



Mark Twain Circular

Newsletter of the Mark Twain Circle of America
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Mark Twain at the Bahia 1994

The Mark Twain Circle, as planned, presented two panels at the American Literature Association Conference in San Diego, June 2-5, but additions and cancellations made the program somewhat different from that reported in the last issue of the *Circular*. These are the sessions as they actually occurred:

I. "Conceptualizing Mark Twain's Style" (Chair: David E. E. Sloane, U of New Haven)

Papers:

1. Chris Kearns (Indiana U), "Divided in Twain: Detecting the Post-Colonial in *Pudd'nhead Wilson*"
2. William B. Millard (Rutgers U), "All the Poetry that you can't understand': Emersonian Strategies in the Language of Mark Twain"
3. Joseph B. McCullough (U of Nevada, Las Vegas), "Mark Twain's First Chestnut: Revisions in 'Extracts from Adam's Diary'"
4. Pamela A. Boker (Columbia U), "The glory which is built upon a lie': Mark Twain's Humor as an 'American Art'"

Respondent: Michael J. Kiskis (Elmira C)

II. "Mark Twain and Social Matters" (Chair: Victor Doyno, SUNY-Buffalo)

Papers:

1. Laura Skandera-Trombley (SUNY,

- Potsdam), "Mark Twain's Last Work of Realism: The Ashcroft/Lyon Manuscript"
 2. Jeff Abernathy (Illinois C), "To Hell and Back: *Huckleberry Finn* and Racial Representation in the Twentieth Century"
 3. Joseph Csicsila (Auburn U, Montgomery), "Mark Twain's 'No. 44, The Mysterious Stranger: The *Self-Enlightenment* of August Feldner"
- Respondent: James S. Leonard (The Citadel)

A third Mark Twain session, "Mark Twain's Early Career: Alternative Perspectives" (Chair: Bruce Michelson, U of Illinois), not sponsored by the Circle, included the following:

1. Susan K. Harris (Pennsylvania State U), "Case Studies in Gender and Reading: Livy and Sam"
2. Tom Quirk (U of Missouri), "Intellectual Incompatibilities and Comic Incongruities: Mark Twain's Early Humor"
3. Donald Florence (U of Illinois), "Dreaming Other Dreams: Persona and Humor in Mark Twain's Early Writings."

In addition, (1) the Circle sponsored a riverboat cruise in Mission Bay (to which all conference participants were invited) for the purpose of presenting Robert Hirst of the Mark Twain Papers with a Distinguished Achievement Award; (2) Shelley Fisher Fishkin (U of Texas, Austin) led a seminar on

"Teaching *Huckleberry Finn*"; (3) Victor Doyno (SUNY, Buffalo) presented a paper titled "Discoveries in the New *Huck* Manuscript" in a session titled "Genesis, Composition, and Interpretation" (chaired by Tom Quirk); (4) Jeffrey A. Melton (Auburn U, Montgomery), gave a paper titled "Same Trip, Different Holy Lands: Aboard the *Quaker City* with Mark Twain and Mrs. Stephen M. Griswold," and Lawrence I. Berkove gave a paper titled "A Comstocker Abroad: Joe Goodman's European Travel Letters" in a session titled "Nineteenth-Century American Travel Writers."

At the business meeting of the Circle, a change of officers was effected. David E. E. Sloane ended his highly successful term as President--marked by further expansions of Mark Twain activities, as demonstrated by the high visibility of Twain scholarship and discussion at this conference, and by new initiatives such as the efforts to gain greater participation by high-school teachers. Victor Doyno completed his term as Vice President and succeeded to the office of President. Michael Kiskis completed his three-year term in the arduous job of Executive Director and moved to the post of Vice President. Laura Skandera-Trombley, after a year as "cub" to the Executive Director, succeeded to that position. Jennifer Rafferty joined the Executive Committee succeeding Shelley Fisher Fishkin, and David Sloane succeeded Pascal Covici on the Committee.

