



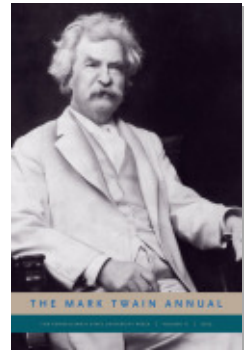
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The Naming of a Slave

Roxy's Power in Mark Twain's *Pudd'nhead Wilson*

Rebecca Guess Cantor

There is no character, howsoever good and fine, but it can be destroyed by ridicule, howsoever poor and witless. Observe the ass, for instance: his character is about perfect, he is the choicest spirit among all the humbler animals, yet see what ridicule has brought him to. Instead of feeling complimented when we are called an ass, we are left in doubt.

—*Pudd'nhead Wilson's Calendar*

Mark Twain understood the power of a name. After trying out names like W. Epaminondas Adrastus Blab and Thomas Jefferson Snodgrass, he finally settled on a familiar term from his Mississippi River boating days for his personal pseudonym. Twain never forgot that his own mother chose not to name him immediately after he was born, because she was afraid her sickly baby boy would soon die.¹ He also knew that the ability to name was powerful; while he had the power to rename himself, many were denied the right even to a surname. Twain demonstrates the power of names and naming throughout his works, but especially in *Pudd'nhead Wilson* where many characters including David Wilson, Thomas à Becket Driscoll, and Valet de Chambers are renamed without consent, and yet none of them gains any understanding of the power of naming. Each in his own way perpetuates the circular momentum of oppressive naming, either by failing to recognize what has been done to him or by naming others. Only Roxy, the slave who appears white and spends her life struggling between the groups, learns to harness the innate power of naming by being fully aware of the negative experiences she has with naming at the hands of her oppressors. As someone who wields the power of naming, Roxy is connected to Twain, the ultimate namer and self-named man.

In the elite group of *Pudd'nhead Wilson* are characters such as Judge York Leicester Driscoll, Pembroke Howard, and Colonel Cecil Burleigh Essex. These characters are powerful, influential, and white; and Twain gave each of them a decidedly British name in order to demonstrate their disconnection from the American plight. Twain named York Leicester Driscoll for two important cities that sit ninety-two miles apart in Great Britain. Driscoll is the first to give David "Pudd'nhead" Wilson his nickname, and the name adheres because of Driscoll's influence in Dawson's Landing. Pembroke Howard's first name is Welsh and English and means "lives in the headland" referring to areas with steep cliffs in the northern United Kingdom. Like Judge Driscoll, Pembroke descends from what Twain calls "The First Families of Virginia" and works as a well-respected lawyer. Twain named Colonel Essex after William Cecil, 1st Baron Burleigh, who was Queen Elizabeth's adviser and served as the Lord Lieutenant of Essex from 1588 to 1598. The name Cecil means "blind," and Burleigh means "lives at the castle's meadow fortified." Colonel Essex is Chambers's father who dies before the action of the novel begins and remains largely absent except in Roxy's memory. Twain's decision to give each member of the privileged class such strongly British names actively separates them from the plights of the other characters. These men are out of touch, old, stuffy, and even though they are Americans, they are decidedly un-American in Twain's eyes.² The elite group of Dawson's Landing may have the power to name, but they never demonstrate any comprehension of naming's power or importance.

In the marginalized group are the often-unnamed slaves. These characters are powerless, owned by others, and completely at their owners' mercy. The tragedy of these characters, and of slavery as presented in the novel, is not purely the physical abuse they suffer, or their lack of freedom, but their lack of identity. For many slaves, namelessness, whether in the form of being numbered like stock or in the lack of a last name, was one of the most pervasive reminders of their irrelevance. Refusing the privilege of a name (as Twain writes, "no surname—slaves hadn't the privilege") to the marginalized half of society was a subtle but effective way that the elites discounted slaves, just as Jane Clemens discounted her ailing baby. Namelessness is a stifling and painful existence, and one to which Twain can relate. Even though he was given a meaningful name by his father shortly after his birth, he continued to struggle throughout his young life with illnesses, financial hardship, the coldness of his father, and later the death of his father and beloved brother. It is no wonder that once young Samuel Clemens set out on his own, he began searching for a new name, a meaningful name of his own choosing. Twain had a personal connection to

those without an identity, which manifested itself in his stories about those who many others failed to notice. When Twain wrote about former slave Mary Ann Cord, he titled the story “A True Story, Repeated Word for Word as I Heard It” and decided to publish it under his real name, Samuel Clemens, rather than his pseudonym, because he wanted the piece to be taken seriously.

