

# Mark Twain Circular

Newsletter of the Mark Twain Circle of America  
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## MT at ALA 1995

Mark Twain was, as usual, a conspicuous presence at the American Literature Association's 1995 "Conference on American Literature." The three Twain sessions reported in the January-March *Mark Twain Circular* all took place as predicted, and Twain loomed large in an additional session titled "Humor and Violence," chaired by Joseph Alvarez (Central Piedmont Comm. Coll.). That gathering featured Louis J. Budd (Duke U), presenting "A (Better-Humored) Retrial for Hank Morgan, Convicted Mass Murderer," and Everett Emerson (U of North Carolina), presenting "*A Connecticut Yankee*: Meaning and Significance Revisited."

At the Circle's business meeting, Howard Baetzhold, Alan Gribben, and Hamlin Hill were feted as the Circle's newest Honorary Members, joining the august company of Thomas A. Tenney, Louis J. Budd, Everett Emerson, William Linn, and George Meenaghan.

—J.S.L.

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## The Circle at SAMLA 1995

The Mark Twain Circle will sponsor a session titled "Mark Twain as Letter Writer" at

the 1995 SAMLA convention in Atlanta (Marriot Marquis Hotel, Nov. 3-5). The session will be chaired by Alan Gribben (Auburn U, Montgomery), and James S. Leonard (The Citadel) will serve as secretary. There will be four presentations:

1. "The Samuel L. Clemens-Olivia Langdon Clemens Letters"—James D. Wilson (U of Southwestern Louisiana)
2. "Mark Twain's Unsent Letters"—Thomas H. Brown (U of Alabama-Birmingham)
3. "An Unpublished Mark Twain Letter"—Rayburn S. Moore (U of Georgia)
4. "Writing Metaphor in the Mark Twain-Howells Letters"—John Bird (Winthrop U)

Following the presentations, there will be a 10-minute business meeting.

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## "A Tip of the Hat . . ."

As a personal note, I'd like to call attention to Stan Brodwin's retirement from teaching at Hofstra University.

Probably none of us ever fully know—really know—another person's career. But I do know that Stan has written on authors as diverse as William Cullen Bryant, Melville, Cather, Du Bois, Boswell, Whitman, Sholem Asch, as well as Emerson,

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Hawthorne, Steinbeck, and Thomas Mann.

In addition, Stan has written at least fourteen articles on Mark Twain, frequently concentrating on religion or on *Pudd'nhead Wilson*. I've noticed how often these articles have been cited or reprinted. How would most of us like to have had our work singled out for praise by Louis Budd, Jim Cox, Ham Hill, and Alan Gribben? Stan Brodwin knows how that has felt.

Stan was once, back in pre-history, a founding member of the Executive Committee of the Mark Twain Circle. He has won a Distinguished Teaching Prize and the Countee Cullen Prize for Distinguished Teaching of Afro-American Literature. Of course, Stan has given special lectures at more schools than you can shake a microphone at, including Annapolis and the Twain Center at Quarry Farm in Elmira. People still speak with something like awe about Stan's performance at the University of Missouri Conference on *Huckleberry Finn*. This range of achievement is extraordinary, admirable, inspiring.

I judge that I can speak for many Twainians, saying that we are glad that generations of students—countless individual Americans—have had the good fortune to be taught Mark Twain by such a person as Stan Brodwin.

So, Stan, at this time of your retirement (while we are waiting for the article that is right now in press!), we salute you!

Victor A. Doyno  
(SUNY, Buffalo)  
President, MT Circle

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### Lou Budd Earns His Degree

Thanks to Gretchen Sharlow, Director of the Center for Mark Twain Studies at Quarry Farm, for providing the following notice from the Elmira *Star-Gazette* (May 23, 1995):

Louis Budd, described by Elmira College as the dean of Mark Twain scholars, will receive an honorary degree at the col-

lege's 137th commencement at 11:00 a.m. June 4.

An author and teacher, Budd's work has charted the course for Mark Twain studies over three decades, the college said.

As the article also pointed out, Lou Budd was the first president of the Mark Twain Circle. He received the degree of Doctor of Letters.

—J.S.L.

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### *Huckleberry Finn*: Sonata-allegro Form?

During a workshop at Quarry Farm, early in June 1994, James Wilson of Southwestern Louisiana State University was discussing the formal structure of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. He remarked that some scholars view the novel as episodic with many parallels and repetitions and likened it to a "theme and variations" form. While this is a justifiably valid viewpoint, I would like to suggest the use of sonata-allegro form as an alternative.

