



Mark Twain Circular

Newsletter of the Mark Twain Circle of America

Volume 26

April 2012

Number 1

The President's Column

James S. Leonard
The Citadel

In this, my last, President's Column (with Linda Morris scheduled to succeed me at May's ALA meeting in San Francisco), I offer, on behalf of the Mark Twain Circle, our parting salutes to Jim Cox and Tom Tenney—two major figures in Mark Twain scholarship, both of whom died very recently. Alan Gribben's tribute to Prof. Tenney and Thomas Wortham's tribute to Prof. Cox, in this issue of the *Circular*, enumerate some of their career accomplishments and assess something of their importance to the field of Mark Twain studies.

I didn't know Jim Cox well, having corresponded with him on only a couple of occasions, and having met him only once, and then briefly—at an American Literature Association Conference in Baltimore that he attended as recipient of a special career achievement award. But I, like all Twainians, knew him by reputation. His *Mark Twain: The Fate of Humor* remains, nearly fifty years later, one of the most respected works in the critical literature on Mark Twain and his works—as evidenced by its having been republished in 2002 by the University of Mis-

souri Press as part of the "Mark Twain and His Circle" series.

I did, on the other hand, know Tom Tenney well. He was my colleague for many years at The Citadel (though, as Alan Gribben points out, he was never a tenured faculty member either there or elsewhere). More than one of my students remarked to me, during those years, that Tom looked like Mark Twain. He didn't, of course (at least not physically), but he was so adept at conjuring Twain's presence that it seemed he must be Twain's reincarnation. Like many others, I was drawn into Mark Twain scholarship principally by Tom; in fact, much of my early work on Twain, such as the *Mark Twain Circular* and the edited book *Satire or Evasion?* (of which he was a coeditor), came to me from Tom's overflow. And that was the story of many Mark Twain projects that others undertook—worthy ventures that passed through Tom on their way to becoming major scholarly events in the professional lives of his associates.

Both Jim and Tom, each in his own way, made themselves indispensable to the Mark Twain scholarly community. →



Despite their passing—each after a life rich with contributions and accomplishments—they remain of the utmost importance to us.

Meanwhile, carrying on in the spirit of Jim's and Tom's work, we have major Mark Twain events on the horizon: two Twain sessions plus a joint Mark Twain-Henry James session at ALA in May; the Complicating Twain: Biography, Autobiography, and the Personal Scholar (Remembering Michael Kiskis) Symposium, chaired by Kerry Driscoll and Ann Ryan, at Elmira in October 2012; Mark Twain sessions, probably including another joint session with the Henry James Society, at the January 2013 MLA conference; One Man, Many Legacies: The Seventh International Conference on the State of Mark Twain Studies, at Elmira, in August 2013. No doubt the spirits of Jim and Tom—and of Lou Budd and Michael Kiskis—will be there cheering us on. And that's a happy thought. □

**Mark Twain Circle Sessions at the
American Literature Association Conference
San Francisco, CA, May 24-27, 2012**

(For more MTC and AHSA panel information for ALA, see pages 6 and 11. See also the full ALA program draft at the American Literature Association website @ <http://www.calstatela.edu/academic/english/ala2/>)

Getting Real: Henry James and Mark Twain [Saturday, 5/26, 11:10-12:30, session 17-D]

Organized by the Mark Twain Circle of America and the Henry James Society

Chairs: James S. Leonard, The Citadel; John Carlos Rowe, University of Southern California

1. "Marginal James," Michael Anesko, Pennsylvania State University
2. "A Possible Biographical Connection between Mark Twain and Stephen Crane," Paul Sorrentino, Virginia Tech
3. "The Duality of the American Derived Identity Through the Narrative Lens of Henry James and Mark Twain," Jocelyn Chadwick, Harvard University

Mark Twain: Exploration and Conflict [Saturday, 5/26, 2:10-3:30, session 19-E]

Organized by the Mark Twain Circle of America

Chair: John Bird, Winthrop University

1. "Mark Twain's Autobiographical Dictations and William James's Concept of 'The Stream of Thought,'" Patrick K. Dooley, U. S. Air Force Academy
2. "Twain's War in *Pudd'nhead Wilson*," Beverly A. Hume, Indiana University-Purdue University
3. "'A far-off speck that looked like daylight': McDougal's Cave and the Vagaries of Discovery in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*," Erin Sweeney, University of California, Irvine

Finding Mark Twain [Saturday, 5/26, 3:30-4:50, session 20-C]

