's the place. (41)

In the event Twain's reader has missed something, this monologue provides a logical framework for the bizarre props Huck staged just a few hours earlier. Clearly Huck's deductions themselves are not nearly so brilliant as the visual art they inspired, but it is also clear that this kind of logical foresight (and hindsight) partly depends on visual, or spatial, imagination. Moreover, to the credit of Huck's logical ability, the above-quoted self-congratulations are for visually discovered solutions that in some definite manner partook of logical intuition--the fairly mysterious power famous for producing "flashes" of insight, the kind which saves Pudd'nhead Wilson's career and Huck Finn's very life. Finally, getting back to working definitions, Huck's logical musings do reflect Gardner's description of logical intelligence, which includes the ability

to appreciate the actions that one can perform upon objects, the relations that obtain among those actions, the statements (or propositions) that one can make about actual or potential actions, and the relationship among those statements. (129)

Although Huck's "statements" are an interior monologue, he clearly enjoys thinking back on the clever actions he performed in order to escape a nightmarish captivity. Huck may or may not have demonstrated exceptionally acute logic or reasoning, but his powers of logic are undeniable and are sufficient to have inspired an exceptionally lucid and ingenious plan of escape. Like his other intelligences, Huck's logical ability helps him to confront the tangibly real threats of adult society.

Of the six characters in this study, only Pudd'nhead Wilson is more steadily devoted to concrete reality; and if the reader allows that almost all of Huck's adept prevarication and not-so-adept role-playing issues from some dire necessity or another, then Huck's overall attunement to reality may be seen to match Pudd'nhead's in consistency and of course to overmatch it in terms of episodic volume. However, Huck's fine earthiness should not be argued without some reconciliation to the superstition running rampant in Tom Sawyer and still very alive in Huckleberry Finn. The same boy who exchanges the wildest superstitions with Jim and Tom instinctively draws the line at every bit of Tom's fantastic prating. Still a willing empiricist, Huck gives magic lamps a try; but unlike the ghosts and witches Huck believes he has glimpsed, the genies will not appear:

But it warn't no use, none of the genies come. So then I judged that all that stuff was only just one of Tom Sawyer's lies. I reckoned he believed in the A-rabs and the elephants, but as for me I think different. It had all the marks of a Sunday school. (17)

Huck has good reason for thinking Tom rather far gone, since only a few weeks later, in the infamous conclusion to the novel, Tom is so steeped in make-believe that Robert Regan says it is "a little less than insane" (133), and Judith Fetterley, even less charitable, considers it tyrannical cruelty (444).

Scarcely anyone within or outside the novel fully enjoys Tom's concluding shenanigans: the most amiable critics make excuses for Twain, while others like Fetterley argue that Twain himself despised the boy. Of all Tom's observers, whether readers or fellow characters, his best friend Huck may be the most tolerant, though Huck cannot fathom nor even appreciate the depths of his friend's romancing. Thus it is somewhat surprising that Huck could ever share Tom's penchant for superstition since he barely tolerates Tom's protracted flights of fancy. The reader may better appreciate this apparent inconsistency by first considering just how far Huck diverges from Tom in other matters touching on the imaginary and the presumably unreal.

In the midst of Jim's "rescue," Huck's aforementioned devotion to reality is repeatedly highlighted by Tom Sawyer's opposing inclination. Huck mildly but consistently resists Tom's complicated embellishments of a "rescue" that is already quite unnecessary. When Huck innocently suggests a way to fetch things for prisoner Jim,

Tom asked a lot of questions, and when Jim told him Uncle Silas come in every day or two to pray with him, and Aunt Sally come in to see if he was comfortable and had plenty

to eat, and both of them was kind as they could be, Tom says:

"Now I know how to fix it. We'll send you some other things by them."

I said, "Don't do nothing of the kind; it's one of the most jackass ideas I ever struck; but he never paid no attention to me; went right on. It was his way when he'd got his plans set." (309)

Tom's characteristic absorption in the charade permits him to ignore Huck or any other potential distraction; and indeed a reader might be struck at the distance between the two boys. Huck appears more like a lenient adult guardian to Tom than his adolescent chum. He amuses Tom somewhat in the manner of a sanitarium orderly indulging a raving lunatic. It is a tribute to Huck's patience, and perhaps to Tom's tyranny, that at this point, unlike Tom, Huck does not realize Jim's imminent freedom from slavery and so must regard Tom's excesses with even less relish than he ordinarily could muster. Although Twain never so much as whispers the possibility that things will go seriously awry (i.e., that Jim will be caught and sold), Huck enjoys no such omniscience and is tolerating Tom's fantasies not only in the face of present dangers, but also in the aftermath of numerous harrowing scrapes involving Jim or other problematical associates. Huck's distinctly down-to-earth tendencies affirm his primary modus operandi, which is to see clearly and acutely exactly what rests, stirs, or passes before him.

Perhaps Huck's perspicacity should briefly be considered in light of his mystifying penchant--actually shared with Tom--for the arguably unreal world of ghosts, witches, and the myriad

defenses and offenses which supposedly fend and frighten them off. The second line Huck Finn ever delivers in the Twain canon is none other than "Dead cat" (Tom Sawyer: 49); and this predisposition never leaves the boy throughout his career as Twain's character. Sensing that dead cats are good for something, Tom asks what for, and it turns out they cure warts. What follow are three pages lined with superstitious lore, the kind which evidently circulated in rural Missouri as widely as fairy and hobgoblin lore filled the rural England of Shakespeare's day.

This three-page spiel, the longest uninterrupted focus on folklore in any of Twain's Missouri-based novels, features a staggering catalog of magical effects which both boys powerfully admire. The conversation takes in such wart-curing considerations as drawing rain from spunk water stumps, choosing the right time of day for it, facing the right direction, uttering the precise incantation, taking eleven quick steps, keeping eyes closed, turning around three times, walking home in silence--all in service of the charm. As it happens, this is only one prescription, for Huck follows with the intricate bean methodology:

You take and split the bean, and cut the wart so as to get some blood, and then you put the blood on one piece of the bean and take and dig a hold and bury it 'bout midnight at the crossroads in the dark of the moon, and then you burn up the rest of the bean. You see that piece that's got the blood on it will keep drawing and drawing, trying to fetch the other piece to it, and so that helps the blood to draw the wart, and pretty soon off she comes.
(50)

Although Huck will be apparently confirmed in his superstitious fear throughout much of his own novel, Twain never appears to

treat the particular omens with anything but mild ridicule.

However, in the matter of ghosts and witches--especially ghosts--the author seems almost willing to lend Huck some mystic credibility, suggesting both his keen powers of vision and his intrapersonal attunement to Nature, inner and outer alike. Perhaps it is difficult to dismiss Huck's less extravagant occultism since everywhere in his own novel he records objective reality with such vivid accuracy. Early in Huckleberry Finn, sitting lonesomely by the window in his bedroom at the Widow's, Huck almost wishes he were dead (not for the last time in this book), and then expresses what seems to be a genuine attunement to a world of spirits evidently coinciding with the natural world he knows so well.

The stars was shining, and the leaves rustled in the woods ever so mournful; and I heard an owl, away off, who-whooping about somebody that was dead, and a whippowill and a dog crying about somebody that was going to die; and the wind was trying to whisper something to me and I couldn't make out what it was, and so it made the cold shivers run over me. Then away in the woods I heard that kind of a sound that a ghost makes when it wants to tell about something that's on its mind and can't make itself understood, and so can't rest easy in its grave and has to go about that way every night grieving. I got so down-hearted and scared, I did wish I had some company. (4)

Although the scene quickly dissolves to farfetched signs and symbols, the initial references to animals and even to ghosts bear a strange aura of authenticity, as if Huck's antenna are as certain of the invisible world as his eyes are of the visible one. Besides, the words are poignantly beautiful, and the sentiments so delicate as to lift the passage above any comic intention of

Twain's--at least until Huck brings in the spider, whereupon Twain picks up the satire.

Since the intelligence of lower animals and the existence of disembodied spirits were two rather well-established arguments in Twain's day, and since there is substantial evidence that behind Twain's ridicule of certain occult beliefs was a strain of begrudged respect, no one need disallow that on occasion some of Huck's melancholy is taken from the very atmosphere he inhabits, again suggesting supersensitive (psychic) "vision" or intrapersonal awareness of subtle emotional worlds. No one but a mental deficient is entirely insensitive to a nighttime graveyard; and of course, as my general thesis runs, Huck is not mentally deficient, nor, incidentally, insensitive to the spirit world. Although none of this argument proves or even wants to prove the existence of ghosts, Twain did not find the notion a contemptible one. Thus some of Huck's occultism is ultimately legitimized, if not by Twain's biography, then by the textual tones themselves and by the logical coincidence of Huck's spiritual perceptions with his acutely objective ones. Psychic or mystical vision fairly complements extraordinary powers of empirical observation.

As for the other kind of superstition, the kind Twain treats predominantly, and for chiefly comic effect--well, not even Huck's sober powers can supersede the call for comic hyperbole, which helps explain how Huck can keep perfect pace with Tom's longwinded cues and cures, while disdaining his excursions into Walter Scott.

Or perhaps a better explanation concerns Huck's sensitive personality, which, despite its rustic simplicity, must be allowed its obsessive-compulsive excesses as well. After all, Freud called this (obsessive-compulsive) personality type a very intelligent one, despite the irrational basis of much of its behavior. In all his extraordinary circumstances Huck has neither a normal intelligence nor a perfectly normal cosmology. Thus even if his authorially sanctioned ghosts do not warrant all manner of subsidiary spooks and omens, there is ample reason why Huck may be perspicacious and comically superstitious at once.

Before proceeding to the highest octaves of Huck's intrapersonal intelligence, which might also be construed as his highest fidelity to the real and the true, one must interrupt this study to consider Huck's one major talent which not only diverges from his truthfulness but opposes it diametrically. This vocation is namely Huck's deliberate prevarication, his practice of lying whenever circumstances require it, which they frequently seem to do. To the extent that lying may be considered mainly a verbal exercise, then the rhetorical aspect of linguistic intelligence seems to be the featured ability. Again, this rhetorical aspect is "the ability to use language to convince other individuals of a course of action" (Gardner 78). Since Huck almost always lies out of a desperate need to do so, his false language almost always is used to effect an above-stated "course of action" in others, even if the desired course is simply that others leave him alone. Also,

however, some credit must be given to the bodily-kinesthetic and the interpersonal intelligences since these both involve abilities that may assist an excellent lie. Clearly much talented lying requires some acting ability, which comes under bodily-kinesthetic intelligence in the specific capacities of timing, concentration, observation, mimesis (imitation), memory, and bodily expression. Huck enjoys some of these capacities in great measure. He also has a certain interpersonal gift, whose specific capacities are similar to those described under rhetoric:

In an advanced form, interpersonal knowledge permits a skilled adult to read the intentions and desires--even when these have been hidden--of many other individuals and, potentially, to act upon this knowledge--for example, by influencing a group of disparate individuals to behave along desired lines. (239)

Huck is not yet an adult, but he has precocious interpersonal talent. Since the active form of this talent must involve the persuasive use of language, for the most part this linguistic facet of prevarication will be discussed in terms of rhetorical ability. With occasional reference to interpersonal abilities, the discussion of Huck's genius for spontaneous dissimulation will refer primarily to his extraordinary rhetorical and acting (bodily-kinesthetic) talents.

As previously noted, in Tom Sawyer Huck proves a poor liar the one chance he gets; but in his own book he reaches dizzy summits (or depths) of falsehood. Twain's rather well-known facetiousness concerning the truth/falsehood dichotomy is reflected from the outset in Huck, who in some ways gauges other

people by their willingness to lie. He opens the book by referring to Tom Sawyer, in which Twain

told the truth, mainly. There was things which he stretched, but mainly he told the truth. That is nothing. I never seen anybody but lied, one time or another, without it was Aunt Polly, or the widow, or maybe Mary. Aunt Polly--Tom's Aunt Polly, she is--and Mary, and the Widow Douglas, is all told about in that book--which is mostly a true book; with some stretchers, as I said before. (1)

The immediate reference to lying and liars is hardly curious in a story whose plots and subplots depend so heavily on verbal and dramatic falsehood. While Huck spews whoppers with facile regularity, usually in the effort to protect Jim, his other principal companions in the story--the King, the Duke, and Tom Sawyer--live by the lie for other reasons. Evidently Twain appreciated the raw talent for successful lying, else he would not have put so much of it into the novel. He ridicules the practice of truth-telling, and nowhere more pungently than in Huck, midst his full confession to Mary Jane Wilks:

I says to myself, I reckon a body that ups and tells the truth when he is in a tight place, is taking considerable many resks, though I ain't had no experience, and can't say for certain; but it looks so to me, anyway; and yet here's a case where I'm blest if it don't look to me like the truth is better, and actuly safer, than a lie. I must lay it by in my mind, and think it over some time or other, it's so kind of strange and unregular. I never see nothing like it. Well, I says to myself at last, I'm agoing to chance it; I'll up and tell the truth this time, though it does seem most like setting down on a kag of powder and touching it off just to see where you'll go to. (239)

Twain has fun here, but still Huck's testimony could not be surpassed in candor or singularity. With "no experience" in telling

dire truths, Huck at least matches the King and the Duke in consistency of falsehood and has the simple confidence to admit it on paper.

Huck has the con artist's practicality without generally seeking the con. While the King and Duke tell lies either to forward their greedy manipulations or to sidestep the backfiring of them, Huck is free of both charges since his lying certainly began and mainly continues in desperate innocence. The bulk of Huck's storytelling anticipates a history of his morality, for he alters the facts to save his own skin or someone else's, but never for avarice. Huck may be the original street-wise American kid, however rural his setting: as seen in Tom Sawyer his outcast state has rendered him phenomenally independent, resourceful, self-reliant, and necessarily wary of the adult world which openly scorns him. Unlike the King and Duke, Huck has never much told lies for profit, but only for survival and essential comforts. Nor like Tom Sawyer has he ever gone in for elaborately purposeless make-believe: Huck's lying is an acquired defense against an encroaching adult society which, after ostracizing him in Tom Sawyer, has made him unfit for the captivity benevolently imposed by the Widow. More pertinent to his own adventures, Huck's lies are a defense against a society seeking to sell his Negro companion into a not-so-benevolent captivity of his own.

In only one instance does Huck lie gratuitously and, as it were, maliciously; for this lone transgression Jim sorrowfully

reduces Huck to the compassionate humility that is his nature:

It was fifteen minutes before I could work myself up to go and humble myself to a nigger--but I done it, and I wasn't ever sorry for it afterwards, neither. I didn't do him no more mean tricks, and I wouldn't done that one if I'd a knowed it would make him feel that way. (105)

The racial qualification jars a modern ear, but readers know that Huck's general devotion to Jim runs abrasively counter to the society of genuine racists that would punish Huck as surely as the runaway he is protecting.

Thus Huck's lying, practiced mainly for the just preservation of life and liberty, does not essentially contradict his otherwise truthful career as meticulous observer, recorder, and interpreter of men and events. Yet in Huck's prevarications we see some of his greatest endowments, which fall into the general provinces of rhetorical and theatrical (bodily-kinesthetic) intelligences. Even a cursory look at Huck's improvised yarns shows that T. S. Eliot and others wrongly deny him a claim to Tom Sawyer's mode of imagination. To be sure, Tom's imagination is different from Huck's, but mainly insofar as Tom's excursions into make-believe are for their own sake and thus are luxurious rather than desperate. Admittedly the distinction goes deep, though, for when given the chance, as already noted, Huck cannot enjoy sheer gratuitous fantasy. And yet this difference ultimately belongs more to affections than to visual or verbal faculties, for Huck's fictive manifestations seem about as well fueled as Tom's. Although one might argue that Tom's imagination is superior since

Huck's efforts largely partake of a lifesaving adrenaline, no one should dispute the potency of Huck's manufactures.

In his first literal lie Huck may come closest to the negative capability Tom routinely enjoys. His role as Sarah Williams of Hookerville (Chapter XI) is about as challenging as acting can get. To the extent that Huck truly "gets inside" this part, his acting "underscores the crucial role of emotions in the performance of the actor" (Gardner 227); but to the probable greater extent that Huck does not feel much like a girl, his method follows those which "de-emphasize the need to re-create the felt mood, and stress instead attention to surface details" (227). However, whether Huck uses emotion or mimicry, and whether the role itself or his rehearsing it beforehand is the more remarkable, the mere fact of Huck Finn in a girl's dress, acting the part in a stranger's house, easily exceeds in audacity all other parts he will play, including such roles as George Jackson, castaway from a steamboat; Adolphus, boy valet straight from England; and Tom Sawyer, brother to Sid, who is played by the real Tom Sawyer.

Taken at face value, the Sarah Williams costuming alone proves Huck's singular boldness, and coupled with the script he improvises, makes a stunning flourish undone only by the uninformed threading of a needle. Wearing a dress, Huck may be as literally immersed in a role as a body, even Tom Sawyer's, can get, although the internal identification, one hastens to repeat, would surely suffer in comparison. No one wants Huck to be effeminate, nor does

Twain allow it; so when Mrs. Judith Loftus discovers Huck's real gender, he decides to "make a clean breast and tell her everything" (73), which, clean or not, goes thus:

I told her my father and mother was dead, and the law had bound me out to a mean old farmer in the country thirty mile back from the river, and he treated me so bad I couldn't stand it no longer; he went away to be gone a couple of days, and so I took my chance and stole some of his daughter's old clothes, and cleared out. . . . I said I believed my uncle Abner Moore would take care of me.
(73)

Huck's "clean breast" of things actually flirts with the truth and doubtless issues from his recent scrapes with Pap Finn. But the embellishments, whether previously used or brand new, are Huck's own, right down to every slippery alias. After Huck proves his country origins on a four-item quiz for farmers, Mrs. Loftus, convinced, merely wants to know his "real" name, which in Huck's "clean breast" turns out to be George Peters. It must chiefly be rhetorical intelligence which supplies Huck such ready, easy, and generous tall tales replete with phony relatives and character names.

Whether Huck sometimes gets inside his yarns to the point of enjoying them (as Tom, Beriah Sellers, the King, and the Duke do) is not an easy question since these yarns almost always have a needy purpose, and since desperate playacting arguably may or may not inspire a "feeling" for the role. Although Huck is gathering vital intelligence for Jim and himself, this scenario threatens merely to expose him for who he really is, and not, like later

episodes, to bring him a thrashing or to endanger Jim any more than he already is. Thus Huck may have the breathing room to appreciate the whole charade, although, as Walter Blair points out, it is still a test of wits: "Huck has to think quickly, and in doing so he shows the glibness that later helps him lie himself out of many tough situations" (130).

One of these situations, five chapters later, is perhaps Huck's greatest moment as a master rhetorician. At least it is one of his most brilliant improvisations, both for intrinsic beauty and for benevolent effects. Although Blair rightly states that Huck lies to people "with inventiveness born of long practice and awareness of human foibles" (104), his tricking the two slave-hunters in Chapter XVI is as sudden as the lightning of true genius, striking just as Huck decides to alter Jim's color and thereby put the slavehunters off their mercenary course:

"Is your man white or black?"

I didn't answer up prompt. I tried to, but the words wouldn't come. I tried, for a second or two, to brace up and out with it, but I warn't man enough--hadn't the spunk of a rabbit. I see I was weakening; so I just give up trying, and up and says--

"He's white."

"I reckon we'll go and see for ourselves."

"I wish you would," says I, "because it's pap that's there, and maybe you'd help me tow the raft ashore where the light is. He's sick--and so is mam and Mary Ann."

"Oh, the devil! we're in a hurry, boy. But I s'pose we've got to. Come--buckle to your paddle, and let's get along."

I buckled to my paddle and they laid to their oars. When we had made a stroke or two, I says:

"Pap'll be mighty much obleeged to you, I can tell you. Everybody goes away when I want them to help me tow the raft ashore, and I can't do it by myself."

"Well, that's infernal mean. Odd, too. Say, boy, what's the matter with your father?"

"It's the--a--the--well, it ain't anything, much.

They stopped pulling. It warn't but a mighty little ways to the raft, now. One says:

"Boy, that's a lie. What is the matter with your pap? Answer up square, now, and it'll be the better for you."

"I will, sir, I will, honest--but don't leave us, please. It's the--the--gentlemen, if you'll only pull ahead, and let me heave you the headline, you won't have to come a-near the raft--please do."

"Set her back, John, set her back!" says one. They backed water. "Keep away, boy--keep to looard. Confound it, I just expect the wind has blowed it to us. Your pap's got the small-pox, and you know it precious well. Why didn't you come out and say so? Do you want to spread it all over?"

"Well," says I, a-blubbering, "I've told everybody before, and then they just went away and left us."
(125-27)

As if Jim's continued freedom were not tangible sign enough, when the men leave Huck forty dollars in gold, the heavens themselves have rained a shining reward on his high merit. A material blessing, the money seems an effect of Huck's goodness as surely as does Jim's freedom. Both are won by a combined rhetorical and theatrical intelligence that mere practice cannot produce, but which is the work of genius. The rhetorical flair describes not only the irresistible verbal manipulations themselves, but also the unfailing speed with which they are manufactured. As for the oral and physical delivery of these manufactures, Huck's theatrical abilities are harnessed.

A close look at particular lines reveals Huck's formidable submergence in the above role and points to specific performing talents which Gardner outlines as timing, concentration, observation, mimesis, and memory:

"Say, boy, what's the matter with your father?"

"It's the--a--the--well, it ain't nothing, much."

"Boy, that's a lie. What is the matter with your pap? Answer up square, now, and it'll be the better for you."

"I will, sir, I will, honest--but don't leave us, please. It's the--the--gentlemen, if you'll only pull ahead, and let me heave you the headline, you won't have to come a-near the raft--please do."

"Your pap's got the small-pox, and you know it precious well. . . . Do you want to spread it all over?"

"Well," says I, a-blubbering, "I've told everybody before, and then they just went away and left us."
(126-27)

The stuttering can mean only the most careful timing and concentration, namely that of the talented actor. As Gardner says, "all skilled performances include a well-honed sense of timing, where each bit of a sequence fits into the stream in an exquisitely placed and elegant way" (208). Twain paces the utterance with precision, and it reads aloud just as a subtle deception should. Ironically, Huck must appear to be a clumsy liar, though clumsiness is hardly part of his usual repertoire. While he probably has observed such dissimulation in other liars (and will observe a great deal of it during the Wilks affair) and may well be mimicking from memory and acquired skill, Huck clearly feels the part intuitively. He is emotionally imagining the role with perfectly delicate accuracy; and indeed, given his rude and "outcast" childhood, Huck actually may be remembering a personal desperation akin to the one he is dramatizing. In any case, for a fourteen-year-old, outcast or not, such verbal and dramatic talent spells genius, not just above-average cleverness. Huck produces in dire

circumstances what the Duke and especially the King toss off with money-grubbing relish. The difference is that Huck's histrionics unselfishly serve another person's welfare.

Logically, some of Huck's greatest moments are inspired by the river-rat royalty who alter facts even more often than Huck, though not necessarily more deftly. Indeed a high tribute to the boy's intelligence is his never failing to stay at least even with the two tricksters and usually staying a step ahead of them. Just after establishing their royal compatibility, the King and Duke grill the servants:

They asked us considerable many questions; wanted to know what we covered up the raft that way for, and laid by in the daytime instead of running--was Jim a runaway nigger? Says I--

"Goodness sakes, would a runaway nigger run south?"
(166)

This is not the only time Huck fools the very lords of falsehood with a classic bit of rhetoric, in this case a question which purports to answer another, and which utterly evades the truth without being a literal lie. Thus Huck lies without lying, though this is an inadvertent subtlety since, as already noted, Huck takes no shame whatever in deliberate falsehood. Again, Huck's cleverness is the more striking for its deceiving two fellows who literally subsist on clever deceptions. But Huck's performance has just begun.

Whether practiced or shiny new, the yarn Huck now reels off is worthy of either swindler, and a fitting turnabout against them both. As usual, Huck rips out his fiction at the insistence

of circumstance, which this time demands that he explain his mysterious southward journey:

I had to account for things some way, so I says:

"My folks was living in Pike County, in Missouri, where I was born, and they all died off but me and pa and my brother Ike. Pa, he 'lowed he'd break up and go down and live with Uncle Ben, who's got a little one-horse place on the river, forty-four mile below Orleans. Pa was pretty poor, and had some debts; so when he'd squared up there warn't enough to take us fourteen hundred mile, deck passage nor no other way. Well, when the river rose, pa had a streak of luck one day; he ketched this piece of a raft; so we reckoned we'd go down to Orleans on it. Pa's luck didn't hold out; a steamboat run over the forrard corner of the raft, one night, and we all went overboard and dove under the wheel; Jim and me come up, all right, but pa was drunk, and Ike was only four years old, so they never come up no more. Well, for the next day or two we had considerable trouble, because people was always coming out in skiffs and trying to take Jim away from me, saying they believed he was a runaway nigger. We don't run day-times no more, now; nights they don't bother us." (166)

Inasmuch as this is Huck's fifth longwinded lie in the last fifty pages--one tall tale for every ten pages or so--we can suppose that sheer practice does play its part in his glibness, and that certain items such as sister Mary Ann, the death of his parents, and his falling off a steamboat, are so much fodder recycled many times now in Huck's precocious career as a liar.

Despite the repertoire, though, most of Huck's lying must be fitted instantly to whatever novel situation arises. Here, having ingeniously and falsely denied any further suggestion of Jim's runaway status, Huck must elaborate the denial to the satisfaction of two adept storytellers whose own proclivities render

them acutely attuned to the faintest falsehood in others. Yet they cannot penetrate Huck's lie. Unlike the gross concoctions they just inflicted on Jim and Huck--the "royalty" which Huck easily saw through--the boy's life, born of necessity rather than greed, is carefully and flawlessly realistic. He has infallible antennae for every tight spot, and the raw creative talent to embroider every narrow escape with simply splendid verbiage and playacting. Although this triumph over the King and Duke does not exhibit the full range of Huck's improvisational skills, the rich storyline alone, as always, proves his rhetorical genius.

Notwithstanding Huck's inevitable cleverness as narrator of a great novel, and all the practice he has accumulated, his every utterance nevertheless features canny embellishments of an already adequate plotline: first names, Ike and Uncle Ben; Ben's precise circumstances down to the mileage, forty-four miles from Orleans; the sixteen dollars left his poor squared-up pa; a fourteen-hundred-mile trip; the "farrard" corner of the runover raft; pa's fatal drunkenness; Ike's scant four years. Huck's precise inventions might be the excesses of anxiety, though such excesses would only tap the well of rhetoric rather than supplying it. Or, to reiterate, perhaps Huck quietly enjoys embellishing lies even in desperate situations. Either way, the above stretcher he tells the King and Duke, though not overstuffed like many of theirs, is lavishly equipped, and so persuasive that the Duke, a fairly uncharitable soul, decides "to cipher out a way" (203) to keep Jim in Huck's rightful "possession," which he subsequently does.

While at least two of Huck's extended fabrications are for Jim's sake, an earlier scenario not only demonstrates Huck's other theatrical strengths, but also features his famous conscience (intrapersonal intelligence) as graphically as do most of his kindnesses toward Jim. The scene is from Chapter XIII, when Huck sympathetically decides to send anonymous help to a gang of criminals he and Jim have just stranded on a riverboat wreck. One novel view of Huck here is the thick sobbing which he suddenly produces for the ferryboat watchman and which anticipates the King's effortless blubbing some fifty pages later. The compassionate motive aside, Huck's easy tearfulness seems as much an attraction to theater as the dress he wore for Mrs. Loftus; and both are precocious commitments to playacting for any fourteen-year-old, "sivilized" or not. And yet the weeping is essential, after all. Unlike some of the minutae--exact mileages and so on--displayed in other performances, Huck's generous tears are more than an embellishment: they are necessary to ensure the watchman's sympathetic attention to what follows, which is a series of subtle deceptions aimed at rousing the watchman's help without rousing his curiosity about Huck, secret protector of a runaway. While it is tempting to suppose that Huck's ready weeping comes from skillful observation and mimicry, it is more tempting to anticipate his intrapersonal emotional world whose deep feelings permit Huck to value the lives of even coldblooded murderers. And as far as bodily-kinesthetic or acting talent is concerned, Gardner

himself suggests "that an 'emotion-centered' acting technique highlights the intrapersonal intelligence" (227).

Another marvelous touch is Huck's breathless excitement, not only realistic from a weeping kid, but also useful in cueing the watchman to fill in gaps:

I broke in and says:
 "They're in an awful peck of trouble, and--"
 "Who is?"
 "Why, pap, and mam, and sis, and Miss Hooker; and if you'd take your ferry-boat and go up there--"
 "Up where? Where are they?"
 "On the wreck."
 "What wreck?"
 "Why, there ain't but one."
 "What, you don't mean the Walter Scott?"
 "Yes."
 "Good land! what are they doin' there, for gracious sakes?"
 "Well, they didn't go there a-purpose."
 "I bet they didn't! Why, great goodness, there ain't no chance for 'em if they don't git off mighty quick! Why, how in the nation did they ever git into such a scrape?"
 "Easy enough. Miss Hooker was a-visiting, up there to to the town--"
 "Yes, Booth's Landing--go on." (89-90)

Though Huck has the man air the ship's name to ensure the rescue, he avoids open ignorance of both names since his apocryphal Miss Hooker and her terrible ordeal require that he know these items. Thus he baits the watchman, snatching knowledge of the locale straight off the man's tongue, and also exemplifying brilliantly the rhetorical genius which can slowly but surely "convince other individuals of a course of action" (78).

At the watchman's bidding to "go on," Huck glides into the kind of meaty monologue witnessed earlier. Here we concede Huck

another privilege belonging to some protagonists, for Twain offers the following gratuities for the plain sake of comedy:

And it was so dark we didn't notice the wreck till we was right on it; and so we saddle-baggsed; but all of us was saved but Bill Whipple--and oh, he was the best cretur!--I most wish't it had been me, I do. (90)

The emphasized (italicized or underlined) words appear throughout the novel, in virtually everyone's speech; but only in a few passages is the emphasis given a conscious irony by the speaker. Huck's "was" is comic since he not only exaggerates poor Whipple's virtues, but also, as Twain's joke would have it, greatly exaggerates the rumors of Whipple's life and death alike. While Huck's rhetoric is part and parcel of his being the narrator, his lime-light as fairly belongs to character analysis, and to the analysis of Huck's intelligence, as to any considerations of author's artifice, artistry, or general intent to entertain.

