



Mark Twain Circular

Newsletter of the Mark Twain Circle of America

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The Circle in San Diego

James S. Leonard
The Citadel

New Honorary Members: The Mark Twain Circle sponsored a cruise on the Evans Riverboat on Mission Bay at the American Literature Conference in San Diego (May 30–June 2) to honor four Twainians for their outstanding contributions to Mark Twain scholarship. Amid champagne toasts, Circle President Victor A. Doyno presented honorary Circle memberships to Sherwood Cummings, Pascal Covici, Jr., M. Thomas Inge, and Horst Kruse.

New Officers: During the same cruise, new officers were installed for 1996–97. Victor Doyno and Laura Skandera-Trombley completed their highly successful terms as President and Executive Coordinator, respectively; Michael J. Kiskis moved from Vice-President to President, Shelley Fisher Fishkin became Vice-President, and Joseph A. Alvarez became Executive Coordinator.

“I Drink with the Ghost of Mark Twain”

Michael J. Kiskis
Elmira College

Let me begin with what my students (and probably a high percentage of my colleagues) would consider an all-too-public confession (neither students nor colleagues really want us to be honest about what we think and do). A good number of my ideas come to me away from the classroom or office or campus. They seep into my thoughts as I lean comfortably back on a wooden or thinly padded bar stool and prop my leg against the wooden skirt that covers the bar. The room is usually dark, there may or may not be music playing, and the regulars are hunched over their folded arms as they share opinions with the bartender, insult one another (sometimes good-naturedly; sometimes with the enthusiasm of long grudges gone bad), or carry on small wars within new or disintegrating relationships. The dissonance between this scene and the formal classroom or antiseptic library helps me approach my work with a fresh and less pretentious perspective. I suspect that my work will have little to do with the everyday lives of those sitting around me. But I also know that the best part of my reading and writing and teaching is intimately tied to the neighborhood in which I grew up, a neighborhood populated by local taverns and dirty wood floor bars. The atmosphere insulates me from a lot of the noise so prominent in the academy and opens paths and reveals connections that I might otherwise pass

over as too simple—as not important enough because they rely on what I have seen and experienced rather than on major literary theories or critical movements. I am reminded of the lesson taught in my freshman writing class some 20 years ago—“Don’t place yourself at the center of your paper. I is not a proper pronoun reference in critical writing. Be objective.” Well, objectivity is a ruse. And I know that who I am is at the heart of each project I undertake. And several projects have been born amidst beer and conversation and noise and solitude.

I recall spending evenings at a local bar looking over the display of spirits and scrawling furious notes on a waitress’ order pad. The notes dealt with Samuel Clemens and his work on the autobiography. I was thinking about storytelling in the midst of stories. I am not sure what the other patrons thought I was doing. As I sat there, removed from the florescent hush and dust of the library, immersed in partial darkness, and scribbling madly to the din of the juke box, the bar tender stopped by every

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few minutes to check my glass (he was a born pessimist who saw each glass as half-empty; Clemens, I think, would have approved). Clemens' creative well and my seemingly bottom-less glass seemed linked. Ideas were on tap. And there before me was the figure of Clemens. I could run though the time line and fit my ideas into the folds of his life. I played with his words and those words helped shape my thoughts.

I don't recall using very much of what I wrote sitting at that bar. I do recall that the writing itself was important. The process of getting words down on paper; the process of thinking about Clemens and how his writing provided the thread that wove the events—pleasures and pains—into the pattern of his life was key. There was certainly something about the environment that was conducive to conjuring Clemens out of the past. I imagined him quite taken by the mix of academic exercise and class awareness that took shape as I sat and thought and wrote. This was not the rarified atmosphere of the classics. It was a spot he might find comfortable. At least for a while. And that began to make a difference. It made a difference because the process was as much about introducing Clemens to my world and my experience as it was about introducing me to the range of his.

I have been reading and writing and thinking about Clemens for about ten years now. I keep reading new books (I buy too many of them). I read some articles (there are just too many). I wade through batches of electronic messages (a recent addition and not without its blessings and curses). I read student papers (sometimes weeping openly at their alternating brilliance and banality). I also write a little bit. Even so, for a time, I didn't even know what I should call him. I have run the full range: from the too familiar "Mark" used so easily by DeVoto and Ferguson (in graduate school, I was asked, "So, you know him personally do you?") to the purist's "Mark Twain," from the more broadly used "Twain" to my present certainty

that has me sticking to Howells' simple "Clemens." It is all very strange. Perhaps the real issue here, however, is not that I don't know what to call him. He will, after all, answer to any number of names—Mark, Twain, Mark Twain, Clemens, SLC, Sam, Youth. The issue may be that I don't know what to call me. Am I a critic? biographer? literary biographer? explorer? Damn.