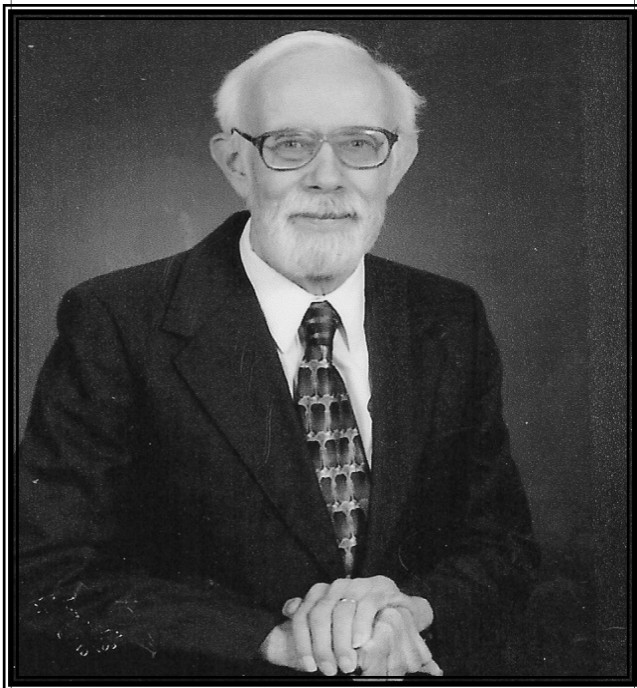
Organized by the Mark Twain Circle of America

Chair: Linda Morris, University of California, Davis

1. "A Digital Palimpsest Mapping Project (DPMP or 'Deep Map') on 'Global Huck,'" Shelley Fisher Fishkin, Stanford University
2. "*Huck Finn* in China," Selina Lai, University of Hong Kong
3. "Mark Twain Meets the 'Irish Brigade,' Follows them to Lake Tahoe," Robert E. Stewart, Ind. Scholar

[Mark Twain Circle Business Meeting: Sunday, 5/27, 8:30-9:40 AM, session 22-H]

Dr. Thomas A. Tenney 1931-2012



Dr. Thomas A. Tenney, the internationally known editor of the *Mark Twain Journal* since 1984, died of heart failure on February 1st after a brief stay in a Charleston hospital.

Dr. Tenney was born on June 20, 1931, in New York City to parents who were both teachers. He worked in the Texas oil fields before serving in the U. S. Army in Germany in the 1950s. He earned his undergraduate degree from the University of South Carolina, his master's degree from Columbia University (where he wrote his thesis on Mark Twain under the direction of Lewis Leary), and his doctoral degree in English from the University of Pennsylvania. His dissertation under Henning Cohen examined Twain's early travels. In 1957 he married Margaret Shannon Broughton, and they would have three sons: Robert, Charles, and William.

Caught in the tightening academic job market of the 1970s, Tom Tenney never enjoyed a tenured position but nevertheless taught various English classes at the College of Charleston, Charleston Southern University, Limestone College, and the Citadel, as well as on Navy ships at sea and in ports.

Without the benefits of institutional support, this independent scholar managed to assemble and publish *Mark Twain: A Reference Guide*

(1977) to assist scholars in locating topics within the proliferating studies of this popular author. Over the years Dr. Tenney issued periodic supplements to update this work. He also became a co-editor of an important volume, *Satire or Evasion? Black Perspectives on Huckleberry Finn* (1992). For more than a quarter of a century his *Mark Twain Journal* provided a forum for scholars to discuss all aspects of Twain's life and writings.

In addition to these activities, Dr. Tenney in the 1980s undertook a nationwide odyssey to find and disseminate Mark Twain letters and documents in public and private collections; persuading the owners to allow him to photocopy these items with a portable machine that accompanied his travels, he widely distributed the results. To bolster the Mark Twain Circle of America, Dr. Tenney in 1987 launched the *Mark Twain Circular*, a newsletter that James S. Leonard then went on to edit very ably. Dr. Tenney was involved in setting up the morning and evening paper sessions presented in the Mark Twain suite at annual MLA conferences. He was an early visitor to Quarry Farm after it was donated to Elmira College, was an immediate and stalwart proponent of the Center for Mark Twain Studies, and assisted in arranging the first academic conference in Elmira. Since then he made many gifts of books and other materials to the Mark Twain Archives at Elmira College.

Even in light of these achievements, Tom Tenney's main contribution to the field of Mark Twain studies consisted of his sincere and unstinting generosity toward emerging scholars and interested students. Testimonials to his spirit of cheerful sharing and advocacy soon followed the news of his death on the online Mark Twain Forum: "a generous and helpful scholar and human being" (Shelley Fisher Fishkin); "an amazing scholar whose sense of humor was unparalleled" (Jocelyn A. Chadwick); "generous, gracious, welcoming, encouraging, thoughtful, helpful, sharing" (Mark Dawidziack); a "kind, gentle, gracious, and wonderful person" (John Davis); "a loss on so many levels. . . . We owe him so much" (Wes Britton); "his generosity was boundless and unwavering, and his devotion to Twain scholarship and amiable regard for his fellow Twainians set an example for us all" (Kevin Mac Donnell); "Tom treated everyone with equal respect. . . . [and] was always willing to pretend that we knew more than we knew, and that we were teaching him something, when he taught us all so much" (K. Patrick Ober, M. D.); "a fine person and great scholar. . . . What a positive →

attitude he always had” (John Bird); “his scholarly enthusiasm, boundless energy, and gentle demeanor never wavered” (M. L. Christmas); “one of the kindest and most generous people whom I’ve ever met” (R. Kent Rasmussen); “for me to have had his approval was (and remains) one of the highlights of my life. . . . We [should] refresh our efforts to emulate his high standard of scholarship and great human qualities as we deal with beginning scholars coming up behind us” (Taylor Roberts).