Yet another dexterity emerges from Huck's attentiveness to the watchman's words, such that when the question arises as to how to finance the rescues, Huck instantly recalls and falsely employs a name the watchman casually dropped minutes before. Even while spewing tall fantasies, Huck notices the minutest details in the man's report and now turns the wealthy Jim Hornback, a real person Huck does not know, into a fictitious Uncle Hornback, uncle to the Miss Hooker whom Huck has already invented. Naturally the watchman must know that the rescue will be financed:

"But who in the dingnation's agoin' to pay for it?
Do you reckon your pap--"

"Why that's all right. Miss Hooker she told me,
particular, that her uncle Hornback--"

"Great guns! is he her uncle?" (90)

No, he is not, nor will he be much inclined to foot the bill for Huck's conscience-ridden rescue arrangements. Yet, however ingeniously Huck gulls the watchman, it is in a thoroughly decent cause. Thus the whole scene not only demonstrates Huck's supreme actor's concentration and memory, talents that Gardner also describes (227), but it is as good an introduction to Huck's primary intrapersonal strengths as any other scene.

In saving full-fledged murderers out of sympathy, Huck surpasses ordinary altruism. In recalling the conception of the rescue plan, Huck foreshadows the famous compassion he will have for Jim in a later scene:

Then Jim manned the oars, and we took out after our raft. Now was the first time that I begun to worry about the men--I reckon I hadn't had time to before. I begun to think how dreadful it was, even for murderers, to be in such a fix. I says to myself, there ain't no telling but I might come to be a murderer myself, yet, and then how would I like it? (87)

That Huck's deep-running sympathy for the killers is exercised through blatant falsehoods is perhaps no more ironic than his marginally illiterate grasp of all kinds of sophisticated verbal subterfuge. His free-flowing lies are as much the marks of a sovereign moral system as the supernormal benevolence he cannot help extending even to hardened criminals.

Of all Huck's talents or gifts, his moral integrity, or what Martin Shockley calls his "intuitive morality" (75), is by

far the most celebrated. With the possible exception of his improvisational flourishes (some of which, as already seen, serve highly moral ends), Huck's spells of profound sympathy, goodheartedness, and righteousness are his most striking expressions of genius.

In terms of intrapersonal intelligence, these abilities include "access to one's own feeling life--one's range of affects or emotions," general introspective vision, "deep knowledge" of one's own "feeling life," and wisdom gained from a "wealth of inner experiences" (Gardner 239). For the completion of Huck's profile, the focus moves to an intelligence of the heart and of the soul; and it moves back to Huck's powers of vision and his genius for appreciating inner worlds as well as the outer ones.

Huck's personal intelligence--a term which here is used to suggest Huck's powers of compassion, sympathy, and love--echoes that first item considered in Huck's profile, his love of Nature. The basic difference here is a focus on human nature instead of the so-called inanimate world of wood and water and sky which Huck extols from time to time. Though the focus has shifted, Huck's impulse is the same: to love, honor, and cherish God's manifest Creation, replete with its numberless flawed human beings. While this sort of awareness may begin as intrapersonal intelligence, the outward expression becomes interpersonal intelligence. But personal intelligences do not always work together. The King, the Duke, and Colonel Sellers are spectacular exceptions since they brilliantly handle others without clearly understanding

themselves. At any rate, where self-knowledge is strong, knowledge of others is strong as well, so that Huck's remarkable (inter-personal) estimation of Jim's individual worth is simply an inner (intrapersonal) knowledge turned outward.

Huck's moral excellence is just this love and respect for other mortal souls; it is a mystical perception of the beauty and truth made manifest in God's universe. Indeed God's immanence in Huck's world hardly need be argued since the boy offers various testimonies, such as this one in the midst of his crisis with Jim's runaway status:

At last, when it hit me all of a sudden that here was the plain hand of Providence slapping me in the face and letting me know my wickedness was being watched all the time from up there in heaven, whilst I was stealing a poor old woman's nigger that hadn't ever done me no harm, and now was showing me there's One that's always on the lookout, and ain't agoing to allow no such miserable doings to go along just so fur and no further, I most dropped in my tracks I was so scared. (268-69)

Although Huck perceives an active Deity and thus may be analyzed in terms of a mystic faculty and awareness, the kindnesses he shows other human beings are never blind, mechanical, or neurotically servile to a fear of God; rather these kindnesses partake of an abiding love of humanity which seems almost to necessitate an abiding love of Him who made the human world. In short, Huck's tireless love and sympathy, directed even to scoundrels and cut-throats, are simply part of his psychic makeup; he has an intuitive feel for God's love, which causes him to see this love in everything and everyone around him.

Since Huck follows an inner voice of compassion even when his brain tells him differently--as when he thinks himself a sinner for protecting Jim--"morality" does not fully describe his deeply sympathetic gestures. In the case just mentioned ("All right, then I'll go to hell" [271]), Huck's rational thinking is overwhelmed by his love of Jim. Thus Huck's moral intelligence might better be labeled a genius of love, his love undeniably constituting that advanced level of intrapersonal intelligence which turns a clear inward gaze to the divine external world as well. Of course Huck's spontaneous capacity to love other people does not normally contradict his intellectual recognition of right and wrong, so our labeling his virtue as the genius of love indicates simply a broadened identification of strong moral virtue. Whether a given person's virtuous treatment of other people depends more on feelings of love than on a drier sense of duty, justice, or rightness, Huck's regard for his fellows always carries both qualities in good measure, even if his sense of duty occasionally is misinformed.

Indeed, in the most famous situation of Huck's confusion, when he fears damnation for helping a runaway slave, his sense of what is right is confounded merely by an entire social and legal institution which crumbled by 1865, which by general hindsight was unpardonably indecent, and which Twain clearly means to satirize by opposing to it the better instincts of an untutored and politically naive adolescent boy. In those situations where

Huck's intuition is not up against the collective prejudice of an entire civilization, his brain is in ready agreement with his heart.

The first such situation occurs in Tom Sawyer, and reminds us that Huck's strong personal intelligence (morality, sympathy, love) is perhaps the only of his endowments given conspicuous treatment in the earlier novel. When Huck decides to help the Widow Douglas, his will to do good places him under a considerable personal risk, just as the above-mentioned gesture, like all other decisions to protect Jim, is personally risky. In helping Jim, Huck opposes not only the abolitionists but all manner of scavenger slavetraders like his own King and Duke; and in hiding the Wilks gold Huck runs counter to the King's dangerous lust for gold; but in saving the Widow Douglas, Huck incriminates probably the most intimidating and deadly evil he will ever meet in Twain's fictional world.

Because he has already seen Injun Joe murder Doctor Robinson, Huck knows that the vicious threats concerning the Widow are far from idle ones, and that were Injun Joe ever to lay hold of his informant, the revenge against him (Huck) would be more grimly motivated even than the very grisly intentions toward the Widow. Thus Huck's moral courage may never be greater than here, where the personal risk is so terrifying. Also of interest is that this particular good deed, unlike most later ones, seems more dependent on a sense of moral duty than on gut-level or heart-level sympathy. Although Huck remembers specific kindnesses from the

Widow, his urge to help is perhaps more honorable and less emotional than usual, since, after all, he cannot yet have grown so enamored of the Widow as, in the later book, he will be enamored of Jim and the pathetic Wilks sisters.

Yet there is sympathy enough in this scene, and altogether enough decent courage to foreshadow the extraordinarily compassionate protagonist of a later story:

This was that stranger's voice--the stranger of the haunted house. A deadly chill went to Huck's heart--this, then, was the "revenge" job! His thought was to fly. Then he remembered that the Widow Douglas had been kind to him more than once, and maybe these men were going to murder her. (Tom Sawyer: 207)

This scene neatly opposes the previous one, where Huck's instincts finally overwhelm his confused morality (his feeling damned for helping Jim), for here Huck's instinct tells him to run while his clear sense of moral duty yet prevails. Here Huck knows instantly the right thing to do and carries it through despite the hideous capabilities of him whose plan he overhears:

"Kill? Who said anything about killing? I would kill him if he was here; but not her. When you want to get revenge on a woman you don't kill her--bosh! you go for her looks. You slit her nostrils--you notch her ears like a sow!"

"By God, that's--"

"Keep your opinion to yourself! It will be safest for you. I'll tie her to the bed. If she bleeds to death, is that my fault? I'll not cry, if she does."
(208)

Injun Joe's designs on the Widow are the more impressive for their being only a substitute vindication, the real grudge being against her deceased husband: "He took advantage of me and died. But

I'll take it out of her" (208). The reader, and Huck as well, might shudder to wonder how Injun Joe would handle the real article--how he possibly could improve on the sort of displaced revenge mapped out for a proxy, in this case the Widow. Huck hardly can be discredited for the stipulations he stresses to the Welshman:

"Please don't ever tell I told you," were Huck's first words when he got in. "Please don't--I'd be killed, sure--but the widow's been good friends to me sometimes, and I want to tell--I will tell if you'll promise you won't ever say it was me." (209)

And so this introduction to Huck Finn's moral strength and service, taking place in another boy's story, sets the stage for the later novel's thematic insistence on Huck's intrapersonal sensibilities. Huck may never be more intrepid than when thwarting Injun Joe, but in his own later adventures the courage takes other memorable forms: sometimes an irrepressible love, sometimes an irresistible conscience, but generally the causal coupling of love, then duty.

It is the courage of humility which Huck learns early in his trip down river with Jim--a humility necessitated by the only instance in Twain's fiction where Huck Finn is mean to another person. Having made Jim believe he dreamed real events, and then having punctured Jim's extravagant interpretation of his "dream," Huck is abruptly rebuked by Jim's hurtful confession of love, and lays bare his lesson in a passage cited earlier: "It made me feel so mean I could almost kissed his foot to get him to take it back" (105). Of course the cleverness with which Huck works Jim up to

his fantastic dream belongs to a previous discussion of the boy's rhetorical (and interpersonal) skills, but it is worth noting that his cleverness could not backfire without Huck's ready sympathy, which instantly turns a thoughtless trick into acute remorse.

By contrast, one can hardly imagine the Tom Sawyer of this novel recoiling at Jim's pain, nor indeed does Huck's later complicity in Tom's "rescue" of Jim do much toward distinguishing Huck's real sensitivity from Tom's lack of it. Here, free of Tom's bewitching influence, Huck's natural generosity is uninhibited and memorably exerted, despite the fifteen-minute lapse and the helplessly racist basis for it. That Huck would "humble" himself to a slave at all can suggest only his superiority to the prevailing temper of a society in which even many abolitionists privately regarded black people as subhumans. But Huck comes from a slave state, where even the token humanity of so many abolitionists is no white man's obligation, and where common slaveowning atrocities place black people at best on a par with inanimate property. In such a context Huck's heartfelt apology to Jim might be termed saintly, if only saints smoked, cussed, and told lies by vocation.

One such lie, covered earlier in the discussion of creative storytelling, comes just three pages after the apology and is a saintly lie if such lies exist. Huck's brilliant pretense of harboring his sick (with "the small-pox") family marks an abrupt decision to protect Jim instead of turning him in, a decision with which his confused sense of justice is not yet at ease. In effect,

the very same contextual considerations work here as in the apology scene, and even more forcefully, for now Huck's irrepressible sympathy crosses gigantic social and legal barriers in forcing him to oppose and rebuff the adult slaveowning community. As in most scenes featuring Huck's humanity, a sense of fair play or justice combines with his inherent charity; and these qualities inevitably reflect Huck's high estimation of individual human worth and his superior "sense of self," which Gardner says "is ordinarily viewed as a quintessential manifestation of intrapersonal intelligence" (242). This sense of self refers "to the balance struck by every individual--and every culture--between the promptings of 'inner feelings' and the pressures of 'other persons'" (242). Huck's opposition to an entire slaveowning civilization could not better exemplify a human being's "sense of self" or his agonizing struggle between just "inner feelings" and the massive influence exerted by "other persons" devoted to the cruelest form of racism. Of course Huck ends up striking the only conceivable "balance" in a mind so gifted with intrapersonal intelligence; he follows his "inner feelings" while fearfully believing that somehow an entire civilization should not be in the wrong. Remarkably enough, a mere boy can be wiser than a massive adult population.

In the previous scene Huck's very wise apology followed Jim's love-inspired scolding; in the "small-pox" scene Huck is overcome by a similar outpouring of essentially brotherly love. Naturally pressured by the collective belief of millions of "other

persons," Huck paddles away from Jim, painfully convinced he must turn his friend over to an adult world that surely knows what is best in these matters:

"Dah you goes, de ole true Huck; de on'y white genlman dat ever kep' his promise to ole Jim."

Well, I just felt sick. But I says, I got to do it-- I can't get out of it. (125)

Twain makes Huck's struggle a fascinatingly complex triumph of love over prejudice, of personal intelligence over culturally inflicted stupidity. Several lines later Huck sets up the benevolent "small-pox" dramatization:

"Is your man white or black?"

I didn't answer up prompt. I tried to, but the words wouldn't come. I tried, for a second or two, to brace up and out with it, but I warn't man enough--hadn't the spunk of a rabbit. I see I was weakening; so I just give up trying, and up and says--

"He's white." (125-26)

This scene anticipates an even greater crisis of the same fabric about one hundred pages later; and though it fairly well establishes that Huck will never betray Jim, there is enough struggle within Huck to provide not only a dynamic plotline but also the realistic character development which critics have famously praised.

As noted earlier, the forty dollars left to Huck for the care of his sick Pap, mam, and sister, Mary Ann, seems something like the instant karma of virtue rewarded; but acquired prejudice still warps Huck's reason, turning this virtue to wretched confusion:

They went off, and I got aboard the raft, feeling bad and low, because I knowed very well I had done wrong, and I see it warn't no use for me to try to learn to do right; a body that don't get started right when he's little, ain't got no show--when the pinch comes there ain't nothing to back him up and keep him to his work, and so he gets beat. Then I thought a minute, and says to myself, hold on,--s'pose you'd a done right and give Jim up; would you felt better than what you do now? No, says I, I'd feel bad--I'd feel just the same way I do now. Well, then, says I, what's the use you learning to do right, when it's troublesome to do right and ain't no trouble to do wrong, and the wages is just the same? (127-28)

Admitting the tongue-in-cheek irony of all this, and that Huck is Twain's vehicle for the roundest satire of a racist society and culture, the reader still may observe Huck-the-character's incipient realization that "what is right" ought not to be "troublesome" to one's conscience, and that if it is troublesome it actually may not be right. Huck must be credited for feeling his way, ever more certainly, through the abysmal miseducation of a racist upbringing. While Twain, for satiric purposes, never frees his protagonist of society's inverted definitions of right and wrong, Huck nonetheless embodies the "most advanced level" of intrapersonal intelligence, which "allows one to detect and to symbolize complex and highly differentiated sets of feelings" (Gardner 239). If he reaches old age, Huck may well be "the wise elder who draws upon his own wealth of inner experiences in order to advise members of his community" (239).

Even when Huck decides once and for all, one hundred pages later, that he cares for Jim too much to turn him in, the decision comes only after Twain's most elaborate harangue against collective

bigotry and its effects on individual thinking. In two exquisitely ironic paragraphs just before Huck's ultimate moral crisis, Twain pushes the boy's ethical misinformation to the point of absurdity.

When Huck goes so far as to think himself a wicked sinner for helping a human being avoid cruel and lifelong slavery, the reader must marvel at the elasticity of Twain's irony. This satire by hyperbole rages for more than a page, climaxing with Huck's most damnable decision to save a decent human life: "All right, then, I'll go to hell" (271). This decision finally appears to be the voice of the soul overwhelming the voice of the long misinformed mind. It is fascinating that Huck never once articulates a condemnation of slavery as a system, but only as a lamentable fate for his black friend Jim. In effect, the heart overrules the head, for Huck's resignation to hellfire suggests either his lasting acknowledgement of slavery's legitimacy, or else his almost ironical dismissal of any such hellish judgment. The fact that Huck shivers and trembles before deciding seems to rule out the second possibility; and indeed the question of hellfire already has been introduced in a moment of remorse: "There was the Sunday school, you could a gone to it; and if you'd a done it they'd a learnt you, there, that people that acts as I'd been acting about that nigger goes to everlasting fire" (269).

If all this moral confusion seems to argue against Huck's intelligence, the reader might conclude with the observation that Huck's intuitive morality does win out, and wins out not only over

the proscriptions of his slave-owning society, but also over the supposed proscriptions of God Himself. Here then is Twain's thrust against Sunday-school racism, for Huck apparently believes that the St. Petersburg Sunday school fairly represents God's thinking in the matter: thus Huck's fearful opposition to God and to the whole Southern civilization proves the boy's giant sympathy, integrity, and wisdom. Were Huck not the vehicle of so much satire, his reasoning would more nearly agree with his deepest feelings. But even without the satire, any teenage protagonist might well be brainwashed by the ancient prejudices of a massive adult world.

A less famous display of intrapersonal intelligence involves Huck's involuntary participation in the Wilks affair. Here Huck registers two different strains of moral intelligence, though they are two sides of one coin. On one side is Huck's growing distaste for the avaricious phoniness of the King and Duke; on the other side is his pity for the young female victims of their sham.

By the time the trio of impostors arrive at the Wilks home, Huck is already very tired of the frauds, for he has never liked their purposes. His tolerance critically low, Huck is repelled by the soundrels' first gushing of grief, before the Wilks girls have even been encountered: "Both of them took on about that dead tanner like they'd lost the twelve disciples. . . . It was enough to make a body ashamed of the human race" (210). Although at times Huck cannot help admiring the sheer wit and endurance

propelling their shenanigans, he plainly despises the selfishness of the King and the Duke.

Three pages later, when their sobs and tears have set the whole Wilks gathering to fits of weeping, and the King has unleashed his most abundant waterworks and platitudes "till it was just sickening," Huck takes refuge in an erupting hymn: "Music is a good thing; and after all that soul-butter and hogwash, I never see it freshen up things so, and sound so honest and bully" (213). This is not to say Huck likes going to church, where hypocrisy also abounds; but church music, more or less incorruptible, is pleasingly truthful to one who, though an adept liar, is remarkably devoted to justice, decency, and fair play.

The higher greatness of this devotion is Huck's acting upon it. A few hours after the eldest Wilks girl, Mary Jane, has blissfully handed the King six thousand in gold, she is in the kitchen defending Huck against sister Joanna's interrogation. Playing the King's English valet Adolphus, Huck is not so much shamed by his own outrageous lies, but by all the kindness which their embarrassing (and rare) failure brings him. Each sister's humility, so beautiful to Huck, mortifies his sense of justice: "I says to myself, this is a girl that I'm letting that old reptile rob her of her money!" (225). Though helping the girls will mean robbing the dangerously greedy King, Huck cannot abide the cruel violation of their innocence: "I felt so ornery and low down and mean, that I says to myself, My mind's made up; I'll hive that money for them

or bust" (225). A few minutes later, narrowly eluding the frauds, Huck indeed manages to "hive" their gold in Peter Wilks' coffin, thus saving the Wilks girls while jeopardizing his own young skin.

Except in particulars, one can hardly distinguish Huck's Wilksian heroism from that realized in service to Jim: in both cases personal risks are forgotten in the inspiration of doing what feels right, fair, and good, inside. Of course the Wilks caper does not put Huck up against an entire misinformed civilization, and so his intrepidity here may not be as spectacular as in the episodes with Jim. However, it should be observed that although Huck's defense of the Wilks girls is not as comprehensively defiant as his defense of Jim, it might be seen as a more active and dynamic kind of charity since his great deeds on Jim's behalf were essentially acts of mission. Thus, because of great strain and great hazard, Huck's exertions in the Wilks affair, though not as gigantic in what they oppose, are feats of moral fortitude nonetheless quite comparable to those most famous gestures made on behalf of Jim and in opposition to half of a nation. Although Huck ran all sorts of personal risks in aiding Jim, the lasting impression in those episodes is more Huck's gut-wrenchingly psychological fortitude than any kind of physical derring-do. In the Wilks scenes, though Huck fears reprisals from the King and Duke, his bravery amounts to the dashing, swashbuckling, almost unthinking courage attending such romantic heroes as inhabit Tom Sawyer's daydreams. Were Tom Sawyer ever to read Huck Finn's book, as Huck

read the one about Tom, he would much prefer Huck's defense of the girls to anything Huck ever does for Jim.

Despite all surface distinctions, though, both scenarios are about the same essential human greatness, which is the intrapersonal power of charity, sympathy, and love. Especially in light of his age and his peculiar social and personal backgrounds, no careful examination of Huck's thoughts and deeds can deny him a ranking among the great moral commentators in all of fiction. Indeed the depth of Huck's sensitivity, and his innate capacity to love, are especially unforgettable if one considers, again, the otherwise crude vessel in which these sublime qualities reside. Twain forever juxtaposes Huck's crudity and his delicacy by wrapping even the boy's most sensitive expressions in characteristically uncouth vernacular such as the following, offered in regard to the gulling of the Wilks girls: "Them poor things was that glad and happy it made my heart ache to see them getting fooled and lied to so, but I didn't see no safe way for me to chip in and change the general tune" (234). Huck's precocious sensitivity remains the more astounding for its backwoods origins and articulations.

A fitting conclusion to Huck's intrapersonal profile might be his final disposition regarding the King and the Duke, the deadbeats responsible for the bulk of Huck's trouble in the novel. Without listing their crimes against Huck and Jim, but merely noting that the two cheats hold our protagonists in unconscionable

bondage for nearly one hundred pages, we close with Huck's astonishing sympathy for these devils, now tarred, feathered, and riding a rail:

Well, it made me sick to see it; and I was sorry for them poor pitiful rascals, it seemed like I couldn't ever feel any hardness against them any more in the world. It was a dreadful thing to see. Human beings can be awful cruel to one another. (290)

Huck almost seems to have forgotten how awfully cruel these two feathered beings, especially the old one, have been to Jim and himself, and recently too.

But the statement is not as naive as it sounds. Huck has been anything but blind to the rampant sinfulness of his former masters, yet something in the combination of his compassionate nature and his less-than-perfectly-hellish treatment from them, permits this ready forgiveness. Since the King and Duke always stop short of the abject physical torturing of others, which is to say since they are never quite hideously abusive of anyone, the vices and shams themselves constitute a comedy of humours inasmuch as the perpetrators clearly are hanging themselves from a long and meandering rope. Thus Huck's pity for the King and the Duke is neither implausible nor outrageous, but merely characteristic of the boy's unsurpassed goodheartedness. As for Huck's feeling responsible for their fate--"I warn't feeling so brash as I was before, but kind of ornery, and humble, and to blame, somehow--though I hadn't done nothing" (290)--one wonders just what sort of hypersensitivity Twain is depicting here, and why he depicts it.

While Huck's overactive conscience and hasty self-chastisement are partly the effects of the low morale he suffers in several places--e.g., "seeing I was so ignorant and so kind of low-down and ornery" (14)--they are more a result of his unflagging sympathy for other denizens of this world. In the same way that he hurt for the murderers stranded on the Walter Scott, Huck helplessly imagines the ordeal of hot tar and feathers. Sensing the other fellow's plight acutely and infallibly, he harbors an unreasoned sense of responsibility for any such suffering. This kind of mystic sympathy is so saintlike as to place Huck in a class apart from Tom and even Pudd'nhead, who in their own stories express memorable acts of altruism--but not so profoundly nor in such significant sums. While we perhaps cannot overemphasize Twain's use of Huck's naive goodness as a running counterpart to so much human evil, neither can we dismiss this virtue in analyzing Huck's character. Because Huck's profound goodheartedness is never implausible, we may accept its arresting depths as the twofold art Twain intended: Huck's intrapersonal genius exposes a diseased human race to which, as a backwoods adolescent paragon of love, Huck is a marvelously realistic exception.

CHAPTER III

THE KING OF ST. PETERSBURG

As Chapter II points out, Huck Finn is first introduced in a story belonging chiefly to someone else, namely his friend Tom Sawyer. In The Adventures of Tom Sawyer Huck's talents are small and secondary, never coming to fruition until his own adventures are told years later. In these companion novels the role of guest star or supporting actor is relatively unflattering, but perhaps more so for Tom Sawyer. The brilliant star of his own adventures, Tom is not the same boy in Huck's story, whether one likes him or not.

A number of critics do not like the Tom Sawyer in Huckleberry Finn, particularly in the final chapters where he pushes his aunt, uncle, and Jim to the limits of endurance, and taxes even goodnatured Huck, who basically reveres him, but is appalled at Tom's idea of using his aunt and uncle as messengers: "I said, 'Don't do nothing of the kind; it's one of the most jackass ideas I ever struck'; but he never paid no attention to me; went right on. It was his way when he'd got his plans set" (309). In Tom's two appearances in Huckleberry Finn, near the beginning and throughout the finale, he essentially is no more nor less than a super-dedicated swashbuckler, and thus is a narrower personality than in his own story. It is his narrowness which irritates critics, for in Huckleberry Finn Tom's positive attributes pertain only to his admittedly precocious romantic imagination.

As noted earlier, Robert Regan says Tom's behavior in Huckleberry Finn is almost madness (133), while Judith Fetterley calls it petty tyranny (70). Fetterley draws unflattering contrasts between this Tom Sawyer and the earlier one, contrasts which make Huckleberry Finn's Tom Sawyer not only much less charming but less intelligent too:

Tom's obsession changes him from a character whose genius lies in his capacity to create brilliant situations in response to the immediate circumstances--the whitewashing triumph, the flight to Jackson's Island, the staging of his own funeral--to a character who is both rigid (he constantly iterates, "you'd have to") and derivative: "Everybody said it was a real beautiful oath, and asked Tom if he got it out of his own head. He said some of it, but the rest was out of pirate-books and robber-books." (70)

Fetterley implies that Twain himself does not like Tom, that Tom is a deliberate portrait in obnoxious egotism. This interpretation is just one of hundreds of attempts which baffled critics have made to account for a famously dissatisfying conclusion to Twain's masterpiece. Fetterley's commentary is particularly useful to this study because, first, her supremely negative response to Tom invites critical appraisal of Tom's character, and because, second, her own criticism points directly to the matter of Tom's intelligence.

Fetterley argues that Huckleberry Finn's Tom Sawyer obeys an insipidly self-conscious "code" of conduct instead of the sublime spontaneity which inspired his earlier character. In Huckleberry Finn Tom "acts constantly upon the compulsions of his code rather than upon the promptings of his genius" (72). According to Fetterley, the later Tom Sawyer is simply not the sensitive, perceptive boy he

once was: "In Tom Sawyer, Tom senses always what is expected of him, and he acts accordingly. In Huckleberry Finn, both the conscience and the self-perspective are lacking" (72). As clinical as these indictments may sound to the casual reader of Huckleberry Finn, they must be considered in any deliberate character analysis, especially one focussing on questions of Tom's intelligence and genius.

While this study does not aim to render a particular verdict on the ending of Huckleberry Finn, such a judgment is part and parcel of any critical disposition toward Tom Sawyer as he appears in those concluding chapters. As noted in Chapter II, even the mildest of critics regard Tom's concluding pranks as a curious descent from the preceding fare of Huck's noble moral struggles; and some sterner readers such as Fetterley see Tom's behavior as a deliberate vehicle in Twain's diatribe against moral hypocrisy, Tom's own alleged hypocrisy consisting in what Fetterley calls his hollow use of such "code" words as "right," "wrong," "principle," "duty," and "honor" (72). Thus there are basically two negative responses to Huckleberry Finn's Tom Sawyer: one merely regards him as tiresomely, pointlessly superficial; the other sees something strange and perhaps wrong in his carefree insensitivity.

Fetterley is perhaps the ultimate spokesperson for the second view, arguing that the later Tom Sawyer is flawed for conscious thematic reasons. She actually places this Tom beneath the King and the Duke in terms of moral turpitude, arguing that unlike Tom "they never claim that what they are doing is right"

(449). In this way Fetterley implies that Tom Sawyer is Twain's foremost proof of moral hypocrisy in all of Huckleberry Finn. Thus, well founded or not, Fetterley's thesis provocatively disapproves of a character who has provoked a good deal of critical reaction. While this writer cannot believe much that Fetterley claims about Twain's developing relationship to Tom, her argument concerning Tom's shrunken genius is fairly indisputable. For whatever reasons Twain had in mind, Tom's personality is less rounded in Huck's book than in his own, as is Huck's personality a lesser one in Tom Sawyer than in Huckleberry Finn.

For consistency's sake, the analysis of Tom's genius should begin, as with Huck, by his less favorable appearance, although in this case the more favorable characterization came first. However shrunken or even deformed the later Tom Sawyer might be, he at least is an introduction to the earlier boy genius. A few examples from Huckleberry Finn's concluding pages will suffice to lay the framework of that intelligence which dominates the earlier novel.

To put into perspective Fetterley's criticism concerning Tom's reduced intelligence, one begins with her observation that in Huckleberry Finn Tom's imaginings are unoriginal, drawn mainly from "pirate-books and robber-books" (70) and not born of such brilliance as inspired, for example, the "whitewashing triumph" in Tom Sawyer. Yet comparable circumstances show that Tom leans as heavily on "derivative" inspiration in the first novel as in the

second. Six chapters after the whitewashing, in pirate banter virtually identical to the robber-talk in Huckleberry Finn, Tom's sources are clearly the same as later on:

Now appeared Joe Harper, as airily clad and elaborately armed as Tom. Tom called:

"Hold! Who comes here into Sherwood Forest without my pass?"

"Guy of Guisborne wants no man's pass. Who art thou that--that--"

"Dares to hold such language," said Tom, prompting-- for they talked "by the book," from memory. (66-7)

Though Joe is almost Tom's equal in piratese, and so himself a cause for some admiration, the point is that Tom's excellent mimicry and playacting (bodily-kinesthetic or theatrical intelligence) is always prompted by what he has read. This point should be obvious, but the parallel passages indicate it is so.

As for Fetterley's other charges, that in Huckleberry Finn Tom unwholesomely infringes on other people's real lives and indeed is cruelly insensitive to others, these are not unreasonable indictments. As already noted, while some readers of Huckleberry Finn doubtless regard Tom's antics as so much boisterous boyhood fun, others see serious flaws in his behavior. Although no one should deny that Tom is less attractive in the later novel than in his own, the question of Tom's later motivations is not crucial to a study of his surviving genius, however interesting the question may be. However cruel and insensitive the later Tom Sawyer may be, he still exhibits several facets of his splendid earlier genius.

In Tom's most obnoxious moments, this genius admittedly resembles that of the King and the Duke as those two run self-absorbedly roughshod over the meek and the innocent. It is difficult to say whom Tom torments more, Jim or Aunt Sally, but the point germane to this study is that both victims are unwilling participants in a drama that is almost supernaturally well conceived, equipped, directed, and consummated by the solitary will of one fourteen-year-old boy. Despite the suffering he causes others, and whether or not he is a rampant sociopath, Tom demonstrates several extraordinary abilities in his fantastic rescue of Jim.

