

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

DETERMINISM IN MARK TWAIN

Presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of M.A. in English
at Massey University.

by

Pearl Forster

1994

DEDICATION

To Michael, for his time-proven love and loyalty, and for practising William Faulkner's philosophy that even if humans are prevented from prevailing we can at least endure.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply grateful to Dr Karen Rhodes for her supervision and guidance, and my husband, Michael, for typing my work as well as for his invaluable help in so many ways. Sincere thanks also to Judy and Michael Lawrence for technical advice and for printing this thesis, and to my parents, Joyce and Clive, for their support and their many acts of kindness.

Abstract

Determinism in Mark Twain

In *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, and *The Mysterious Stranger*, Twain illustrates the determinism of forces that he sees as being perpetuated largely through the heredity and conditioning of cultural ethics. Twain makes the inference that the exercise of free will is impossible in any civilised state and that true freedom and democracy can never be anything more than philosophical ideals to struggle for in vain. At best, Twain sees any state of freedom as purely temporary, and in the works discussed asserts that the only real escapes lie in sleep, dreams, insanity, and death. The inability of Twain's heroes to escape or even outwit cultural and other environmental forces to find their own freedom thus emphasizes the power of determinist forces.

CONTENTS

Introduction	Page 1
 <u>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</u>	
Chapter 1 : Language, Lies and Guizes	Page 10
Chapter 2 : Enslavement, Racism and Violence	Page 19
Chapter 3 : Money, The Aristocracy and Romanticism	Page 30
Chapter 4 : Customs, Conventions and religion	Page 37
Chapter 5 : Nature and Supernature	Page 46
 <u>A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court</u>	
Chapter 6 : Science and Technology, Industrialism and Commercialism	Page 54
Chapter 7 : Reform and Revolution, Imperialism and Colonisation	Page 66
Chapter 8 : The Church, The Monarchy and Magic	Page 77
Chapter 9 : Serfdom, The Nobility and The Knighthood	Page 90
Chapter 10 : History	Page 102
 <u>The Mysterious Stranger</u>	
Chapter 11 : Sleep, Dreams, Insanity and Death	Page 113
Chapter 12 : God, Christianity and The Moral Sense	Page 126
Chapter 13 : Satan and Free Will	Page 137
Conclusion	Page 144
Note	Page 145
Works Cited	Page 146