During his seventies Dr. Tenney came into several recognitions for his lifetime investments in Twain scholarship. In 2005, amid a standing ovation at the Fifth International Mark Twain Conference at Elmira College, he received the first John S. Tuckey Award for the enhancement of Twain studies. Subsequently he was given the Mark Twain Circle of America Award for Service. Yet as many scholars have remarked, it was impossible to repay this singular individual who had no equal in fostering and encouraging the study of Mark Twain.

Alan Gribben

Auburn University at Montgomery



Above: Tom and his wife, Margaret, receiving the 2005 John S. Tuckey Award.



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Complicating Twain: Biography, Autobiography, and the Personal Scholar: Remembering Michael J. Kiskis

**October 19th and 20th, 2012
Elmira College**

On behalf of Co-Chairs Kerry Driscoll and Ann Ryan, the Elmira College Center for Mark Twain Studies is pleased to announce a fall weekend symposium: “Complicating Twain.”

The symposium will address topics relating to the biographical and autobiographical narratives that Twain both inspired and produced, on domesticity and Twain, including Twain's representations of the child and of women, on the subject of the sometimes fraught relationship between Twain and his biographers, editors, and his reading public; and on the ways in which scholarly writing is often at odds with the call to authenticity that underlies so much of Twain's work.

The Co-Chairs invite submissions that reflect not only upon the scholarly legacy of Michael Kiskis, but that consider the wonderfully skeptical, ironic, playful, and original voice of Michael Kiskis as well.

Keynote Address: “Come Back to the Raft Ag’in, Michael Honey,” given by Laura Skandera Trombley, Pitzer College.

Please send abstracts by **June 1, 2012**, to **Dr. Kerry Driscoll** at kdriscoll@sjc.edu and to **Dr. Ann M. Ryan** at ryanam@lemoyne.edu.

Papers will be considered for inclusion in an edition of *The Mark Twain Annual* dedicated to Michael Kiskis.

The Call for Papers is available at http://www.elmira.edu/resources/shared/pdf/academics/distinctive_programs/twain_center/ComplicatingTwain.pdf.

Complete program and registration information will be available in July 2012. □

In Memoriam: James Melville Cox (1925-2012)

I arrived at Indiana University for graduate studies several years too late to have encountered Jim Cox in the classroom, though among the older students stories about him still flourished. My favorite was the one that had him entering class on the first day, doing two perfect cartwheels, and then announcing to the astonished students, "You haven't seen anything yet. Let's get to work!" Later when I got to know Jim as a friend, I never had the heart to ask him if this story were indeed true. By then it really didn't matter. What he had given us in his writings was far more impressive than any acrobatic gyrations, particularly his book on Mark Twain which appeared not long after I first heard the story about his remarkable classroom entrance. And the numerous testimonials that came from his students at Dartmouth left no doubt in my mind that he was truly one of the most talented classroom teachers of his generation, a conclusion shared by the Danforth Foundation years later when it awarded him the E. Harris Harbison for Gifted Teaching. Even after retirement Jim returned on occasion to the classroom, and not so many years ago (at least from my ancient perspective) I yearned to return to the place of my own professional beginnings when I heard he was going to team-teach a course with Terence Martin at Indiana University, but that pleasure will have to wait until paradise.

In the mid-sixties there were only two books about Mark Twain's writings that graduate students preparing for qualifying examinations really felt compelled to read: Henry Nash Smith's *Mark Twain: The Development of a Writer* (1962) and Jim's *Mark Twain: The Fate of Humor* (1966), works that still nearly fifty years later largely define the most intelligent and critically useful discussions of Clemens's life and writings. On most days I should not hesitate to place Jim's book at the top of this short list, and it remains the book I first mention when students come and ask me where they should start. Because of the nature of our profession, it is, perhaps unfortunately, the work by which he is best known, but at least two scores of fine articles in leading journals and influential books in the years since rival the Mark Twain book in affecting the way we read American literature. A few of these were collected in *Recovering Literature's Lost Ground: Essays in American Autobiography* (1989), and it is a pity that more of them could not be made more easily available to students today, since they still have much to teach about the responsibilities and pleasures of reading and teaching the literature of our strange nation.