The first of these is Tom's ability to conceive and then direct such an outrageous, or perhaps gorgeous, but in any case massive drama involving numerous unwitting and unwilling players, all to some extent manipulated by Tom himself. While the overall drama, one could argue, contains all six of Gardner's intelligences, the basic conception and direction of it involve primarily Tom's spatial (visual), rhetorical, and interpersonal ("influencing a group of disparate individuals to behave along desired lines" [239]) abilities--though here again the rhetorical and interpersonal functions are very similar. And Tom's overall exertion here is very similar to that of the King and Duke when they sweep into villages and make unknowing pawns of whichever townspeople cross their path. Like the two scoundrels, Tom is amazingly capable of launching and controlling gigantic charades involving the real

lives of other people. It is precisely Tom's rhetorical/interpersonal intelligence which enables him to assemble his cast and to put them--especially Jim and Aunt Sally--through such gratuitous agonies. Tom's spatial or visual intelligence is mainly responsible for the elaborate envisioning and staging of Jim's rescue, just as Huck's spatial intelligence allowed him to picture and then construct the various props necessary to suggest his own murder. As Huck says, "Tom superintended. He could outsuperintend any boy I ever see. He knowed how to do everything" (323).

While Tom does superintend largely in accordance with the romances he has read, he is not so rigidly derivative as Fetterley suggests, but spontaneously alters the script several times. Referring to Tom's original vision, Huck says:

I see in a minute it was worth fifteen of mine, for style, and would make Jim just as free a man as mine would, and maybe get us all killed besides. So I was satisfied, and said we would waltz in on it. I needn't tell what it was, here, because I knowed it wouldn't stay the way it was. I knowed he would be changing it around, every which way, as we went along, and heaving in new bullinesses wherever he got a chance. And that is what he done. (292)

As noted earlier, contrary to Fetterley's suggestion, Huckleberry Finn's Tom Sawyer appears to be no more dependent on reading materials than he was in Tom Sawyer; and certainly his loyalty to sacred romantic precedents never precludes his inventing this or that departure from an old plot. Again, like the King and Duke, Tom improvises well, even with a traditional scenario already in his mind's eye.

A second ability involves the massiveness and duration of Tom's vision, the prodigious volume of embellishments which fill up nearly forty pages of the novel. Of course the seemingly endless details of the escape necessitate not only the sufferings of Jim and of Aunt Sally, but of countless critics as well. While even the most lenient readers tend to consider Jim's escape overdrawn, its ploy-packed longevity must count as an awesome spectacle of creative (visual) and mnemonic (retentive) energies; for what Tom does not dream up on his own, he lucidly remembers from his favorite books. Thus one must admire not only the countless individual luminosities which surface in Tom's unfolding vision, but also the fierce concentration and recollection (both in the actor's arsenal [Gardner 227]) necessary to sustain this vision hour after hour, day after day. A catalog of the particular contrivances would be enormous: the last ten chapters are more or less filled with Tom's artifices. However much Tom depends on romantic literature, we must conclude that his make-believe rescue of Jim is, obnoxious or not, a sustained tour de force in live theater.

Tom's third extraordinary achievement concerns his own role-playing, and points directly to the bodily-kinesthetic (theatrical) index of abilities including observation mimicry, memory, concentration, and perhaps emotional recreation (Gardner 227). Tom is remarkably immersed in the "rescue," quite as though, much of the time, he believes it is real. While Huck's "negative capability" may go no deeper than his surprising willingness, earlier in the

novel, to pose as Sarah or Mary Williams, Tom seems always to be inside his part, even more so than the King and Duke when they weep floods over their departed brother Peter Wilks. With the threat of tar and feathers, as well as the promise of thousands in gold, always looming before them, the King and Duke would be expected to do their credible and energetic best; by comparison Tom's imagination is far more purely motivated.

Although the King and Duke clearly relish their thespian vocations, Tom's ardor comes of his love of swashbuckling romance, even if, as Fetterley argues, Tom's exertions are egotistically insensitive to others. And even this insensitivity to Jim's and Aunt Sally's aches and pains might be seen as the all-consuming drive of a ruthless romantic genius. Robert Regan's suggestion of Tom's near-insanity refers to Tom's deep absorption in the "rescue" fantasy, which at times does seem inordinately out of touch with reality, beyond what the King and Duke ever reach and antithetical to Huck's distrust of superfluous pretension.

Critics who think Tom is close to madness may have in mind simply the gross insensitivities best evidenced by Tom's effectively putting snakes into his Aunt Sally's bed as well as into Jim's. This is the liveliest torture Tom inflicts on them, and yet it easily is surpassed by other effects which Tom seems genuinely willing to produce but regretfully must forego:

He had his chin in his hand, thinking. Pretty soon, he sighs, and shakes his head; then sighs again, and says:
 "No, it wouldn't do--there ain't necessity enough for it."

"For what?" I says.

"Why, to saw Jim's leg off," he says.

"Good land!" I says, "why, there ain't no necessity for it. And what would you want to saw his leg off for, anyway?"

"Well, some of the best authorities has done it. They couldn't get the chain off, so they just cut their hand off, and shoved. And a leg would be better still. But we got to let that go. There ain't necessity enough in this case; and besides, Jim's a nigger and wouldn't understand the reasons for it, and how it's the custom in Europe; so we'll let it go." (299-300)

Like the other real effects, the hypothetical effect of breaking Jim's leg needs some justification in terms of Tom's overall motivation.

In the case of the garter snakes, spiders, and rats, Tom is blatantly inconsiderate of others, and perhaps cruel, though the cruelty surely has no deliberate place in his designs. Besides, unsavory as they are, the snakes, spiders, and rats are all hand-picked by Huck and Tom, neither of whom is likely to fathom any need for squeamishness in the presence of mere rodents and creeping, crawling things. There is no question that, were the roles by chance reversed, Tom would cheerfully play Jim's part in this delicious adventure. As for the notion of sawing off Jim's leg, either Tom is merely enjoying some wishful thinking, or else, like any zealous director of good theater, he is simply sacrificing one player's comfort to the overall authenticity of the production. After all, Tom is never so happy as when, by what inestimable good fortune, he himself suffers a painful wound. As Huck explains:

We was all glad as we could be, but Tom was the gladdest of all, because he had a bullet in the calf of his leg.

When me and Jim heard that, we didn't feel so brash as what we did before. It was hurting him considerable, and bleeding. . . . I told Tom I was agoing for a doctor. He raised considerable row about it, but me and Jim stuck to it and wouldn't budge; so he was for crawling out and setting the raft loose himself; but we wouldn't let him. Then he give us a piece of his mind--but it didn't do no good. (340-41)

Given Tom's own glad suffering, charges of his cruelty are misleading at best. His ecstasy over a serious wound proves his absolute dedication and devotion to the cause of romantic adventure.

Either this fanatical dedication is madness, or it is the consuming idealism and artistry of an inspired, driven and, yes, obsessed genius of imaginative playacting. As Dean Simonton points out: "The poet John Dryden expressed a widespread belief when he wrote: 'Great wits are sure to madness near allied, / And thin partitions do their bounds divide'" (55). Tom Sawyer is mad only insofar as his inflamed romantic/theatrical genius is madness.

When the live drama is fully consummated, and when the fever and delirium have passed, Tom, still convalescing, sits up in bed to declare Jim's real freedom, and tells Aunt Sally why he went about rescuing a free man: "Well, that is a question, I must say; and just like women! Why, I wanted the adventure of it; and I'd a waded neck-deep in blood" (357). It is this full-bodied immersion--heart, soul, and bare blesh--that constitutes a third extraordinary achievement of Tom's. Not only did he mastermind, supervise, and in all ways direct this forty-page romantic melodrama; not only did he equip it with a thousand superb theatrical effects produced either from faultless memory or soaring imagination; but

he lived his numerous roles like the most daring and consummate of method actors:

He'd got all that coat of arms business fixed, so now he started in to finish up the rest of that part of the work, which was to plan out a mournful inscription--said Jim got to have one, like they all done. He made up a lot, and wrote them out on a paper, and read them off, so:

1. Here a captive heart busted.
2. Here a poor prisoner, forsook by the world and friends, fretted out his sorrowful life.
3. Here a lonely heart broke, and a worn spirit went to its rest, after thirty-seven years of solitary captivity.
4. Here, homeless and friendless, after thirty-seven years of bitter captivity, perished a noble stranger, natural son of Louis XIV.

Tom's voice trembled, whilst he was reading them, and he most broke down. (322-23)

At this point the reader must appreciate, as with Huck's astounding female impersonation, the precocious "negative capability" on display. Tom loses himself in the scenario, shedding real tears for poignant, indescribably beautiful, and utterly make-believe sentiments.

Although he must come part way out of these reveries to arrange the necessary twists, turns, and embellishments in this live drama he is producing, directing, and even literally (rhetorically) writing, Tom is capable of instant and full self-effacement. He has the perfect concentration of the best of dramatic actors, who quite forget what and where they are in favor of what and where the script demands they be. Tom is, then, a superbly concentrated player, a writer with mimetic and creative talents, and a producer and director of an extravaganza the proportions of which Cecil B. DeMille might well have admired.

Concerning the last item--Tom's producing (creating and equipping) and directing (staging) this stupendous drama--readers should note the concluding assessments of Tom's achievement, the ignorant but not unreasonable estimates of the mysterious work force behind it:

"Don't tell me, s'I; there wuz help, s'I; 'n' ther' wuz a plenty help, too, s'I; ther's ben a dozen a-helpin' that nigger, 'n' I lay I'd skin every last nigger on this place, but I'd find out who done it, s'I; 'n' moreover, s'I--"
 "A dozen says you!--forty couldn't a done everything that's been done." (346)

The greatness of Tom's achievement is beyond dispute. Even if critics still question his motivation, his decency, or the likability of his character, they at least should admit the definite strains of his genius.

Concerning unattractive geniuses, of which Tom may count as one, Dean Simonton says: "To earn the genius label a candidate does not have to be 'right' or 'good.' Genghis Khan and Adolph Hitler can be styled geniuses of a kind: an 'evil genius' remains a genius, however ethically repulsive" (2). Tom may be a ruthless playwright and stage director, irritatingly bossy, and bluntly insensitive to others' wishes; but after all is done he remains a basically decent boy, though one supernormally driven to manifest the deep romances playing in his precocious heart and head.

This basic decency suggests one final note on Huckleberry Finn's Tom Sawyer, regarding Tom's profound romantic leanings, especially striking in contrast to Huck's lack of such feelings. While both boys exhibit keen imagination, virtually all of Huck's excursions into make-believe are strenuous escapes from real

trouble. As the final chapters of his story show best, Huck does not much enjoy extravagant fantasy. Unlike Tom, Huck is not attuned to the subjective glories of elaborate imaginary worlds (unless one counts the world of ghosts and witches, which both boys admire). More to the point, though Tom is a ruthless director in the final chapters of Huckleberry Finn, there is something in his trembling and nearly weeping over a made-up "mournful inscription" (322) that resembles Huck's intrapersonal sensitivities ("access to one's own feeling life") discussed in Chapter I. As we saw, Huck felt melancholy when meditating on ghosts, sublime awe when regarding the splendor of Nature, loving remorse after hurting Jim, and the tenderest of concern as the Wilks girls were being victimized. Although Huck's love of other people and of the natural world is a sensitivity to real life, it bears some comparison to the sensitive love which Tom holds for certain make-believe people and landscapes. This juxtaposition is simply to suggest that the Tom Sawyer in Huckleberry Finn exhibits more humanity, sensitivity, and love than critics generally have allowed. At any rate, such a suggestion is a helpful transition to Tom's own book, in which his character, critics commonly argue, resembles a real human being instead of a two-dimensional clown. Perhaps the disparate Tom Sawyers are somewhat reconciled if the later tyrant can be seen to have a tender, sublimely emotional inner self.

As Chapter I indicated, Tom Sawyer's intelligence is trumpeted from page one onward in his own story, written eight

years before he surfaced in Huckleberry Finn. Aunt Polly's opening soliloquy on Tom's cleverness establishes the boy's intellect as the centerpiece of the whole novel. Huck often eclipses himself in telling his story, but Tom Sawyer's narrator keeps Tom forever in close range. He is the shining hero of his story, never relinquishing center stage. Although he exhibits strong abilities in his own story which he does not exhibit in Huckleberry Finn, for purposes of continuity we begin cataloging the early Tom Sawyer by examining those capacities still displayed in his later character.

One of these is Tom's rhetorical genius. In Huckleberry Finn Tom exercised this power almost exclusively in service of Jim's magnificent rescue. While this project is a work of unmistakable genius, Tom's rhetoric is more widely effectual in Tom Sawyer. Although most of these rhetorical flourishes sustain or deepen Tom's primary role of enlightened leader to Huck and to several other boys, he employs a linguistic intuition for a wide variety of handsome effects.

The most famous of these is the whitewashing scene, where Tom not only foists his fence-painting chore onto others, but reaps material gratitude in the bargain. Scores of critics have praised the brilliant management of this now famous Saturday-morning chore. Judith Fetterley writes: "Tom has only to present it as something he cannot allow them to do, an art requiring special skills which only he possesses" (Rebel: 94). These "special skills" must

include a reintroduction of the interpersonal intelligence, for, in combination with rhetoric, the interpersonal abilities precisely describe Tom's whitewashing achievement. Again, these abilities permit

a skilled adult to read the intentions and desires--even when these have been hidden--of many other individuals and, potentially, to act upon this knowledge--for example, by influencing a group of disparate individuals to behave along desired lines. (239)

Tom is not yet an adult, and so is a precocious user of this particular gift.

Brief passages from the whitewashing scene reveal Tom's combined interpersonal and rhetorical genius. First, the stunning reversal of logic:

"What do you call work?"

"Why, ain't that work?"

Tom resumed his whitewashing, and answered carelessly:

"Well, maybe it is, and maybe it ain't. All I know, is, it suits Tom Sawyer."

"Oh, come, now, you don't mean to let on that you like it?"

The brush continued to move.

"Like it? Well, I don't see why I oughtn't to like it. Does a boy get a chance to whitewash a fence every day?"

That put the thing in a new light. Ben stopped nibbling his apple. (13-14)

Fetterley observes that Tom's strategy "rests on his intuitive discovery that people want to do what they are forbidden to" (Rebel: 94). Thus the second revelation of interpersonal/rhetorical genius is Tom's subsequent nonchalant harnessing of every chance straggler, regardless of his particular disposition towards purchasing another boy's Saturday labors:

And while the late steamer Big Missouri worked and sweated in the sun, the retired artist sat on a barrel in the shade

close by, dangled his legs, munched his apple, and planned the slaughter of more innocents. There was no lack of material; boys happened along every little while; they came to jeer, but remained to whitewash. By the time Ben was fagged out, Tom had traded the next chance to Billy Fisher for a kite, in good repair; and when he played out, Johnny Miller bought in for a dead rat and a string to swing it with--and so on, and so on, hour after hour. And when the middle of the afternoon came, from being a poor poverty-stricken boy in the morning, Tom was literally rolling in wealth. (15)

Whether Twain borrowed this episode or invented it, its fame is entirely warranted. Even without the material gains, consisting of nineteen separate acquisitions, Tom's ploy merits the highest accolades. With the colossal irony of Tom's selling the chore to others, the reader should expect no greater manifestation of personal genius in the remainder of this novel nor in many another story besides. Tom's interpersonal/rhetorical power helps make him the boy king of St. Petersburg, and the unchallenged lord of his own gang. It is to the point, then, that rhetoric "is the ability that political leaders . . . have developed to the highest degree" (Gardner 78) and that "we see highly developed forms of interpersonal intelligence in political and religious leaders" (239). Indeed Tom exerts a political and at times almost religious influence on the less inspired robbers and pirates of the region.

While the whitewashing scene reveals an incipient leadership, in other scenes Tom Sawyer is a full-fledged leader wielding generally unquestioned authority. So great is the whitewashing spectacle that no other particular greatness could be precluded. Thus a few pages later it comes as no surprise whatever that Tom

Sawyer is one of the Generals in a great battle scene, nor does one wonder that "Tom's army won a great victory" (19). And though Twain has not yet so specified, the reader rightly assumes that all the military trappings are the work of General Sawyer: "Then the dead were counted, prisoners exchanged, the terms of the next disagreement agreed upon, and the day for the necessary battle appointed; after which the armies fell into line and marched away" (19). Given the massive volume of such effects produced at the end of Huckleberry Finn, Tom is but an apprentice stage director in this earlier story.

Yet Tom is as fully the master of other boys in his own novel as later in Huckleberry Finn. Tom's nearest rival in romantic articulations, be they of the high seas or of Sherwood Forest, is Joe Harper, a worthy adventurer himself. Yet Tom not only prompts Joe in the midst of a pirate dialogue, but easily overrules him in their discussing imminent careers:

Joe was for being a hermit, and living on crusts in a remote cave, and dying, sometime, of cold and want and grief; but after listening to Tom, he conceded that there were some conspicuous advantages about a life of crime, and so he consented to be a pirate. (99)

As a prodigious leader and wielder of words, Tom has a natural duty not only to hold the band of pirates together, but also to inspire them generally. Clearly much of Tom's fiery rhetoric comes from an irrepressible self-glorification which must and will have an audience.

Like any swaggering pirate, Tom loves his own exploits and enjoys recounting them. After stealing back home to eavesdrop on

his grieving survivors--a mission that narrowly misses detection-- it is the lusty adventurer's privilege to tell his tale on reaching camp again:

"No, Tom's true-blue, Huck, and he'll come back. He won't desert. He knows that would be a disgrace to a pirate, and Tom's too proud for that sort of thing. He's up to something or other. Now I wonder what?"

"Well, the things is ours, anyway, ain't they?"

"Pretty near, but not yet, Huck. The writing says they are if he ain't back here to breakfast."

"Which he is!" exclaimed Tom, with fine, dramatic effect, stepping grandly into camp.

A sumptuous breakfast of bacon and fish was shortly provided, and as the boys set to work upon it, Tom recounted (and adorned) his adventures. They were a vain and boastful company of heroes when the tale was done. (118)

As a pirate captain leads his men in boasting, so must he raise them from the doldrums to which their profession is peculiarly vulnerable.

Less than two pages later the crew are suffering a homesickness past even Tom's powers to assuage. After vigorous teasing and his own gutty steadfastness fail to dissuade the deserters, Tom resorts to the master rhetoric of a brilliant and flawless pirate's plan:

"Wait! Wait! I want to tell you something!"

They presently stopped and turned around. When he got to where they were, he began unfolding his secret, and they listened moodily till at last they saw the "point" he was driving at, and then they set up a war whoop of applause and said it was "spendid!" and said if he had told them at first, they wouldn't have started away. . . .

The lads came gaily back and went at their sports again with a will, chattering all the time about Tom's stupendous plan and admiring the genius of it. (122)

Space does not permit a thorough record of Tom's leadership since he exudes this quality in virtually every word and gesture. Without fail he inspires either love, admiration, or awe in everyone he meets.

Even in one-on-one encounters Tom "leads," for, as with Aunt Polly, he virtually always brings the other person to a strong alignment with his own point of view. That he exercises such interpersonal influence primarily through linguistic adeptness merely signifies the well defined intelligences operating in the art of persuasion. As Gardner indicates, linguistic and interpersonal skills are at the front of great leadership. Since Tom's rhetorical greatness is more or less a constant--whether he is dealing with Aunt Polly, Becky Thatcher, innocent passersby, Tom Sawyer's gang, throngs of anonymous admirers, or single comrades like Huck--no more illustration is necessary, except perhaps that which closes the book.

This final example is a sort of fanfare rhetorical finish in which Tom singlemindedly makes possible those circumstances from which Huck is wrested by his Pap and subsequently propelled down river into his own Adventures. Somewhat like persuading one's friends to buy up one's day labor, it is no small order persuading Huck Finn to stay on awhile with the Widow, where of course "everything's so awful reg'lar a body can't stand it" (257). In fact Tom works much harder to effect this magic trick than in the whitewashing episode. The clincher is a claim to reputation: probably

a sincere claim, but nonetheless the one calculation sure to bring the outcast back:

"But Huck, we can't let you into the gang if you ain't respectable, you know."

Huck's joy was quenched.

"Can't let me in, Tom? Didn't you let me go for a pirate?"

"Yes, but that's different. A robber is more high-toned than what a pirate is--as a general thing. In most countries they're awful high up in the nobility--dukes and such."

"Now, Tom, hain't you always ben friendly to me? You wouldn't shet me out, would you, Tom? You wouldn't do that, now, would you, Tom?"

"Huck, I wouldn't want to, and I don't want to--but what would people say? Why, they'd say, 'Mph! Tom Sawyer's Gang! pretty low characters in it!' They'd mean you, Huck. You wouldn't like that, and I wouldn't."

Huck was silent for some time, engaged in a mental struggle. Finally he said:

"Well, I'll go back to the widder for a month and tackle it and see if I can come to stand it, if you'll let me b'long to the gang, Tom."

"All right, Huck, it's a whiz! Come along, old chap, and I'll ask the widow to let up on you a little, Huck."
(258-59)

With the stature of this persuasion--its conquering a stubborn personality and so setting the stage for grand future Adventures--no other triumph in this book of personal triumphs should close the file on Tom Sawyer's interpersonal and rhetorical genius.

Mnemonics, another of Tom's linguistic assets in Huckleberry Finn, manifests itself in Tom Sawyer more nearly the same way it does in the later novel. Tom's ability to recall vividly the various trappings, gestures, and dialogues of the high romances he has read is the indispensable fuel of Jim's rescue in Huckleberry Finn and of more general activities in Tom Sawyer. Without

Tom's vast and ready memory, not only would ordinary battles and skirmishes be poorly played out, if played at all, but the trip to Jackson Island and the tracking of Injun Joe--and all the famous consequences thereof--would never come to pass. The most pleasing illustration, since it indicates Tom's superior memory, is one that conveniently represents his theatrical gifts as well. Nowhere in all of Jim's "rescue" is there an uninterrupted "scene" like the following in Chapter 8 of Tom Sawyer:

"Hold, my merry men! Keep hid till I blow."

Now appeared Joe Harper, as airily clad and elaborately armed as Tom. Tom called:

"Hold! Who comes here into Sherwood Forest without my pass?"

"Guy of Guisborne wants no man's pass. Who art thou that--that--"

"Dares to hold such language," said Tom, prompting--for they talked "by the book," from memory.

"Who art thou that dares to hold such language?"

"I, indeed! I am Robin Hood, as thy caitiff carcase soon shall know."

"Then art thou indeed that famous outlaw? Right gladly will I dispute with thee the passes of the merry wood. Have at thee!"

They took their lath swords, dumped their other traps on the ground, struck a fencing attitude, foot to foot, and began a grave, careful combat, "two up and two down." Presently Tom said:

"Now, if you've got the hang, go it lively!"

So they "went it lively," panting and perspiring with the work. (66-7)

When Joe misses a cue, Tom's familiar directorial gifts take over, supported as always by flawless recall:

By and by Tom shouted:

"Fall! fall! Why don't you fall?"

"I shan't! Why don't you fall yourself? You're getting the worst of it."

"Why, that ain't anything. I can't fall; that ain't the way it is in the book. The book says, 'Then with one

backhanded stroke he slew poor Guy of Guisborne.' You're to turn around and let me hit you in the back."

There was no getting around the authorities, so Joe turned, received the whack and fell.

"Now," said Joe, getting up, "you got to let me kill you. That's fair."

"Why, I can't do that, it ain't in the book."

"Well, it's blamed mean--that's all."

"Well, say, Joe, you can be Friar Tuck or Much the miller's son, and lam me with a quarterstaff; or I'll be the Sheriff of Nottingham and you be Robin Hood a little while and kill me."

This was satisfactory, and so these adventures were carried out. (67-8)

Tom Sawyer may or may not be above doctoring a script for his own good showing, but at any rate the intricate words and motions of these charades are flawlessly faithful to one or another source, and indicate Tom's precocious acting and directing talents. The above scenes thus combine Tom's linguistic (including mnemonics), bodily-kinesthetic (acting), and interpersonal gifts at least, for the spatial or visual intelligence could be documented as well.

Before the discussion of language facility is concluded, a few comments are in order concerning Tom Sawyer's rhetoric versus Huck's. Chapter II argued that in his own story Huck is rhetorically skilled in the highest degree, despite a lack of formal education. In one episode after another Huck either dodges trouble or gathers vital intelligence through his ability to use words cleverly and longwindedly. Yet Huck's wealth of verbal access has little to do with formal education and perhaps nothing to do with the kind of free reading Tom Sawyer has done. Since Huck's rhetorical triumphs are almost always hair-raising escapes

from one threat or another, the verbal "stuff" of his fine improvisations comes mainly from innate rhetorical abilities honed and polished by long practice. He bears the silver tongue of nomadic, "outcast" wisdom, and is virtually never motivated by pride or ego.

In contrast, Tom Sawyer's magic tongue serves a rich ego, an educated and natural-born leader with a keen literary orientation. When Tom appears near the conclusion of Huckleberry Finn, bursting with adventuresome schemes of no practical worth, Huck steps aside, indulging his friend as one indulges an eccentric but irresistibly inspired genius. Despite natural rhetorical gifts that in their own contexts are as formidable as Tom's, if not more so, the genuinely humble Huck Finn, content to be a detached spectator, marvels at a form of genius (Tom's) that he essentially cannot comprehend since it originates in pride, self-promotion, and the love of romantic fantasy.

Although Huck's genius is not well displayed in Tom Sawyer, his abject humility is. When Tom has inscribed their oath of secrecy (concerning Dr. Robinson's murder) on a "clean pine shingle," Huck is "filled with admiration of Tom's facility in writing, and the sublimity of his language" (80). As at the end of Huckleberry Finn, throughout Tom Sawyer Tom generally rules Huck, that is, dominates their relationship. For the sake of a tighter comparison, one wonders how Huck's rhetorical genius might manifest were he enamored, like Tom, of power, glory, and literary dreams. As with real friendships, perhaps no fictional friendship

can accommodate two king-size egos; yet if Huck craved center stage as Tom does, he would claim his own limelight at will, despite the lack of formal tutoring. After all, Huck has teachers such as the King and the Duke, willing role models and qualified instructors the likes of which no other boy in St. Petersburg can ever boast or complain.

Of Tom's two primary abilities not well featured in Huck's story, the first within Gardner's chronology is logical intelligence, of which Tom might well boast in his own story. None of this logic is absolute or unquestionable genius, but it does set Tom quite apart from his fellows. Tom instantly knows why and for whom the river cannons are blasting. He suddenly intuitively knows what Injun Joe means about "No. 2" (a room in town), and what kind of accommodations (whiskey) No. 2 provides its occupants. These deductions are especially formidable simply because they all belong to Tom. In comparative terms, they are a species of genius; compared to Huck and to the rest of Tom Sawyer's gang, the gang leader is exceptionally capable of logical thinking.

If expounded, the anatomy of Tom's logic reveals a combination of agile inductions and deductions which unfold intuitively, as logical insights seem to do: first of all, the cannons are blasting. At other times when they were shot, someone had drowned or at least was believed to have drowned. By inductive analogy, these shots are probably to signal an alleged drowning. Because Tom and his gang are long disappeared, and are known water travellers; and because water travellers in long absence frequently

are suspected to have drowned, statistical induction gives a high probability that Tom and his gang are such suspects. Of course some of this inductive probability is pre-absorbed into premises from which Tom rapidly deduces these answers. Such is the nature of classic deduction's first premise. It is itself an inductive truth.

Thus Tom's preformulated inductions yield him these more or less unconscious (intuitive) deductions:

1. Cannon blasts mean a suspected drowning.
2. These noises are cannon blasts.
3. Therefore, these noises mean a suspected drowning.

As for who the suspects must be, Tom effects, in a so-called intuitive flash, another telling deduction:

1. River dredgings coincident with the known disappearance of known water travellers are conducted in the belief that said travellers have drowned.
2. This is a river dredging coincident with the known disappearance of known water travellers.
3. Therefore, this is a dredging conducted in the belief that known water travellers have drowned.

So much for anatomy. The point is that Tom's intuitive logic is astute enough to warrant some special attention.

A pertinent note here is the critical notion that Pudd'n-head Wilson, whose story appears in the decade following Tom Sawyer, is a sort of Tom Sawyer "grown up." Although Frederick Anderson finds the resemblance in Pudd'nhead's "florid speech and dramatic manner in the courtroom" (293), Tom's detective work (involving Injun Joe) and occasional other flashes of intuitive logic can only support such a comparison. The pros and cons of

this argument are elaborated in a subsequent chapter, but a preliminary verdict finds at least a modicum of Pudd'nhead's logical faculties at work, or play, in the mind of young Tom Sawyer. Huck, the King, and the Duke are also recognizably adept logical thinkers; and it may be that the first single exception is now recorded, in Beriah Sellers' almost exquisite lack of effectively logical thinking.

As for Tom Sawyer's other primary ability not well displayed in Huckleberry Finn, it is not only an organizing principle in this study, but it also is the one intellectual province in which Tom is decidedly second to Huck Finn. The principle and province is of personal intelligence, both in its formal definitions and in its derived working definitions of morality, sympathy, love, compassion, charity, altruism, ethics, duty, conscience, sensitivity, and so on. No matter how large Tom's love and sympathy figure in particular episodes of his story, he is never as benevolent or as wise a force as Huck is in protecting a slave against the legal and social machinery of a massively prejudiced culture.

On the other hand, although Huck's care for Jim is ultimately an act of sympathy, the literal surface of this sympathy may be no more remarkable than a number of instances where Tom is overcome with altruistic pity, compassion, or the like. For that matter, the reader may be tempted to place Tom's aid to Muff Potter up against Huck's defense of Jim in terms of altruistic greatness. Both efforts indicate a powerful "sense of self,"

which, reiterated, "is ordinarily viewed as a quintessential manifestation of intrapersonal intelligence" and particularly refers "to the balance struck by every individual . . . between the promptings of 'inner feelings' and the pressures of 'other persons'" (Gardner 242). Indeed Tom's inner feelings are of high fiber in several other episodes, but especially so in this case where the "pressures" to keep quiet come from none other than a vindictive murderer fully alert to any accuser. If lashing out for justice at the expense of the wrathful Injun Joe is Tom's greatest intrapersonal realization--greater than his decision to take Becky's schoolroom punishment or his tenderly consoling her in the cave--it is still but on a par with Huck's second greatest intrapersonal triumph. In plotting against the King and the Duke, Huck risks as potentially lethal an antagonist as Tom's Injun Joe, though Tom's surface defiance may be handsomer for its face-to-face expression. Yet even though Tom's case may be the handsomer in this comparison, it cannot attain to the depth and magnitude of Huck's greatest exertion, which is his defying a nation's collective hatred and stupidity.