James S. Leonard
Editor, *MT Circular*

Mark Twain for Breakfast at MLA 1994: Call for Papers

At the annual Modern Language Association conference for 1994, the Mark Twain Circle will encore its 1993 success by again sponsoring Mark Twain Breakfast Sessions. Submissions on Twain's life and work are invited. There are two available slots: December 28, 9:00-10:00 a.m., and December 29, 9:00-10:00 a.m. Please send 1-2 page abstracts to: Laura Skandera-Trombley, Executive Director, Mark Twain Circle, SUNY

Potsdam, NY 13676.

The Mark Twain House Annual Fall Twain Symposium October 1, 1994

The Mark Twain House (Hartford, CT) announces that its Fall Twain Symposium on "The Power of Language" will be held on Saturday, October 1, 1994. The symposium will address the expression of African-American identity through the language of the arts and the effects of political correctness on the English language.

The day's speakers include Pulitzer-Prize winning *Chicago Tribune* columnist Clarence Page; comedian and civil-rights advocate Dick Gregory, *Los Angeles Times* court reporter and editor of that paper's noted style manual Andrea Ford; ABC television commentator Jeff Greenfield; Professor Michael Dyson of Brown University, author of the recent book *Reflecting Black: African-American Cultural Criticism*; Professor Shelley Fisher Fishkin of The University of Texas, author of *Was Huck Black?: Mark Twain and African-American Voices*; *Village Voice* writer Nat Hentoff; Professor Roger Abrahams of the University of Pennsylvania; Christopher Hitchens of *Vanity Fair* magazine; and Professor Stanley Fish of Duke University, author of the upcoming book *There's No Such Thing as Free Speech; and It's a Good Thing, Too*.

This year's program will continue the dialogue begun at last year's symposium, "Bookbanning in America." The potency of a single word, "nigger," as used by Twain in *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, generated much discussion among symposium speakers and audience, underscoring the power of Twain's own language and the relevance of his writing to contemporary issues.

Flyers with more detailed information about the 1994 Fall Twain Symposium, including the full list of speakers, are available upon request. Contact Jennifer Huget, Director of Public Information, The Mark Twain House, 351 Farmington Ave., Hartford, CT 06105; phone: 203-247-0998; fax 203-278-8148.

[The Mark Twain House is the home Mark Twain had built in 1874 and lived in with his family until 1891. Twain wrote some of his most famous works during the period when he lived in this remarkable High Victorian building. Designed by Edward Tuckerman Potter, the House features decorative work by the Associated Artists, an important collection of fine and decorative arts, and the only remaining domestic interiors by Louis Comfort Tiffany. Now restored to its nineteenth-century glory, The Mark Twain House is a museum and research center with a collection of some 10,000 objects and offers a full program of literary, musical, family-oriented, scholarly, and educational programs. The Mark Twain House is a National Registered Historic Landmark (since 1963) and the winner of two major awards from the National Trust for Historic Preservation.]

Mark Twain's Meeting with "Sociable Jimmy": New Evidence About When and Where It Took Place

At the time my book went to press, I was able to identify only within rather vague parameters the time and place of Twain's meeting with the ten-year-old black child he described in "Sociable Jimmy" (29 November 1874, *The New York Times*). I suggested that the meeting took place in late December 1871 or early January 1872, somewhere in the midwest, probably Paris, Illinois (*Was Huck Black? Mark Twain and African-American Voices*, 14, 36, 154, 163). (Earlier efforts by a distinguished Twain scholar to determine where the encounter happened were unsuccessful.) New evidence allows us to say with confidence that Mark Twain met "Sociable Jimmy" on December 30th, 1871 at the Paris House, in Paris, Illinois.

In the 1872 letter to his wife in which Twain first mentioned the child, Twain referred to a family named "Aithens" as owner of the hotel in which he was staying at the time (SLC to OLC, 10-11 January, 1872); in "Sociable Jimmy," Twain referred to a man named "Bill" as the hotel "landlord," and Jimmy made it clear that "Bill" was the key figure in the hotel

operation. Both the "1870 Census of Edgar County Illinois, City of Paris" and the contemporaneous volume, *The History of Edgar County, Illinois*, reveal that a "Mr. Will Athon" was clerk of the Paris House, the main hotel in Paris, Illinois, which was run by the large Athon family. Twain lectured in Paris on December 30th, 1871. Twain has Jimmy referring to the "fo'teen" family members, while the 1870 census lists eleven members of the Athon family as residing at the hotel; notwithstanding this discrepancy, the Athon family may well have been, as Jimmy put it, "de biggest family in dese parts." As I have noted elsewhere, Twain changed the name from "Aithens" to "Nubbles" when he published his reminiscences of Jimmy (*Was Huck Black?*, 154); he probably was motivated by a desire to avoid arousing the ire of the "Aithens" family, a fear he expressed in his letter to Livy (SLC to OLC, 10-11 January, 1872).