My memory of the first time I met Jim in person is vague, though I suspect it was at one of Leo Lemay's famous drinking parties that for so many was the first item of serious business at MLA conventions. But I do remember with considerable clarity (no alcohol was involved) the first time I heard him read a paper at a conference. It was in Atlanta in the early 1980s and his subject was "Shelby Foote's *Civil War*." Like so many others I had the three hefty volumes (courtesy of the History Book Club) on my shelves at home, and like so many others I figured that "someday" I should get around to reading them (there are, I fear, far too many of this kind of books on my library shelves); but after listening to Jim's defense of this narrative as

an important work of literature I very soon afterwards settled down in a comfortable chair and experienced the pleasures Jim had promised. Perhaps part of the charm of Jim's shared pleasure and admiration for the history was his Southern drawl which years of living among the Yankees never erased, but far more important was his dedication to the serious and focused reading of the text. At a time when all of us were too easily distracted by "theory," Jim never forgot that theory is only so important as the ability it provides in making us appreciate better the literary text which is, or should be, the ultimate object of our common study.

As soon as I returned to Los Angeles after that Atlanta meeting, I wrote to Jim and asked if he would be willing to serve as a member of the Advisory Board of *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, a journal now known as *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, of which I had just become co-editor. He accepted my offer, but warned that the following year he planned to take early retirement from Dartmouth (though he was only sixty at the time) and move back to the family farm in Virginia, returning to Hanover to teach one term a year until he reached sixty-five: "You may not want such a supernumerary on your board, let alone a superannuated totterer." I had no problem whatsoever with his plans, and for the next ten years he was one of our most valuable board members, quick in his return of the essays and most generous in his advice for their improvement, especially the essays written by those just beginning their careers (we did not have a blind submission policy because I did not believe it served our advisory board members not to know the stage in their careers of our contributors). My great regret was that his splendid reports were probably only seen by me and the grateful (I hope) authors of the essays. They deserved much larger audiences, but that, alas, is not the way we do business.

In 1993 he gently suggested that perhaps it was time for him to step down, because in his opinion he was not "keeping up" adequately with the profession we both cared so deeply about. I resisted his offer for some months, but when he said that he would still be willing to read essays on occasion, that "when you want to resolve a doubt or when you want some corroboration," he would be there. And he always was: both as teacher and friend.

I always thought it would be pleasant to visit Jim at Brookside Farm, to see the house his great grandfather had built in the Blue Ridge Mountains of western Virginia, but I never did. He loved that land, and I found it something of a mystery why he chose the University of Michigan in the upper Midwest to pursue his undergraduate education, courtesy of the GI Bill following his service as a Yeomen first class on the submarine *Dragonet* during the last years of the Second World War. But whatever the reason, it was a fortunate choice, because there in the university library he met his wife Marguerite. I do know why he stayed at Dartmouth so long, since I once asked him if he ever considered following Horace Greely's advice and "Go West." He told me that not only did he like and was challenged by his students there, but that he liked even better the college's generous financial assistance in the education of the children of faculty members, which in his case was considerable, being father of six. But eventually he did return home where he continued to write and be a beloved friend and advisor to so many. And there, as he wished, he died on January 26th of this year in the house in which he first saw the light. He will be missed.

Thomas R. Wortham, Professor Emeritus., UCLA

Elmira 2013

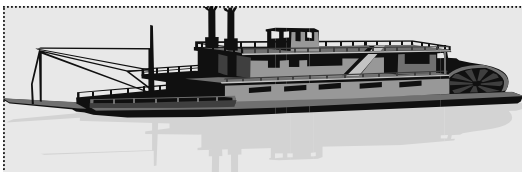
Elmira 2013: The Seventh International Conference on the State of Mark Twain Studies

“One Man, Many Legacies”—Observing the Sesquicentennial of the Pen-name August 1 through 3, 2013.

Call for papers: please provide a developed abstract of 700 words by February 2, 2013. Final papers must be suitable for a 20-minute presentation. Please send your abstract, via electronic submission, to **bsnedecor@elmira.edu**. Provide your name, mailing address, and email address. Developed abstracts will be reviewed anonymously by selected panel chairs. Abstracts will be included in the 2013 Conference program.

Topics: We invite papers related to any aspect of Mark Twain’s legacy. We have a special interest in papers on the following topics: Mark Twain and Crime, Ecocriticism, Family, Folktale and/or Folklore, Humor, Law, Manners, Masculinity, Music, Native Americans, Peace, War, and/or Anti-Imperialism, Performance, Plagiarism, Poverty, Race, Reform, Religion, Science, Science Fiction and/or the Occult, Whiteness, Women, the Chinese, the Politics of Scholarship, the Sandwich Islands, the World of Periodicals, Other 19th and 20th Century Writers, the American West, The Bohemian Mark Twain, The Mark Twain Persona, The New South Edition of *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*, The Transgressive Mark Twain, The Transnational Mark Twain, Mark Twain’s Brand of Realism, Mark Twain’s Encounters with the Metaphysical, Mark Twain’s Style (close reading Twain), Mark Twain’s Uses and Abuses of History, Mark Twain: Deep Cuts (lesser-known and underappreciated works), Marketing Mark Twain, Translating Mark Twain, Mark Twain as Journalist, Mark Twain as Satirist, and Signed “Mark Twain”: The Autobiography of Sam Clemens.