While his experience was dramatically different from that of the enslaved characters in *Pudd’nhead Wilson*, the capacity for growth and change developed in those characters is also emblematic of Twain’s personal struggles.

Several characters, but especially David “Pudd’nhead” Wilson and Roxana, remain between the two groups throughout the novel, which is also where Twain aligned himself throughout his life and especially when choosing his pseudonym. Twain had no tolerance for real life figures without shades of gray—be they religious fanatics, imperialists, secessionists, or the First Families of Virginia. He demonstrated his frustration with absolutes and close-mindedness most often through humor but also through naming. When Clemens renamed himself, he chose a name that represents the liminal space between absolutes. As Twain biographer Ron Powers says in the Ken Burns documentary on Twain:

Two fathoms, mark twain, is the point at which dangerous water becomes safe water, or the point at which safe water becomes dangerous water. And I think Mark Twain was always on that margin. That’s where he lived, on the edge—between lightness and the dark, between safety and danger, but always on the flow of the river.

The same is true of Wilson and Roxana. In *Pudd’nhead Wilson*, we find that those characters caught between the groups are the only characters who are negatively named, which is something Twain knew a great deal about; they are also the only characters capable of growth.

Based on his intelligence and profession, one might expect that David Wilson would be counted among the upper group, but because of an unfortunate nickname, he is relegated to the bottom. An outsider in Dawson’s Landing, Wilson moves to the town to make a fresh start and to begin his promising law practice. But instead, within two short paragraphs, Wilson makes a life-changing mistake. Upon hearing an obnoxious dog barking, Wilson comments:

“I wish I owned half of that dog.”
“Why?” somebody asked.
“Because, I would kill my half” (6).

In this moment, Wilson confuses those around him with his wit. Word of Wilson's comment spreads quickly as Dawson's Landing discusses the ill-fated comment, mulling over what Wilson might have meant. Could he possibly not understand that killing half a dog would kill the whole dog? Twain grants the townsfolk numbers as they discuss. After much discussion, "No. 6" in the nameless crowd declares: "Perfect jackass—yes, and it ain't going too far to say he's a pudd'nhead.³ If he ain't a pudd'nhead, I ain't no judge, that's all" (6). The narrator explains the import of the moment of naming in Wilson's life:

Mr. Wilson stood elected. The incident was told all over the town, and gravely discussed by everybody. Within a week he had lost his first name; Pudd'nhead took its place. In time he came to be liked and well liked, too; but by that time the nickname had got well stuck on, and it stayed. That first day's verdict made him a fool, and he was not able to get it set aside, or even modified. The nickname soon ceased to carry any harsh or unfriendly feeling with it, but it held its place, and was to continue to hold its place for twenty long years (6–7).

Wilson has been named by the town without a trial. The town fails to understand Wilson's joke. And yet, the quick judgment of the town affects Wilson's entire life. Most particularly affected is his law practice, because no one wants to hire a pudd'nhead. Wilson is entirely unequipped to overcome his encounter with naming.