This triumph of inner strength and wisdom was elaborated in Chapter II, but it bears restating, at least to emphasize the different plateaus of altruistic achievement. When Huck crosses the King and Duke, he is, like Tom with Injun Joe, risking his life. But in protecting a runaway black man, Huck invites such a pervasive ill will as to risk not only bodily harm but also an

array of other antagonisms knowing no constraints of blood or brotherhood. In protecting Jim, Huck risks a punishment that the King and Duke do not pose, namely the living death of an outcast condition far worse than he already knows. Because Huck's gestures on behalf of Jim stand taller than any others he makes, even those for which the King or Duke would unhesitantly throttle him, these same gestures necessarily stand taller than anything Tom is ever moved to do. Tom never takes serious issue with an entire community, culture, society, or nation; thus his moral courage or virtue simply never expands to those reaches which Huck's morality is forced to encompass. So great is Huck's achievement, however, that it need not minimize the genuine article of Tom's excellent altruism. This ranking of personal moral achievements, though an organizing scheme in this study, is partly in the interest of comparing two bosom literary buddies whose hearts often wisely rule their agile and cerebral heads.

Tom Sawyer quite naturally comes second in this study since he is closely allied to his friend Huck Finn; but he is the second choice according to the personal index as well, not only because his moral sensitivity is more credibly drawn than Pudd'nhead Wilson's, but also because there are simply more instances of it, more displays of it, than of Pudd'nhead's inner virtue. If this seems a questionable observation, so be it; yet despite Tom's character flaws and Pudd'nhead's relative lack of them, Tom still must rank second only to Huck in terms of the textual evidence--

the size, scope, and full believability--of his moral virtue. By any reckoning, Tom Sawyer in his own book is a more rounded, more nearly complete human portrait than Pudd'nhead; accordingly, Tom's qualities of personal intelligence are in some sense superior to the same basic qualities evidenced in a less rounded and somewhat less realistic literary portrait. As Gladys Bellamy observes, Pudd'nhead Wilson is not a true or whole hero, "even in his best scenes" (321). While it is true that Pudd'nhead is a very fine person often given to a far more exemplary personal conduct than Tom Sawyer, Tom's more intricately developed character renders his moral triumphs more credible, and thus more laudable, than Pudd'nhead's.

Although moral intelligence was identified early in this study as a quality against which all characters would be measured, and with which by no means all characters would be particularly well endowed, it so happens that in Tom Sawyer's case, as in Huck's and Pudd'nhead's, the quality of moral sensitivity is indisputably exceptional. While the greatest concentration of Tom's intra-personal intelligence is in his tormenting struggle with Muff Potter's secret innocence and Injun Joe's secret guilt, fine glimmerings of Tom's sensitivity are elsewhere recorded.

Briefly told, these secondary glimpses are Tom's impressive sympathies for his Aunt Polly and for Becky Thatcher. Besides the numerous sympathies Tom extends Becky in or about the classroom, there is of course his heroically loving protection of her in

McDougal's cave, a feat of such mature inner strength and compassion that Judge Thatcher understandably conceives "a great opinion of Tom. He said that no commonplace boy would ever have got his daughter out of the cave" (255). The Judge can hardly know just how tenderly Tom cared for his daughter, nor indeed can the reader easily reconcile this infinitely gentle Tom Sawyer to the brutal supervisor of Jim's infamous "rescue." Nor does this tormentor of his Aunt Sally seem like the same boy that, eight years earlier, loves his Aunt Polly so dearly.

The aforementioned well-roundedness of the early Tom Sawyer is seen in the mixture of emotions he feels while spying on his bereaved Aunt Polly, who is mourning young Tom's apparent and untimely death by drowning. This particular espionage is entirely Tom's idea, and pleases his theatrical ego enormously; yet in the midst of this spy drama he is stricken with love:

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. . . . His heart was full of pity for her. He took out his sycamore scroll and placed it by the candle. But something occurred to him, and he lingered considering. His face lighted with a happy solution of his thought; he put the bark hastily in his pocket. Then he bent over and kissed the faded lips, and straightaway made his stealthy exit, latching the door behind him. (117)

While the above episodes involving Becky and Aunt Polly do not prove Tom a "genius" of love, they confirm the great goodness he demonstrates throughout the Muff Potter affair.

Tom's noble conscience is hard at work on him every single day between Dr. Robinson's murder and Muff Potter's trial. Within the confines of his own adventures, Tom suffers tremors of conscience on an explicit par with those of the ultrasensitive Huck himself:

Tom went home miserable, and his dreams that night were full of horrors. The next day and the day after, he hung about the courtroom, drawn by an almost irresistible impulse to go in, but forcing himself to stay out. Huck was having the same experience. They studiously avoided each other. (169)

Even without the additional proofs which Twain made some effort to provide, the reader could close the case for Tom's moral or personal depth with the observation that, after all, though both boys are sickened by Muff Potter's plight, it is Tom who willfully and voluntarily testifies against the dreadfully real murderer, Injun Joe. Ultimately this may be the highest recommendation of Tom's valorous compassion.

Twain's repeated exertions along the lines of Tom's tortured sensitivity should not go unacknowledged: when public suspicion of Injun Joe fails to materialize,

Tom's fearful secret and gnawing conscience disturbed his sleep for as much as a week after this; and at breakfast one morning Sid said:

"Tom, you pitch around and talk in your sleep so much that you keep me awake half the time."

Tom blanched and dropped his eyes.

"It's a bad sign," said Aunt Polly, gravely. "What you got on your mind, Tom?"

"Nothing. Nothing 't I know of." But the boy's hand shook so that he spilled his coffee. (89-90)

Although this and other such passages are the mere preamble to Tom's courtroom proclamation, they clearly mark Twain's intention

to give Tom a credible, consistent, and abiding compassion for others:

Every day or two, during this time of sorrow, Tom watched his opportunity and went to the little grated jail window and smuggled such small comforts through to the "murderer" as he could get hold of. (90)

But good works, no matter how numerous, cannot appease Tom's commitment to justice: "The dreadful secret of the murder was a chronic misery. It was a very cancer for permanency and pain" (163).

No boast, no blonde girlfriend, no pirate's adventure will quiet the terrible sense of wrong which compels Tom to speak. Nor, amazingly, will the grim visage of the murderer sitting in the courtroom:

Tom glanced at Injun Joe's iron face and his tongue failed him. The audience listened breathless, but the words refused to come. After a few moments, however, the boy got a little of his strength back, and managed to put enough of it into his voice to make part of the house hear: "In the graveyard!" (170-71)

Here Tom sets the scene of Injun Joe's crime; and a few minutes later, when he has finished his testimony,

Tom was a glittering hero once more--the pet of the old, the envy of the young. His name even went into immortal print, for the village paper magnified him. There were some that believed he would be President, yet, if he escaped hanging. (173)

At their face value, Tom's heroism and consequent wild popularity are unmistakable hallmarks of greatness. It may further be observed that Tom's immense fame is an inexorable conclusion to his magnanimous exertions on behalf of others, and that this magnanimity,

this heart's love and compassion, are rare gifts of personal intelligence.

If William Dillingham's observation is true, that "at the beginning of each episode Tom engages in a childish adventure, but by the end of that section he acts more maturely" (87), then by novel's end Tom should have matured, and grown wise, in reasonable proportion to the swelling fame his adventures have won him. If Tom learned nothing else from his rumored death, from Muff Potter's plight, and from McDougal's cave, at least he learned how much love one person can have for another. For each of these adventures Tom was loudly celebrated, but each was also a quiet and private experience of the heart's deep caring and love, which may be the intrapersonal intelligence's "access to one's own feeling life."

Again, while Tom's feelings for Aunt Polly and for Becky Thatcher ("the electric sympathy of love [53]) mark him as a sensitive boy, it is the Muff Potter/Injun Joe adventure which best reveals the extraordinary strength of Tom's conscience and of his moral discrimination. This weeks-long travail of tormented wakefulness, nightmarish sleep, and strenuous service to the needy is the direct result of Tom's perceiving deeply the essential sacredness of life, human and otherwise. Somewhat like Tom's outstanding logical intuitions, his moral intuitions are so emblazoned on the story's literal text as to render Tom a thoroughly remarkable personality. To those--like Twain himself perhaps--who would

argue that a busy conscience is as much self-interested as charitable, there is no rejoinder except to say that he whose peace of mind depends on doing right by the other person, is a definitively moral being at least. In this sense Tom Sawyer, like Huck Finn, is a strikingly moral young man. Combined with his purely unconditional sympathy for Aunt Polly and, in the cave at least, for Becky Thatcher. Tom's supreme courage on behalf of Muff Potter becomes an insurmountable argument for the boy's exceptional altruism. Even if Tom's compassion for Muff is conditioned by his own complicity in the matter, his open defiance of the foul and vindictive Injun Joe is incontrovertible evidence of a high moral intelligence--so high, indeed, that it almost matches Huck Finn's.

CHAPTER IV

THE EDUCATED GENIUS

Of the six characters in this study, Pudd'nhead owns perhaps the most indisputably superior intellect. He is the classic genius, so recognized and so celebrated by the end of his story. He is the one character in six with a complete and certified formal education, which, despite the nickname that dogs him for twenty years, is entirely justified by his intellectual powers. Indeed Pudd'nhead Wilson's genius is of such pivotal and explicit notice in his story, and of such common notice among critics, that his place in this study is not one for the arguing of genius as much as for juxtaposing its purest form to the less quintessential strains seen in other characters. Naturally this is not to say that Pudd'nhead's intellect is a dull study in isolation, for, as an epitome of mortal genius, Pudd'nhead is an absorbing focus either alone or beside others who are gifted. Indeed, in introducing Pudd'nhead a proper commentator would note that Mr. Wilson is singularly above the other characters in a few specific ways, to be elaborated shortly; but first would come introductory tributes from Twain himself and from other of Pudd'nhead's observers.

Before these tributes, though, at least a skeletal plot summary is in order for the sake of clarifying subsequent references to Pudd'nhead's various remarkable achievements: straight out of

an Eastern law school, Pudd'nhead Wilson moves to Dawson's Landing, Missouri, and the first day there mutters an absurd witticism which earns him his nickname and which estranges him from fortune and respectability for twenty-three years. In the meantime, while Pudd'nhead cultivates a variety of business occupations in addition to the "eccentric" studies of fingerprinting and palmistry, a beautiful one-sixteenth-part Negro woman, raised as a slave, desperately switches her own illegitimate infant son with a look-alike infant son of respectable white (and free) parentage, the Percy Driscoll family. Roxy's real son, apparently Percy Driscoll's son Tom, grows into a mean, weak-willed gambler, thief, and eventual murderer of his own step-father. When visiting Italian twins are falsely accused of the murder, Pudd'nhead Wilson steps forward, immediately perceives their innocence, and finally proves it in sterling courtroom oratory featuring the decisive evidence of his own fingerprinting innovations. In saving the twins' lives, Pudd'nhead divulges Roxy's crime, lays bare Tom Driscoll's wicked ways, and wins for himself the long overdue acclaim which his virtues and his intellectual abilities deserve.

A number of characters, and Twain himself, praise Pudd'nhead. One of the most persuasive assessments of Pudd'nhead's abilities is that given by Roxy in the third chapter of the story:

Dey ain't but one man dat I's afeard of, en dat's dat Pudd'nhead Wilson. Dey calls him a pudd'nhead, en says he's a fool. My lan', dat man ain't no mo' fool den I is! He's de smartes' man in dis town, less'n it's Jedge Driscoll or maybe Pem Howard. Blame dat man, he worries me wid dem

ornery glasses o' his'n; I b'lieve he's a witch. But nemmine, I's gwine to happen aroun' dah one o' dese days en let on dat I reckon he wants to print de chillen's fingers ag'in; en if he don't notice dey's changed, I bound dey ain't nobody gwine to notice it, en den I's safe, sho'. But I reckon I'll take along a hoss-shoe to keep off de witch work. (16)

By making Roxy and Pudd'nhead each other's foil, Twain cleverly flatters them both. Only Roxy seems shrewd enough to perceive Pudd'nhead's braininess, and conversely only Pudd'nhead proves brainy enough finally to unravel Roxy's twenty-year-old deception. To some extent each is the expositor of the other's ingenuity. But other than Roxy, no one but Judge Driscoll (and perhaps the twins) knows what a marvel Pudd'nhead is until his dramatic day in court. In the meantime, only these few characters, a third person narrator, and the readers and critics of this saga know what a misnomer David Wilson's nickname happens to be.

However self-evident Pudd'nhead's intelligence may be, a few secondary observations are in order, if only to document the uniform critical acknowledgement of his brilliance. Though no criticism has centrally focused on Pudd'nhead's genius, the passing allusions to it make a good catalog: Richard Chase describes how Pudd'nhead's "ingenious mind, his eye for paradox and irony" (244) are able to untangle the story's mixed up identities. Tracing the character's origins, Robert Regan says that the "admirable rhetorical capacity to prove a lie" (268) was Twain's core conception of his protagonist's primary talent, though the proving of lies never made its way into the text. And although Marvin Fisher

and Michael Elliott argue gross inconsistencies in Pudd'nhead's intelligence, in so doing they acknowledge "the penetrating combination of disillusioned wit, cynicism, and iconoclasm" (540) in his Calendar. Another ambivalent admirer, John M. Brand, ranks Pudd'nhead and his whole story as a "prosaic" second to the likes of Natty Bumppo and his story, and assigns Wilson's less spectacular heroism to the intellectual planes of "his wit, wisdom and patience" (125). More toward a genuine focus on the subject, Eberhard Alsen states that the central theme of the novel

evolves out of David Wilson's twenty-three year fight for popularity and power, a fight in which his chief weapons are his superior intelligence and his astute knowledge of human nature, both hidden behind his mask of irony. (136)

Finally, Henry Nash Smith puts the critical lens--in a brief focus at least--squarely on the phenomenon of Pudd'nhead Wilson's special endowments. First Smith responds to a letter from Twain to wife Livy in which the author claims he "never thought of Pudd'nhead as a character, but only as a piece of machinery--a button or a crank or a lever, with a useful function to perform in a machine, but with no dignity above that" (254). From this information Smith goes on to make the following observations about Pudd'nhead and his creator:

Wilson is incarnate analytical intelligence, the personification of science. Mark Twain liked to embody the notion of rational analysis, either farcically or seriously, in a figure borrowed from the newspapers and from popular fiction: the detective, ... Closely tied to the solving of crimes is the

sensational effect of the detective's courtroom revelation of the identity of the criminal--a motive that links Wilson retrospectively with Tom Sawyer and proleptically with Wilhelm Meidling, or rather with Satan in the guise of Meidling, in The Mysterious Stranger.

These affiliations of Wilson suggest that he has some qualities of transcendence. He does not have the omniscience of the fully transcendent figure. . . . But his transcendent traits are unmistakable. He is much better educated and more intelligent than anyone else in the village; . . . his mastery of the science of reading palms, like his discovery of the principle of identification through fingerprints, strikes the townspeople as almost miraculous. (254).

Smith fairly summarizes the greatness of Pudd'nhead Wilson's educated intellect.

There is no contradicting Twain's own remarks on Pudd'nhead except to point out, with Smith's help, those qualities which render Pudd'nhead decidedly more than "a piece of machinery." One is his wit, seen mainly in the Calendar but also made immediately prominent in the opening utterance ("I wish I owned half of that dog . . . because I would kill my half" [5]) which earns him his titular nickname, dashes his legal career, and generally determines the course of the story. Another human attribute is Pudd'nhead's morality, which effects a comprehensive justice by novel's end and all along presents more than a machine's mechanical "dignity." As for "transcendence," which is Smith's well taken interpretation of Twain's remarks, Pudd'nhead's "almost miraculous" powers do transcend ordinary abilities, yes; but these arts of fingerprinting and palm reading, while rarefied and rare, are nevertheless human abilities, not supernatural and certainly

not of a machine. It happens that Smith is an appropriate transition to the cataloging of Pudd'nhead's genius, for he best approximates Pudd'nhead's supernormal but nonetheless real and mortal capacities. Although Smith introduces a strain of genius that is new to this study--Pudd'nhead's occult power of reading palms--the formal profile on Pudd'nhead begins with those abilities claimed by Huck or Tom as well.

According to Gardner's ordering of intelligences, the first in question is linguistic, an area in which all six characters excel. The first aspect of linguistic ability refers to the flair for rhetoric, certainly one province in which Pudd'nhead's alleged kinship with Tom Sawyer might be examined. As noted before, a number of critics have claimed clear similarities between the two, pertaining mainly to a talent for theatrics. Clearly some of this talent involves sheer rhetorical force, which, again, Gardner defines as "the ability to use language to convince other individuals of a course of action" (78). Since some rhetorical flourishes are longwinded, a related ability is the second linguistic aspect, mnemonics, the ability to remember information. And since rhetorical ability has already been seen to overlap with interpersonal intelligence, a comparison of Tom's and Pudd'nhead's linguistic powers may touch on most if not all of their primary abilities.

As seen in Chapter III, Tom Sawyer proves overwhelmingly persuasive in Huck's Adventures as well as in his own. His "rescue"

of Jim in Huckleberry Finn, and assorted episodes such as the whitewashing scene in his own novel, prove Tom adept at converting others to his thinking. Also noted in Chapter III are Tom's powers of retention and recall, best exemplified by the vast scripts, numberless props, and intricate directions he carries--all in his head--into the fantasies he stages in both novels. It has already been noted that rhetoric and mnemonics sometimes play together, and that, as in the above--cited scenes, the interpersonal intelligence (the power of "influencing a group of disparate individuals to behave along desired lines" [239]) is closely related to rhetorical efforts. Inasmuch as active rhetoric generally requires one or more human targets, then the successful practice of it should suggest the rhetorician's skilled influencing of others. In short, as Tom Sawyer's whitewashing and Pudd'nhead's courtroom triumphs illustrate, theatrical (bodily-kinesthetic) talent may encompass several other abilities, especially if it aims to influence others' thoughts and actions.

In some ways, then, Pudd'nhead Wilson might be called a grown-up Tom Sawyer since his courtroom theatrics alone demonstrate the same fundamental strengths in rhetorical, mnemonical, interpersonal, and bodily-kinesthetic intelligences as do many of Tom Sawyer's exertions. Indeed, although theatrical talent per se may not encompass every intelligence which Tom and Pudd'nhead have in common, Pudd'nhead's courtroom extravaganza does, for it also illustrates great logical, spatial, and intrapersonal abilities

which, though distinct from Tom's, might fancifully be seen as their matured and educated forms. And this whole "grown-up Tom Sawyer" argument might best be finished with the observation that, as a practicing lawyer, Pudd'nhead Wilson finally enjoys a career which Judge Thatcher, himself a man of the law, actually envisions for Tom Sawyer:

Judge Thatcher hoped to see Tom a great lawyer or a great soldier some day. He said he meant to look to it that Tom should be admitted to the National Military Academy and afterward trained in the best law school in the country, in order that he might be ready for either career or both. (255)

Though the comparison may be more fanciful than unavoidable, there is some basis for regarding the freckle-faced lawyer of Dawson's Landing as a grown-up version of the freckle-faced boy who also has his proud day in court.

While similarities do exist, nevertheless an item-by-item exemplification of Pudd'nhead's strengths should determine the true extent of his kinship with Tom Sawyer.

Starting with the rhetorical flair, a truly striking comparison of these two characters is difficult to establish for several reasons. One is the difference in both physical and mental circumstances. While Tom's rhetoric is perfectly formidable, it never approaches the lifesaving plateau of Pudd'nhead's articulations. The mere fact that Pudd'nhead's outpourings are a desperate effort to save an innocent man from hanging renders his rhetoric virtually a different species from Tom's. In this regard

some of Huck Finn's flourishes come closer to Pudd'nhead's since Huck's rhetoric almost always issues from hair-raising necessity.

Part and parcel of this wide difference in general circumstances are the significant anatomical differences between Tom's rhetoric and Pudd'nhead's. Wonderfully persuasive as Tom is, in no scene whatever do his own words feature the high eloquence sounding in Pudd'nhead's courtroom. Although Judge Thatcher himself predicts Tom will make a great lawyer or military leader, there is nothing in the boy's linguistic arsenal that anticipates Pudd'nhead's sophistication unless it is Tom's rote mastery of high-flown romanticism. Since Tom's powers of learning are self-evident, and his rhetoric remarkably effectual at least, one could hardly consider Judge Thatcher's forecast an unreasoned one; yet a single passage from Pudd'nhead's courtroom transcript suggests how far young Tom must progress before mastering a living language even more ornate and blustery than the piratese flawlessly lifted from old scripts:

May it please the court, the claim given the front place, the claim most persistently urged, the claim most strenuously and I may even say aggressively and defiantly insisted upon by the prosecution, is this--that the person whose hand left the blood-stained finger-prints upon the handle of the Indian knife is the person who committed the murder. . . . We grant that claim. (106)

Even without the benefit of biographical data, the reader might determine from such pronouncements that Pudd'nhead's formal education is a superior one. Indeed he is a graduate of "an Eastern law school" (5); and the inescapable suspicion, whether early or

late in the reading of this story, is that Pudd'nhead's law degree is of some such unsurpassed stock as, say, Harvard, Yale, or Princeton. At any rate, one quality of Pudd'nhead's rhetoric which distinguishes it from that of all other characters in this study is its profoundly formal origins. Pudd'nhead is an erudite student of several distinct sciences, law being just one.

As for rhetoric's definitive capacity "to convince other individuals of a course of action," not only do Pudd'nhead's persuasions depend partly on his sophisticated handling of English vocabulary, syntax, and inflection, but, as mentioned before, they also depend on his effort to convince twelve local jurors not to hang a strange Italian visitor for his alleged murder of the eminent Judge Driscoll, but instead to hang the actual murderer, young Tom Driscoll, who is a lifelong resident of Dawson's Landing and whose sole benefactor was the Judge himself. Thus, combining exquisite eloquence and the highest purpose, Pudd'nhead's rhetoric is of such a refined and elevated cast that, in comparison, Tom Sawyer's whitewashing persuasion, while an outstanding show of genius, seems much more an adolescent forerunner to the con artistry of the King and the Duke than to anything manifesting in Pudd'nhead's argumentation. To align Tom's rhetoric with the King's is by no means to undermine its greatness, but merely to suggest Tom's kinship with other geniuses besides Pudd'nhead.

Since Pudd'nhead's rhetorical challenge, just now described, so neatly involves his "influencing a group of disparate individuals

to behave along desired lines," the interpersonal intelligence, as in previous chapters, is conveniently discussed along with the rhetorical. Since juries are perhaps a classic aggregate of disparate personalities (e.g., "hung" juries), Pudd'nhead's pure mastery of Luigi's jury is the work of extraordinary interpersonal intelligence. This mastery spans a monologue of some four thousand words, more than twenty lengthy paragraphs, every one of which illustrates stunning precision, clarity, forcefulness, and overall sophistication in thought and speech, and every one of which establishes some progression or another in an inexorable revelation of the truth. But the final few "clinchers" which put the twelve "disparate individuals" forever along Pudd'nhead's "desired lines" fairly represent the height of his interpersonal intelligence:

"Do you know how to account for these strange discrepancies? I will tell you. For a purpose unknown to us, but probably a selfish one, somebody changed those children in the cradle."

This produced a vast sensation, naturally; Roxana was astonished at this admirable guess, but not disturbed by it. To guess the exchange was one thing, to guess who did it quite another. Pudd'nhead Wilson could do wonderful things, no doubt, but he couldn't do impossible ones. Safe? She was perfectly safe. She smiled privately.

"Between the ages of seven months and eight months those children were changed in the cradle"--he made one of his effect-collecting pauses, and added--"and the person who did it is in this house!"

Roxy's pulses stood still! The house was thrilled as with an electric shock, and the people half rose as if to seek a glimpse of the person who had made that exchange. Tom was growing limp; the life seemed oozing out of him. Wilson resumed:

"A was put into B's cradle in the nursery; B was transferred to the kitchen and became a negro and a slave [Sensation--confusion of angry ejaculations]--but within a quarter of an hour he will stand before you white and

free! [Burst of applause, checked by the officers.]
 From seven months onward until now, A has still been a
 usurper, and in my finger-record he bears B's name.
 Here is his pantograph at the age of twelve. Compare
 it with the assassin's signature upon the knife-handle.
 Do they tally?"

The foreman answered:

"To the minutest detail!"

Wilson said, solemnly:

"The murderer of your friend and mine--York Driscoll
 of the generous hand and the kindly spirit--sits in among
 you. Valet de Chambre, negro and slave--falsely called
 Thomas a Becket Driscoll--make upon the window the
 finger-prints that will hang you!"

Tom turned his ashen face imploringly toward the
 speaker, made some impotent movement with his white lips,
 then slid limp and lifeless to the floor.

Wilson broke the awed silence with the words:

"There is no need. He has confessed." (112-13)

Since all of Pudd'nhead's talents appear in one stupendous scene,
 inevitably they work together in various combinations. For
 example, the passage above denoting the exchange of infants not
 only demonstrates the dynamic interpersonal intelligence it was
 meant to demonstrate, but it also reveals superior rhetoric,
 mnemonics, logic, histrionics, and, implicit in Pudd'nhead's over-
 all effort, superior intrapersonal (moral) intelligence as well.

Of course no short speech alone can prove a genius for,
 say, mnemonics; but since Pudd'nhead's presentation spans four
 thousand words, excerpts from it at least suggest those capabilities
 which the total presentation firmly establishes. The mnemonics
 are a good example because, given the duration of Pudd'nhead's
 courtroom delivery, it is by far the longest display of mnemonic
 ability of any character (excepting Huck the narrator) in this
 study. Even Tom Sawyer's apparently total romantic recall and the

King's brilliant quick study of Peter Wilks' family and friends must pale in a literal juxtaposition to Pudd'nhead's performance. While the mere rote memorization of a four-thousand-word speech, even if falteringly delivered, would be some cause for recognition, Pudd'nhead presents his fact-filled case with a sure-minded evenness and precision suggesting photographic recall. Moreover, although four thousand smoothly flowing words do not necessarily indicate an exceptional memory in the cases where long preparation is available, the record shows that Pudd'nhead's oral preparation time is scant at best. Pudd'nhead does not put the last piece of the crime puzzle into place until the night before, while asleep in bed. Starting from a dream, he suddenly knows the full truth, but must spend the rest of the night painstakingly preparing the legal proof of it. "Tedious and difficult" (105), these preparations surely afford Pudd'nhead little time for memorizing anything. Instead, beginning at nine the next morning, he appears simply to bring forth in its proper order every single bit of information and reasoning pertinent to the credible revelation of the innocent and the guilty.

Because no excerpt can indicate the remarkable clarity of recollection required to improvise the flawlessly fact-filled whole of Pudd'nhead's argument, and because logic is so much a part of his argument anyway, the following passage, which in itself merely hints at Pudd'nhead's outstanding recall, also shifts the focus to his acute powers of logical thinking:

"Much stress has been laid upon the fact that the accused offered a very large reward for the knife with which this murder was done; that no thief came forward to claim that extraordinary reward; that the latter fact was good circumstantial evidence that the claim that the knife had been stolen was a vanity and a fraud; that these details taken in connection with the memorable and apparently prophetic speech of the deceased concerning that knife, and the final discovery of that very knife in the fatal room where no living person was found present with the slaughtered man but the owner of the knife and his brother, form an indestructible chain of evidence which fixes the crime upon those unfortunate strangers.

"But I shall presently ask to be sworn, and shall testify that there was a large reward offered for the thief, also; that it was offered secretly and not advertised; that this fact was indiscreetly mentioned--or at least tacitly admitted--in what was supposed to be safe circumstances, but may not have been. The thief may have been present himself. [Tom Driscoll had been looking at the speaker, but dropped his eyes at this point.] In that case he would retain the knife in his possession, not daring to offer it for sale, or for pledge in a pawnshop. [There was a nodding of heads among the audience by way of admission that this was not a bad stroke.] I shall prove to the satisfaction of the jury that there was a person in Judge Driscoll's room several minutes before the accused entered it. [This produced a strong sensation; the last drowsy-head in the court-room roused up now, and made preparation to listen.] If it shall seem necessary, I will prove by the Misses Clarkson that they met a veiled person--ostensibly a woman--coming out of the back gate a few minutes after the cry for help was heard. This person was not a woman, but a man dressed in woman's clothes." Another sensation. Wilson had his eye on Tom when he hazarded this guess, to see what effect it would produce. He was satisfied with the result, and said to himself, "It was a success-he's hit!" (107)

Pudd'nhead Wilson is frightfully good at what he does, which is to dispense punishment like some pitiless god of Truth. His elaboration of Tom Driscoll's guilt is so inexorably logical as to suggest indeed the piece of machinery Twain described in the letter to

Livy; yet Pudd'nhead's performance is not impossible, but merely the work of rare genius. As a later section will discuss, Pudd'nhead's grand courtroom calculations are very human ones in their endeavoring not only to clear Pudd'nhead of an unfair twenty years' reputation, but also to save the innocent lives of his Italian friends. No man could want a more exacting avenger, nor, where the twin defendants are concerned, a more awe-inspiring defender of justice and liberty.

The following passage from Howard Gardner describes the same intellectual muscles thus far outlined in Pudd'nhead's magical courtroom figure:

A valued cultural role can be filled by individuals who present distinctive intellectual profiles. Take, for example, the role of lawyer in our society. There is room in (and at the top of) the legal profession for the individual who has outstanding linguistic skills: one who can excel in the writing of briefs, the phrasing of convincing arguments, the recall of facts from hundreds of cases, and the like. There is room also for the individual with highly developed interpersonal skills: one who can speak eloquently in the courtroom, skillfully interview witnesses and prospective jurors, and display an engaging personality--the so-called society lawyer. Finally, there is room for the individual with highly developed logical skills: one who is able to analyze a situation, to isolate its underlying factors, to follow a torturous chain of reasoning to its ultimate conclusion. (317)

Except for the writing of briefs and the interviewing of jurors, Pudd'nhead brilliantly performs all the above skills concretely within the text of the novel; and the two exceptions are hardly skills that would elude his thorough ability as a lawyer.