The History of Edgar County, Illinois notes that "the Paris house is very centrally located, being near the business portion of the town; bus to and from all trains; the house contains about seventy rooms, fine sample-room on the ground floor, the house having been newly furnished and the whole interior renovated, giving the hotel a very homelike and cheerful appearance. Mr Will Athon, the accomodating clerk, who is well known by all traveling men who visit this place, and the attentive landlords have made many friends by their uniform kindness and pleasant manners." The "William Athon" profiled in the *History* is quite likely the "Bill" described by Jimmy. The fact that the census does not list a child of Jimmy's age as residing at the hotel is not significant, since Jimmy would have been only eight or nine years old when the 1870 census was conducted, and may not have started working at the hotel until he was older.

The census data and the history of Edgar County was supplied in January 1994 by Linda Cary, volunteer librarian of the Edgar County Genealogy Library in Paris, Illinois, in response to an inquiry from Lin Salamo, Associate Editor of the Mark Twain Papers, who generously shared these materials with me.

Shelley Fisher Fishkin
University of Texas, Austin

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Cincinnati Hears 50th Anniversary Performance of Jerome Kern's Orchestral Portrait of Mark Twain

Cincinnati's Music Hall, which witnessed the world premiere of Jerome Kern's "Mark Twain: Portrait for Orchestra" in 1942, was recently the setting for a fiftieth anniversary performance, the first to include a spoken text drawn from Twain's writings.

In the days following America's entry into World War II, Andre Kostelanetz, then conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony, after consideration of what he called "the manner in which music could be employed to mirror the magnificent spirit of our country" (Program 4) commissioned three composers to write pieces based on notable American figures. Aaron Copland chose Abraham Lincoln; Virgil Thomson selected New York's Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia; Jerome Kern's choice was Mark Twain. The three pieces were played for the first time in the symphony's concert of May 14, 1942. Perhaps in an attempt to ensure a good house--and certainly a more varied program--Kostelanetz also scheduled several operatic arias to be sung by his wife, the well-known soprano Lily Pons. Thus Verdi's "Caro Nome," arias from *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and songs by Darius Milhaud and Wolfgang A. Mozart were heard along with the new works by Kern, Copland, and Thomson.

To assist the audience in understanding his new composition, Jerome Kern prepared program notes indentifying and explaining the four sections of the work: "Hannibal Days," "The Gorgeous Pilot House," "Wanderings Westward," and "Mark in Eruption." Apparently Kern had recently read Bernard DeVoto's *Mark Twain in Eruption*, since the titles of the first and last sections are taken from it.

Kern's note for the opening section included a passage from the fourth chapter of *Life on the Mississippi* describing the effect of an arriving steamboat upon the town of Hannibal but attributing the cry of "S-t-e-a-m-boat a-comin'!" to "a voice (Mark Twain's, the young boy)" rather than to the "Negro

drayman, famous for his quick eye and prodigious voice" described in the book (Program 5). Annotating the second section, Kern pointed out how its music depicts not only Twain's years on the river but also the "rumblings of the Civil War, and then the war itself--the spirited marching and gay singing of the Confederate soldiers." A "muted trombone solo" described as "the ballad of the plainsman or miner" introduces the third section. The final section drew only brief comment: "Once established, Mark Twain's career was triumphant to the end. However, the recapitulation of the River theme and the Gorgeous Pilot House illustrates that his nostalgia for both river and pilot's life never left him" (5). Although there are supposedly fourteen different themes portraying "highlights in Twain's career" (Brownell 2), these were not identified in the program notes.