In the *Mysterious Stanger* manuscripts, Twain's narrator August, a young printer's apprentice, describes a similar situation in which he is humiliated by "an unprintable name" given to him by the men in the print shop. He says, "As for the name the foreman gave me, it stung me and embittered me more than any of the other hurts and humiliations that were put upon me; and I was girl-boy enough to cry about it, which delighted the men beyond belief, and they rubbed their hands and shrieked with delight" (263). Twain abbreviates the name "B.-A." in the text, and expands it somewhat in his marginal note: "bottle-ad." William M. Gibson explains that the name "stands for 'bottle-assed'—from the printer's term meaning 'type thickened, at the feet through . . . continual impression and improper planing down' according to Charles T. Jacobi in *The Printer's Vocabulary*" (475). As Gibson points out in his introduction to *Mark Twain's Mysterious Stranger Manuscripts*, it is easy to imagine that this experience of being nicknamed by a group of printers likely belonged to young Mr. Clemens first. Gibson writes, "It is a fair guess

that August speaks for the youthful Clemens when he says that this ‘small thing’ shamed him ‘as few things have done since’” (14). Like young Samuel Clemens, and David Wilson, August is scarred by an embarrassing nickname. Twain remembered his experience of being renamed throughout his life, not only because it becomes part of his reputation in the print shop, but also because it affected him emotionally. Years later, Twain used the experience as material for the scenes of August’s humiliation and David Wilson’s renaming.

Only one character, Roxana,⁴ sees through Wilson’s nickname and understands him. Like Wilson, Roxy is caught between the groups. Though she is a slave, she looks white because the strong majority of her heritage is Caucasian: “Only one-sixteenth of her was black, and that sixteenth did not show” (9). Roxy is beautiful and graceful, with “majestic form and stature,” and generally admired for her character and kindness, but she is a slave, and so she remains between the groups (9). Roxy’s proximate situation between the societal groups of Dawson’s Landing, as well as her prowess with naming, allow her to understand that the town has misrepresented Wilson. She, unlike the others in Dawson’s Landing, sees what Wilson is and what has happened to him, saying, “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, no less’n it’s Jedge Driscoll, or maybe Pem. Howard” (17). Due to her experiences with naming, Roxy understands its power and sees Wilson as the intelligent man he is rather than as the reflection of his nickname. She has been named, but she has rejected the names and risen above them. She has also taken the power of naming and used it to rename her son and to gain power over him later in his life. The difference between Roxy and Wilson is that while she, too, has been negatively named, Roxy learns from and gains strength from her experiences, while Wilson simply accepts his new fate.

Roxy’s first act of naming, which the reader sees in flashback, fails due to her initial inability to understand the power of naming. Lacking the right to give her son a surname, she instead gives him the most beautiful first name she can come up with, Valet de Chambre:⁵ “Roxana had heard that phrase somewhere, the fine sound of it had pleased her ear, and as she had supposed it was a name, she loaded it onto her darling” (10). To Roxy, giving her son a beautiful name is a powerful act. As a slave, she does not have the option of choosing where they will live or what they will do for a living. She did not even get to decide who would be her son’s father because a wealthy white man chose her. In the face of these challenges, Roxy uses naming to give her son something beautiful to

guide him through life. But Roxy's first act of naming is failed because in trying to empower her son with a beautiful name, she actually labels him a servant: Valet de Chambre is the French term for a chamber servant. Twain highlights the failed act by using the negative phrase "she loaded it onto," making the act feel like she is burdening Chambers rather than giving him a gift.

Roxy's second act of naming is inadvertently powerful. Addressing the two children Roxy takes care of at the beginning of the novel, her enslaved son and her white charge, Twain writes, "The white child's name was Thomas à Becket Driscoll, the other child's name was Valet de Chambre: no surname—slaves hadn't the privilege" (10). Roxy decides to remedy her son's lack of a surname, and of course the lack of stature and security that go along with it, by switching the name and life of her son with the name and life of the white child she cares for: Thomas à Becket Driscoll. Because of Roxy's act, Tom and Chambers also become caught in between groups. When the switch is discovered twenty-three years later, the men are stained by the lives they have been living and cannot simply reclaim their original identities. The switch and their renaming are powerfully irreversible.⁶ By renaming her son, a slave, with the name of a wealthy white child, Roxy believes she is saving his life. At the very least, she is protecting her son from a life of slavery and from the possibility of being sold away from his mother to a place where Roxy may never be able to find him again. But even as Roxy gives her son a new life by naming him positively, she negatively names another. Roxy manages to give her son the very surname that he "hadn't the privilege" to possess, but in positively naming her son, Roxy negatively names the real Tom, altering both lives forever. Roxy's act of switching the names and lives of her son and her charge unleashes the only act of violence of a black person against a white person in Twain's entire canon, and it begins with an act of naming. But Roxy has not yet taken on the power of naming. Even though Roxy intended to empower her son by renaming him, in the end, her action had the opposite effect, wreaking havoc on all three lives involved in the switch. She is unable to exercise naming's power until she has been named and learned from the painful experience. Twain respects those who rebuff authority, those like Roxy who break the rules of those from the upper group.⁷ Twain's heroes—those like Tom Sawyer, Huckleberry Finn, and Roxana—break the rules for what is right, making them American in Twain's eyes.