Please see the Elmira College website, http://www.elmira.edu/academics/distinctive_programs/mark_twain_center/conference, for more information. □



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To:

**Prof. Sharon McCoy
Executive Coordinator
Department of English
University of Georgia
254 Park Hall
Athens, GA 30602**

Please enroll me as a member of the **Mark Twain Circle of America** and subscriber to the *Mark Twain Circular* and *The Mark Twain Annual*. I enclose a check for \$30.00 (\$25.00 for graduate students, and \$32.00 for a non-U.S. address) made out to “Mark Twain Circle of America.”

(printed name)

(city, state, and zip code)

(email address—please write clearly)

AHSA *Mad* Magazine Panel at ALA 2012:

Mad About *Mad*: Humor, Satire, and Culture
in *Mad* Magazine: [Fri, 5/25, 5:10-6:30 PM: 14-C]

Organized by: John Bird, Winthrop University

Chair: Judith Yaross Lee, Ohio University

1. “Dave Berg: Chronicling American Dystopia,” Joseph A. Alvarez,
Independent Scholar
2. “Joseph Orlando: His *Mad* Encounters,”
Jules A. Hojnowski,
Independent Scholar
3. “Sing Along With Alfred: Humor, Satire
and Culture in the Music of *Mad*,”
John Bird, Winthrop University

[See pages 2 and 11 for more MTC and AHSA
panel information for ALA.]

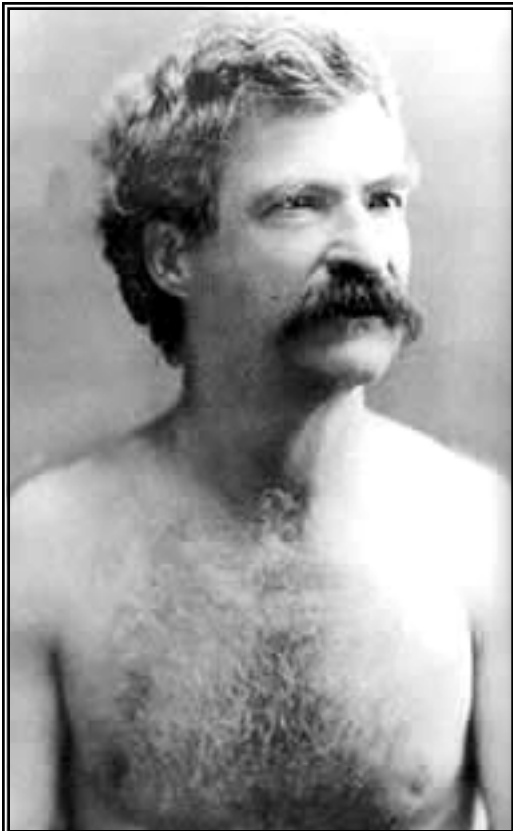
Mark Twain Circle at the 2013 MLA Conference January 3-6, Boston, MA

The Mark Twain Circle posted two calls for papers for the 2013 MLA convention:

- An open call for papers on any topic related to Mark Twain and his work.
- A call for papers on global versus provincial perspectives in the works of Mark Twain and/or Henry James. Comparisons of modern and late-modern or postmodern globalization.

The abstract deadline **has passed** (as of 10 March 2012).

Session 2 is jointly sponsored by the Henry James Society—a sequel to the Mark Twain and Henry James session planned for the 2012 ALA meeting in San Francisco.



Do you have good photos of Mark Twain Circle events and/or activities? If so, please email them to the *Circular* editor at crohman@dom.edu.

Dates to Circle:

»Mark Twain Circle and the American Humor Studies Association at the American Literature Association annual conference, May 24-27, 2012, in San Francisco, CA.

»*Complicating Twain: Biography, Autobiography, and the Personal Scholar—Remembering Michael J. Kiskis*. A weekend symposium, October 19-20, 2012, in Elmira, NY.

»Mark Twain Circle at the 2013 Modern Language Association (MLA) Conference, January 3-6, 2013, in Boston, MA.

ABOUT THE CIRCLE. The Mark Twain Circle of America was formed at an organizational meeting held at the 1986 Modern Language Association convention in New York. Although many members are academic specialists, the Circle also includes many non-academic Twain enthusiasts.

ABOUT THE CIRCULAR. The *Mark Twain Circular* is the newsletter of the Mark Twain Circle of America. It is published twice per year (April and November) and is mailed, by the editor, to all members of the Mark Twain Circle. The *Circular* prints news of Mark Twain events and scholarship, directories of members, and current bibliography. Subscribers are distributed among 44 states and 14 foreign countries.