When Kostelanetz conducted the Kern piece on a nationwide CBS broadcast, Sunday afternoon, June 7, 1942, the composer, best known for his 1920s *Show Boat* score (including "Old Man River," "Bill," and "Can't Help Lovin' That Man of Mine"), provided oral program notes, beginning with an explanation for his choice of subject:

When Andre Kostelanetz asked me to write a musical portrait of a great American, I said, "Which one?" He answered, "Pick your own." I suggested Mark Twain--pretending that I had thought of him on the spur of the moment. Andre said, "Splendid." So there we were. It just had to be Mark Twain. Andre didn't know it, but Mark's *Huckleberry Finn* was the first book I ever read. It was first issued in 1885--so was I" (Brownell, 2).

Kern then gave his radio audience a brief description of the piece's four sections, with a much shorter quotation from *Life on the Mississippi* which again removed any suggestion of its being a black voice which regularly proclaimed the imminent arrival of a steamboat (3). Kern spoke of the final section as portraying "the triumphant close of the career of an honored, beloved great American man of letters" and added, "If you can't remember all that, just keep thinking of Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn--that's always a good idea anyway" (3).

Kern's orchestral portrait of Twain was recorded by Andre Kostelanetz and His

Orchestra for Columbia Records in 1942, and resulted in Kern's being given an honorary charter membership in the Mark Twain Association of America, but over the years it was largely forgotten. The principal studies of Kern's work give it short shrift; Gerald Bordman, for example, described it as a "diffuse, meandering work, lacking even Kern's usual melodic invention." It created, he said, "few ripples and was soon forgotten" (391). A similar fate overtook Thomson's "Mayor LaGuardia Waltzes," while Copland's "Lincoln Portrait" went on to be performed again and again.

In the fall of 1977 the present conductor of the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, Erich Kunzel, recorded a slightly abridged version of the "Mark Twain: Portrait for Orchestra" as part of a Vox Turnabout album entitled *American Fantasia*. As the fiftieth anniversary of the Kern piece approached, Maestro Kunzel planned to have his orchestra repeat it, but--perhaps mindful of the value of the spoken portion of Copland's "Lincoln Portrait"--he decided to include a spoken text. Originally scheduled for fall 1992, the piece was actually played in the concerts of January 17-18, 1993, in Music Hall, Cincinnati. Although Maestro Kunzel's original plan was to have the text read by a professional actor, scheduling proved difficult, and he read the text himself while an assistant conducted the orchestra. This time the Kern work was balanced, not by Lily Pons, but by the Kingston Trio.

The spoken text, which I provided at Maestro Kunzel's request, consisted of a brief sketch of Twain's career, passages from *Life on the Mississippi* for the first two sections, a passage from *Roughing It* for the third, and for the final section, statements from Ernest Hemingway and William Dean Howells about Mark Twain and a series of Twain epigrams, drawn from *Pudd'nhead Wilson* and *Following the Equator*.

For contemporary tastes Kern's music is surely all too tame; the "Wanderings Westward" section fails to provide any sense of the kind of raucous, uproarious behavior which characterized those years. The final section, despite the title "Mark in Eruption," contains no eruption; it lacks entirely the dissonance and clashing harmonies which present-day knowledge of Twain might call for, though one must surely say that had Kostelanetz

wanted such a piece, he would have asked someone other than Jerome Kern to compose it. Kern's program note for the final section, quoted above, indicates all too well his oversimplified view of the greater part of Twain's life. Just as Norman Rockwell's illustrations for *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn* pictured a happier, brighter world than that depicted in the novels themselves, Jerome Kern's music presented the familiar, popular side of Mark Twain in an idiom more calculated to please an early 1940's audience which wanted to be reminded of America's greatness than to portray more accurately the contrariness, the self-contradictory nature, and the torment of America's greatest humorist.

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Program, Cincinnati Symphony, May 14, 1942.

Allison Ensor
University of Tennessee

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Sam Clemens Strikes It Rich

A 53-year-old salesman who faithfully kept score of animated beer bottles playing football during Super Bowl commercials received \$1 million Thursday as the grand-prize winner in Budweiser's "Bud Bowl V" sweepstakes.