As Roxy's son grows up, she is comforted to know he is safe, but horrified to watch him become a hateful and cruel human being who treats her terribly,

never knowing she is his real mother. Roxy recalls the terrible names that her son calls her:

You call me names, en as good as spit on me when I comes here po' en ornery en 'umble, to praise you for bein' growed up so fine en handsome, en tell you how I used to nuss you en tend you en watch you when you was sick en you hadn't no mother but me in de whole worl', en beg you to give de po' ole nigger a dollah for to git her sum'n to eat, en you call me names—*names*, dad blame you! (43).

Understanding the gravity of the accusation, Twain chooses to have Roxy emphasize the importance of the word “names.” The experience of being negatively named by her own son is clearly painful for Roxy, but she learns from the experience. Most characters in *Pudd'nhead Wilson* cannot grasp the power or even the concept of naming and instead accept the negative names, letting themselves be relegated just as the ass is in Twain's example at the beginning of the novel. Rather than gaining understanding, these characters perpetuate the cycle of naming. First, the inability to recognize the power of naming is evident in Wilson's failure to move to a new town where he could be successful and leave his unfortunate nickname behind. Second, Tom makes the lack of understanding apparent when he perpetuates the cycle of oppressive naming. Finally, because Chambers has been renamed, he becomes a cowering shadow of a man, unable to fill the shoes of any position of power even when, at the end of *Pudd'nhead*, he is restored to his proper position in life. Roxy, however, learns from her experiences of failing at naming and of being named and becomes the novel's most powerful namer.

The resulting success or failure of any given naming act is contingent on the character being named. If he or she accepts the truth and power of the name, granting the namer the authority, the name will adhere. But if, as in the case of Roxy, the named rejects the name and refuses to grant authority to the namer, the name will fail. Unlike Wilson, Tom, and Chambers, Roxy learns from her negative experiences with naming, and uses her new understanding to her advantage.

When Roxy renamed her son, switching his identity as a slave for the identity of a privileged slave owner, the scene was quiet and almost sweet. Her maternal instincts drove her to protect her flesh and blood, saving him from potentially being sold down the river by sacrificing their relationship. Years later, once Roxy understands the power of naming, she is prepared to confront

her son who has no idea of their connection in what is arguably the novel's most important scene of naming. The exchange is violent, angry, and ripe with names, epithets, and labeling:

"You is a *nigger*!—*bawn* a nigger en a *slave*!—en you's a nigger en a slave dis minute; en if I opens my mouf, ole Marse Driscoll 'll sell you down de river befo' you is two days older den what you is now!"

"It's a thundering lie, you miserable old blatherskite!"

"It ain't no lie, nuther. It's jes de truth, en noth'n *but* de truth, so he'p me. Yassir—you's my *son*—"

"You devil!—"

— "en dat po' boy dat you's been a kickin' en a cuffin' to-day is Percy Driscoll's son en yo' *marster*—"

"You beast!"

— "en *his* name's Tom Driscoll en *yo'* name's Vallet de Chambers, en you ain't *got* no fambly name, becaze niggers don't *have* 'em!"

Tom sprang up and seized a billet of wood and raised it; but his mother only laughed at him and said—

"Set down, you pup!" (45).