ABOUT THE ANNUAL. The Mark Twain Circle also publishes an annual volume titled *The Mark Twain Annual*, edited by Ann Ryan (Le Moyne College), featuring criticism and pedagogy related to Mark Twain and his works.

Current Mark Twain Bibliography

Current Mark Twain Bibliography is a means of giving notice of what is new in Mark Twain scholarship. Where annotations are used, they are in most cases descriptive blurbs provided by publishers (or in some cases, by authors) with value judgments edited out.

If you have recently published something that you would like to have included in this list, please send it by email to the current *Circular* editor, **Chad Rohman** (crohman@dom.edu).

Books

Antonucci, David C. *Fairest Picture: Mark Twain at Lake Tahoe.* Art of Learning Publishing, Lake Tahoe, 2011. 302 pages. ISBN 13: 978-1463765699. List Price: \$17.99 Paperback.

Fairest Picture is the book Mark Twain fans and Lake Tahoe enthusiasts have longed for. For the first time, a single volume brings together Mark Twain and his favorite lake, Lake Tahoe. Inside you will find little known facts and newly discovered information about Mark Twain's experiences and adventures at Lake Tahoe that cannot be found in any other books or on the web. You will read about Mark Twain's Lake Tahoe of the early 1860s, how it is different today and still the same in many ways. We solve the riddle of where Mark Twain was camped and located his timber claim on the North Shore, exactly as he told the story in *Roughing It* and letters home. We describe Mark Twain's subsequent trips to Lake Tahoe as a reporter for the *Virginia City Territorial Enterprise* and locate the hotels where he stayed and what he did while he was here as a tourist. We provide maps and directions to 12 Mark Twain places at Lake Tahoe and the surrounding area so that scholars and enthusiasts can visit these sites, see what Mark Twain saw and experience the same feelings that inspired him to write so eloquently about the lake. Inside is a complete listing of all known Mark Twain quotations about Lake Tahoe in his writings and lectures together with interpretation and context. We closely examine and debunk the many myths and tall tales

about Mark Twain at Lake Tahoe and in particular, the often repeated East Shore timber claim legend. Readers will have a much deeper appreciation Mark Twain and the Lake Tahoe region, a place where he found his voice as a writer and humorist and went on to become one of America's greatest authors. [Excerpt from Amazon.com]

Courtney, Steve. "The Loveliest Home That Ever Was": *The Story of the Mark Twain House in Hartford.* Dover Publications, 2011. 144 pages. ISBN 13: 978-0486486345. List Price: \$19.95 Paperback.

This is the official guide to The Mark Twain House & Museum, an institution dedicated to preserving the author's home, literary legacy, and life story. Author Steve Courtney, the organization's Publicist and Publications Editor, conducts a journey back to the Gilded Age, when the celebrated author and humorist was known as Mr. Samuel Clemens of Hartford, Connecticut. Readers can venture inside "the loveliest home that ever was" for an illustrated tour that offers intimate glimpses of the writer, his wife, and their daughters within their Victorian mansion. Abundantly illustrated with architectural drawings and period photos, this volume also features dozens of recent color images. Built in the American Gothic tradition, the richly appointed house features the decorative work of Louis Comfort Tiffany and contains many souvenirs of family trips to Europe. During the seventeen years that he lived in the Hartford home, Sam Clemens completed *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884), along with *The Prince and the Pauper* (1881) and *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889), in addition to countless lectures, magazine pieces, and stories improvised for the children's delight. The narrative traces the house's history beyond the Clemens family's residence, from its 1903 sale to its current status as a lovingly preserved and restored National Historic Landmark. [Excerpt from publisher's website.]

Gribben, Alan, Editor. *Mark Twain's Adventures of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn: The NewSouth Edition.* NewSouth, Incorporated, 2011. 528 pages. ISBN 13: 978-1588382672. List Price: \$24.95 Paperback.

In a radical departure from standard editions, Twain's most famous novels are published here as the continuous narrative that the author originally envisioned. More controversial will be the decision by the editor, noted Mark Twain scholar Alan Gribben, to eliminate the pejorative racial labels that Twain employed in his effort to write realistically about social attitudes of the 1840s. Gribben points out that dozens of other editions currently make available the inflammatory words, but their presence has gradually diminished the potential audience for two of Twain's masterpieces. The novels can be enjoyed deeply and authentically without the continual encounters with hundreds of now-indefensible words, Gribben explains. [Excerpt from Barnes & Noble.com]

Holbrook, Hal. *Harold, The Boy Who Became Mark Twain.* Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2011. 480 pages, plus 16 black and white photographs. ISBN 13: 978-0374281014. List Price: \$30.00 Hardcover.