In the middle of the 18th century, composers developed a formal structure called sonata-allegro, or first movement form. It emerged simultaneously with the growth of the symphony orchestra and the establishment of the large-scale sonata form, a multi-movement structure which comprised more or less most of the symphonies and string quartets of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, along with those of many other composers through the 19th and into the early 20th century.

Sonata-allegro form is a single movement structure in abstract music which provides the requisite mix of repetition and contrast that permits a work to be not only memorable but also interesting. It consists of two components: one thematic (melodic) and the other harmonic. Originally it was the harmonic component which was most important in determining the formal structure, but by the end of the 18th century it became possible—and much easier—to

delineate the form through its thematic content.

The structure of sonata-allegro form consists of three sections: the exposition, the development, and the recapitulation. There may be—and quite often are—an introductory section and a closing (coda) section as well, but they are not absolutely necessary to the structure. Each of the major sections does pretty much what its name suggests. The exposition presents the important thematic material. Usually there are two themes, different in character and emotional color, with the first of these themes generally regarded as the more important one. Quite often there is also a shorter closing theme. The development section takes the themes—with greater emphasis generally placed on the first one—and through a variety of technical devices explores, exploits, and manipulates the possibilities inherent within the material. The recapitulation presents the thematic material more or less as it appeared in the exposition, with perhaps some alteration. The difference now is that the material is seen in a new light as a result of its transformations in the development section. If there is an introduction, it does precisely what the name implies. A coda is used to provide a feeling of complete closure.

With the preceding in mind, then, a brief schematic is outlined below.

- Introduction: Paragraphs 1-2 of Chapter 1
- Exposition: Chapters 1-6
- Development: Chapters 7-18, 19-31
- Recapitulation: Chapters 32-42
- Coda: Chapter 43

The introduction is a brief recounting of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. It brings us up to speed, so to speak, and smoothly inserts us into the action of *Huckleberry Finn*.

The exposition presents us with the principal theme of freedom, the secondary theme of the supernatural, and a closing theme centered on family, although this final theme could easily be subsumed under the principal one. Freedom—and its polar opposite, constraint—is manifested in black slaves versus free whites, the "sivilization" of the

bourgeois family as typified by the Widow Douglas, Miss Watson, and Tom Sawyer versus the river and Pap's cabin. The supernatural—and its opposite, mundane reality—is presented to us via Huck's superstitions, Miss Watson's Christianity, Jim's "witches ride" and oracular hairball, and the imagination of Tom Sawyer versus Huck's pragmatism. Family is manifested not only as blood relations (Huck and Pap), but also as adoptive (Huck and Widow Douglas) and as a community of non-blood related people who mutually choose to care for one another (Tom, Huck, and Jim).

Furthermore, the exposition presents the principal characters in an order which has some relevance later. They are the Widow Douglas and Miss Watson, Tom Sawyer, Jim, Judge Thatcher, and Pap. This will be of some significance in the recapitulation.

The development is sectionalized, a common occurrence in the musical form. The first of these sections, which emphasizes the freedom theme, concerns Huck and Jim and their exploits alone on the raft. The important events here are discovering the dead man in the house (Pap), Huck meeting Judith Loftus, the wreck of the "Walter Scott," Huck sneaking aboard the other big raft, Huck and Jim's raft being run down by the steamboat, and Huck encountering the Grangerford family. The second of these sections, which emphasizes the supernatural theme, adds the King and the Duke and is comprised of the camp meeting, the Boggs-Sherburne incident, the circus, the Royal Nonesuch, and the Wilks family. Both of these subdivisions offer many and various transformations of the exposition's themes. It is significant also that each section ends with Huck encountering a family which attracts him greatly, but which ultimately he must leave behind.

The recapitulation begins with Huck encountering the Phelps family, and it is now that the introduction and sequence of the characters becomes important in comparison with the exposition. Aunt Sally Phelps is a composite analogue of Widow Douglas and Miss Watson. Next, Tom Sawyer and then Jim are reintroduced. Instead of Judge Thatcher, we here meet the old doctor. However, the Judge and doctor are simulacra

of each other: both are professional men, "old," kindly, and altruistically helpful to Huck and Tom. The last character is not an individual but a composite: the mob of armed men who shoot at Huck and Tom. This mob functions as an analogue to Pap in the exposition. With the introduction of each character in the recapitulation, we find ourselves in a situation remarkably similar, if not identical, to its parallel in the exposition, providing some justification for the sonata-allegro form hypothesis.