Roxy repeatedly names and labels her son, first "nigger" and "slave," and later "Vallet de Chambers," his real name. Tom becomes increasingly incensed at the woman he is realizing is his birth mother. He attempts to counteract her aggressive naming by pelting her with one epithet after another—"blatherskite," "devil," "beast." The word "blatherskite," meaning "a blustering, talkative fellow," is particularly poignant, because it implies that he hates what she is saying as much, if not more, than he hates her (*OED*). When his name-calling fails, again because Roxy rejects the names as false and does not let them affect her, Tom becomes frustrated and resorts to the threat of violence. But one final act of naming by his mother silences Tom. She calls him "pup," a young, weak, and helplessly small animal, and he feels the truth of her naming. After this, Roxy has the upper hand over her son. Through naming, Roxy first empowered Chambers to become Tom, and now she oppresses him into quiet submission.

In order to cement her new position of power, Roxy takes the scene one step further, forcing her son to name her positively for the first time. "Dah's one thing you's got to stop, Vallet de Chambers," she says. "You can't call me *Roxy*, same as if you was my equal. Chillen don't speak to dey mammies⁸ like dat. You'll call me Ma or mammy, dat's what you'll call me—leastways when dey

ain't nobody around.' *Say it!*" (46). By forcing her son to rename her, to move from a lifetime of calling her oppressively negative names to now calling her one of two terms she desires, either "Ma" or "Mammy," Roxy has won the struggle with her son. She now holds a power over him unlike the usual mother/son relationship. Roxy has shamed her son into submission. In this way, Roxy manipulates the power of the very system that has enslaved her all her life. Unlike Wilson, Tom, and Chambers, she has learned from those who told her what she was and what her value was, and now she uses this knowledge to gain power over her son. In this moment, "Roxy knew her conquest was complete" (46). Here Roxy becomes a master of naming because, while she has been negatively named, the names thrown at her have not adhered. Even though she still harbors deep-seated anger toward her son, who has shown no gratitude toward her, either for raising him, or for giving him a name that saved him from a life of slavery, she is able to move past their painful history. She tells her son, "I don't hate you so much now, but I've hated you a many a year—and anybody would. Didn't I change you off en give you a good fambly en a good name, en made you a white genl'man en rich, wid store clothes on—en what did I git for it? Despised me all de time; en was allays sayin' mean things to me befo' folks, en wouldn't ever let me fogit I's a nigger" (47). Roxy is angry, but she remains unbroken. And because she is able to observe the power of naming, she learns from each encounter how to wield the same power that others have attempted to use against her. Roxy's strength of character allows her to move forward from her negative naming experiences toward becoming a master of naming.

Tom initially attempts to reject the names and labels his mother gives him, but he comes to accept them very quickly. For instance, Tom asks Roxy, "Ma, would you mind telling me who was my father?" admitting that he believes that Judge Driscoll is not his biological father. Roxy comforts him, telling him of his father's high stature and rank in society:

"Does I mine tellin' you? No, dat I don't! You ain't got no 'casion to be shame' o' yo' father, *I* kin tell you. He wuz de highest quality in dis whole town—ole Virginnny stock. Fust famblies, he wuz. Jes as good stock as de Driscolls en de Howards, de bes' day dey ever seed." She put on a little prouder air, if possible, and added impressively: "Does you 'member Cunnel Cecil Burleigh Essex, dat died de same year yo' young Marse Tom Driscoll's pappy died, en all de Masons en Odd Fellers en Churches turned out en give him de bigges' funeral dis town ever seed? Dat's de man. . . . Dey ain't another nigger in dis town dat's a high-bawn as you is" (47).