There is, after all, just so much more territory to explore. There are more precise critical maps to use (major new studies continue to appear at least several times each year). It may be that the territory is increasingly complex and poses dangers for even the most experienced of guides. Maybe it's because I don't do as much thinking in bars as I used to. While I still manage to drop in occasionally to help me keep my balance and reinforce a sense of class that increasingly informs my work, I end up wandering a lot farther as I explore Clemens' life and times. I am not looking for complete understanding. Even partial understanding is a victory when dealing with so complex a personality in so unsettled a life. I have days when I rap out a few paragraphs and end up just plain confused. I end up staring into the monitor, letting my thoughts wander around in hope of finding a path out of the labyrinth.

Let me share some of my wanderings with you (at least I will not be the only one who is confused during the paragraphs that follow). You see, for all the time reading and writing that we all have spent, I sometimes think that I still know very little about Clemens. Rather than there being too little information—there is simply too much. As the Clemens/Mark Twain industry grows, the sheer amount of material makes the prospect of control more difficult—it is very much like interpreting a conversation with the variety

of Babel. I do have moments of clarity as I adjust my hearing to pick up one or two very explicit exchanges. Sometimes what is most clear are the conflicts that survive at the heart of our study of Clemens. And those conflicts drive me down different and sometimes colliding paths as I try to create my own reading of Samuel Clemens, Mark Twain, and the lives they led and the books they wrote.

As I have continued to work on Clemens' autobiography (and by necessity his biography—the two are not as separable as we might, with the recent interest in genre distinctions, think), I have tried to locate a safe mooring within the critical tradition that has taken shape since the early battles between Albert Bigelow Paine, Van Wyck Brooks, and Bernard DeVoto. I have, however, moved away from that critical orthodoxy toward a less dichotomous (and perhaps more vibrant) critical constellation that takes advantage of bits and pieces of biographical interpretation offered by Ferguson, Cox, Budd, Emerson, Kaplan, and Hill on the one hand and Steinbrink, Doyno, and Skandera-Trombley on the other). The central theme of this broadly constructed constellation is an attempt to plane the shell of myth that surrounds the

The *Mark Twain Circular* is the Newsletter of the Mark Twain Circle of America.

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figure of Samuel Clemens until we are able to locate the man at its core. Its aim—or if not its aim certainly its result—has been to introduce complexity into a critical system that jumps to easy classification. It has served—both within its own central orbit and in a series of related studies—to widen the circle within which we place Clemens: we are now more aware of the influence contemporary writing (literature, science, history) had on Clemens; we are increasingly asked to look seriously at the impact of race and class, family and friends, women as well as men on his writing and his ideas. All of this has begun to replace the relatively simplistic and easy Truth of environmental influences (the west against the east) with a complex series of smaller, more focused truths that will, once seen in combination, offer an image of Samuel Clemens as a man who was both a product of and an influence on his times, a man who orchestrated a career and took steps to assure his success, a man who suffered at his own hands and found it nearly impossible to find happiness and peace because his drive for public approval so often conflicted with his need for private, emotional connection. All of this improves our understanding of Clemens' life and works.

It also, ironically, makes it more difficult to teach. Let me tell you about a recurring conversation I have. I have just finished teaching a junior/senior level course devoted to Clemens that has reinforced the intellectual and emotional vertigo. My students kept waiting for me to tell them the truth about Mark Twain.

"You're the expert on Mark Twain," they would chant (sometimes alone, which was easy to turn aside; sometimes in unison, which would quickly become annoying).

"I don't know the truth," I would reply, "but how about looking at several possibilities."

"That's the problem," they would moan. "You give us too many possibilities. Can't you just pick one kind of truth for today and let it go? Geez."

The exchange occurred more often toward the end of the term. I don't think they ever accepted the notion that I didn't know the truth. More likely, they felt that I was holding back on them. They weren't happy, especially when I quoted what has become my favorite and all-purpose line from *The Odyssey*. (Odysseus offers the comment when pressed into still another adventure): "Life is pain." I followed that with the sage observation of Jimmy Carter, "Life is not fair."