Although Judge Thatcher predicted Tom Sawyer could be a great lawyer someday, thus far in a strict comparison to Pudd'nhead, Tom would seem no more than a very promising seed of some as yet unidentified plant. While his natural gifts for persuasion, for recall, and for self-dramatization are splendid, they do not link him any more readily with Pudd'nhead Wilson than with the King or Duke. Yet in some form several fundamental abilities are common to Tom and Pudd'nhead, with the logical ability being perhaps their closest kinship.

Since Tom does register several memorable flashes of logical insight, and since the one concerning Injun Joe's secret hideout is indirectly responsible for saving the Widow Douglas and for sending Injun Joe to his just doom, Tom's gift for logical thinking seems the best basis for calling him a young Pudd'nhead Wilson, who of course is very much a lifesaver himself. As in other contexts, Tom shows admirable intuition where Injun Joe is the focus. Huck and Tom both have contemplated the meaning of Joe's "Number Two," when suddenly Tom is stricken:

"Say, Huck--maybe it's the number of a house!"

"Goody! . . . No, Tom, that ain't it. If it is, it ain't in this one-horse town. They ain't no numbers here."

"Well, that's so. Lemme think a minute. Here-- it's the number of a room--in a tavern, you know!" (195)

As noted earlier, Tom's logical breakthroughs are not as impressive in the isolated study as in their natural context, where always one or more of Tom's companions stand by confounded and helpless,

while he somehow works his way to the truth. Yet if Tom comes closest to Pudd'nhead in this comparison, he still is not afforded the richer detective work given to one whose fully established career has garnered him such employment. Still the adult to young Tom, Pudd'nhead again surpasses his predecessor, not just in the unparalleled oral logic of the courtroom, but also in the volume of logical gymnastics Pudd'nhead must exercise prior to arguing his case.

Although Pudd'nhead's actual "breakthroughs" are modestly few, his powers of reason are put to much honest labor before the courtroom scene. The fingerprinting aside for now, Pudd'nhead still displays some astute logical maneuvers in his preliminary quest for justice. A few examples may suffice to demonstrate the logic he exercises well before delivering up his devastating courtroom performance.

First, it is Pudd'nhead's shrewd (although uninformed) idea to post a secret reward for the thief of Luigi's knife as well as for the knife itself--in order to seize the greedy culprit in his carelessly stepping forward to collect the reward. The supreme irony here is that if Tom did not "luckily" overhear this plan, he might well be caught with the knife and thus averted from a murderous course. Another incidental twist is Luigi's purely innocent indictment on the evidence of this, his own knife stolen by the real murderer. At any rate, the knife's continued

disappearance is neatly circumstantial evidence enabling Pudd'nhead later to prove Tom's guilt.

Second, when the cash box is found at the murder scene, Pudd'nhead wonders how the "girl" he has seen could have ignored the only motive (robbery) he figures a girl could have had for killing Judge Driscoll, a "gentleman" quite above inciting any female's "revenge." Simply because the cash is untouched, Pudd'nhead already intuitively discerns the real gender of the murderer.

And third, the pre-trial solution of the puzzle is the clearest view of Pudd'nhead's logical intuition at work. Though more intense and sustained, the operation is much like Tom Sawyer's: the sudden divination of truth following a concentrated drive to divine it. After a long effort to understand the mixed-up sets of fingerprints, Pudd'nhead

was tired out, now, and his brains were beginning to clog. He said he would sleep himself fresh, and then see what he could do with this riddle. He slept through a troubled and unrestful hour, then unconsciousness began to shred away, and presently he rose drowsily to a sitting posture. "Now what was that dream?" he said, trying to recall it; "what was that dream? --it seemed to unravel that puz--"

He landed in the middle of the floor at a bound, without finishing the sentence, and ran and turned up his lights and seized his "records." He took a single swift glance at them and cried out:

"It's so! Heavens, what a revelation! And for twenty-three years no man has ever suspected it!" (104)

While the precise mechanism in such intuitions must remain an essential mystery of cognition, this intuition is at least the clearest evidence that Pudd'nhead Wilson excels at knowing the truth.

And since Pudd'nhead's courtroom deductions did not precisely fit into the discussion of his rhetoric, here now is an encapsulation of the logic he serves up to judge, jury, and ever more astonished spectators. First, the motive for Judge Driscoll's murder must have been robbery rather than revenge, for the accused twins' behavior at the scene of the crime was wholly inconsistent with their alleged murderous instincts towards self-preservation. If the twins killed Judge Driscoll out of an urge towards self-preservation, how could this urge permit them to linger at the scene of the crime when any self-interested murderer would flee the premises immediately? Furthermore, the fact that the twins' knife was never returned for a reward need not signify their false concealment of the knife since the secret reward also posted for the thief himself could have been (and it turns out was!) proposed in the presence of the thief, in which case the knife could not be expected to surface. Furthermore, the person dressed as a girl, whom the Clarkson ladies saw leaving the back gate shortly after the murder, had intended to rob Judge Driscoll, not murder him, inasmuch as, first of all, three thousand dollars was found in a tin cash-box on the table, and, secondly, the thief easily could have been concealed in the house, known of the box, and been caught red-handed after unintentionally waking the slumbering Judge.

At this point Pudd'nhead concludes his theory and commences proving it via the ingenious fingerprinting discussed below. The barest summary of Pudd'nhead's logic suffices to establish its

complexity; but the scenes themselves, before the trial and especially during it, demonstrate the phenomenally cool functioning of Pudd'nhead's reasoning apparatus. While Pudd'nhead's eleventh-hour thunderbolt of murder-solving intuition is arguably akin to the intuitive flashes bursting into Tom Sawyer's young brain, nothing nor nobody in the Twain canon matches Pudd'nhead's courtroom delivery for the fluid, flawless, and sustained exercise of rational intelligence.

It is time now to assess two of Pudd'nhead's rather eccentric talents--his fingerprinting and palmistry--whose indispensable merits win the twins their freedom and Pudd'nhead his new reputation, and both of which feature at least a fine spatial intelligence, the next ability presented in Gardner's chronology. While Pudd'nhead's fingerprinting surely proves the more effectual of the two talents, his palmistry bears the aura of the occult, which Twain treats with a seriousness that is surprising in view of the mock attention he gives occult subjects in some other novels. This straightforward treatment is of special interest because it renders Pudd'nhead's occultism a real form of intelligence.

In Tom Sawyer Twain roundly targets Aunt Polly's acceptance of all sorts of fads, tabloids, and "phrenological frauds" (92). In Huckleberry Finn both the King and the Duke take interest in apparently pseudo-occult vocations, con jobs that Twain clearly means to portray as such. At the King's query of "What's your line--mainly?" the Duke reels off his various trades, which include

"mesmerism and phrenology when there's a chance." He says, "Oh, I do lots of things--most anything that comes handy, so it ain't work. What's your lay?" (160-61). Getting closer to Pudd'nhead's real work, in turn the King boasts among other things: "I k'n tell a fortune pretty good, when I've got somebody along to find out the facts for me" (161). In the absence of compensating reports, this phony fortune-telling would seem to be the only kind possible, or at least all that Twain cares to consider in Huckleberry Finn's broad-ranging satire of human foibles.

At any rate, in tracing Twain's metaphysics one must note the complete shift in attitude between the King's fraudulent occultism and Pudd'nhead's real metaphysical knowledge. Little has been said about Twain's open forwarding of palmistry in this novel; Pudd'nhead's accurate reading of Luigi's palm, his own words about palmistry, and his popular palmreading reputation in general, are the plainest statements of belief that an author could make short of Tolstoyan sermons to the reader. Indeed in placing palmistry more or less alongside fingerprinting, Twain seems to say one is as scientific as the other, a view of palmistry which in Twain's society found perhaps as much corroboration as in any other American era.

Since palm reading actually is an astrological study--its particular landmarks all pertaining to one astrological principle or another--and since, as Twain himself depicts it, it may involve

seeing into the future, then in a sense Pudd'nhead's talent for palmistry is a remarkably occult power; at any rate it is a unique ability among those considered in this study. Aside from the King's purely mock exercises in this area, the closest item to Pudd'nhead's connection is Huck's psychic brooding over ghosts and signs and ill luck in the first chapter of Huckleberry Finn: it is a strange passage leaving the strong impression that, by Twain's conscious design, Huck is in touch with a spirit world, one which Nature and even her sensitive fleshly denizens can perceive, monitor, and anticipate. But Huck's mysticism, if it is such, is not emphasized or scrutinized in his story, whereas Pudd'nhead's strange ability is.

It turns out that palmistry finds a place in Gardner's study, but not explicitly. While Frames of Mind endorses no "pseudoscience" unless it is phrenology, palmistry happens to illustrate the spatial intelligence well; and since Pudd'nhead excels in palm reading, his spatial intelligence is accordingly remarked: "Central to spatial intelligence are the capacities to perceive the visual world accurately, to perform transformations and modifications upon one's initial perceptions" (173). Clearly the accurate reading of palms, which Pudd'nhead manages brilliantly, is a keenly visual and spatial art which in a sense transforms mute epidermal etchings into loud significances of personality, character, and destiny. As with other pseudosciences, with palmistry the problem for Gardner might be the operation of a metaphysical logic that is

simply invisible, to wit nonexistent, to most observers. Since astrologers themselves are hard pressed to know how the stars and planets can imprint on the face of one's hand the past and future qualities and specific events of his life, then at least the metaphysics of palmistry are out of Gardner's sphere. And yet even at his "occult" best, Pudd'nhead actually is exercising nothing more than great powers of observation and learning.

Perhaps the only feature of Pudd'nhead's palm reading more stunning than its accuracy is his ready acceptance of it, without the least comment from him--or from Twain either--on just how it works. Thus Pudd'nhead's character reading of Luigi appears to involve no "psychic" attunement whatever, but rather a very adept empirical interpretation of certain marks on Luigi's hand. Pudd'nhead offers no knowledge of why palmistry works, but merely firm evidence that it does. Thus, although the efficacy of palm reading is ultimately mysterious even to those palmists inclined to contemplate it, practitioners can be reasonably successful without the accompanying psychic gift which some palmists are said to have.

Indeed, even without the accessory of clairvoyance (or extra sensory perception), the mystic foundations of palmistry make it an unlikely vocation for someone like Pudd'nhead, so devoted to logical thought processes. It may be that he was subjected to the same kind of irresistible evidence which his own palm reading

provides for skeptics like Tom Driscoll, who can hardly believe the specific hits Pudd'nhead makes on Luigi's personal past:

"Caesar's ghost!" commented Tom, with astonishment. "It beats anything that was ever heard of! Why, a man's own hand is his deadliest enemy! Just think of that--a man's own hand keeps a record of the deepest and fatalest secrets of his life, and is treacherously ready to expose him to any black-magic stranger that comes along." (52)

The scene is laced with Tom's ironic prophesy as well as his ignorance of the future: his uneasiness about palm reading is later justified by the companion "science" of fingerprinting; and his acerbic claim to be no murderer--a direct attack on Luigi's past--is later contradicted by his murderous crime against the Judge. The acerbic ejaculation is made just as Pudd'nhead is about to read Tom's hand, which, ironically, he never does as the palmist who might foresee a murder, but only later as the fingerprint expert who must solve one. Tom's apprehension of "any black-magic stranger" points up, also ironically, the fact that accurate palm reading actually requires no more "black magic" than fingerprint-reading does, even where future indications are told. And for that matter, Pudd'nhead owns up to limited magic: "I'll tell you what we'll do, Count Luigi: I'll make a try at your past, and if I have any success there--no, on the whole, I'll let the future alone; that's really the affair of an expert" (50-1).

While actual expertise in palmistry may partake of sixth-sense or clairvoyant perceptions, neither Pudd'nhead nor Twain provides any indication of such a possibility. As suggested

earlier, despite its metaphysical premises the art of palmistry was long ago found to rest reliably on certain observable markings and contours of the hand, which "signs" can be learned by any intelligent pudd'nhead, such as Twain's. Thus, without any explicit indication of mystical insight or perception, Pudd'nhead stuns onlookers through the same powers of learning and keen observation which make him an excellent accountant, lawyer, and detective. He reads Luigi's palm with the same unshakable confidence and concentration that he applies to his various other mental endeavors; but here the accent is on visual concentration and acuity, the ability to detect and discriminate among intricate and minute bits of visual information:

Wilson began to study Luigi's palm, tracing life lines, heart lines, head lines, and so on, and noting carefully their relations with the cobweb of finer and more delicate marks and lines that enmeshed them on all sides; he felt of the fleshy cushion at the base of the thumb, and noted its shape; he felt of the fleshy side of the hand between the wrist and the base of the little finger, and noted its shape also; he painstakingly examined the fingers, observing their form, proportions, and natural manner of disposing themselves when in repose. All this process was watched by the three spectators with absorbing interest, their heads bent together over Luigi's palm, and nobody disturbing the stillness with a word. Wilson now entered upon a close survey of the palm again, and his revelations began.

He mapped out Luigi's character and disposition, his tastes, aversions, proclivities, ambitions, and eccentricities in a way which sometimes made Luigi wince and the others laugh, but both twins declared that the chart was artistically drawn and was correct.

Next, Wilson took up Luigi's history. He proceeded cautiously and with hesitation, now, moving his finger slowly along the great lines of the palm, and now and then halting it at a "star" or some such landmark, and examining that neighborhood minutely. He proclaimed one or two

past events, Luigi confirmed his correctness, and the search went on. Presently Wilson glanced up suddenly with a surprised expression-- (51)

It suffices to add that Pudd'nhead's "clincher" is the divination of Luigi's having killed a man, a legitimate reading proved by Pudd'nhead's announcing the confession Luigi wrote down in advance. As the above passage reveals, Pudd'nhead's characteristic attentiveness and alertness are in full effect as he studies Luigi's palm.

Where Pudd'nhead pauses to examine "minutely" a particular "landmark," the reader might suppose this palmist is "feeling" the truth as much as reading it, the distinction being so-called psychic ability versus that of astutely objective observation. After all, many manifestations of alleged psychic power reputedly depend on the psychic's ability merely to concentrate profoundly and purposefully, something which Pudd'nhead appears to do whenever he wishes. However, speculation along these lines is necessarily restrained, for as far as the text reveals, Pudd'nhead's palm reading is just one more expression of his marvelously learned, agile, and alert mind. Though Pudd'nhead is not alone in enjoying an acute spatial or visual intelligence, the successful practice of palmistry may be his single most distinguishing talent in regard to the other geniuses in this study.

Pudd'nhead's other eccentric practice, that of fingerprinting, also depends on spatial/visual intelligence, but on a particular facet of bodily intelligence as well. It is clear enough that

a fine spatial/visual intelligence is required to perform the painstaking practices which Pudd'nhead's finger-mark hobby involves:

He often studied his records, examining and poring over them with absorbing interest until far into the night; but what he found there--if he found anything--he revealed to no one. Sometimes he copied on paper the involved and delicate pattern left by the ball of a finger, and then vastly enlarged it with a pantograph so that he could examine its web of curving lines with ease and convenience. (7).

As this and other passages indicate, bodily intelligence is also a clear contributor to the delicate taking and studying of fingerprints. As Gardner says,

Our discussion of bodily intelligence has focussed on capacities that highlight the use of the body per se, with relatively little emphasis on the use of the body, and particularly of the hands, with other materials. Yet, as we have seen, the development of the capacity to manufacture and transform objects, both directly with one's body and through the use of tools, has been especially characteristic of the human species. . . . In my own view, fine motor bodily intelligence, in combination with spatial capacities, is most strongly entailed in the use of objects and tools. (231-2)

Everything about Pudd'nhead's fingerprinting trade involves either a keen eye or a dexterous hand, for he handles delicate glass strips, methodically "takes" finger-marks onto them, sometimes copies the intricate patterns by hand, enlarges them with a "pantograph," and in general pores over these "records" with discriminating visual attention. Surprisingly, though fingerprinting today is a far more accepted science than palmistry, it was so newfangled in Pudd'nhead's day that he admitted no name for it

and would not "explain to anybody what its purpose was, but merely said it was an amusement" (7).

Nowadays fingerprinting is a long established legal means to identifying criminals and criminal suspects. If not the FBI's most precious tool, it is that organization's most famous method for determining criminal guilt or innocence. It was a well-known device when Twain wrote Pudd'nhead Wilson, but Twain deliberately placed his protagonist--living sixty years earlier in 1830--at the frontier of this particular "fad": no one else in Dawson's Landing has ever heard of such a thing, and for his many detractors this newfangled science is excellent after-the-fact evidence that Pudd'nhead was given a fitting nickname. Yet, of course, this fad turns out to be both the revelation of and the only means of proving the crucial facts of Judge Driscoll's murder. Given its pivotal importance and early introduction in the novel, the fingerprinting stands as the signal eccentricity in a classically eccentric protagonist.

Because it is so utterly new to the age, Pudd'nhead's collection of "natal autographs" also places him high in the order of one of Gardner's "higher-level" cognitive abilities, namely originality. Gardner calls originality, or novelty, "the skill of fashioning an unfamiliar and yet worthy product within a particular realm, be it an innovative story or dance, the solution of a personal conflict or a mathematical paradox" (288). It suffices to say that no product could be worthier than one which punishes the wicked and lets the innocent go free.

The fingerprinting informs Pudd'nhead that the twins did not murder Judge Driscoll; and after Tom Driscoll inadvertently places his own finger-marks before Pudd'nhead's trained eye, all truths come clear: who killed the Judge, who the mysterious "girl" is, why the thief never claimed the reward for the knife, and what Roxy did twenty-three years ago with two look-alike infants. In short, in this particular story the newfangled science of fingerprinting reveals all and saves all--saves all, that is, but the guilty. If Tom Sawyer's talents stand out in his community, those that Pudd'nhead unfolds are entirely unparalleled in his. The remarkable thoroughness with which he maintains the finger-mark records is surpassed only by the phenomenal power that such an eccentric and ingenious practice turns out to wield.

While Pudd'nhead's palmistry and fingerprinting are undeniably unique talents, his flair for witticism might also be said to set him apart from the other characters in this study. Certainly Huck uncorks a few witticisms, which is to say, a few deliberately clever and amusing remarks; and surely the King and the Duke score well in this department; but, again, no other of Twain's characters produces anything like the volume of deliberately amusing utterances that comprise Pudd'nhead Wilson's Calendar.

Before a review of critical responses to the Calendar, an explanation of its delayed consideration is in order since it could have been introduced in the discussion of Pudd'nhead's linguistic

abilities. In fact, wit is referred to in Gardner's chapter on "Linguistic Intelligence," in the section entitled "Cross-Cultural Linguistic Variations," in which Gardner discusses the "verbal dueling," punning, and linguistic invention found even in "preliterate cultures" like that of the Chamula of Chiapas, Mexico (93). Although any clever and amusing use of words, oral or written, is a definitively linguistic exercise and thus is covered in Gardner's chapter on linguistic intelligence, the particular phenomenon of the witticism does not seem readily to fall under any of the "four aspects of linguistic knowledge" that Gardner defines. This elusiveness, the fact that Twain gathered his hero's witticisms into the fictitious Pudd'nhead Wilson's Calendar, and critical objections to the Calendar, make Pudd'nhead's wit a justifiably isolated study.

Since more than one critic has found the content and tone of Pudd'nhead's Calendar to be inconsistent with his role in the story, this charge might be considered before the wit itself is discussed. Marvin Fisher and Michael Elliott were cited earlier in this chapter for finding discrepancies in Pudd'nhead's intelligence. Centering on the intellectual quality of the Calendar, their objections are as follows:

The maxims of the Calendar reflect an aspect of Wilson we hardly see in the events of the novel. It is scarcely possible to imagine that the Wilson who ostensibly accepts the F.F.V. code and reprimands Tom for not confronting Luigi in a duel could have produced the penetrating combination of disillusioned wit, cynicism, and iconoclasm in the Calendar. (540)

Although this example fairly sums up their point, Fisher and Elliott offer other alleged inconsistencies between the values or beliefs Pudd'nhead expresses in the Calendar and those he seems to represent in the novel itself:

Wilson wants to be recognized and accepted as part of this village elite, he is "deeply gratified" by the invitation to run for mayor of Dawson's Landing, and he considers this political opportunity "a step upward." In the final courtroom scene he serves as protector and supporter of the town's most cherished values and institutions--including the system of slavery. For such a man to commemorate Columbus Day by writing "It was wonderful to find America, but it would have been more wonderful to miss it" is inconceivable. . . . Mark Twain has apparently presented us with two rather separate characters in his portrayal of Pudd'nhead Wilson. (540-41)

Although this argument might be specifically refuted, a more inviting response, so far as Pudd'nhead's credibility is concerned, may be a polite "And so?"--for many of Twain's most realistic characters are similarly inconsistent in conduct, personality, and apparent fiber of intelligence. Tom Sawyer is an infamously less rounded personality and intellect in Huck's story than in his own, an inconsistency which scores of critics have noted. And any realistic appraisal of Huck Finn's personality reveals seemingly impossible discrepancies: between his occasional horrendous misspellings and grammatical gaffs on the one hand, and on the other hand his flawless transcription of all else, often involving much more sophisticated vocabulary and syntax; between his rude youth and celebrated "illiteracy," and his polishing off an eminently readable two-hundred-page narrative before realizing "what a trouble

it was to make a book" (362). And into this book enters the Duke, spouting sophisticated locutions as effortlessly as a college professor, but all of them in service to one pathologically manipulative facade or another. In short, several of Twain's characters behave inconsistently while still being vividly realistic. Inasmuch as real human beings often reveal astonishing self-contradictions, perhaps the above-cited inconsistencies argue ever more for Twain's realism.

Admittedly, Pudd'nhead's allegedly divided character is just one exhibit which Fisher and Elliott introduce in a much more comprehensive argument that the whole novel is satirically divided on questions of man's moral integrity (or turpitude). Nevertheless, in the interest of closing the (character) gap which Fisher and Elliott perceive, this writer would simply remind them that Pudd'nhead's emphatic, vain, and very human desire to redeem himself in Dawson's Landing explains quite realistically any discrepancies between his public conduct and the cynically sage musings recorded in his Calendar.

Moreover, it is difficult to side with these critics when, evidently, they claim that Pudd'nhead's unraveling of Roxy's crime indicates his support of slavery inasmuch as Tom Driscoll is consequently sold "down the river." Indeed such a claim is preposterous in view of the comprehensive, albeit imperfect, justice which is served: the two innocent defendants are saved from hanging; Roxy

is justly identified as the original cause of so much eventual pain and tragedy; Judge Driscoll's murder is avenged when the murderer, however victimized by wicked white racism, is punished for unsurpassed wickedness of his own. The flaw in Fisher and Elliott is their effectively blaming Pudd'nhead Wilson for the existence of slavery. All points considered, his public conduct appears significantly more compatible with his private utterances than these critics seem to recognize. Of course no one denies that the Calendar entries, like the lead-in epigrams to particular chapters of many other books, are oddly detached from the story itself. Yet, at least for the sake of discussing one character's intelligence, this writer contends that on the basis of textual evidence, Pudd'nhead the accountant, palmist, and criminal lawyer is a good facsimile of him who authors the wise and witty Pudd'n-head Wilson's Calendar.

If the reader still has difficulty imagining Pudd'nhead the character to be the same persona responsible for the Calendar, this reader should remember that Pudd'nhead composed this catalog of cynicisms during some twenty long years (plenty of time and reason to write a scathing commentary on mortal folly) of abject professional, social, and spiritual misfortune. And the reader should remember that Pudd'nhead the character's remark about owning half a dog and killing his half--the very wisecrack which launches his twenty years' misfortune--is every bit as dry,

sophisticated, and penetrating a witticism as those several dozen making up Pudd'nhead's Calender. A few of these gems shall suffice to demonstrate not only Pudd'nhead's genius for witticism, but incidentally another "higher-level" capacity which Gardner labels as wisdom:

considerable common sense and originality in one or more domains, coupled with s seasoned metaphorizing or analogizing capacity. The individual can draw upon these abilities, at least in given circumstances, in order to make sage comments and to propose well-motivated lines of action. (293)

The Calender may be short on wholesome or practical proposals of action, but it does feature plenty of sage, if also cynical, comments on human psychology.

First, on the profound challenge of self-improvement, Pudd'nhead (the Calender) writes: "Habit is habit, and not to be flung out of the window by any man, but coaxed downstairs a step at a time" (27). The metaphor is delightfully apt, habit being an all but unshakable beast for that person lacking a steady and patient will. On another mortal phenomenon, the Calendar opines: "The holy passion of Friendship is of so sweet and steady and loyal and enduring a nature that it will last through a whole lifetime, if not asked to lend money" (33). The deliberate bathos in this utterance--the deliberately ludicrous descent from the sublime to the banal--is unfortunately a fitting description of mortal man's confused system of values. Still on the vast subject of human folly and foible, one other display closes this review of

Pudd'nhead's penetrating wit. Like so many other Calendar entries, this one is infernally caustic, although understated to the point of insinuation: "Even popularity can be overdone. In Rome, along ar first, you are full of regrets that Michelangelo died; by and by you only regret that you didn't see him do it" (83). The mock callousness echoes the half-a-dog crack, though unlike that fatal remark, this typical Calendar lampoon targets man instead of beast. The edge is fourfold at least, hitting men, Romans, Michelangelo, and Pudd'nhead himself in one acerbic swipe (this swipe incidentally reminiscent of Innocents Abroad). The dry mock is the same that would kill half a dog, proving that Pudd'nhead's visionary irreverence does carry over from the Calendar to the narrative that is superintends.

Hands (or rather palms?) down, Pudd'nhead's Calendar places him over even the King and Duke in the category of razor-sharp wit. As for the philosophic and linguistic sophistication of this wit, it has no peer among Twains's other characters, though they all can rightly claim some fine verbal dexterity or another.

Though his creator once called him a machine, Pudd'nhead's wit, among various other faculties, confirms his humanness. Some other confirmations include his twenty-three-years-old "fight against hard luck and prejudice" (114) and his distinctly human expressions of regard for other people such

as his murdered friend, Judge Driscoll:

Upon this haft stands the assassin's natal autograph,
written in the blood of that helpless and unoffending
old man who loved you and whom you all loved. There
is but one man in the whole earth whose hand can dupli-
cate that crimson sign . . . and please God we will pro-
duce that man in this room before the clock strikes
noon! (109)

Of course Pudd'nhead's valiant defense of the twins and his determined avenging of Judge Driscoll's death may be ascribed in part to his real desire to terminate twenty-three years of public and private ignominy--in short to prove his nickname an unfitting one after all. Such a motive is human, credible, and explicitly cited in the text. But another motive, Pudd'nhead's personal moral sensibility, is clearly at work, and is the closing commentary of this chapter.

It is not a long commentary, for while much of the text implies Pudd'nhead's moral intelligence, there is too little explicit reference or display to render Pudd'nhead any sort of "genius" of love and sympathy. According to the personal (moral) hierarchy by which this study arbitrarily orders the examination of characters, Pudd'nhead Wilson comes after Tom Sawyer not because anything that Tom does represents a decidedly higher order of moral intelligence or sensibility than Pudd'nhead's best display, but more because Tom's sensitivity and compassion and righteousness are more focussed and more emphatic than are Pudd'nhead's.

Unlike Tom, Pudd'nhead never registers more than a flicker of explicit human sympathy; his humanity is mostly just implied

through the general revelation of his character, which immediately casts him in a favorable light. The reader never questions Pudd'n-head's good character; it is unambiguously established in Twain's opening description of him: "He was a homely, freckled, sandy-haired young fellow, with an intelligent blue eye that had frankness and comradeship in it and a covert twinkle of a pleasant sort" (5).

From this point forward Pudd'nhead never seriously deviates from exemplary private and public conduct. Despite the acerbity in the Calendar and in his famous opening quip, the principles of honesty, loyalty, courtesy, and fairness are forever apparent in his character. Perhaps no other character in this study presents such a uniformly wholesome and untainted personal demeanor. Even Huck Finn, a moral paragon in certain ways, evidently cusses profusely, inconsiderately calls Joanna Wilks "the hare-lip," and plays an infamously mean joke on Jim. But the point remains that, however irreproachable Pudd'nhead's conduct appears, his soul is never laid open like Huck's or Tom's.

Here indeed one must admit the comparative flatness of Pudd'nhead's human profile: as Twain's letter suggested, Pudd'nhead is certainly not a rounded--that is, complex and flawed--character like Huck and Tom, at least as they appear in their own stories. The distinction is not subtle or obscure: Pudd'nhead's interior world is never developed; his feelings are not visible,

but merely suggested. Thus Tom Sawyer's tearfulness over Aunt Polly, his nightmarish aching over Muff Potter, even his brief pity for Injun Joe, all register more vivid humanity than Pudd'n-head ever does. Although one could well argue that Huck's and Tom's defenses of Jim and of Muff Potter, respectively, are purer altruisms than Pudd'nhead's defense of the twins, the more telling point here is that, though not an unrealistic character, Pudd'n-head is not a vividly three-dimensional one either. His altruism, or his personal intelligence, is never sounded, described, or understood. Because he is a shallower creation, Pudd'nhead presents fewer so-called character flaws than Huck or Tom, but much less human sympathy as well. Pudd'nhead is arguably the supreme giant in this gallery of intellectual titans; his story proves he is a gentle and upright fellow. But since Twain never gets inside him, the visible total of Pudd'nhead's moral or personal intelligence--his sense of duty, of charity, and of love--must rank somewhere below Tom Sawyer's, and, it seems, somewhere above that of Beriah Sellers, the next genius in line.

CHAPTER V

THE COCKEYED OPTIMIST

Beriah Sellers, the eternal optimist in The Gilded Age, is as profoundly governed by emotional "intelligence" as Pudd'nhead Wilson is governed by the intelligence of reason. Unfortunately, Sellers is as consistently misguided by his emotionalism as Pudd'nhead is soundly directed by his rational faculties. Clearly Seller's genius does not involve the ability to make shrewd or sound judgments based on available evidence. Unlike Pudd'nhead, who sifts through real and illusory truths with adept discrimination, Beriah Sellers is fantastically incapable of seeing much else besides the next illusory horizon on his personally vast dreamscape. Somewhat like Tom Sawyer, but much like the King as well, Sellers is inordinately absorbed in his own view of things, to the virtual ignorance of possible other viewpoints.

Like Tom, Sellers generally wants others to be happy and would like to be the revered bestower of good fortune. Unlike Tom, he is remarkably inept at producing any sort of material happiness for others, except insofar as his personal presence might be a kind of material joy to those who love or are fond of him. Tom frees Muff Potter from the gallows, saves Becky Thatcher from a cavernous death, and earns six thousand in gold for his participation in the dreadful Injun Joe affair. As far as the reader can see, Beriah

Sellers has no such effectuality in the real affairs of men. Although in some ways his spirit is great and his particular talents phenomenal, he must come well after Huck, Tom, and Pudd'nhead in the personal hierarchy since he never accomplishes tangibly moral or altruistic good.