While neighbors gawked and television cameras rolled, a Brinks armored truck, led by a Fountain Valley police car with its siren blaring, turned onto Sam Clemens' quiet cul-de-sac and delivered the \$1 million. In cash. As in stacks and stacks of \$50 and \$100 bills carried by serious-looking men with guns.

Rather than present Clemens with a check and a handshake, Anheuser-Busch Inc. arranged to pay off the prize in cash in an elaborate publicity stunt. The beer company withdrew the money from a bank, hired an armored car and off-duty, plain-clothes Los Angeles police officers for extra security and asked Fountain Valley police to provide an escort.

As the convoy entered Tulipan Circle, longtime neighbor Jean Williams, who thought she was going to see Clemens and his wife, Joanne, receive a simple check, exclaimed, "A Brinks truck! Oh my goodness."

"That's hype for you," added her husband, John.

Two armed guards pulled out four sacks of money and plopped it at the top of the Clemenses' driveway. One sack was opened and bundled stacks of money were shown to the Clemenses and a swarm of about 45 other people, including reporters, TV crews, company representatives and neighbors.

"Community property," shouted Joanne Clemens as she held up a bundle of her husband's winnings.

Her husband rifled through several stacks of bound cash. "Fifty thousand dollars. OK, it looks like it's all there," he quipped.

Sam Clemens, who markets new inventions to area companies for the National Idea Center in Washington, is a distant cousin of writer Mark Twain. His parents live on the banks of the Missouri River, he said.

So far, he and his wife have no definite plans for the money beyond traveling a little and replacing a 1987 Chevrolet with 207,000 miles on it.

"Kind of put a little money away for a rainy day and retirement," Sam Clemens said.

No retirement is on the horizon, though. "I think I'd get tired of lying on the beach every day," he said.

Joanna Clemens said she will continue teaching kindergarten at Moffett School in Huntington Beach through the next school year. After that, she said, she will become a part-time substitute teacher so she can enjoy a life of travel and leisure.

Once the last photograph was shot and the TV cameras were turned off, the armed Brinks guards dutifully returned the money to the armored truck and drove off. The \$1 million will be placed in the Clemens' bank account via wire transfer.

By picking up his Bud Bowl game card from an AM-PM Mini Mart, Clemens also won another \$1 million from Atlantic Richfield Co. That million will be awarded through payments of \$50,000 a year for 20 years.

As the ceremony was wrapping up, neighbor John Ross, 31, continued watching from the sidewalk across the street. "It looks

like he'll make it through the recession OK," he said.

Tom McQueeney
Los Angeles Times

[Thanks to Harold Aspiz (Long Beach, CA) for sharing the above article from the "Orange County Focus" section of the *Los Angeles Times* (Friday, Feb. 26, 1993). Note: The Sam Clemens in this story is the son of Cyril Clemens, founder of the *Mark Twain Journal*.]

Mark Twain Bibliography

The name of our group, the Mark Twain Circle, suggests to me mutuality, fellowship. I am sure that all members of the Circle join me in honoring and celebrating J. R. LeMaster and James D. Wilson for the informative and enjoyable encyclopedia they have given us. I am grateful to have been included as a contributor. It is now in the spirit of mutuality that I am responding with some suggestions for additions to the bibliographies at the end of most entries. Perhaps fellow Circlers will want to copy the list that follows and stick it into their copy of that good book. Perhaps other Circlers will want to make further contributions --perhaps to MY entries!

Additions to Bibliographies in *The Mark Twain Encyclopedia*:

"EXTRACT FROM ADAM'S DIARY":

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Everett Emerson
Chapel Hill, NC

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Dates to Circle

November 10-13, 1994. American Literature Association Symposium on "American Autobiography," Cabo San Lucas, Baja California, Mexico. Conference Director: Michael Kiskis, English Dept., Elmira College, Elmira, New York, 14901.

December 8-11, 1994. ALA Symposium on "American Humor," Cancun, Mexico. Co-sponsored by the American Humor Studies Association and the Mark Twain Circle. Conference Director: David E. E. Sloane, English Dept., University of New Haven, West Haven, CT 06516.