"I hate when my parents say that," offered one student. Chimed another, "Yeah, if you don't want to tell us, then don't. Just let us know what's going to be on the exam." Their exam Truth was running head on into my negotiated truths. And we are back to the dissonance that separates the scholar's comfort with negotiated definitions of meaning from everyday expectations that one solid Truth serves as the foundation for our understanding of the world. Reconciliation seems a long way off.

Any reconciliation between our scholarship and the civilians who sit in our classes or share our evenings in the local pub will have to begin with an honest reexamination of the role that Clemens/Mark Twain plays as a cultural icon and the way that we approach and deal with our icons. Any figure who is not only a member of the American literary canon but who has schools, civic centers, streets, motels, inns, bourbon, and hang gliding competitions named after him can be said to have had an influence. But what happens when image survives alone, when a shell replaces the substance that assured status—in this case when the white suit blinds our vision of the man who filled out that suit. About a year ago, a community college in Hartford announced that it wanted to change its name to Mark Twain Community College in honor of Clemens' connection with that city. Students demonstrated against the change; many of them were unfamiliar with Mark Twain and had no idea that he had anything to do with the

city or area. The issue here is not a brand of cultural literacy. It is about how we try to know our past and how we communicate that knowledge both inside and outside the formal and too often opaque walls of the academy. It is also a question of how we deal with our culture's ghosts.

Ghosts, after all, are not simply grist for Charles Dickens or Bill Murray (who faced his own brand in the ghost busters films, *Scrooged*, and *Groundhog's Day*) or Stephen King or Elvis impersonators. Our culture thrives on hauntings—ghosts fuel our notions of the present and are interrogated for hints of the future. Some are honored; more are defiled. When present-day scandals are no longer enough, we exhume the body of Zachary Taylor to see if he was poisoned. When celebrity becomes its own vehicle to media dominance, we write pathographies to identify, chart, accentuate, and (perhaps) create flaws. We revel in insinuated sin. It is a leveling technique meant to sully reputations and steal power and public acclaim. We should wonder how we play a part in this leveling and at least be sensitive to the pen's potential for exploding characters, for destroying myths but leaving little or nothing of reality in their place.

All this suggests the opening lines of a recurring image of mine: "You might consider being a little more hospitable. Nothing melts perfection like the strong light of microscopic observation. We are all vile specimens under bright light." I know the voice. It sounds a little like Hal Holbrook. I am in a dark-wood-paneled room. (As an aside—my class would recognize it. Or at least think it familiar. It resembles the dark-paneled room in the Elmira College library that is home to their collection of Mark Twain materials—some of the paneling and the mantelpiece were transplanted to the library when one of the local pubs was being demolished for urban renewal in the late 1960s—a pub that, supposedly, Clemens frequented on his trips to Elmira. The room is known as the "Mark Twain Room"—access is

restricted to working scholars. There are, I think, only three keys. Even the president doesn't have one.) Clemens is sitting across the table from me. His hand is stretched palm downward atop an empty glass. He seems about 70 years old, and I can't help but think that he—like Sandy in Captain Stormfield's tale—decided to stay near his earthly age once he arrived in heaven. He is dressed in dark colors that match the storm in his eyes; his mood is made darker and more obscure by the fog of smoke that streams from a just-lighted cigar, and there is the vague scent of stale air and scotch sliding across the table top. There is an open bottle. Several glasses. No ice. This is not a scene that lends itself to white suits.

"I think I know what you are up to," I whisper. "It's all related to biography and autobiography. You yourself said that your books laid end-to-end would make up your biography. Besides them, I have read what Paine and DeVoto and Smith and all the rest have surmised and suggested. Hell, I read Cardwell, and I have heard Hoffman."

"Just my god-damned luck," snorts Clemens. He drains his glass. Pours two fingers of scotch in his own glass; another two fingers in the glass closest to me.

"I have read your letters," I continue, and I begin to swirl the scotch around until a miniature vortex takes shape in the glass. "And I have read your autobiographical manuscripts and examined the variations in the texts and the handwritten comments and changes you made. I have plugged the individual pieces into the chronology of your life. After all of that, I have come to an idea of what drove you throughout the project. And what drove you during your final decade."

"Really," he draws. He drains his glass.