Harold is Hal Holbrook's affecting memoir of growing up behind disguises, and his lifelong search for himself. Abandoned by his mother and father when he was two, Holbrook and his two sisters each commenced their separate journeys of survival. Raised by his powerful grandfather until his death when Holbrook was twelve, Holbrook spent his childhood at boarding schools, visiting his father in an insane asylum, and hoping his mother would suddenly surface in Hollywood. As the Second World War engulfed Europe, Holbrook began acting almost by accident. Thereafter, through war, marriage, and the work of honing his craft, his fear of insanity and his fearlessness in the face of risk were channeled into his discovery that the riskiest path of all—success as an actor—would be his birthright. The climb up that tough, tough mountain was going to be a lonely one. And how he achieved it—the cost to his wife and children and to his own conscience—is the dark side of his eventual fame from performing the man his career would forever be most closely associated with, the iconic Mark Twain. [Excerpt from Amazon.com]

Kupperman, Michael. *Mark Twain's Autobiography 1910-2010.* Fantagraphics, 2011. 128 pages. ISBN 13: 078-1606994917. List Price: \$19.99 Hardcover.

Michael Kupperman has already indulged his love for Mark Twain in the pages of *Tales Designed to Thrizzle*, but the recent publication of Twain's (real) autobiography has inspired the cartoonist to a full-blown book-length piece. [Twain speaks from the grave in his own introduction]:

“GREETINGS, STRANGER OF THE FUTURE. If you are reading this, it means the written word has survived, that the world of tomorrow still exists, and that for some reason my ramblings are still considered worth reading. My name is Mark Twain, and I write these words to you in the good old days of August 2010. ‘What’s that, you say, didn’t you die a hundred years ago, you old coot? I hear your memoirs have just been published, right now in 2010, because they had to wait a century after your death, blah blah blah and so on.’ The truth is I never died, but the same old rumors got exaggerated and then the Great War happened, so people forgot I was still alive. And I’ve kept alive, due to a magic spell cast upon me by a wizard — but I’ve promised not to tell that tale until 1,000 years have passed. I let them do the century book because otherwise I might have to pay the advance back again, and I couldn’t afford it. I suppose by now you all know how I was Jack the Ripper, and why it was in a good cause that I committed those foul murders. Also that I was directly responsible for the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln. Hopefully you’ve forgiven me ...”

Readers eager to see how Twain hunted the Yeti (“Come out here and face me, you snow-covered coward!”), met the Six Million Dollar Man, had a love affair with Mamie Eisenhower (“Boy oh boy, this lady was one hot dish”), and accidentally became involved in X-rated films, will devour this tome, which of course is augmented with Kupperman's hilariously deadpan illustrations. 128 pages of full-color comics. [Excerpt from Amazon.com]

Lowe, Hilary Iris. *Mark Twain's Homes and Literary Tourism.* University of Missouri Press, 2011. 256 pages. ISBN 13: 97800826219763. List Price: \$40.00 cloth.

A century after Samuel Clemens's death, Mark Twain thrives—his recently released autobiography

topped bestseller lists. One way fans still celebrate the first true American writer and his work is by visiting any number of Mark Twain destinations. They believe they can learn something unique by visiting the places where he lived. *Mark Twain's Homes and Literary Tourism* untangles the complicated ways that Clemens's houses, now museums, have come to tell the stories that they do about Twain and, in the process, reminds us that the sites themselves are the products of multiple agendas and, in some cases, unpleasant histories. Hilary Iris Lowe leads us through four Twain homes, beginning at the beginning—Florida, Missouri, where Clemens was born. Today the site is simply a concrete pedestal missing its bust, a plaque, and an otherwise-empty field. Though the original cabin where he was born likely no longer exists, Lowe treats us to an overview of the history of the area and the state park challenged with somehow marking this site. Next, we travel with Lowe to Hannibal, Missouri, Clemens's childhood home, which he saw become a tourist destination in his own lifetime. Today mannequins remind visitors of the man that the boy who lived there became and the literature that grew out of his experiences in the house and little town on the Mississippi. Hartford, Connecticut, boasts one of Clemens's only surviving adulthood homes, the house where he spent his most productive years. Lowe describes the house's construction, its sale when the high cost of living led the family to seek residence abroad, and its transformation into the museum. Lastly, we travel to Elmira, New York, where Clemens spent many summers with his family at Quarry Farm. His study is the only room at this destination open to the public, and yet, tourists follow in the footsteps of literary pilgrim Rudyard Kipling to see this small space. Literary historic sites pin their authority on the promise of exclusive insight into authors and texts through firsthand experience. As tempting as it is to accept the authenticity of Clemens's homes, *Mark Twain's Homes and Literary Tourism* argues that house museums are not reliable critical texts but are instead carefully constructed spaces designed to satisfy visitors. This volume shows us how these houses' portrayals of Clemens change frequently to accommodate and shape our own expectations of the author and his work.

[Excerpt from publisher's website.]