On the altruism index Sellers does rank higher than the King or Duke, though some surprising comparisons can be argued, especially between the Colonel and the King. Although the fibers of their egotism are mutually distinct, Seller's personal pride is every bit as blustery and bombastic as the King's, especially in view of the King's conscious pretension to so much of his greatness. The Colonel's lust for gold, though meant to benefit others besides himself, is actually more obsessive than the King's. Although the Colonel is no criminal or con man and is entirely above any deliberate cheating of his fellows, the mammoth proportions of his goldlust exceed the King's and are partly the reason he inadvertently cheats his wife and children of a decent existence. In short, though Sellers is a more sympathetic character than the King, his gross irresponsibility is at complex odds with his positive qualities. Thus in the overall profile on Colonel Sellers, the issue of personal intelligence (or the absence of it) is more difficult than anywhere else in this study. Because the Colonel's partly good intentions bear no decent fruit whatever, and indeed bring poignant suffering to near and dear ones, the issue of his

moral qualities remains closely intertwined with the analysis of his amazingly counter-productive intellect and genius.

The first in Gardner's list of intelligences is easily Beriah Sellers' foremost calling card. It is rhetoric--the persuasive manipulation of others through language--and it is one talent which Twain makes more prominent in the Colonel even than in the other great rhetoricians in the present gallery. Huck, Tom, Pudd'nhead, the King, and the Duke all manifest one or more sorts of rhetorical brilliance; but only Sellers is literally billed and announced as a master weaver of words: "The Colonel's tongue was a magician's wand that turned dried apples into figs and water into wine as easily as it could change a hovel into a palace and present poverty into imminent future riches" (55). Almost every appearance by the Colonel reveals his special powers of articulated imagination, but the above passage, besides labeling these powers, also identifies the enormous ethical problems which they both conceal and reflect.

Many of the Colonel's grand speeches effectively conceal one significant truth or another from his audience, though for the reader this same brilliant bombast is a conspicuous symptom of Sellers' true inadequacy. Again like the King, Sellers at his bombastic best is often at his ethical (personal) worst as well. The above passage refers to Washington Hawkins' first supper at the Sellers home, where Washington falls under a spell of such

intoxicating illusion that he scarcely can perceive the wretched poverty that is there:

What Washington regarded at first sight as mere lowly potatoes, presently became awe-inspiring agricultural productions that had been reared in some ducal garden beyond the sea, under the sacred eye of the duke himself, who had sent them to Sellers; the bread was from corn which could be grown in only one favored locality in the earth and only a favored few could get it; the Rio coffee, which at first seemed execrable to the taste, took to itself an improved flavor when Washington was told to drink it slowly and not hurry what should be a lingering luxury in order to be fully appreciated--it was from the private stores of a Brazilian nobleman with an unrememberable name. (55)

Of course, these charming deceptions tend to mask the Colonel's dismal personal failure as a husband, father, provider, and adviser.

Indeed this opening to Chapter Eight is pregnant with suggested comparisons, favorable or not, to other great illusionists, especially Tom Sawyer and the fraudulent King. Tom Sawyer's lustiest robber and pirate scenarios are never so illusory as Sellers' fantasies since Tom and company are basically exercising a willful suspension of disbelief, whereas Sellers' auditors are generally involuntary "victims" of some perfectly overpowering illusion or another. An easy inference from this comparison is that Sellers materializes personal visions even more palpably than Tom Sawyer:

Washington slept in a cold bed in a carpetless room and woke up in a palace in the morning; at least the palace lingered during the moment that he was rubbing his eyes and getting his bearings--and then it disappeared and he recognized that the Colonel's inspiring talk had been influencing his dreams. (55-6)

Not Tom nor even the King confounds an auditor's very sense impressions the way Sellers can; Twain tirelessly fleshes out the Colonel's stupendous rhetorical gifts, so emboldening this particular quality that he stands above even such tongue-waggers as the King and Huck and Pudd'nhead. The true quality of Sellers' gift is hard to measure since seemingly boundless optimism should get at least occasionally positive results. Thus something about the Colonel's vision is awfully blind, mad, or both.

Yet if the Colonel is blind, he has frequent company. Since the present scene utterly mystifies Washington Hawkins, it well represents the mystification that Colonel Sellers consistently inspires in those who hear him speak. Although this novel reputedly "echoes the sounds of its time" (xiv), the reader is asked to believe, at the start of Chapter Eight at least, that a fairly intelligent young man, Washington Hawkins, can be so put upon by another man's words as to see visually whatever those words are suggesting.

It is clear that, while the Colonel's powers of suggestion leap over the King's accomplishments, his mystifications consist largely in fabulous lies. The King's claims to royalty do not exceed or even match Sellers' several claims about his royal potatoes and coffee, though Huck and Jim see through the King while Sellers' listeners usually are overwhelmed. Admittedly the King gulls whole mobs on incredible pretexts, but nowhere in his career

does he sport such palpable sensory illusions as the Colonel effects over Washington Hawkins. Nonetheless, the two men are comparably gifted in the field of creative falsehood.

This comparison goes far in delineating the Colonel's peculiar brand of creativity, how it resembles but is different from the King's own indomitable artistry. While the King's falsehoods never claim any admirable motivation, the Colonel's fabrications, as already noted, are by no means undeploable. What with his starving family, the Colonel's wondrous table talk is as criminal as it is ingenious.

Washington's second dinner at the Colonel's, this time raw turnips and water, reveals more poignantly than the first just how empty Sellers' bombast can be. A key difference in this scene is the Colonel's not having expected Washington's visit. Lest the reader suspect Colonel Sellers of utter lunacy, Twain pictures him looking "nonplussed, and just a bit uncomfortable," clearly embarrassed by his family's destitution. Mrs. Sellers grows crimson and tearful, and Washington "wished he had never come there and spied out this cruel poverty and brought pain to that poor little lady's heart and shame to her cheek" (78). At this point, featuring rhetoric as galling as what the King spews forth when asked to describe Peter Wilks' tattoo, Sellers proudly pretends that his family and guest are the recipients of blessedly simple yet delectable provisions.

Interspersed with this homespun charlatanism are strains of the Colonel's obsessive and circumstantially criminal devotion to fortune-hunting:

Let me help you, Washington--Lafayette pass this plate to Washington--ah, well, well, my boy, things are looking pretty bright now, I tell you. Speculation--my! the whole atmosphere's full of money. I wouldn't take three fortunes for one little operation I've got on hand now--have anything from the waters? No? Well, you're right, you're right. Some people like mustard with turnips but--now there was Baron Poniatowski--Lord, but that man did know how to live!--true Russian you know, Russian to the back bone; I say to my wife, give me a Russian every time, for a table comrade. The Baron used to say, "Take mustard, Sellers, try the mustard,"--a man can't know what turnips are in perfection without mustard, but I always said, "No, Baron, I'm a plain man, and I want my food plain--none of your embellishments for Beriah Sellers--no made dishes for me!" And it's the best way--high living kills more than it cures in this world, you can rest assured of that. --Yes indeed, Washington, I've got one little operation on hand that--take some more water--help yourself, won't you?--help yourself, there's plenty of it. --You'll find it pretty good, I guess. How does that fruit strike you? (78)

In view of how Sellers preaches his fatuous schemes in the pitiful presence of their very worst victims, he seems lower than the King, who appears to have no family or friends and thus can victimize only strangers. Of course Sellers is not cold-blooded quite like the King, yet his warmth and cheer are counterbalanced by a willful neglect of his family. Whereas the King deliberately sins against his victims by deceiving and swindling them, the Colonel never intends to harm anyone. Since his affability and good intentions are clearly genuine, the Colonel is not as definitive or as profound a sinner as the King. Yet the two men share

at least a couple of deadly sins--pride and greed--which walk hand in hand with their genius.

When the Colonel rails on so winningly about the virtues of raw turnips, he clearly is wrestling with a form of tenacious pride similar to that which compels the King, after hearing the Duke's sob story, to declare himself the lost son of Looy the Sixteen, or later, to broadcast a specific description of a body (Peter Wilks') he has never seen. Neither man can admit defeat nor easily settle for ordinary equality with other men. The King's natural pride will not endure the Duke's claiming ascendancy over him; the Colonel similarly takes every possible opportunity to assert his enormous yet perverted sense of self. Thus a cursory dissection of overpowering rhetorical strength reveals, in these rhetoricians at least, fueling reservoirs of pride. This overflowing personal pride characterizes every gesture and utterance of the Colonel's, and partly accounts for his selfish neglect of the painfully needy around him.

In one passage alone the reader can see--besides sheer rhetorical genius--the monumental pride which not only helps the Colonel forget his real responsibilities, and inspires his endless glorification of future potentials, but also necessitates his handling other people like a self-righteous shepherd lording over his flock:

Stuff! Why what an infant you are, Washington--what a guileless, short-sighted, easily-contented innocent you are, my poor little country-bred know-nothing! Would

I go to all that trouble and bother for the poor crumbs a body might pick up in this country? Now do I look like a man who--does my history suggest that I am a man who deals in trifles, contents himself with the narrow horizon that hems in the common herd, sees no further than the end of his nose? You ought to know that if I throw my time and abilities into a patent medicine, it's a patent medicine whose field of operations is the solid earth! its clients the swarming nations that inhabit it! Three years of introductory trade in the orient and what will be the result? Why, our head-quarters would be in Constantinople and our hind-quarters in Further India! Factories and warehouses in Cairo, Ispahan, Bagdad, Damascus, Jerusalem, Yedo, Peking, Bangkok, Delhi, Bombay and Calcutta! Annual income--well, God only knows how many millions and millions apiece! (59)

Twain evidently figured that for Sellers to be a likable character--which he is--his rhetoric would have to be so bedazzling as to eclipse his otherwise glaring faults. Sellers has all the egocentric vigor and natural linguistic facility to produce just such long-winded but high-soaring speeches almost every time he opens his mouth. Regardless of its unique features, Colonel Sellers' rhetoric is comprehensively the strongest and most pronounced of such gifts as covered in this study of highly talented talkers.

Another deadly but rhetorically propelling sin that the Colonel and the King both own, is avarice. While the King is probably no prouder than Colonel Sellers, he has the Colonel beat in pure greediness despite Sellers' terrible selfishness as a family man. The principal difference is that Sellers genuinely intends and envisions sharing his would-be fortunes with friends

and family, while the King never registers the slightest altruistic (personal, moral) impulse, and joins with the Duke only because two con men swindle better than one. It should be added that, on the immediate personal level, Sellers is far more attractive and likable than the King, who never once exhibits decency in dealing with others and who therefore must finish dead last in the ranking of intrapersonal knowledge, or knowledge of the inner self which dwells deep inside all men.

Unlike the King, Colonel Sellers consistently victimizes himself with a sort of unintentional con artistry. He is a con man turned in on himself. He appears to believe truly that his huge schemes will succeed, and undoubtedly he would share the wealth if they did. Since they never do, it appears almost as if Sellers' greed is not so much for the purely elusive gold as for the philanthropic kingliness that could be his if just once he got hold of the "millions" forever dancing in his head (cf. spatial intelligence). His greed, thus a sort of voracious pride, will not let the Colonel settle for an ordinary income; thus his family must settle for next to no income at all. Sellers would like to be a king, just as the one in Huckleberry Finn calls himself such; and unlike this "king," Sellers has real magnanimity and compassion which, though masking serious faults, put the Colonel much closer to benevolent majesty--and to some measure of personal intelligence--than Huck's fraudulent lord ever comes.

Thus Colonel Sellers' benevolence is paradoxically greedy, and the two opposing moralities can be glimpsed side by side in his luminous ravings, which are as brilliant as inspired unreality can be, and precisely as well-intentioned as they are terribly egotistical. The "Rothschild proposition" is but one of four phenomenally gaudy fantasies Sellers paints before Washington's bulging eyes in the space of Chapter Eight's first three pages. The reader should note that only minutes earlier Washington paused to recognize the bewitching influence of the Colonel's gab, and that "Beriah Sellers' Infallible Imperial Oriental Optic Liniment and Salvation for Sore Eyes," which the previous quote touched upon, is but another breath away. Such is the rapid forgetfulness befalling the Colonel's every listener, except of course his wife, some of his children perhaps, and giftedly cautious souls such as Ruth Bolton or Washington Hawkins' mother. As for Washington himself, he is mesmerized by an alchemy of egotism and goodness, excerpted as follows:

"Why Washington--but what's the use of talking about it--any man can see that there's whole Atlantic oceans of cash in it, gulfs and bays thrown in. But there's a bigger thing than that, yet--a bigger--

"Why Colonel, you can't want anything bigger!" said Washington, his eyes blazing. "Colonel, you can't improve on these--no man can improve on them!"

A sweet, compassionate smile played about the Colonel's features, and he leaned over the table with the air of a man who is "going to show you" and do it without the least trouble:

"Why Washington, my boy, these things are nothing. They look large--of course they look large to a novice, but to a man who has been all his life accustomed to large operations--shaw! . . . --now just listen a moment--just let me give

you an idea of what we old veterans of commerce call 'business'. Here's the Rothschild's proposition--this is between you and me, you understand--"

Washington nodded three or four times impatiently, and his glowing eyes said, Yes, yes--hurry--I understand--" (57)

Apocryphal or not, the Rothschild's "proposition" would have the Colonel "buy up a hundred and thirteen wild cat banks" in five states:

. . . by them all up, you see, and then all of a sudden let the cat out of the bag! Whiz! the stock of every one of those wildcats would spin up to a tremendous premium before you could turn a hand-spring--profit on the speculation not a dollar less than forty millions! [An eloquent pause, while the marvelous vision settled into W.'s focus.] Where's your hogs now! Why my dear innocent boy, we would just sit down on the front door-steps and peddle banks like lucifer matches!

Washington finally got his breath and said:

"Oh, it is perfectly wonderful!" (57-8)

All his unrealized optimism aside, the Colonel's gargantuan enthusiasms must have some basis in real possibility, else he could never consult and converse with prominent figures like Senator Dilworthy. But no such flattering acquaintance can minimize the strange selfishness behind the Colonel's every awesome failure.

Despite perpetual failure, the Colonel conceives at least superficially realistic plans, and, powerfully believing them, spellbinds devotees while at least confounding his skeptics. Here the interpersonal connection with rhetorical genius should be reiterated, though admittedly Sellers' easy influence over others may depend less on his understanding their "intentions and

desires" (Gardner 239) than on his simply overwhelming them with the force of his own obsessive drives. At any rate, Sellers certainly is capable of "influencing a group of desperate individuals to behave along desired lines" (239). Washington Hawkins is just one good example of a Sellers devotee; Harry Brierly is deeply infatuated with the Colonel's vision, and even his level-headed engineer friend, Philip Sterling, ignores for a while the Colonel's repeated lack of "ready money," believing instead that this "enthusiastic and hospitable gentleman" is "engaged in very large operations" (110). It is precisely this magnitude--that is, the Colonel's extraordinarily large ego--which best accounts for the vast dimensions and reservoirs of his rhetorical and interpersonal abilities.

The Colonel is not a mimic, but rather an exorbitant imitation of prosperous genius. His greed can never be separated from his genius because the vice is a part of the fabulously inspired rhetoric. The Colonel literally deprives his family of basic needs, and yet the intensity of his illusions is partially likable because, in all his fantastic futility, the Colonel wishes almost as well for others as for himself.

It should not be necessary to expound on Sellers' mnemonic or interpersonal intelligences since both are necessitated by the size and number of the Colonel's tirades. His memory is gargantuan, if for no other reason because he tenaciously pictures (visual or spatial memory) his own make-believe greatness in all sorts of

elaborate fantasies. Although the "Imperial Oriental Optic Lini-ment" speech is a good example of the Colonel's meticulous knowledge of a superficially realistic landscape, his many other spiels feature either the same real or apparent memory which long and facile rhetoric entails. In his court testimony on Laura's behalf, the Colonel,

seeing the attention of the counsel and Court entirely withdrawn from him, thought he perceived here his opportunity. Turning and beaming upon the jury, he began simply to talk, but as the grandeur of his position grew upon him--his talk broadened unconsciously into an oratorical vein.

"You see how she was situated, gentlemen; poor child, it might have broken her heart to let her mind get to running on such a thing as that. You see, from what we could make out her father was lame in the left leg and had a deep scar on his left forehead. And so ever since the day she found out she had another father, she never could run across a lame stranger without being taken all over with a shiver, and almost fainting where she stood. And the next minute she would go right after that man. Once she stumbled on a stranger with a game leg, and she was the most grateful thing in this world--but it was the wrong leg and it was days and days before she could leave her bed. . . . Gentlemen of the jury, if I had time, if I had the opportunity, if I might be permitted to go on and tell you the thousands and thousands and thousands of mutilated strangers this poor girl has started out of cover, and hunted from city to city, from state to state, from continent to continent, till she has run them down and found they weren't the ones, I know your hearts--"

By this time the Colonel had become so warmed up, that his voice, had reached a pitch above that of the contending counsel; the lawyers suddenly stopped, and they and the Judge turned towards the Colonel and remained for several seconds too surprised at this novel exhibition to speak. (389-90)

Although the Colonel is elsewhere known to misremember (i.e., invent) facts very elaborately (e.g., "The Colonel's memory was a

little at fault here. Mr. Hawkins had never gone into details with him on this subject" [388]), the long passage above is too bizarre--even for Sellers--to be made up in the main, though thick embellishment is seldom to be discounted.

In any case, memory is involved, and it is sufficiently visual memory to warrant another reference to spatial intelligence. In discussing great chess players, Gardner refers to their more or less abstract visual memory versus the concrete visual memory of, for example, painters (194). It seems that Colonel Sellers' vast dreamscapes consist of both. However, he certainly wings his way through misinformation, fantasy, or the real past with flawless and unhesitant grace. Even the invented scenarios often suggest recollected musings, giant interior monologues aired for the first or the umpteenth time. The Colonel's catalog of prospective foreign markets for the Optic Liniment--spanning Cairo, Ispahan, Bagdad, Damascus, Jerusalem, Yedo, Peking, Bangkok, Delhi, Bombay and Calcutta--is one pithy proof of his rhetorical reservoirs: his proud, greedy, but always tenacious grip on the particulate stuffs of winning rhetoric.

The interpersonal intelligence--"influencing a group of disparate individuals to behave along desired lines"--is a more explicit effect of the Colonel's rhetoric than is his great memory a distinct contributor to this wild rhetorical flair. The above scene at Laura's trial is just one illustration of how interpersonal

intelligence comes from, or perhaps rather belongs to, the gift of rhetorical persuasion. All the Colonel requires is an audience, for of course like everyone else in this study he has certain thespian talents. Seen above, Sellers exudes the interpersonal genius of manipulating groups of people, in this case a murder trial jury to which the Colonel, with awesome ease, "turning and beaming," "began to talk," which talk quickly "broadened unconsciously into an oratorical vein" (389). While it certainly could be argued that Sellers' fine defense of Laura has some bearing on her acquittal, and thus on the jury's collective behavior, the lawyers and the Judge himself are continually challenged by the Colonel's willingness to take charge of the courtroom:

Sheriff: "Order in the Court."

The Judge. "The witness will confine his remarks to answers to questions."

The Colonel turned courteously to the Judge and said:

"Certainly, your Honor, certainly. I am not well acquainted with the forms of procedure in the courts of New York, but in the West, sir, in the West--"

The Judge. "There, there, that will do, that will do!"

"You see, your Honor, there were no questions asked me, and I thought I would take advantage of the lull in the proceedings to explain to the jury a very significant train of--"

The Judge. "That will do, sir! Proceed Mr. Braham."

"Colonel Sellers, have you any reason to suppose that this man is still living?"

"Every reason, sir, every reason."

"State why."

"I have never heard of his death, sir. It has never come to my knowledge. In fact, sir, as I once said to Governor--". (390)

It is fair to say that much of Colonel Sellers' manipulation of others depends on just such appeals to ignorance as this one. Surely every one of his wild-eyed schemes can be reduced to this fallacious equation: "I am bound to succeed because I do not know that I will not!" Unfortunately, as seen earlier, Sellers' manipulations are not all inspired and glamorous speech-making, but must include the sort of interpersonal exertions by which he manages to stay on decent terms with the wife and six children who are practically starving right under his speculating nose.

Surely no other character in this study embodies interpersonal intelligence as completely as does Colonel Sellers. Admittedly the King works wonders with strange village folk, and Tom Sawyer miraculously enlists fence-painters, and Pudd'nhead artfully dominates the courtroom; but Sellers appears to be Twain's unsurpassed model of the winning personality. Although the Colonel's voluble charms flow forth at literally every opportunity, and in every case are self-evident marvels of rhetorical and interpersonal genius, the reader should consider again some concrete proofs of the Colonel's greatness.

Although Pudd'nhead is ultimately a successful trial lawyer, and though the King personally overwhelms entire congregations and villages, neither man moves in a sphere comparable to that which Sellers gracefully cuts out for himself in Washington. Perhaps it is improbable that such an errant schemer as the Colonel would be

conversant with any high government official at all; yet, amazingly, "Colonel Sellers knew the President very well, and had access to his presence when officials were kept cooling their heels in the waiting-room" (272). Even if he is mainly an amusement for the President, such intimacy still defines the Colonel's powerful charm.

And yet Sellers is more than just charming at the top government level. He knows all high officials, and manages to extract important information from them:

The Colonel had access to the departments. He knew all the senators and representatives, and especially the lobby. He was consequently a great favorite in Newspaper Row, and was often lounging in the offices there, dropping bits of private official information, which were immediately caught up and telegraphed all over the country. . . . People used to wonder in the winters of 187- and 187-, where the "specials" got that remarkable information with which they every morning surprised the country, revealing the most secret intentions of the President and his cabinet, the private thoughts of political leaders, the hidden meaning of every moment. This information was furnished by Colonel Sellers. (273)

No matter where he circulates--in a country town or in the nation's capital--Colonel Sellers unfailingly carves out for himself a circle of appreciative friends and acquaintances, some of whom are actively influenced by him, but all of whom are captured by Twain's veritable Prince of Persuasion.

At least two more of Gardner's intelligences fit into the Colonel's profile, but two others are so exquisitely inapplicable as to beg a brief explanation. The first is the logical faculty, the sound reasoning that should play a healthy part in the scheming of any successful speculator, but which cannot honestly be

argued in the case of pure and perpetual financial failure. The Colonel is not without the apparatus of logical thought, but no objective appraisal should assign him any special powers in this area. The Imperial Oriental Optic Liniment scheme--just one example--includes a fairly shrewd and logical marketing plan; but the crux of the scheme, the liniment itself, is so hopelessly airborne as to place the whole project somewhere in a sphere of fertile anti-logic.

Similarly, the Colonel is fabulously deficient in the "higher-level" capacity which Gardner calls "common sense" (287). It would be difficult indeed to dream up a character any less possessed of common sense than Colonel Sellers, whose every scheming thought runs counter to practical possibility. Twain clearly meant to fashion a colossal antithesis to common sense, for the Colonel is spectacularly unlike those "individuals who seem able to plan ahead, to exploit opportunities, to guide their destinies and those of others in a prudent way, uncontaminated by jargon, ideology, or elaborate but possibly irrelevant theories" (Gardner 287). Unfortunately, the Colonel's non-sense is so uncommonly rampant that he cannot manage even the most fundamental practical affair of providing for his wife and children.

While Sellers lacks common sense, he does arguably exhibit another higher-level capacity: originality. Again, Gardner calls originality "the skill of fashioning an unfamiliar and yet worthy product within a particular realm, be it an innovative story or

dance, the solution of a personal conflict or a mathematical paradox" (288). The quibble here may concern the word "worthy," since little if anything that the Colonel ever dreams up can be set neatly apart from the self-centered indulgence responsible for his family's long suffering. Nevertheless, arbitrarily isolated, the Colonel's rhetorical flourishes might always be deemed "worthy" by his auditors. And his frequent "innovative stories" may be more easily defended whenever, as at Laura Hawkins' trial, they are benevolent and highly effectual exaggerations of basic truths. Moreover, the Colonel's distinctly original rhetoric occasionally relieves personal conflicts: in Chapter Eleven, when Washington's unexpected arrival renders Sellers momentarily "nonplussed" by the clash between reality and personal image, the Colonel talks his way out of any embarrassment; in Chapter Thirteen, as in numerous other implied instances, Sellers overcomes a personal conflict between appetite and resources by artfully "borrowing" from his new friends Philip and Harry. And finally, though his exertions all miss the mark, one must credit the Colonel with startlingly original plans at least. Whether it is Rothschild's proposition, the Oriental Optic Liniment, the "famous air torpedo," The Columbus River Navigation Scheme, or the Tennessee Land plan, the Colonel's countless unrealized dreams all bear the mark of vigorous originality.

Another of Colonel Sellers' primary abilities, briefly discussed earlier, greatly contributes to his countless dreams and

schemes. Indeed it is self-evident that the Colonel's unending schemes depend on a spatial and visual intelligence that similarly will not quit. Earlier his visual memory was cited, but clearly every one of Sellers' ill-fated fantasies gets a vivid screening in his strangely visionary head. Although any one would suffice, perhaps the Oriental Optic Liniment scenario best demonstrates the visual and spatial abilities in combination. While the visual strength may be said to provide the unceasing images conjured up in his every garish illusion, the Colonel's distinctly spatial intelligence may provide the kind of topographical, sprawling, and ultimately soaring prognostications for the prospects of his Oriental Liniment:

Factories and warehouses in Cairo, Ispahan, Bagdad, Damascus, Jerusalem, Yedo, Peking, Bangkok, Delhi, Bombay and Calcutta! Annual income--well, God only knows how many millions and millions apiece! (59)

This particular vision combines the concrete and the more abstract forms of imagery and thus illustrates Gardner's distinction between visual and spatial intelligences (194). At any rate, the mesmerizing effect which this and other "visions" has on the Colonel's listeners is sufficient proof that he himself is extraordinarily well immersed in the fantasies forever airing in his mind's eye.

Given this immersion, it is no wonder that Colonel Sellers' spiels are dramatically effective; and yet the Colonel is also

consciously theatrical, owning the same bodily-kinesthetic talents as Huck or Tom or the King. According to Gardner, who is paraphrasing British psychologist Sir Frederic Bartlett,

all skilled performances include a well-honed sense of timing, where each bit of a sequence fits into the stream in an exquisitely placed and elegant way; points of repose or shift, where one phase of the behavior is at an end, and some calibration is necessary before the second one comes into play; a sense of direction, a clear goal to which the sequence has been heading, and a point of no return, where further input of signals no longer produces a result because the final phase of the sequence has already been activated. (208)

This sophisticated analysis of mind-body "timing" describes Huck's skin-saving yarns, some of Tom's pirate impersonation, the essential stock in trade of the King and the Duke, Pudd'nhead's courtroom tour de force, and much of Beriah Sellers' behavior as well.

Although Twain literally documents some of Sellers' well-honed theatrics, the "borrowing" episode classically illustrates Bartlett's definition since the "clear goal" of the Colonel's "skilled performance" is as tangible as whiskey and cigars. "Having disposed of his liquor" and "called for cigars," Colonel Sellers

lighted the fragrant cigar with satisfaction, and then carelessly put his fingers into his right vest pocket. That movement being without result, with a shade of disappointment on his face, he felt in his left vest pocket. Not finding anything there, he looked up with a serious and annoyed air, anxiously slapped his right pantaloons pocket, and then his left, and exclaimed,

"By George, that's annoying. By George, that's mortifying. Never had anything of that kind happen to me before. I've left my pocket-book. Hold! Here's a bill, after all. No, thunder, it's a receipt."

"Allow me," said Philip, seeing how seriously the Colonel was annoyed, and taking out his purse.

The Colonel protested he couldn't think of it, and muttered something to the barkeeper about "hanging it up," but the vender of exhilaration made no sign, and Philip had the privilege of paying the costly shot; Colonel Sellers profusely apologizing and claiming the right "next time, next time." (95)

Of course this is classic con artistry, and worthy of the King and Duke, though those two generally pay for their pleasures with money "earned" in the previous village. Philip's letter home to Ruth inadvertently declares Sellers an habitual moocher, though Philip's actual assessment is typically favorable to the Colonel, and wholly blind to his "performance."

Twain emphasizes the Colonel's deliberate theatricality with bracketed documentations of it. On Washington's first visit to Colonel, three such asides appear in the course of the Colonel's two-page tirade, excerpted as follows:

"And then there is the hog speculation--that's bigger still. We've got quiet men at work," [he was very impressive here,] "mousing around, to get propositions out of all the farmers in the whole west and northwest for the hog crop. . . .

"They want me to go in with them on the sly--agent was here two weeks ago about it--go in on the sly" [voice down to an impressive whisper, now,] "and buy up a hundred and thirteen wild cat banks. . . . Whiz! the stock of every one of those wildcats would spin up to a tremendous premium before you could turn a hand-spring--profit on the speculation not a dollar less than forty millions!" [An eloquent pause, while the marvelous vision settled into W.'s focus.] "Where's your hogs now! Why my dear innocent boy, we would just sit down on the front door-steps and peddle banks like lucifer matches!" (56-8)

Like the Colonel, the other characters in this study are capable of intricate conversational choreography; and since it does effect specific directions and conclusions to a dialogue, it is closely associated with rhetorical and interpersonal intelligences.

Huck registers pregnant pauses in several of his prevarications, the small-pox drama being one good example. Pudd'nhead works strategically dramatic pauses into his courtroom performance. Yet it seems that the Colonel, the King, and the Duke occupy a special class of dramatic arts since these three spend so much of their time talking toward what Bartlett calls the "clear goal." Huck is an actor only during crises, and Pudd'nhead takes to the stage only once in his story. But the Colonel, King, and Duke almost constantly try to produce particular effects in their listeners. Since much of the King's and Duke's acting elicits immediate monetary rewards, the Colonel is easily the top-ranking gratuitous actor. Though he may get deeply into his roles, no other character is so purely interested in simply impressing other people. Tom Sawyer excels in this area, but there are times when his speech is neither affected nor calculated to impress. The Colonel, however, is always "on," never resting from (at least the unconscious) effort to appear knowledgeable and important. Thus Sellers' acting is more or less continuous and his actor's timing a constant but brilliantly effective device.