"Yes." I lean into the table to prevent an echo in the empty room. "You were looking to regain your muse by resurrecting the dead community of readers that shaped your writing. Your work on the autobiography—especially

during the final five years of your life—was an attempt to feed your desire to rekindle the creativity you experienced sitting on the porch at Quarry farm reading to Livy and the girls. It was an attempt to recall the compassion and connection found within the closest of human communities. Whether those communities are international, national, free or slave, extended or immediate family, you pushed the notion that individual and personal—most often one-to-one—relationships held out promise of spiritual peace."

"Go on," he nods. "Tell me more." He reaches over to the bottle and splashes two more fingers into his glass. He pushes back from the table, stands slowly, and paces back and forth, preparing, it seems, some rebuttle. Or perhaps an explosion of venom against one more damned critic. He lights another cigar.

His tramping about is a bit distracting, but I am not surprised by his movement (Susy thought his walking about between a dinner's several courses one of his most distinct actions; Howells would watch as Clemens tramped and told stories), and I continue.

"You turned to recollection to get back to the storytelling that so filled your youth. The key is the act of storytelling and the way that language and story pull readers and listeners more tightly around the story's teller, effectively creating a shared experience that helps all of them both separate themselves from and respond to the world around them. Story was the one way you knew to spark that personal connection. A storyteller is a community builder. I know you. You were that storyteller when you played with the tales of the southwest and the likes of Nasby. You were also that storyteller when you adopted the oral traditions of the slave kitchen. Both influenced you by focusing on the way story can be used to establish and protect communities, communities made up of listeners. Audience became the one way to determine whether a tale was a success. The more united and tight-knit that

audience became, the more successful the tale."

"Go on."

"That is why you found first-person narrative so useful. You kept returning to the teller as primary conduit for his own tale. You may have played at bringing Tom and Huck back in a variety of published and unpublished texts and journal entries, but you recognized the value of anyone telling a personalized story. That was what pushed you to autobiography. That is what made you turn to Susy's biography and why you intended to delve into Orion's. It's what made you hunt up letters, Ralph Ashcroft's journals, and other examples of first-person narrative to include in the chaotic collection. That is why you ultimately turned to letter writing as a cure for the corrupted dictations—it would return your full attention to the voice you needed to use to influence, to affect, your community of readers (even if you at least pretended that community was made up of only two people—like you and Howells for the Ashcroft/Lyon manuscript; like you and Paine for the sketch on the death of Jean). It all made clear the benefit of keeping the teller in the story, of letting one voice control the overall flow of the narrative even if you were intent on (or perhaps more correctly most capable when) using a string of brief and sometimes separate and complete anecdotes or tales to create the longer fictions."

"Done?" Clemens sniffs.

"Almost," I breathe. I am surprised that I have been able to blurt so much without him taking the floor and running his own stream of words and images against mine. "I think that for all your bluster and railing against the gods, you were most concerned with how human beings relied on each other, on personal contact and connection to navigate through this life. It's one thread that ties your work together—from early tales of vernacular storytellers to questions of intolerance and learning to confront unknown others in the travelogues *Innocents Abroad*, *Roughing*

It, A Tramp Abroad, Following the Equator, and the autobiography, as well as in the fictional worlds of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, and *Pudd'nhead Wilson*. Even the diaries of Adam and Eve; even the manuscripts you left unfinished. I suspect that you pigeon-holed them because you were searching for some of that personal connection and community at the same time you continued to write about its importance. You just couldn't write and search at the same time. And it frustrated you. But you kept on writing. That's a helluva comment on how important writing was to you. Your continued work, your continual work, stands as testament to your essential belief in the lone voice leading into the darkness. Admit it, you aren't the egoist and the misanthrope you pretend to be. I know it. I know you."

Clemens looks directly at me, and with a undeniable note of contempt in his drawling voice, he offers a comment plagiarized, I think, from a taped interview of Bob Dylan—"You don't know me, man," he says. "Nobody knows me." He drains his glass.

Damn. Damn. God damn. He looks over at me not even trying to disguise his keen pleasure at my discomfort. He looks a lot like his conscience once it shrunk to its hideous caricature. He certainly is full of the same piss and vinegar. I catch a hint of whisky breath, I spot a bright sparkle in his eye, and I know what William Dean Howells must have experienced at the end of their bouts of conversation. The scotch seems a good idea. I reach for my glass. It vanishes. Clemens laughs an ambiguous laugh, one that suggests that I am right but also wrong. And Clemens bleeds into the dark walls. I am back at my keyboard staring into the monitor.