The coda provides at least partial closure. Jim is freed and can go to search for his family. Tom Sawyer has the bullet taken from his leg as a memento of a real adventure instead of an imaginary one. Only Huck is left, still pondering whether "sivilization" is worth it or not. But then, that's where he was in the beginning of the book; so if we can't have full closure, at least we have come full circle.

Joseph T. Cook  
Assoc. Professor, Music  
Elmira College

=====  
**Life Bids Farewell to Mark Twain**

[Thanks to Louis J. Budd for sharing the following article from the May 5, 1910 issue of *Life*.]

Uncle Mark Twain has retired permanently from this life, fairly full of years and abundantly embellished with popularity and honors. For forty years Uncle Mark has been widely known as an amusing writer, but not until the last fifteen years or so has his eminence in literature been realized. The truth is that when one goes to enumerate his rivals for pre-eminence in American literature there is not need of more than half the fingers of one hand to count on.

Mark Twain's chief literary asset was the talent he was born with. But he had wonderful advantages in developing it. Even while he was getting the rudiments of a literary education in a district school in Missouri his chief study was boys, caves and

ivers. Becoming proficient in these subjects, he began the wander years that carried him to Nevada and California, to newspaper offices where he had to practice writing, and then around the world with the Innocents. He was a free man from his youth, tied to no formulas of respectability, cramped by no artificial standards of taste or deportment, but devoted to seeing what he could, learning what he might, and thinking it over and writing about it in the best words he could find.

An untrammelled man, instinctively honest, diligent and temperate (except with cigars, which didn't seem to hurt him much). Dr. Wilson may include him with Lincoln in the list of men to whom it was probably an advantage that they never had to go to college. But he was born remarkable, and would probably have worked out remarkable whatever the processes might have been. Born to different sights and associations and to a less haphazard system of education, he might perhaps have turned a still more remarkable writer than he did. Working out as he did, however, he saw aspects of American life that there were few good writers to tell about, and it is his record of them that contributes his chief cause to permanent distinction.

It is a happiness to record that Uncle Mark was a man faithful and upright in every relation of life. He joked a great deal, and there was plenty of the artistic temperament in him, but he paid his debts and loved his women-kind with a fidelity less common than it should be among humdrum men.

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**Dates to Circle**

**Nov. 3-5, 1995.** SAMLA Annual Convention; Atlanta. The Mark Twain Circle will present a session titled "Mark Twain as Letter Writer." See "Mark Twain at SAMLA 1995," above.

**Dec. 27-30.** Modern Language Association Annual Convention (Chicago), featuring Mark Twain Circle conference sessions, breakfast sessions, and cocktail hour sessions.

# Diversity and American Humor

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During this four-day program, historians and humorists will shed light on the diverse origins of the American peoples and how their folk tales, exploits, impulses, hardships, and search for social identity came to be exhibited through a uniquely American "sense of humor."

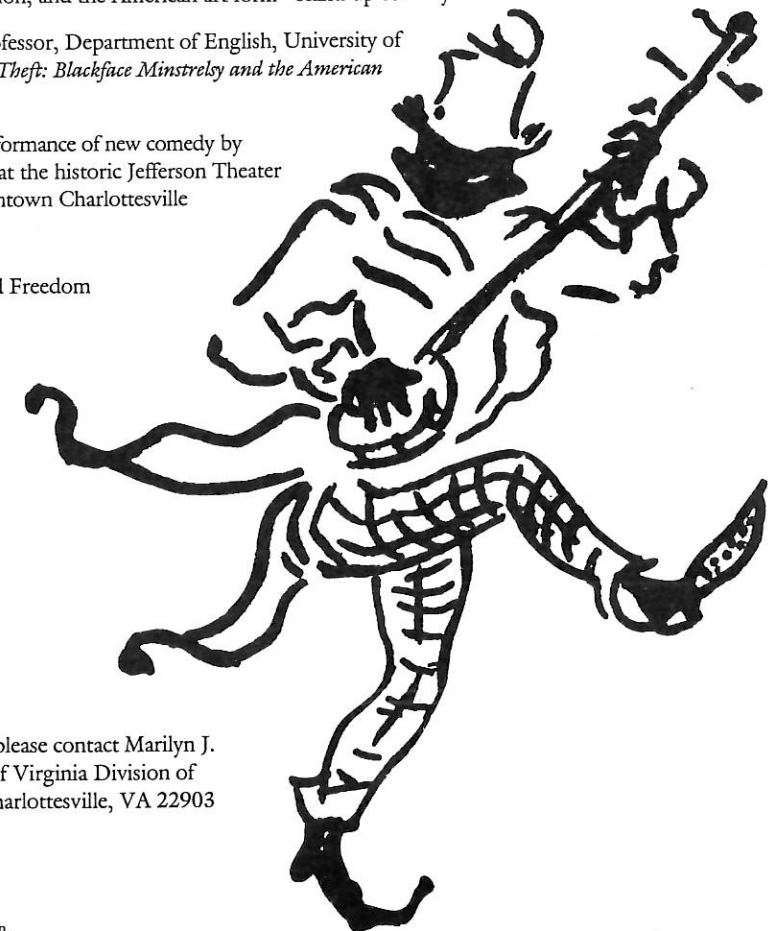
Historians will trace the phenomenon of American humor as entertainment from blackface minstrelsy to vaudeville, radio, film, television, and the American art form - stand-up comedy.