To conclude the Colonel's intellectual profile is to consider once again the qualities of his tireless exuberance, and to

measure this positive energy in terms of real self-knowledge. The intelligence in question is the intrapersonal, which "in its most primitive form . . . amounts to little more than the capacity to distinguish a feeling of pleasure from one of pain and, on the basis of such discrimination, to become more involved in or to withdraw from a situation" (Gardner 239). At this level the Colonel certainly excels, for he seems supernaturally capable of avoiding pain of any kind. Earlier passages prove he can turn embarrassment into pomp, pennilessness into whiskey and cigars, and general poverty into grand prosperity: "The Colonel's tongue was a magician's wand that . . . could change a hovel into a palace and present poverty into imminent future riches" (55). In short, the Colonel wonderfully albeit selfishly masters the pleasure-pain dichotomy.

Perhaps it is this consuming selfishness which prohibits the Colonel from experiencing the "most advanced level" of intrapersonal knowledge, which "allows one to detect and to symbolize complex and highly differentiated sets of feelings" (239). According to Gardner, this form of intelligence denotes introspection and a "deep knowledge" of one's inner nature, attributes which hardly appear in the grandiloquent folly of Colonel Sellers' life. It is true that he is astonishingly visionary, fluent, and likable; but his optimism is so errant and irresponsible that he hardly can be said to have realized deep inner truths.

To reiterate the most perplexing point about the Colonel, his soaring inspiration flies in the suffering faces of his own wife and children. He is a marvelous talker and, perhaps, thinker as well; and his low-level intrapersonal knowledge is greater, by textual volume at least, than even the pleasure-loving King's. Where Sellers falls far short is in the effective harnessing of all his positive thinking. His blind spot--the genuine suffering of others--does not seem as terrible as the King's, if only because Sellers mixes benevolent impulses with his giant egotism. Because he is uniformly loquacious and vain, the Colonel is not a complex character like Huck or Tom. But he may be the most perplexing study in this gallery of geniuses, for unlike the other five, Colonel Sellers is precisely as harmful a force as he is an optimistic one.

CHAPTER VI

THE KING AND THE DUKE

Not only do Huck Finn's roguish travelling companions, the King and the Duke, exhaust Huck's appreciation of play-acting, but they finally astonish the boy with the near-perfection of their art. Though he never says so, Huck realizes that the two scoundrels have talents which, were they not so profoundly mis-directed, could effect all manner of wholesome personal successes, conventional or not. Twain's apparent affection for the King and Duke--eighty-odd pages' worth--permits their protracted sinfulness, their remarkable though temporary effectuality in sham; to this extent, when their curtains are finally drawn, they essentially have realized the ends of their own fantasies. As consummate deceivers, the King and the Duke effortlessly sway heads, inspire faith, and reap monetary tribute wherever they travel. Like tigers or other predators in the low animal world, the King and Duke manipulate dynamically and irresistibly. Huck's asides are Twain's most direct tribute to the charlatans' phenomenal gymnastics; but because the boy's observations are mostly the exclamations of inarticulate youth, the scoundrels' genius has virtually no textual, literal reference. But both men are demonstrable geniuses, excelling in several of Gardner's intelligence indices, though occupying the abysmally low end of the morality spectrum.

If Colonel Sellers' sincere warmth is at perplexing odds with his cruel profligacy, then the King and the Duke are perplexing in their totally amoral expenditure of so much legitimate intellect. The Colonel is a paradox because selfishness nullifies goodness. The King and the Duke are paradoxes because so much intelligence is spent so nefariously. Except for his mooching, Colonel Sellers is not at all a proper con man since his actual intentions are to provide for others, not to deprive them. But the King and the Duke are classic confidence men, classic con artists. As such, they are absorbing studies in the pathology of misspent genius.

Johnson Jones Hooper's Simon Suggs is an American forbearer to Twain's hobo rogues. Somewhat like Suggs, the King and Duke epitomize the peculiarly unfettered American spirit, the frontier wanderer who, if penniless, lives then on courage, pluck, enthusiasm, and wit. Two American types are at play here, for the American freeworld dream has fostered two paths for her natives: the rags-to-riches climb, and the super-buoyant, village-to-village, freeloading career. Though the freeloader has European precursors, both paths are classic American phenomena. Yet America's nomad-con man necessarily inherits the dizzy, sprawling atmospheres of opportunism suggested by any vast continental expanse not subject to severe socialization, and whose national character stands moreover on an astonishingly famous sovereignty and on an equally

celebrated capitalistic frenzy--the very frenzy, incidentally, that afflicts Colonel Sellers' head.

Hollywood has long seized on the incongruous rogue-poet, usually placing him on or near the railroad (itself so American), equipping him with top hat, harmonica, tobacco, handkerchiefed stick, and ready quips, stories, philosophies. Not surprisingly, at least two American hobo types emerge, for some are mystic visionaries while others are merely very talented. Both are entertainers, but the benevolent ones, the actual poets, approximate India's wandering sadhus--mendicant travellers in search of nothing in particular since all things before them are God and, as God, are joyful miracles. And yet the rascally drifter paradoxically shares some of the mystic drifter's imaginative faculties, and misses divine powers in just the way, however ill-defined, that the King and the Duke lack spiritual sensitivity.

Lacking the thirst for God or for any sort of do-gooding, Twain's rascals pour their remarkable intellects down shameless ruts of corrupt money-grubbing. Yet the power that enables the King and Duke to animate false premises to credible productions, theatrics that take in and control entire communities, is an intellectual one, distinguished by unusually high concentration, even to the point, as some actors claim, of merging into the imagined role (cf. Tom Sawyer in final chapters of Huckleberry Finn). By their sustained manipulation of others, marked by rare gifts of repartee as well as high-driven confidence and stamina,

the King and Duke embody the sheer intellectual vigor and strength that propel more favorably angled personalities into sublime inspirations, ones filled not with gold-lust but with the light of love. Twain's con men--truly all con men--confound ordinary expectations regarding self-assertion, personal potential, growth, and the individual good. The con man's serpent wisdom comprehends an opposing force which is divine genius, the wholesome self-direction which devils never own.

For whatever complex reasons Twain's writing proves to be comedic instead of horrific, his con men are generally more amusing than horrifying, and by comic cast are capable of suggesting positive potentials in their misspent endowments. Although Twain disclaimed any moral to Huckleberry Finn, the reader cannot wholly believe him even if said reader's enjoyment of the book is continuous, immense, and of apparently primary importance to the author.

Analysis of humor aside, Twain's comedy decidedly rests on human folly; thus one concludes that Huckleberry Finn was begun and sustained in the author's love of humor--of humours, of mankind's fantastic foolishness. If the humours lack bloodlust, if they lack grim and sickening hues, then they are as amusing as they are expository or instructive. If Twain intended no horror, he compensated with a marathon sideshow of milder excesses, corruptions, self-delusions. The King and the Duke wield as much tainted authority as any of, say, Ben Jonson's pretenders, and for

the most part just as amusingly since neither Twainian egotist has murderous motivations, but mainly vain monetary ones.

Somewhat like Colonel Sellers, the King and the Duke describe human error, human potential, and, by their fairly innocuous ways, human comedy. Because neither scoundrel, generally, is gruesomely fraudulent, both then afford the reader's bemused witness of the divine Earth comedy, divine if only because, as Twain would have it, all parts are written, cast, and controlled by a superhuman Director, identifiable or not. Whether or not Twain ever admitted of an ultimate Benevolence, literal after-life, or incorporeal intelligence, he certainly founded in the King and Duke a lighthearted study of flawed but mighty intellects, personalities which universalize not just human misconduct, but also human genius for survival, conquest, manipulation of circumstance, and realization of envisioned desire. Although the King and Duke are American types, their story ends and begins in the unbound province of human personality with its numberless masks, inevitable weaknesses, and glorified strengths.

In the King and Duke, implacable greed and deceit do partial battle with a fiery elementation which, however self-promoting, lightens the personality to such an extent that these rascals are not consistently unpalatable, not steadily abhorrent to the reader's sensibilities. His false healing aside, even the King labors with comparatively minor malignity. Clearly, comic

realism--and Huckleberry Finn is not far-fetched satire--cannot for its lightness stand much of vicious sinfulness. Moreover, were the King and Duke more heinously evil, and were their victims (within the novel) more abjectly helpless (e.g., cripples), then along with all comedy would be lost the shining potentials the two rascals unwittingly but self-evidently hold.

Although the King is fully sociopathic (i.e., ignorant of others' feelings), and the Duke little better, they carry in their eighty-page presence the portraitures of awesome wit and imagination. They come at the end of this study because they have the least natural goodness or decency about them. As an adroit swindler perhaps neither man, if he had a family, would permit it to go hungry; but the King's and Duke's canny con artistry still places them well below Colonel Sellers in his futile decency. Although the two frauds surpass Colonel Sellers and Twain's other characters in one or more intellectual departments, by the morality index which orders the introduction of these geniuses, the King and the Duke--or, more precisely, the Duke and the King--must come last in this study.

Indeed the King's and Duke's genius is more inextricably joined to moral deformity than the Colonel's, for the two frauds exercise their talents in deliberate wrongdoing. And it should be mentioned, here and later, that though the King and Duke shall largely be treated as a unit, or a con man composite, Twain distinguishes their talents as well as their deformities. Both men's

talents are criminally misspent, and in at least similar ways; but some episodes reveal not just differing talents, but the King's more profound sinfulness as well.

Although it was pointed out in the previous chapter that rhetorical, interpersonal, and bodily-kinesthetic abilities are natural co-workers in the life of dynamic leadership, for clarity's sake these talents may continue to be filed more or less separately, beginning as usual with the rhetoric, which again is "the ability to use language to convince other individuals of a course of action" (Gardner 78). The earliest revelations of the King's and Duke's livelihood, made as soon as they are aboard Huck's raft, describe careers based largely on rhetorical talent: the King and Duke pose as this or that reverend, thespian, healer, or fortune-teller for the definitive purpose of convincing unsuspecting victims to throw away their money.

Their first active exercise in rhetoric, also occurring just moments after they have boarded the raft, typifies not just the easy flow of verbiage, but of outrageous lies as well. The false claims to royalty may best be chalked up to gratuitous playacting, but Huck's and Jim's subsequent subservience notably accrues to the royal titles won through irresistible rhetoric:

"Gentlemen," says the young man, very solemn, "I will reveal it to you, for I feel I may have confidence in you. By rights I am a duke!"

Jim's eyes bugged out when he heard that; and I reckon mine did, too. Then the baldhead says: "No! you can't mean it?"

"Yes. My great-grandfather, eldest son of the Duke of Bridgewater, fled to this country about the last century, to breathe the pure air of freedom; married here, and died, leaving a son, his own father dying about the same time. The second son of the late duke seized the title and estates--the infant real duke was ignored. I am the lineal descendant of that infant--I am the rightful Duke of Bridgewater; and here am I, forlorn, torn from my high estate, hunted of men, despised by the cold world, ragged, worn, heart-broken, and degraded to the companionship of felons on a raft!"

Jim pitied him ever so much, and so did I. We tried to comfort him, but he said it warn't much use, he couldn't be much comforted; said if we was a mind to acknowledge him, that would do him more good than most anything else; so we said we would, if he would tell us how. He said we ought to bow, when we spoke to him, and say "Your Grace," or "My Lord," or "Your Lordship"--and he wouldn't mind it if we called him plain "Bridgewater," which he said was a title, anyway, and not a name; and one of us ought to wait on him at dinner, and do any little thing for him he wanted done." (161-62)

The first order of analysis is the rhetorical effectiveness: the Duke succeeds in garnering all sorts of small comforts, courtesies, and favors, though he immediately is topped by the old man's far more ludicrous but also more concretely influential spiel on kingship. With so much royalty on board, Huck and Jim must offer not only every humility but every comfort as well: "so the king told us to both stay on watch till the weather got better; then him and the duke crawled into the wigwam and turned in for the night" (167).

Also noteworthy is the high eloquence in the Duke's speech, which places him in a different social class from the King, whose dialect is as crude as Huck's: "Yes, my friend, it is too true--your eyes is lookin' at this very moment on the pore disappeared Dauphin, Looy the Seventeen, son of Looy the Sixteen and

Marry Antonette" (163). Perhaps Twain wants to suggest that fraudulence knows no socio-economic boundaries; at any rate, the Duke represents the sophisticated, educated scoundrel, the silver-tongued hobo since popularized in American media (TV, movies), and decidedly of another origin than that of the King, whose sheer verbiage carries him through personally incongruous impostures. However, it seems likely that the Duke's claim to royalty is a well rehearsed speech, whereas the King's appears terribly spontaneous. What the King lacks in education he makes up for in natural rhetoric. In some ways the Duke is more clever, but most of the grand verbal flourishes belong to the King, who like Tom Sawyer and Beriah Sellers can dominate any verbal situation through that mysterious wit at least partly fueled by unshakable faith and determination.

The height of the King's rhetorical and interpersonal powers may be in Pokeville, where, seventy years and all, he gets going so that "you could hear him over everybody" (172). Not only does the Pokeville harangue rhetorically "convince other individuals of a course of action"--namely to give the King money--but it classically illustrates Gardner's line on interpersonal intelligence, which "permits a skilled adult to read the intentions and desires . . . of many other individuals and, potentially, to act upon this knowledge--for example, by influencing a group of disparate individuals to behave along desired lines" (239). Even more than Tom Sawyer or Colonel Sellers, the King is explosive, irrepressible,

and masculine, like raging fire. Yet such types are not fictitious; the King is simply an unusually robust man, not an impossibly strong one. His voice booming, he electrifies the Pokeville crowd with a stupendous and probably improvised yarn about piracy, endurance, the Indian Ocean, life at sea, Christian penance--all quite beyond him except for the piracy and endurance, enjoyed inland by the King. He has an easy way with winning speeches--vibrant, impassioned, penetrating. The fury required to seize an Arkansas mob, bind it in a spell, and shake it down for "conversion" funds is the mark of the "fiery orator": sparking, igniting, warming, searing, inflaming the crowd with a contagious frenzy, valid or not. In this particular mode the King strongly resembles Colonel Sellers, though the Colonel never spews such abject and blatant untruths.

Except for the Duke's opening claim to royalty and his subsequent introduction of the Royal Nonesuch, he has no opportunity to address gatherings since much of his time in the novel is spent playing Peter Wilks' mute brother. Nevertheless, his drumming up of the "Arkansas lunkheads" attending the Nonesuch is very serviceable rhetoric, and certainly an adroit (interpersonal) reading of a crowd's intentions, desires, and vulnerabilities:

When the place couldn't hold no more, the duke he quit tending door and went around the back way and come onto the stage and stood up before the curtain, and made a little speech, and praised up this tragedy, and said it was the most thrillingest one that ever was; and so he went on a-bragging about the tragedy and about Edmund Kean the Elder, which was to play the main principal part

in it; and at last when he'd got everybody's expectations up high enough, he rolled up the curtain, and the next minute the king come a-prancing out on all fours, naked

Then the duke he lets the curtain down, and bows to the people, and says the great tragedy will be performed only two nights more, on accounts of pressing London engagements, where the seats is all sold aready for it in Drury Lane; and then he makes them another bow, and says if he has succeeded in pleasing them and instructing them, he will be deeply obleeged if they will mention it to their friends and get them to come out and see it.

Twenty people sings out:

"What, is it over? Is that all?"

The duke says yes. Then there was a fine time. Everybody sings out "sold," and rose up mad, and was agoing for that stage and them tragedians. (196-97)

The first batch of dupes, not wanting "to be the laughing-stock of this whole town," talk the show up "and sell the rest of the town!" (197). The Nonesuch packs the house two more nights. Later, sailing away on the raft, the Duke, a braggart in his own right, explains the strategy:

Greenhorns, flatheads! I knew the first house would keep mum and let the rest of the town get roped in; and I knew they'd lay for us the third night, and consider it was their turn now. Well, it is their turn, and I'd give something to know how much they'd take for it. I would just like to know how they're putting in their opportunity. They can turn it into a picnic, if they want to--they brought plenty provisions. (198)

His cleverness aside, the Duke's theatrical aptitude not only explains his eloquent speech, but also ensures his skillful manipulation of an audience, be it "felons on a raft" or "flatheads" attending the Nonesuch.

As Twain must have intended, readers forget midst the spectacular exertions of the King and Duke that these entertainers

are perpetually victimizing innocent people. However, Twain's working up these scoundrels to their bursting point is inherently interesting because their personalities fairly comprise the gamut of human falsehoods and deceits, and more fundamentally because human folly, if viewed from a safe distance (and without prolonged focus on the suffering it conveys), is funny! If it does not inflict visible, or sensible, pain on others, and if it is not principally bloodthirsty, mortal man's foolishness likely brings laughter to bystanding readers. Thus, as Twain's King and Duke certainly present lessons in wrongdoing--how not to conduct one's life--readers are permitted to laugh at the relative innocuousness of their misdeeds, especially since the fruit of these sins inevitably shall be bitter (punishment). Since the King and Duke end up being tarred and feathered, Twain clearly took their folly more seriously than that of Colonel Sellers, who is never punished for his crimes of negligence, presumably because they are sins of omission instead of flagrant sins of aggression.

Within the confounding versatility of their sinfulness, the King's and Duke's preying on the Wilks girls probably stands as their greatest corruption. Here they come closest to breaking hearts, and here Huck's aversion to the "dead-beats" grows intense. Twain could not have picked more sensitive circumstances than the Wilks girls' bereavement, which the King violates with almost inconceivable meanness. Although the King's and Duke's initial cataloging of their sham vocations showed an absolute disregard of

others' well-being, the unfolding dramas involving the Wilks girls prove especially the old man's avarice. And yet in all their demonic falsity, the two frauds are comic as well, partly because their talents are so wondrously misapplied, and partly because — this gross misapplication virtually trumpets their impending and richly warranted doom.

Perhaps because the Wilks circumstance is so sensitive, the compensation or balance of broad comedy is necessary. In the swath of this comedy are showcased some of the frauds' most memorably perverted abilities. The King and Duke sail into the Wilks' caper glibly and confidently, as if it were their thousandth consecutive performance; nevertheless, as in their Shakespeare studies, some preparations are involved.

Here another linguistic ability is best exemplified, for the King's mnemonic ability comes formidably into play. While the Duke's general eloquence proves he is an adept learner, the King's quick study of the Wilks' family and friends is a unique demonstration of tenacious memory at work. With unaffected forwardness, the King as "Reverend Elexander Blodgett" grills a young informant all about the Wilkses. Duly interrogated, the boy begins giving the King all the trivia necessary for a secure imposture; and the King bemoans the Wilks tragedy miles before meeting his new nieces: "Poor things! to be left alone in the cold world so" (206).

The thoroughness of the King's intelligence-gathering, like other of his abilities, impresses Huck:

Well, the old man he went on asking questions till he just fairly emptied that young fellow. Blamed if he didn't inquire about everybody and everything in that blessed town, and all about all the Wilkses; and about Peter's business--which was a tanner; and about George's--which was a carpenter; and about Harvey's--which was a dissenting minister; and so on, and so on. (207)

Huck has instantly realized the King's intentions, and once ashore with him and the Duke, observes their collusion: "and the king told him everything, just like the young fellow had said it--every last word of it" (208). Huck's pause (marked above by the dash) announces the tenacity of the King's interest, for the old man flawlessly catalogs the Wilks family, soon to be his own. Here the negative excess--raw desire--would seem to fuel the very faculties, as if a man's passion or the strength of his will measures and somehow provides every capacity, even the intellectual. The King's burning self-propulsion requires intense concentrations of physical and mental proteins alike; the King's verbal energy, including the memory, fully matches the physical dynamism of his nomadic existence.

The mnemonic display is not complete without the consummation of the King's efforts. Having landed in the midst of his new family and friends, the King is soon ready to expose all the mental photographs he so assiduously took. By now the continuity of the charades rather stupefies Huck, who moreover is merely a spectator to this marathon. With mixed nausea and awe, he records the progress of the sham:

Then the king begins to work his jaw again, and says how him and his nieces would be glad if a few of the main principal friends of the family would take supper here with them this evening, and help set up with the ashes of the diseased; and says if his poor brother laying yonder could speak, he knows who he would name, for they was names that was very dear to him, and mentioned often in his letters; and so he will name the same, to-wit, as follows, vizz--Rev. Mr. Hobson, and Deacon Lot Hovey, and Mr. Ben Rucker, and Abner Shackelford, and Levi Bell, and Dr. Robinson, and their wives, and the widow Bartley. (213)

The reader should note that all this and more information was originally flung at the King conversationally, not set before him as facts to be learned. For the greedy King, such virtuoso memory work surely draws some of its luster from the "three or four thousand" (in gold) awaiting the next of kin; yet such recall surpasses ordinary achievement as surely as the surrounding histrionics spell more than the inspired anticipation of a handsome inheritance. While the King's mnemonic ability may be no greater than, say, Huck's or Pudd'nhead's, his and the Duke's histrionics certainly have no match elsewhere in this study.

Since the Wilks scheme requires so much overall ingenuity, the logical intelligence--next in Gardner's chronology--must be involved. Although most of the rhetorical/theatrical manipulations indicate the operation of rapid logical intuition at least, some of the Duke's behind-the-scenes exertions suggest the more familiar, deductive operation of logic. As the two cheats go pawing Peter Wilks' gold, some is discovered missing:

Says the king:

"Dern him, I wonder what he done with that four hundred and fifteen dollars?"

They worried over that a while, and ransacked all around for it. Then the duke says:

"Well, he was a pretty sick man, and likely he made a mistake--I reckon that's the way of it. The best way's to let it go, and keep still about it. We can spare it."

"Oh, shucks, yes, we can spare it. I don't k'yer noth'n 'bout that--its the count I'm thinkin' about. We want to be awful square and open and aboveboard, here, you know. We want to lug this h-yer money up stairs and count it before everybody--then ther' ain't noth'n suspicious. But when the dead man says ther's six thous'n dollars, you know, we don't want to--"

"Hold on," says the duke. "Less make up the deffisit"--and he begun to haul out yallerboys out of his pocket.

"It's a most amaz'n good idea, duke--you have got a rattlin' clever head on you," says the king. . . . It most busted them, but they made up the six thousand clean and clear.

"Say," says the duke, "I got another idea. Le's go up stairs and count this money, and then take and give it to the girls."

"Good land, duke, lemme hug you! It's the most dazzling idea 'at ever a man struck. You have cert'nly got the most astonishin' head I ever see." (214-15)

The King's blue arrow invention later fetches a similar compliment, but here he rightly praises the Duke's thinking, for it deduces the probable cause of the shortage, the probable response to it, and the most winning gesture the frauds could make after publicly counting the shored-up treasure. The Duke generally outshines the King in backstage cleverness, in the quietly logical motions divorced from high rhetoric and theater.

Associated with this logic is another of the Duke's behind-the-scenes talents which, though enlisting deduction, also exemplifies brilliant spatial/visual originality. The Duke's rendering Jim a ghastly "sick Arab" not only follows Gardner's core definitions of spatial intelligence, but it also illustrates the

higher-level cognitive operation which Gardner labels "originality"--"the skill of fashioning an unfamiliar and yet worthy product within a particular realm, be it an innovative story or dance, the solution of a personal conflict or a mathematical paradox" (288). Most of the episodes discussed in this chapter involve some sort of visual as well as original thinking, but, again, perhaps the purest form of such thinking is what can be isolated from rhetorical/theatrical exhibition. Clearly the King's blue arrow is a fabulous problem-solving visualization, but as the culmination of a stupendous theatrical tour de force, it belongs in another category. The finest sample of either fraud's spatial/visual as well as inventive intelligence may be the Duke's sympathetic solution to Jim's having to hide all day long, tied up in the wigwam aboard the raft.

Huck's praise of the Duke's cleverness is the least ambiguous compliment he ever pays either rogue, for the boy is grateful and admiring at once:

So the duke said it was kind of hard to have to lay roped all day, and he'd cipher out some way to get around it.

He was uncommon bright, the duke was, and he soon struck it. He dressed Jim up in King Lear's outfit--It was a long curtain-calico gown, and a white horse-hair wig and whiskers; and then he took his theatre-paint and painted Jim's face and hands and ears and neck all over a dead dull solid blue, like a man that's been drowned nine days. Blamed if he warn't the horriblemest looking outrage I ever see. Then the duke took and wrote out a sign on a shingle so--

Sick Arab--but harmless when not out of his head.

And he nailed that shingle to a lath, and stood

the lath up four or five foot in front of the wigwam. Jim was satisfied. He said it was a sight better than laying tied a couple of years every day and trembling all over every time there was a sound. The duke told him to make himself free and easy, and if anybody ever come meddling around, he must hop out of the wigwam, and carry on a little, and fetch a howl or two like a wild beast, and he reckoned they would light out and leave him alone. Which was sound enough judgment; but you take the average man, and he wouldn't wait for him to howl. Why, he didn't only look like he was dead, he looked considerable more than that. (203-04)

Huck's calling the Duke "uncommon bright" might be proof enough, for in this entire novel not even Tom Sawyer earns such praise. As for the scheme itself, it is not only justifiably gaudy, but necessarily so. As Huck proved earlier with his small-pox lie, only the threat of death or serious physical harm will keep mercenary hands off a run-away black man. The sick Arab is certainly one of an exclusive species of creatures that would at once conceal Jim's identity and preclude any inspection of it. Although Huck instantly produced the necessary formula--lethal illness--which the Duke takes his time to discover, they are independently brilliant concoctions, Huck's taking the form of a rhetorical evasion and the Duke's more of unhurried, luxurious sculpture. Besides being strikingly original, the sick-Arab creation, which fantastically transforms Jim, is a definitive effect of fine spatial intelligence, which

entails a number of loosely related capacities: . . . the ability to transform or to recognize a transformation of one element into another; the capacity to conjure up mental imagery and then to transform that imagery; the capacity to produce a graphic likeness of spatial information; and the like. (176)

Whether or not Shakespeare would admire Jim's Lear, the Duke has envisioned and produced a creature sufficiently horrific to enhance any tragedy. It is appropriate that King Lear is the disguise, since the Duke, like his partner, is first and foremost a theatrical phenomenon.

Indeed it is in the theatrical or bodily-kinesthetic intelligence that the partners' special fanfare may be sounded. While it has been seen that all characters in the present gallery have some theatrical leanings, none except Tom Sawyer approaches the full thespian dimensions of the King and the Duke. Crude little Huck Finn plays an amazing Sarah Williams, and pretends many other things; but these surprising achievements all are more or less coerced and generally not enjoyed. The erudite Pudd'nhead shrewdly plays with the judge and jury by means of the perfect ordering and timing of his presentation; but he is, after all, just a brilliantly dramatic attorney working hard to save lives. As for Beriah Sellers, he is unquestionably a gifted performer and in specific respects is much like the King himself: supremely robust, spontaneous, voluble, animated, cheerful, confident, irrepressible, proud. But Sellers never assumes a thoroughly false identity, seldom if ever engages a crowd, and is often quite real and serious in what he is declaring.

It is Tom Sawyer who best compares to the King and Duke in terms of pure thespian spirit. The robber and pirate activities in his own story, and Jim's escape commandeered in Huck's, all

testify to Tom's natural enthusiasm for playacting and his ability to lose himself in it. It is this very immersion in Jim's "escape" which has inspired critics such as Robert Regan to refer to Tom's insanity (133) and Judith Fetterley to mourn Tom's alleged "loss of perception," loss of control, and "petty" tyranny (444). Indeed, while it is difficult to determine just how far the King and Duke really get "inside" their roles to become their parts, the reader should remember that later in this novel Tom Sawyer is deeply and sincerely moved by the "mournful inscription" he himself pens for prisoner Jim: "Tom's voice trembled, whilst he was reading them, and he most broke down" (322-3). Throughout Jim's escape Tom is strikingly caught up in the imagined reality of it all, somewhat in the manner that the King and Duke often seem to believe their own pretensions.

As was discussed in an earlier chapter, Twain makes every effort to illustrate the gulf between Huck's level-headedness and Tom's deep-end excursions. As if to assure the reader that Tom Sawyer is not insane, now and then Twain has Huck himself size up Tom's impenetrable and irresistible fantasy world: "I said, 'Don't do nothing of the kind; it's one of the most jackass ideas I ever struck'; but he never paid no attention to me; went right on. It was his way when he'd got his plans set" (309). In short, Tom creates Jim's entire "escape" and steps out of it only for purposes of improvising and directing it. His so-called negative capability--the capacity to eclipse his own identity while

profoundly assuming another--may be greater even than the King's or Duke's. At any rate, Tom Sawyer best approximates their rich thespian orientation.

If Tom's playacting runs deeper than that of these itinerant pretenders, it may only be because the deadbeats, despite their love of performing, always have the lustiest of monetary motivations. Such a distinction cannot be ignored in the academic case of who is the purer thespian, the boy or the adult swindlers. Tom is the logical choice since his only possible motive besides love of fantasy would be a love of bossing others around, which the King and Duke enjoy at least as much.

Yet any academic distinction is easily forgotten in the face of such versatile, exuberant, and often overplayed make-believe as the two frauds forward in their long-winded appearance. Moreover, their monetary motive might be a moot point, anyway, since adults must earn a livelihood somehow, and since many great actors are well compensated for their efforts. Finally, though Tom is certainly the more pure-hearted player, this superiority has no bearing on questions of versatility, agility, range, or, for all anyone knows, identifiable talent in general. The King and the Duke are the most talented actors in the present gallery of stars, and this superlative puts them into the limelight of bodily-kinesthetic considerations.

While this particular faculty is closely associated with rhetorical and interpersonal talents, Gardner gives it several

distinguishing features besides the "well-honed sense of timing" highlighted in previous chapters. Gardner's section on "The Actor" is of vital importance in profiling those thespian skills of the King and Duke which set them apart from Twain's other actors:

In all forms of performance, but particularly in acting, one's ability to observe carefully and then to re-create scenes in detail is at a premium. . . . These "born mimics," who are perhaps gifted with a high potential in the area of bodily intelligence, can watch a scene but once or twice and pick up the most salient and most individuating features, while other individuals who behold the same scene numerous times still prove far less accurate and acute in their re-creations.

A strong proclivity to imitate and remember displays well may be a desirable or even a necessary stock-in-trade for a future performer but, in itself, does not suffice to produce memorable performances. Other intellectual powers are also at a premium. The acting teacher Richard Boleslavsky stresses the importance of absolute concentration, where one directs all one's attention, as long as one's strength endures, toward defining the desired object. The actor must try to re-create feelings with the aid of unconscious memory. . . .