While getting ready to start the next paragraph, I focus on my own experience with Clemens and what I have learned. I have learned more about myself than about Clemens. The work that we do reveals our own nature.

Clemens knew this when he wrote that autobiography was merely the "clothes and buttons" of the man. Our real natures can be seen by stringing together evidence gleaned from the comments we have made during our lives, comments both oral and written. Each public comment adds a dab of paint to our self-portrait; however, we are described as much by our silences and by the information "hidden between the lines" (as Clemens would say) as we are by our public statements. Perhaps more so. And that may be the one lesson that he has taught me. It is a lesson that comes back to me now when I slide onto a barstool and think of the contrast between my immigrant grandparents—my grandfather who worked as a carpet weaver in a mill that still stands only two blocks from the house I still own—and blue- and pink-collar parents—my father who worked as a welder and equipment operator; my mother who found work as a book-keeper after my father left the family—and my privileged place in the academy. None of us fully escapes our beginnings. Like Huck Finn who learned to use the survival techniques of the street, we all must turn to our pasts for help to understand how and why we make the choices that govern our lives, the choices we make as students and as scholars.

That, I think, says as much (and perhaps more) about us than it does about Clemens. And those choices remain with us and haunt us (sometimes as playful poltergeists; sometimes as avenging demons) as we go about our daily business. Some of us will use our choices to lead us to new paths for our reading and thinking and writing. I, for one, have recently become more interested in Clemens' notions of class and his—and my—inability to turn away from our individual pasts regardless of how far—physically as well as economically—we manage to travel. I may sit back and enjoy the porches of the faculty club at Berkeley (home of the Mark Twain project) and the farmhouse at Quarry Farm. But I am still—and

most intimately—linked to the porch of my childhood home that looks out on a quiet street and in a still working-class neighborhood. Clemens is the chord that links those three porches and those parts of my life.

That may be why I find myself thinking about Clemens as I focus on the glass in front of me. He has been a teacher of sorts; he remains a mystery. Maybe the problem is, as I said earlier, that I don't do as much thinking in bars as I used to. While I still manage to drop in occasionally to restore my intellectual balance and reinforce my sense of and connection to my family's working-class roots that increasingly inform my work, I end up wandering a lot farther from those roots as I examine Clemens' life and times. He, too, used reading and writing to move farther from his western and decidedly working class beginnings. His life was seasoned with a yearning for solidity and ease; yet, he was skeptical of writing because it seemed to promote laziness and did not exact the same toll as physical labor. His was an unsettled life because he was ultimately unable to reconcile his notion of labor with his work: the swing of the pick was more difficult than the swing of the pen. I know that conflict—as in those days I've mentioned when I knock out a few paragraphs and end up in confusion, staring at the monitor while my thoughts wander in hope of finding an escape path.

Clemens, in the end, was wrong. Writing is physical labor. He admitted as much when he denounced the pen as a hated instrument (at fifty he thought he had written himself out). But, like so much else in his life, that hatred was softened by his ambiguous attraction to the act of writing. He turned to the pen to find solace, to administer a balm to an aching and over-active conscience. He wrote like hell to work out a variety of pain, and it was finally the act of writing—the work—that became most important. The work is the ultimate expression of an ethic, an ethic that shapes and is shaped by our past and that keeps words appearing in blank space.

And that, perhaps, is the final lesson.

More Honors for Tom Inge

In addition to his honorary membership in the Mark Twain Circle (See "The Circle at San Diego," above), Twainian M. Thomas Inge has recently been honored by both the American Humor Studies Association and the Popular Culture Association. The following is an excerpt from a press release (from Randolph-Macon College) announcing those honors:

Dr. M. Thomas Inge, Blackwell Professor of the Humanities at Randolph-Macon College, will receive the Charlie Award from the American Humor Studies Association [at the AHSO session at ALA]. The Charlie is awarded for distinguished contributions to the study of American humor and comedy and has been given only four times previously.

In addition, Inge has had an award named after him by the Popular Culture Association. The M. Thomas Inge Award for Comics Scholarship will be given for the first time at the 1997 Popular Culture Association meeting in San Antonio, Texas. The winner will be determined from an annual paper competition.