**Lead Instructor:** Eric Lott, Associate Professor, Department of English, University of Virginia. Mr. Lott is the author of *Love & Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class*, Oxford University Press.

Participants will also attend an evening performance of new comedy by Phil Nee, Beverly Mickins, and Jane Stroll at the historic Jefferson Theater (Houdini performed there in 1924!), downtown Charlottesville

**Topics will include:**

- African American Humor in Slavery and Freedom
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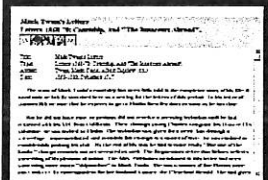
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— Mark Twain Circular



**ABOUT THE CIRCULAR.** The *Mark Twain Circular* was launched in January 1987 by Thomas A. Tenney (Editor of the *Mark Twain Journal*), who edited the first issue, then passed the *Circular* baton to the present editor. An individual who pays dues to the Mark Twain Circle and/or subscribes to the *Mark Twain Journal* receives one subscription (four issues per year) to the *Circular*.

**ABOUT THE CIRCLE.** The Mark Twain Circle of America was formed at an organizational meeting held at the December 1986 Modern Language Association convention in New York; the membership has since grown to approximately 400. Current officers are: President—Victor Doyno; Vice President—Michael J. Kiskis; Executive Director—Laura Skandera-Trombley; Executive Committee—David E. E. Sloane, Susan K. Harris, and Jennifer Rafferty. Past Presidents: Louis J. Budd, Alan Gribben, Pascal Covici, Jr., David E. E. Sloane. Past Executive Directors: Everett Emerson, James D. Wilson, Michael J. Kiskis. Although many members are academic specialists, the Circle also includes many non-academic Twain enthusiasts. The Circle is in communication with other Mark Twain organizations, including those associated with sites important in his life, and cooperates with them.

**ABOUT THE JOURNAL.** Founded in 1936 by Cyril Clemens, the *Mark Twain Journal* is the oldest American magazine devoted to a single author. In 1982 Mr. Clemens retired, and the *Journal* moved to its present home in Charleston, S.C., under the editorship of Thomas A. Tenney. There are two issues per year, Spring and Fall, with a new volume each year (rather than every second year, as in the past). The *Journal* tends to appear late, and begs your patient indulgence. New subscribers may wish to begin with the 1992 issues (to be mailed in summer 1994) rather than the 1994. Although the Mark Twain Circle and the *Mark Twain Journal* are separate entities, Circle members enjoy a reduced subscription rate for the *Journal* (see coupon below for prices). Most back issues from 13:1 to the present are available at \$5.00 each, postpaid (\$2.50 on orders for ten or more; pre-1983 issues are thinner than modern ones, and some are badly reprinted). An index 1936-83 counts as a back issue.

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**FULFILLMENT NOTICE:** Both 1992 issues (30:1 and 30:2) and the Spring 1993 issue (31:1) of the *Mark Twain Journal* were mailed to subscribers in early September 1994. We hope to mail the Fall 1993 issue (31:2) and possibly the Spring 1994 issue (32:1) soon; we ask libraries not to claim these before September 1995. We're doing our best to catch up!

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**SERIAL LIBRARIANS:** The *Mark Twain Circular* is entered selectively in the annual bibliographies of the Modern Language Association and the Modern Humanities Research Association, and in the *American Humanities Index*, the *Literary Criticism Register*, *American Literary Scholarship*, and "A Checklist of Scholarship on Southern Literature," which appears annually in the *Mississippi Quarterly* (Spring issues).

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