On the other hand, some acting techniques de-emphasize the need to re-create the felt mood, and stress instead attention to surface details. In the terms of this study, I might suggest that an "emotion-centered" acting technique highlights the intrapersonal intelligence, while the latter, "surface" form mobilizes interpersonal intelligence. (226-27)

As this passage reveals, Gardner's composite of bodily-kinesthetic intelligence encompasses a complex of abilities, including observation, mimicry, memory, concentration, and, though not quoted here, an anatomical "feel" for a given situation. In various combinations that touch on rhetoric and interpersonal intelligence as well, the King and Duke exhibit all these bodily-kinesthetic abilities, especially during the great Wilks imposture.

As much as Tom Sawyer loves to make believe, still it would be difficult to rank his enthusiasm higher than that of two itinerant charlatan actors who blow into a village and literally overwhelm it with pure pretension. Their long list of previous "vocations" already has indicated their ability to observe other people and mimic their words and deeds. By this time the King has proven himself an excellent preacher, which, as serendipity would have it, happens to be Harvey Wilks' calling. The Duke, especially with his formal thespian background, is probably a better mimic even than the King, and the Wilks performance calls for a mime's best efforts indeed. Thus the King and Duke come into the Wilks environment as veteran actors, with what seems a monumental infatuation with their trade. The intensity with which they enact their impostures signals not only a love of what they are doing, but also the definitive bodily-kinesthetic equipment with which to do it irresistibly well.

The impeccable concentration, actor's memory, and overall bodily intelligence come marvelously into play as soon as the frauds step off the steamboat. In a matter of moments they are weeping for their departed Peter, well before they have even reached the Wilks house. There the two mourners meet the Wilks girls and a crowd of concerned friends of the family. Honking with grief, the King gushes tears enough for all the Wilkses; and the Duke suffers too, but cannot share his sorrow except by the signs

of a matinee mute, and by torrents of emotion equal to the King's.

Huck can hardly believe what he sees:

They bent over and looked in the coffin, and took one sight, and then they bust out a crying so you could a heard them to Orleans, most; and then they put their arms around each other's necks, and hung their chins over each other's shoulders; and then for three minutes, or maybe four, I never see two men leak the way they done. And mind you, everybody was doing the same; and the place was that damp I never see anything like it. (212)

"Emotion" and memory aside for the moment, this theater of tears at least may be said to issue from impeccably concentrated self-dramatization and from a craving for self-centered fantasy. The profound involvement of mind and body alike is essential for Twain's con artists to go from one intricate charade to another.

After praying by the coffin with the Duke, the King

he gets up and comes forward a little, and works himself up and slobbers out a speech, all full of tears and flapdoodle about its being a sore trial for him and his poor brother to lose the diseased and to miss seeing diseased alive, after the long journey of four thousand mile, but it's a trial that's sweetened and sanctified to us by this dear sympathy and these holy tears, and so he thanks them out of his heart and out of his brother's heart, because out of their mouths they can't, words being too weak and cold, and all that kind of rot and slush, till it was just sickening; and then he blubbers out a pious goody-goody Amen, and turns himself loose and goes to crying fit to bust. (212-13)

Aside from its many luminosities, the mere scale of the Wilks imposture is a staggering measure of the scoundrels' sustained concentration, inspiration, and physical and mental "wit," all hallmarks of their high-powered egocentric genius.

Of course the Duke, who plays deaf and dumb William Wilks, stays frenetically busy right alongside his brother "Harvey." Like the King's, the Duke's performance is always a tireless labor of love. When family friends come forward to greet the King, they greet his mute brother too:

And then they shook hands with the duke, and didn't say nothing but just kept a-smiling and bobbing their heads like a passel of sapheads whilst he made all sorts of signs with his hands and said "Goo-goo goo-goo-goo," all the time, like a baby that can't talk. (213)

Sheer love of theatrics plays here, for the Duke forwards this stratagem with far more vigor than bare practicality would demand. If he overacts, as Huck's "sapheads" suggests, again the pointer says the true actor's narcissism and self-indulgence--the exaggeration that commonly grows in one who has played the boards as the Duke has done.

As a mute the Duke sacrifices the dignity and esteem discovered in any number of possible other postures, such as the King's "dissenting minister"; yet as a blubbering mime, the Duke insists on and obtains the special attentions given any such freak. In a part suggesting neither greatness nor pomp, the Duke opts for sympathy, pity, and whatever admiration his grotesque forbearance can claim. He turns a terribly real phenomenon--the deaf and dumb person--shamelessly, to a joke, funny because the reader watches him play the ham, stretching every natural gesture to ridiculous excess. His jibberish before adult viewers comes of an urge to entertain, to fascinate and enthrall, as his actual stage mute

("he had played a deaf and dumb person on the histrionic boards" [208]) must have been.

And yet the apparent excess does not give the Duke away. Rather, he and the King continuously gull almost everyone in the town, children and adults alike. Moreover, the King's unrealized English accent, and not the Duke's gyrations, fails to take in the crucial few skeptics such as Dr. Robinson. In short, every practiced or improvised motion and word from the two frauds has the calculated dramatic effect--except for the King's failed accent. Were his speech trained like the Duke's, no one but Huck would know the truth. At any rate, the Duke, like the King, is an inspired and convincing pretender to what he is not.

While the Duke is clearly the real professional of the two thespians, the King appears to have as much or more natural aptitude for acting. When the Duke is not goo-gooing or squealing with delight, he as likely has joined the King in free and blessed weeping; yet the King seems to own the greater reservoir, and opens it with surprising frequency:

Then Mary Jane she fetched the letter her father left behind and the king he read it out loud and cried over it. It give the dwelling house and three thousand dollars, gold, to the girls; and it give the tanyard (which was doing a good business), along with some other houses and land (worth about seven thousand), and three thousand dollars in gold to Harvey and William, and told where the six thousand cash was hid, down cellar. (214)

The King draws water with singular ease, surely tapping some sort of emotional well as he weeps, though he falsifies the feeling

outwardly. His and the Duke's easy surfeit of tears indicates true or perhaps merely imagined experience, but either form takes an emotional faculty at least.

Though they are faking immediate causes, the frauds evidently own personal reservoirs of emotional intelligence or sense. Thus the King and Duke would seem to corroborate well-known truths about acting. As Gardner points out,

Another master acting teacher, Constantin Stanislavski, also underscores the crucial role of emotions in the performance of the actor. The actor must feel the emotion not merely at the time when he is studying the part, but at every time that he is performing it. (227)

As was suggested earlier, perhaps the sheer endurance required to carry out the Wilks charades is the frauds' greatest gift, but especially the King's, who by Huck's perhaps naive estimate is about seventy years old. But the long series of sentimental speeches, phony sign language gyrations, general howdy-doing, and torrential crying jags makes a simply stunning exhibition of sustained concentration.

Possibly the frauds' repeated spasms of mournful love are actually cathartic, for the sheer physiology of their performances necessitates some release of natural energies. And perhaps the general tearjerking circumstances of Peter Wilks' departure satisfy both egotists' need of an extenuated personal challenge, besides offering them a theater in the round. At any rate, although the King for one shows no real compassion anywhere in the text of Huckleberry Finn, the reader cannot deny at least the emotional

nature of two persons so powerfully predisposed, by fraud or no, to flooding gates.

Since one measure of an actor's brilliance is his credibility, it should be reiterated that even as the King and Duke are called into serious question, they enjoy amazing believability. Before the second and presumably real pair of Wilks brothers arrive, the only identified skeptic in the crowd is Dr. Robinson, who surely would be gulled himself were it not for the King's imperfect British inflections. As the only nonbeliever, Robinson is all but flogged by a mob of believers thus far overwhelmed by the enduring genius of two presently unbilled actors:

Well, how they all took on! They crowded around the doctor, and tried to quiet him down, and tried to explain to him, and tell him how Harvey'd showed in forty ways that he was Harvey, and knowed everybody by name, and the names of the very dogs, and begged and begged him not to hurt Harvey's feelings and the poor girls' feelings. (218)

Since Robinson will not be appeased, the eldest Wilks girl, in a gesture of pathetic trust, reveals how insidious these disguised thespians are:

Mary Jane straightened herself up, and my, but she was handsome! She says:

"Here is my answer." She hove up the bag of money and put it in the king's hands, and says, "Take this six thousand dollars, and invest it for me and my sisters any way you want to, and don't give us no receipt for it."

Then she put her arm around the king on one side, and Susan and the hare-lip done the same on the other. Everybody clapped their hands and stomped on the floor like a perfect storm, whilst the king held up his head and smiled proud. The doctor says:

"All right, I wash my hands of the matter. But I warn you all that a time's coming when you're going to feel sick whenever you think of this day"--and away he went.

"All right, doctor," says the king, kinder mocking him, "we'll try and get 'em to send for you"--which made them all laugh, and they said it was a prime good hit. (219)

Although by now the King's every word more or less reeks of suicidal audacity, the reader may concede that both frauds, the old one especially, are remarkably winning performers.

Besides his particular acting talents, the King, somewhat like Colonel Sellers and even Tom Sawyer, has a certain charisma which unfailingly attracts and enthralls. Given his magnetic effect on crowds, both earlier at the camp revival and now throughout the Wilks adventure, the King seems almost to have dubbed himself appropriately. Even more than the Duke, magnetic in his own right, the King moves in an aura of confidence, inspiration, and majesty matched by no one else, unless by his military counterpart, the "magician" Colonel Sellers.

Although the Duke's extended mute mimicry is laden with bodily-kinesthetic intelligences--timing, observation, imitation, memory, concentration--perhaps the greatest single stroke of combined rhetorical, interpersonal, and bodily intelligences comes from his wily partner. It is the King, not surprisingly, who finally crowns witticism itself, in the stupendous blue arrow invention, a whole scenario drawn by his miraculous deceptiveness. During his on-the-raft defense of Huck (to be examined later), the

Duke pays the finest tribute to that monomaniacal stage concentration which makes the King and himself studies in extraordinary intelligence. His glaring amorality aside, the King displays in the blue arrow episode, here honored by the Duke, perhaps the handsomest samples of intuitive brilliance and dogged staying power in the annals of charlatanism:

You hain't done a thing, from the start, that had any sense in it, except coming out so sool and cheeky with that imaginary blue-arrow mark. That was bright--it was right down bully; and it was the thing that saved us. For if it hadn't been for that, they'd a jailed us till them Englishmen's baggage come--and then--the penitentiary, you bet! (262)

This tribute is especially memorable because it travels from one master of deceit to another, and because it refers to circumstances already witnessed by an incredulous narrator.

Shortly before the blue arrow triumph, the apparently real Englishmen do arrive, sans luggage. There is time yet, before the blue arrow flies, for several displays of consummate stage-acting which anticipate the glorious final scene. Huck waits for the ruse to collapse, and more specifically for the King and Duke to throw up their hands in surrender:

I reckoned they'd turn pale. But no, nary a pale did they turn. The duke he never let on he suspicioned what was up, but just went a goo-gooing around, happy and satisfied, like a jug that's googling out buttermilk; and as for the king, he just gazed and gazed down sorrowful on them newcomers like it give him the stomachache in his very heart to think there could be such frauds and rascals in the world. Oh, he done it admirable. Lots of the principal people gethered around the king, to let him see they was on his side. That old gentleman that had just come looked all puzzled to death. (249)

Huck does not like the King, but helplessly admires him, at least in the way that most mortals, perversely enough, would marvel at a demon in vigorous stride. Even when the King is silent, he acts in mute fashion as brilliantly as the Duke.

Because this entire Wilks drama is perfectly unrehearsed, Huck witnesses the most exhaustive "live" theater he surely ever will encounter. He watches the frauds improvising one warm evasion after another, always summoning the precise words, gestures, and pauses necessary to embellish their precarious sham. Included in these various near-flawless deliveries, then, is the stage actor's proverbial composure or "cool," the self-collectedness that sees some players gracefully through all manner of on-stage crises. Of course the King and Duke face much greater hazards than ordinary stage actors. Because they have cast an entire village as unwitting "players" in a shamelessly criminal scheme, the frauds have more to beware than cat-calls, guffaws, or rotten fruit.

Throughout the ensuing stresses (including the blue arrow trial), Huck discerns no crack whatsoever in the King's aplomb. Like Colonel Sellers, the King seems personally incapable of indignity or uncertainty. During the handwriting trial, it is the Duke who "looked sick," though one wonders if he simply apprehends the imminent danger more clearly than the King. Here, before the blue arrow has surfaced, the King is apparently fearless: that is, a very observant narrator reports no tremors in the King's carriage.

At this juncture, were the King to confess all impostures woefully, he would take a fairly mild punishment, surely not the noose. So just as one might ask about Colonel Sellers--what keeps the King going if not some imperishable belief in his own success? Either he believes, despite vicious hints to the contrary, that he will win the Wilks fortune, or like the Duke he senses the mounting improbability of consummating the sham.

Yet because Huck records no faintness in His Majesty, the King can hardly be said to have even a reasonable fear of failure. When the badly mismatched handwriting samples demand some impossible explanation or another, one wonders if the King is just too proud to quit, or perhaps too engulfed by his fantasy to step out of it. Whatever sustains the King, Huck stands in lasting awe of it:

Well, what do you think?--that muleheaded old fool wouldn't give in then! Indeed he wouldn't. Said it warn't no fair test. Said his brother William was the cussedest joker in the world, and hadn't tried to write--he see William was going to play one of his jokes the minute he put the pen to paper. And so he warmed up and went warbling and warbling right along, till he was actuly beginning to believe what he was saying, himself.
(254)

Again, shades of Sellers and Sawyer--the actor who imaginatively becomes his own fantastic poses, escaping deeply into them like Brando and so many other modern "method" actors who live the parts they play. Doubtless the King keeps an inner eye peeled on the Wilks gold, but he may at times "lose" himself in the fantasy; and, again like Sellers, he may be fighting from a love of conquest and personal triumph as much as from realistic expectations of wealth.

Even as mere fanciful royalty, the King has grown accustomed to having his own way, to bossing people, and generally to holding his head majestically high. Not even a self-groomed monarch bends easily; and the King, even as an English preacher, is grossly self-righteous to the end. Thus his fearlessness, and the Duke's brazen audacity as well, comes from that fanatical self-esteem known to certain rare, precious, and extraordinarily well-proportioned hams. Possibly at this stage of the Wilks affair the King considers complete surrender a poor risk, yet overall he seems more interested in dignity and dominion--a king's birthright--than in bodily health. Perhaps egotistical thespians all feature this ebullience, but here in its criminal expression it borders on lunatic self-confidence--lunatic in that it ignores the needs of others, which ignorance is tantamount to opposing the will of God.

Only once in his many scenes does the King falter, and Huck defends him for that. In the blue arrow episode the King's genius fructifies wondrously, for here he shows rhetorical, interpersonal, and bodily-kinesthetic intelligences combined. The impenetrability that baffles not only Huck but also the entire investigation, moving it to the gravesite--this inscrutable genius comprehends the above-listed talents, for the King fends off and controls an entire village through the powers of verbiage, interpersonal manipulation, verbal and nonverbal histrionics, neck-saving wit and originality, and finally an indomitable will power which perhaps Colonel Sellers himself could not muster.

When the second Harvey Wilks asks the first, Huck's King, about the dead man's tattoo, Huck's report does not conceal the awesomeness of the display:

Blamed if the king didn't have to brace up mighty quick, or he'd a squashed down like a bluff bank that the river has cut under, it took him so sudden--and mind you, it was a thing that was calculated to make most anybody squish to get fetched such a solid one as that without any notice--because how was he going to know what was tatooed on the man? He whitened a little; he couldn't help it; and it was mighty still in there, and everybody bending a little forwards and gazing at him. Says I to myself, Now he'll throw up the sponge--there ain't no more use. Well, did he? A body can't hardly believe it, but he didn't. I reckon he thought he'd keep the thing up till he tired them people out, so they'd thin out, and him and the duke could break loose and get away. Anyway, he set there, and pretty soon he begun to smile, and says:

"Mf! It's a very tough question, ain't it! Yes, sir, I k'n tell you what's tatooed on his breast. It's jest a small, thin, blue arrow--that's what it is; and if you don't look clost, you can't see it. Now what do you say--hey?"

Well, I never see anything like that old blister for clean out-and-out cheek. (255)

Throughout this affair the King's pluck and courage are the greater for his remarkably bad English, elsewhere noted by Huck; but here, with simply an unsurpassed resourcefulness, the King harnesses all the strength and intelligence that his uniquely improvisational theater demands.

The brilliance of the blue arrow invention is not fully appreciated without a consideration of its grisly context, for the townspeople obviously want the truth and also revenge against the impostors whoever they are. At the handwriting test, the Duke could not hide his terror, and now, finally, even the King momentarily goes pale, for the tattoo question leaves him no doubt

that fraud can be dangerous business. The King harbors no conscious death wish, but like some other criminals he seems intensely drawn to precarious contests of ingenuity and will. His cool manipulation of so many of his own would-be executioners suggests a sort of exhilaration in facing down the most hostile of matinee crowds. Since his every occupation involves deplorable deception of others, he constantly runs the risk of violent backlash; yet in this final, and temporary, triumph, but for the brief pallor, the King coasts to victory as nonchalantly as decent citizens win at checkers.

A few words should be entered regarding "common sense" since it is, after all, "the ability to deal with problems in an intuitive, rapid, and perhaps unexpectedly accurate manner" (Gardner 287). This entry might have come earlier but for the crowded cluster of talents in the frauds' repertoire. Moreover, Gardner's definition describes virtually every reflex the King and Duke exercise while managing their con artistry. Since their line of work requires the incessant quelling of this or that nebulous or focussed threat, rapid and intuitive "problem-solving" is their most basic stock-in-trade, as it must be for any thickly involved con men. Whether it is handling a sweaty congregation of sinners, an angry Arkansas audience, or the claustrophobic scrutiny of one victimized village after another, the King and Duke employ Gardner's "common sense" intelligence at every turn of their crooked lives.

In the Wilks caper, for example, the depth of their criminality is reflected in the rising tide of "problems" they must

overcome. As master con men, they waltz through virtually every challenge, the tattoo (blue arrow) question being the only problem visibly affecting the King. Thus, because the con man's inadvertent vocation is the creation of personal problems, common sense is a premium asset which Huckleberry Finn's con men squander in blue chips.

This leads to the final focus, the con man's confounding lack of morality, a worthy focus since it underscores the paradox of inspired misconduct. By now it should be no secret that, compared to the Duke, the King is a superior fighter, egotist, and criminal, if only because the King's basic will to thrive and survive is a little firmer. In matters of ingenuity they might be termed equals since each boasts his own superiorities; but the King is decidedly less distracted by good impulses than his junior partner, as some choice scenes will demonstrate. At last it is time to elaborate the two frauds' differing commitments to wrongdoing, and so specifically to order them at the dark end of this study's organizing continuum of moral or interpersonal intelligence.

Sometimes the Duke's venom dries, and the sudden contrast between him and the King makes the old man look more than usually wretched, and the Duke about half human: "The duke he grumbled; said the bag of gold was enough, and he didn't want to go no deeper--didn't want to rob a lot of orphans of everything they had" (227). The King rides the verbiage ever at his command and

persuades the Duke to stay the course a while, long enough to sell the Wilks girls' property. The Duke is more cautious than compassionate, yet here as elsewhere he wants to be good. As the sick-Arab invention demonstrated, the Duke suffers periodic cracks in his self-centeredness, registering genuine sympathy for others. As Jim observes, "Now de duke, he's a tolerble likely man, in some ways" (200). Meanwhile the King shows no traces of a conscience and so seems a lower species of sinner.

The Duke's protests in the Wilks case come in the face of the King's financial report, which includes an appraisal of the Wilks property and the comment that it is "all good salable stuff, too" (227). In all matters of self-interest the King is especially shrewd, exacting, and merciless. He bombards the Duke with the need to stay, then promptly arranges an auction of the house servants and all other property. When Huck tells the frauds that the servants have made off with the gold, the Duke alone reveals a rather heartwarming good humor about it. The King is furious, fussy, and eager to lay blame. He picks at the Duke, who maintains a physical mastery of him and who, as Huck notes, will not tolerate personal abuse. Hence the King burns in his own anger:

The king sassed back, as much as was safe for him, and then swapped around and let into me again. He give me down the banks for not coming and telling him I see the niggers come out of his room acting that way--said any fool would a knowed something was up. And then waltzed in and cussed himself a while; and said it all come of him not laying late and taking his natural rest that morning, and he'd be blamed if he'd ever do it again. (237)

The King carries more vitriol, more rage, than the Duke, and outreaches his malignity consistently, though the Duke is interestingly willing to beat his partner into submission (237, 262).

Because the King shows no humanity, his psychological profile resists the usual descriptors; but any such analysis of him must consider his aberrant lack of charity. In all their excesses, the King and Duke play their greedy parts variously; yet the King never expresses even the smallest kindness. The cantankerous fit quoted above is fiery petulance surely, but such blazing shows of temper, common to many more or less ordinary complainers, tend to obscure the perfect heartlessness which the King has already demonstrated in planning and executing his sham. While both frauds are astonishing studies in misspent genius, the King may be the greater psychological curiosity for the strong contrast between his jovial masks and his steady undercurrent of implacable greed.

Even the more telling differences between the King and Duke do not greatly separate them on the morality continuum. With notable lapses, the Duke nevertheless easily sustains his side of the Wilks sham, even helping it along with ingenious suggestions. The tartar-remover alone gave him away earlier, but now he wants to rob orphans of their gold at least. Still, the King is the colder, more selfish force at every turn, even as his evangelic chords strum the evening air.

The Duke is not as pathologically amoral, for he warms up now and then and shows sympathy that the King is psychologically

incapable of feeling. Back on the raft after escaping the Wilks entanglement, the King goes for Huck, but is rebuffed: "Leggo the boy, you old idiot! Would you a done any different? Did you inquire around for him, when you got loose? I don't remember it" (262). And later, when Huck asks about Jim's whereabouts, the Duke softens: "He looked kinder bothered, and stood there with his bills fluttering on his arm, thinking, and wringling up his forehead" (274). The Duke starts to tell, out of sympathy, but checks himself like any committed con artist:

"A farmer by the name of Silas Ph----" and then he stopped. You see he started to tell me the truth; but when he stopped, and begun to study and think again, I reckoned he was changing his mind. And so he was. He wouldn't trust me; he wanted to make sure of having me out of the way the whole three days. (274)

The lie he then tells is a clumsy one for a genius like Bridgewater, but as Huck himself perceives, only the Duke's flickering kindness can spoil his bluff and overall reserve.

Obviously these lapses do not nullify the Duke's countless transgressions, yet they exemplify the unique complexity of his will, which cautiously desires all it can have while still feeling the needs and wants of others. While the King is a rampant sociopath, wholly unable to wear the other man's shoes, the Duke, a lesser devil, suffers the occasional disease of human warmth and brotherhood. Nonetheless, even more than Colonel Sellers, these two frauds squander such giant intellectual potential as to beg a final dilation on the mysteries of folly and sin.

As owners of great personal intelligence, the King and Duke enjoy acute and also lusty powers of vision, self-dramatization, and self-motivation, but without the evolved compassion that could turn these gifts to extraordinary good. Hindus might say that the King and Duke have not suffered enough, have not been tarred and feathered with the painful frequency necessary to turn egotistical minds to God. Since the King and Duke are acutely observant otherwise, one wonders how the two rogues could miss seeing the gross error of their ways, could miss the call of that Lord which the King--as Elexander Blodgett and as countless other "men of God"--so ironically falsifies and misrepresents. As with Colonel Sellers perhaps, were the King and the Duke free of their greed and pride, then the mighty climes of true inspiration could be realized. The two frauds have the raw intellectual quotients without, as it were, the underlying soul-maturity (or intrapersonal intelligence) required for initiation into the true Life (i.e., the spiritual or God-conscious life).

Highly intelligent people on a spiritual path are empowered seekers, as unstoppable in divine pursuits as the King and the Duke are in gluttonous ones. Obviously the King and Duke have not met the rebirth in spirituality which must come in order for their magnificent powers--of perception, articulation, concentration, determination--to manifest in positive and truly wonderful ways. As false leaders of men, both scoundrels, but especially the King, have every natural quality that a true king has--except love. And

this omission, this chasm in their otherwise ebullient and lively spirits, must finally be read as the unignited flame in the heart of man, the unkindled fire of yearning after God and His omnipresent Self. Like so many other mortal fools, the King and Duke simply have never heard the murmuring song nor glimpsed the lucid sheen evident to the mystic senses, to the eyes and ears of the long-suffering seeker. The King and Duke have immature albeit highly potent intellectual gifts, ones that keep the lower desires on tap and eclipse sublimer urges in the darkness of egoism.

Since all the characters in this study are by definition highly intelligent, the reader might wonder precisely how it is that the King's and Duke's genius can be so much more hellbent than, say, Huck's, Tom's, or Pudd'nhead's. In other words, while Huck, Tom, Pudd'nhead, and even Beriah Sellers experience love alongside intellectual brilliance, why do the King and Duke spend their marvelous gifts in the almost pure absence of good intention? Such disparity, which surely describes many criminal minds, demands a working definition of wickedness itself if one is to grasp the phenomenal complexities of any successful scoundrel.

Perhaps it is futile to suggest the origin of wickedness, to attempt its elaboration, except by contemplating the nature of human desire and the long history of its perversion and distortion. The simplest explanation of wickedness might be man's lack of unconditional love, that consciousness which perfectly transcends

differentiation, discrimination, and has no desire but to apprehend, everywhere and in all things, the same intoxicating sweetness, the one Supreme Being, who has assumed His myriad forms. The one true desire being this realization of God, all other desires are lesser, are false, and are doomed to frustration; yet thus has evolved human, mortal consciousness, secretly harboring the spirit of love, of God, but tenaciously belonging to numberless wants, vain desires whose inevitable denial aggravates the falsehood, thickens the darkness which somehow originally benighted the light of pure desire, of pure love. Some call the darkness Satan; others call it God's manifestation, His descent from pure light into phenomenal existence, which for its being depends on the dilution of Light--the assumption of matter, or shade, to make up our world of illumination and shadow, of black and white and all the continuous compositions. The mysteries of human psychology ultimately ask how, precisely, do the manifest shades affect the light of love that preceded them. How, in the mortal psyche, does darkness beget impurity?

Is darkness simply the contraction of pure Consciousness, of pure Awareness, into thought? If so, then the thinking which many civilizations have called intelligence is, firstly, not true intelligence, and secondly, the most immediate correspondent to, if not cause of, ignorance and suffering. Thus the birth of thought form--the conscious mind versus the underlying (or overlying) Superconscious mind--determines the smallness and futility of ordinary human, to wit, conscious or subconscious, desires.

Wickedness denotes not brutish, stupid evil, but calculated, cunning, cerebral wrongdoing. The contradiction is stunning, for the seeming powers of mentation oppose universal laws--of justice and of love--which underlie all Creation, and which of course will not be superseded. Wickedness connotes satanic horror, the polar opposition to God, to the forces of goodness and love; it connotes demonic cleverness, acute and most subtle reasoning, cerebration which by its labyrinthine desperation moves even further from the light of real, undifferentiating intelligence. Wicked intellect is thought in search of its own origin, of thoughtless God-Consciousness. If God's will is all-pervasive--that is, if man's free will is merely an illusory sense--then wicked men are no more culpable than brutally malevolent ones; evil geniuses are then as helplessly menacing as the commonest louts and curs. Yet wickedness seems more ill-deserving because it operates by an apparent intelligence, by a power that could fructify sweetly were it merely so destined. Wickedness is the most ironic perversion of William Blake's Energy (spiritual law), for its grandiose presumption of effectuality, of might, renders it profoundly, and imperceptibly, wrong.

Wickedness may reside in thought, but thought belongs to emotional worlds as surely as to airy spheres of intellection. Because the world of darkness is not simply that of vain mentation, not all elemental impulses are definitively mental. Some are more feeling, more emotional, than others. When thought conceived impure desire, which then inevitably was frustrated, the emotions

of anger, pride, and the gamut of sorrows and melancholia were born; hence the annals of emotional struggle, suffering, and disease.

In the case of the Duke, and even more so the King, emotional suffering has scarcely begun, for vain desire has not yet proved vain enough, nor, quite simply, has profound wickedness begun its inevitable purgation. Perhaps the frauds' long purification finally has commenced, here, in the novel, some days after the Wilks affair has ended. It is their former servant, Huck Finn, who catches the King's and Duke's most ignominious performance of all, featuring audience participation, when a mob of unappreciative customers rides the now tarred and feathered thespians on a rail bound for somewhere on the outskirts of town and of human society:

Well, it made me sick to see it; and I was sorry for them poor pitiful rascals, it seemed like I couldn't ever feel any hardness against them any more in the world. It was a dreadful thing to see. Human beings can be awful cruel to one another. (290)

Huck's ironic conclusion indicates he is effectively dismissing the cruel selfishness that has motivated all that the King and Duke have ever done. Twain obviously suggests Huck's forgiveness of meannesses which he himself--appropriately positioned at the other end of the morality continuum--suffered at their hands; and the final moral assessment of any scoundrel must be complex if one regards sinners as helpless players on a cosmic stage, in a play directed by an inscrutable, omnipotent Being.

In this (or any other) grand scheme of things, Twain's frauds are precocious boys, child pranksters riding waves of brilliantly playful but seriously self-serving inspiration. These juvenile inspirations are, however, the doomed infatuations of all spoiled children who eventually must learn the essential rights of all beings, if not also the essential holiness of even the manifest, fleshly world. Twain makes the King and Duke as greedy as confident, as reckless as ingenious; thus he seems determined to give a striking irony in human character, that of sterling mental endowment shamefully, wastefully spent. The justification of this irony is at least twofold: the King and Duke do represent handsomely the legendary American hobo-con man living unscrupulously off optimism and wit, and they emphatically picture the erring path that even keen intellect may help to pave for the unfortunate mortal lacking the harness--and the salvation--of God-Consciousness. Given Twain's undeniable affection for the King and the Duke, it is fair to say he does not consider them irredeemable geniuses. Indeed, after riding a few more rails, they might even be the welcome tutors and companions to that moral paragon and fellow drifter, Huck Finn, whose shining goodness they have yet to discover in themselves.

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VITA

Douglas Kent McKinstry was born in Mayfield, Kentucky on August 28, 1952. In 1970 he graduated from Oak Ridge High School in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. From 1970 to 1974 he attended The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, where he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Russian.

He has gone on to receive three more degrees from The University of Tennessee, Knoxville: the Master of Science degree in English Education in 1978; the Master of Arts degree in English in 1983; and the Doctor of Philosophy degree in English in December 1987.

From 1978 to 1980 he taught in the public school systems of Oak Ridge and Knoxville. From the Fall 1981 to Fall 1987, as a graduate student, he taught freshman composition at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, where he is presently employed as an instructor.