Roxy's pride about the man who impregnated her is surprising to Tom and to the reader. She compares Essex to the Driscolls and Howards, other families with important names that have come to symbolize their stature. Essex's name and stature are a source of pride for a woman who has no last name of her own. According to Catharine O'Connell in "Resecting *Those Extraordinary Twins*: *Pudd'nhead Wilson* and the Cost of 'Killing Half'":

The simultaneous introduction and exclusion of Cecil Burleigh Essex from the novel reaffirms the mode of deception. Early in *Pudd'nhead*, Twain writes: "Then there was Colonel Cecil Burleigh Essex, another F.F.V.⁹ of formidable caliber—however, with him we have no concern." Essex exists only as a name in the text, but, ironically, it is the absence of his name that makes him significant. He fathers Roxy's son, the fake-Tom, but because Essex does not give the child his name and has no role in the child's life, the narrative brackets him as of "no concern" (119–20).

The fact that Twain opted to include Essex's name in the narrative at all is yet another instance of Twain saying one thing and meaning another. Essex is of immense concern to the novel. His stature and legacy matter to Roxy, and through Roxy, to Tom. If Essex remained nameless he may have been of no concern, but the inclusion of his name demonstrates his significance. For Roxy, it is extremely important that her son is the highest born slave in town. To Tom, however, knowledge of his father's name, rank, and position in society is little comfort in the face of Roxy's revelation that he is not white, but is in fact a slave. Importantly, it is naming, not biology, that re-initiates Tom's slave status: Tom is renamed by Roxy and instantly becomes the slave that he hasn't been since he was a child, before Roxy renamed him from Chambers to Tom.

Later, Twain reconfirms Tom's acceptance of his new name by allowing the reader to observe Tom's reactions to it once he is home and alone. Experiencing self-loathing for the first time in his life, he repeats to himself, "A nigger!—I am a nigger!—oh, I wish I was dead!" (48). Upon losing the only name he has ever known, Tom labels himself negatively in the same way that he treated his mother and Chambers. And yet Tom begins to experience a paradigm shift, finally seeing life from the perspective of the other half of Dawson's Landing. Tom asks, "Why were niggers *and* whites made? What crime did the uncreated first nigger commit that the curse of birth was decreed for him? And why is this awful difference made between white and black? . . . How hard the nigger's fate seems, this morning!—yet until

last night such a thought never entered my head” (48). Tom is struck to the core by his new knowledge of himself, and in seeing himself differently, Tom begins to see his world in a new light. The effects of naming are catastrophic for Tom. For days afterward he wanders lost among the ruins of his former life, “trying to get his bearings” and finding himself unable to do so (49). Tom is acutely aware of his new label and feels unable to associate with whites in the same way he did only days before. Based only on his new name, Tom is now ashamed of himself. He has become a part of the other half. And yet, as Twain points out, in reality no change has occurred: “For as much as a week after this, Tom imagines that his character had undergone a pretty radical change. But that was because he did not know himself” (50). Tom’s encounter with naming has given him a new perspective on the world around him, but even after his traumatic experience, he has not learned the power of naming.

Of course, as Twain makes very clear, even the characters with whom he aligns himself, those who are between the groups, and especially Roxy, are flawed. They continue to make mistakes. They continue to be abused by those around them. Roxy gains the upper hand over son by telling him who he is, by renaming him, and taking back her power. But not long afterward, she allows her son to sell her as a slave so that he can have the purchase price and get himself out of trouble. Tom does what she has told him to do; he calls her “mammy,” and the act touches Roxy profoundly—so much so that she sacrifices herself for her son once again. Tom says, “It’s lovely of you, mammy—it’s just—.” Roxy quickly interrupts him, saying, “Say it agin! En keep on sayin’ it! It’s all de pay a body kin want in dis worl’, en it’s no’ den enough. Laws bless you honey, when I’s slavin’ aroun’ en dey ’buses me, if I knows you’s asayin’ dat, ’way off yonder somers, it’ll heal up all de sore places, en I kin stan’ ’em” (86). By calling his mother “mammy,” Tom simultaneously shows his newfound affection for his mother, submits to her power over him, and takes advantage of what he knows to be her weakness, her attachment to names and naming.