December 27-30, 1994. Modern Language Association annual conference, New York, NY, including Mark Twain Circle sessions, cocktail hour sessions, and breakfasts with Mark Twain.

May 26-28, 1995. ALA Conference on American Literature, Baltimore, MD. Conference Director: Gloria Cronin, English Dept., Brigham Young University, Provo, UT 84602; fax number: (801) 373-4661; internet: cronin@jkhbhc.byu.edu.

About Mark Twain

Abbreviations used in this bibliographical series are listed in the January-March 1992 *Mark Twain Circular*. In addition, a combination of year, letter, and number refers to an entry in my *Mark Twain: A Reference Guide* (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1977), and *ALR* refers to one of its supplements in the journal *American Literary Realism*. Readers wishing to keep up to date on Twain scholarship may also want to consult the list of other recommended bibliographic sources in the January-March 1992 *Circular*.

Thomas A. Tenney
(Editor, *MT Journal*)

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GOLD, CHARLES H. "Mark Twain and 'The Damn Machine.'" *Book Production Industry* (September 1977): 48-49, 52, 54, 102 (from a photocopy now at Elmira College). A substantial and readable account, for a general rather than academic audience, of MT's ill-fated investment in the Paige typesetting machine.

KERSTEN, HOLGER. *Von Hannibal nach Heidelberg: Mark Twain und die Deutschen. Eine Studie zu literarischen und soziokulturellen Quellen eines Deutschlandbildes*. [From *Hannibal to Heidelberg: Mark Twain and the Germans. A Study in Literary and Sociocultural Sources of a View of Germany*.] Kieler Beiträge zur Anglistik und Amerikanistik, Bd. 4. Würzburg: Königshausen Neumann, 1993. Originally presented as a dissertation at Universität Kiel, this exhaustive study supersedes everything previously written on the subject of Mark Twain and Germany from Schoenemann, Hemminghaus, and Krumpelmann to the present. With thorough research both in the MTP in Berkeley and in his native Germany, Kersten neglects nothing in tracing the cumulative development of Clemens's interest in and knowledge of Germany, its people, and its language from his childhood experiences with immigrants in Hannibal through his days in the Far West (especially in San Francisco), in Buffalo and

Hartford, and finally in his two long periods of residence in Bismarck's Reich itself. Since too few American scholars read German these days, this book should be translated and published in this country without delay. [Carl Dolmetsch]

NICKELS, CAMERON. *New England Humor from the Revolutionary War to the Civil War*. Knoxville: U of Tennessee P, 1993. This solidly researched and valuable study will interest Twain scholars and extend our understanding of the traditions in which he wrote, including newspaper and magazine humor. While the emphasis is on the period up to the Civil War, there are occasional mentions of parallels (indexed), and Nickels has much to say on MT in his "Bibliographic Essay," concluding that "now that we know more about New England Humor, something meaningful can be written on its place in the humor of Mark Twain, especially *CY*, which "may well mark the 'end' of the New England tradition of native American humor."

SCHARNHORST, GARY. *Bret Harte*. New York: Twayne, 1993. This clear and well-researched study of Harte's life and works provides a corrective to the portrait sketched by MT, who is mentioned passim (indexed), but only incidentally.

ZWICK, JIM. "An American Anti-Imperialist: Mark Twain on the Philippine-American War." *Filipinas: A Magazine for All Filipinos* (San Francisco; copy deposited at Elmira College) No. 5 (September 1993): 50-54. On MT's membership in the Anti-Imperialist League and his opposition to the atrocities inflicted by American troops, with photographs of slaughtered Philipinos. In "To the Person Sitting in Darkness" . . . MT wrote that a reader will say: "Good God, those niggers spare their wounded, and the Americans massacre theirs!" In another essay he said: "Do not wince at the word. I note that many of our people out there use it to describe the Filipino." An American soldier wrote home in 1899: "Our fighting blood was up and we all wanted to kill 'niggers' . . . this shooting human beings beats rabbit hunting all to pieces."

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Shelley Fisher Fishkin is Professor of American Studies at the University of Texas, Austin, and author of the award-winning book *From Fact to Fiction: Journalism and Imaginative Writing in America*.

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