Railton, Stephen, Editor. *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Broadview Press, 2011. 448 pages. ISBN 13: 978-1554810048. List Price: \$13.95 Paperback.

From its first appearance onward, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* has been both praised and condemned, enshrined as one of the world's great novels and banned from libraries and classrooms. This new edition is designed to enable modern readers to explore the sources of its greatness, and also to take a fresh, open-minded look at the source of the current controversy about its place in the canon: its representation of race and slavery. Based on the first American edition of 1885, this Broadview Edition includes all 174 original illustrations by E.W. Kemble. Appendices include contemporary reviews, passages deleted from the original manuscript, advertisements for the book, and a range of materials, from newspaper articles to minstrel show scripts to contemporary fiction, showing how race and slavery were depicted in the larger culture at the time. [From publisher's website.]

Robinson, Forrest, Gabriel Noah Brahm, Jr., and Catherine Carlstroem. *The Jester and the Sages: Mark Twain in Conversation with Nietzsche, Freud, and Marx*. University of Missouri Press, 2011. 184 pages. ISBN 13: 978-0826219527. List Price: \$35.00 Hardcover.

The Jester and the Sages approaches the life and work of Mark Twain by placing him in conversation with three eminent philosophers of his time—Friedrich Nietzsche, Sigmund Freud, and Karl Marx. Unprecedented in Twain scholarship, this interdisciplinary analysis by Forrest G. Robinson, Gabriel Noah Brahm Jr., and Catherine Carlstroem rescues the American genius from his role as funny-man by exploring how his reflections on religion, politics, philosophy, morality, and social issues overlap the philosophers' developed thoughts on these subjects. Remarkably, they had much in common. During their lifetimes, Twain, Nietzsche, Freud, and Marx witnessed massive upheavals in Western constructions of religion, morality, history, political economy, and human nature. The foundations of reality had been shaken, and one did not need to be a philosopher—nor did one even need to read philosophy—to weigh in on what this all might mean. Drawing on a

wide range of primary and secondary materials, the authors show that Twain was well attuned to debates of the time. Unlike his continental contemporaries, however, he was not as systematic in developing his views. Brahm's and Robinson's chapter on Nietzsche and Twain reveals their subjects' common defiance of the moral and religious truisms of their time. Both desired freedom, resented the constraints of Christian civilization, and saw punishing guilt as the disease of modern man. Pervasive moral evasion and bland conformity were the principal end result, they believed. In addition to a continuing focus on guilt, Robinson discovers in his chapter on Freud and Twain that the two men shared a lifelong fascination with the mysteries of the human mind. From the formative influence of childhood and repression, to dreams and the unconscious, the mind could free people or keep them in perpetual chains. The realm of the unconscious was of special interest to both men as it pertained to the creation of art. In the final chapter, Carlstroem and Robinson explain that, despite significant differences in their views of human nature, history, and progress, Twain and Marx were both profoundly disturbed by economic and social injustice in the world. Of particular concern was the gulf that industrial capitalism opened between the privileged elite property owners and the vast class of propertyless workers. Moralists impatient with conventional morality, Twain and Marx wanted to free ordinary people from the illusions that enslaved them. Twain did not know the work of Nietzsche, Freud, and Marx well, yet many of his thoughts cross those of his philosophical contemporaries. By focusing on the deeper aspects of Twain's intellectual makeup, Robinson, Brahm, and Carlstroem supplement the traditional appreciation of the forces that drove Twain's creativity and the dynamics of his humor. [Excerpt from Amazon.com] □

Got Twain?

If you have published an article, chapter, or book on Mark Twain in the last twelve months, please send a notice of your publication to the editor of this newsletter, Chad Rohman, at crohman@dom.edu. Thank you.

American Humor Studies Association @ American Literature Assoc. Conference, San Francisco, CA, May 24-27, 2012

Session 1:

American Mass Culture: Humor, Satire, Gender, Politics

[Friday, 5/25, 12:40-2:00, session 10-B]

Chair: Janice McIntyre-Strasburg, Saint Louis Univ.

- "How Disney Founded the Corporate Welfare State; or, Never Trust a Humorous Homily." Gregg Camfield, University of California, Merced
- "Cartooning Strong-Willed Women in Ante-bellum America." Teresa Prados Torreira, Columbia College, Chicago
- "It's only brains that count": Wit and the Slippery Semiotics of Intellect in *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*." Abby Goode, Rice Univ.

Session 2:

Theorizing Humor and Wit: New Directions

[Saturday, 5/26, 9:40-11:00 AM, session 16-E]

Chair: Gregg Camfield, University of Calif., Merced

- "American Humor: General Theory and Inconvenient Truth." Daniel Royot, Universite de Paris, Sorbonne
- "Humor as a Category of Cultural Analysis." Tracy Wuster, University of Texas, Austin
- "American Humor Studies for a Post-Nationalist Age: A Manifesto." Judith Yaross Lee, Ohio University. □

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