The plethora of differences and separations found in Dawson’s Landing makes the small Missouri town the perfect setting for a novel that deals with the struggle caused by these internal rifts. Unable to understand one another, the citizens of Dawson’s Landing instead resort to negative naming, beginning with the first instance of naming—the renaming of David Wilson. The negative naming is perpetuated by those who have been renamed and continue to negatively name without understanding the power of their actions, and

those, like Roxy, who have been named, and name others with knowledge and understanding of their own power. Twain demonstrates where his allegiances lie in the town of Dawson's Landing: he divides the townspeople into the haves and the have-nots and then focuses his story on those characters who cannot easily fit into either group; he represents those in the upper group as pompous, un-American fools; he allows Roxy, a slave, to rename Tom, her white master; and he gives Tom the ability to empathize with the plight of the slaves he had overlooked his entire life.

Dawson's Landing represents the world writ small. It is a place where Twain brings in the various elements of his society, lets them clash against each other, and watches what happens. And what happens is naming. For Twain, naming is a powerful act, and the characters to whom he endows his personal power to name, are the characters that Twain believes deserve to inherit the world.

Notes

1. In *Inventing Mark Twain*, Andrew Hoffman writes: "John Marshall Clemens named his son Samuel Langhorne; his wife felt so hopeless about the child's survival that she relinquished her usual claim to name him. 'Samuel' came from John's father, who had died when John was a boy" (1).

2. Twain's anti-British tendencies are outlined in Albert Bigelow Paine's discussion of Twain's feud with Mathew Arnold in *Mark Twain: A Biography*, John B. Hoben's article "Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee*: A Genetic Study," and D. M. McKeithan's "More about Mark Twain's War with English Critics of America," among other works. They are also on display in Twain's short story "The Great Revolution in Pitcairn" (*Atlantic Monthly* 1879), and his longer works including *A Tramp Abroad* (especially the chapter "Queer European Manners" 1880), *The Prince and the Pauper* (1881), *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884), and, of course, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889), as well as indirectly in Twain's anti-imperialist works.

3. The *Oxford English Dictionary* lists this quote as the third example of the term "pudding-head," defined as "a stupid person," in use: "1848 B. A. BAKER *Glance at N.Y. I. v. 17* Allow me to propose a speech from our worthy landlord. . . . Louder, old puddin head, louder. 1851 H. MELVILLE *Moby-Dick* cviii. 524 Pudding-heads should never grant premises. 1893 'M. TWAIN' in *Cent. Mag.* Dec. 235/2 Perfect jackass—yes, and it ain't going too far to say he's a pudd'nhead. 1952 S. KAUFFMAN *Tightrope* xiv. 243 Why, you're not doing this at all badly, pudding head. 1978 P. G. WINSLOW *Coppergold* 153, I didn't tell Joss, no matter what that Yorkshire puddenhead thinks. 2004 *South Bend (Indiana) Tribune* (Nexis) 1 June B8 Thanks for having the patience to deal with hoards [*sic*] of pudding-heads like me day after day."

4. Roxana's name is African in origin and means "dawn," but significantly, throughout most of the novel she is separated from her roots by being called Roxy, which is American and means "rosy."

5. Interestingly, when Roxy says her son's full name "Valet" is spelled with two Ls, and "Chambre" is pronounced like her son's nickname, "Chambers," rather than his given name "Chambre" as introduced on page 10.

6. From this point on, I will refer to Tom and Chambers by their new names, those which they live with for most of their lives after Roxy switches them. Twain addresses the same issue at the beginning of Chapter 4: "This history must henceforth accommodate itself to the change which Roxana has consummated, and call the real heir 'Chambers' and the usurping little slave 'Thomas à Becket'—shortening this latter name to 'Tom,' for daily use, as the people about him did" (18–19).

7. For more on Roxy's strength and her connections with Wilson and Twain, see Ann Ryan's "The Voice of Her Laughter: Mark Twain's Tragic Feminism."

8. Even though Roxy uses the problematic term "mammies" here, she is clearly referring to the biological mother/child relationship as distinct from the relationship between a female slave and her charge. Interestingly, Twain chooses to omit the first time that Tom addresses his mother as "Ma" or "Mammy," so we do not know which word he chooses initially. Later, Tom calls Roxy both Ma and Mammy.

9. First Family of Virginia.

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