Call for Papers

The Elmira College Center for Mark Twain Studies

The Elmira College Center for Mark Twain Studies announces a call for

papers for a conference on "The State of Mark Twain Studies," August 14-16, 1997. Co-chairs are James Wilson of the University of Southwestern Louisiana and Leland Krauth of the University of Colorado. The conference will celebrate the centennial of the publication of *Following the Equator* and honor Hamlin Hill upon the occasion of his retirement.

Ten-page papers suitable for 20-minute presentations are invited on the following topics:

Mark Twain's Travels Abroad
Mark Twain's Travels at Home
Mark Twain in 19th Century
Popular Culture
Mark Twain's Style
Mark Twain's Politics
The Late Mark Twain
The Legacies of Mark Twain
Adventures of Huckleberry Finn ...

Papers will be read by juries without knowledge of authorship. Send papers in duplicate to:

Gretchen Sharlow, Director
Center for Mark Twain Studies
Elmira College
Elmira, NY 14901

Deadline: January 15, 1997.

Dates to Circle

November 8-10, 1996. South Atlantic Modern Language Association Annual Conference; Savannah, GA (Marriott Riverfront Hotel). The Mark Twain Circle will sponsor a session titled "The New *Huckleberry Finn*." Chair: James S. Leonard; Secretary: John Bird; presentations by Victor A. Doyno, David E. E. Sloane, Michael J. Kiskis, and Joseph A. Alvarez.

November 7-10, 1996. ALA Symposium, "Modern American Short Story"; Cabo San Lucas, Baja California, Mexico. Conference Director: Abby Werlock, English Dept., (St. Olaf C; Northfield, MN 55057-1098); werlock@stolaf.edu.

December 12-15, 1996. ALA Symposium, "Influences, Friendships, and Rivalries: Relationships between Male and Female Writers of the United States"; Cancún, Mexico. Conference directors: Laura Skandera-Trombley (English Dept., SUNY-Potsdam, Potsdam, NY 13676) and Alfred Bendixen (English Dept., California State U, Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA 90032; abendix@calstatela.edu).

December 27-30, 1996. Modern Language Association Annual Conference; Washington, DC.

March 13-16, 1997. ALA Symposium, "American Autobiography"; Puerta Vallarta, Mexico. Conference Director: Michael J. Kiskis, Dept. Of English, Elmira C, Elmira, NY 14901; mjkkiskis@aol.com.

May 22-25, 1997. ALA Conference on American Literature; Baltimore, MD. Conference Director: Gloria Cronin, English Dept., Brigham Young U, Provo, UT 84602; croning@jkhbrc.byu.edu.

August 14-16, 1997. Conference at Elmira College (Elmira, NY) sponsored by the Elmira College Center for Mark Twain Studies: "The State of Mark Twain Studies." See "Call for Papers: The Elmira College Center for Mark Twain Studies," above.

About Mark Twain

Thomas A. Tenney
The Citadel

Abbreviations used in this bibliographical series are listed in the January–March 1995 *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 1995 *Circular*.

POWELL, JON. “Trouble and Joy from ‘A True Story’ to *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*: Mark Twain and the Book of Jeremiah.” *Studies in American Fiction* 20.2 (Autumn 1992): 145–54. Powell offers a reading of *HF* “as other than a racist document by examining two possibilities simultaneously,” considering Jim’s changing from comic to serious figure to comic as an issue if

HF is not racist; and if it is racist, whether the racism is MT’s or that of his characters. Powell compares Rachel in the Book of Jeremiah and Aunt Rachel in “A True Story,” and echoes of her words and wisdom in Jim. In the end, Huck and MT flee the racist society they cannot change.

ROSENTHAL, M. L. “Alice, Huck, Pinocchio, and the Blue Fairy: Bodies Real and Imagined.” *Southern Review* 29.3 (July 1993): 486–90. Charles Lutwidge Dodgson (b. 1832), Samuel Clemens (b. 1835), and Carlo Lorenzini (b. 1826), using pen-names, published in the generation 1865–1884 books for children embodying adventure, with central characters that “bear a special relation to the real memories and personalities of their authors.” “The innocent carrier of his author’s humane decency,” Huck is humorless, literal-minded, but compassionate; his “increasing sympathy with the runaway slave Jim, despite his guilt at helping him . . . is a blending of his psychologically believable maturing with Clemens’ own maturing.” Despite “the pressure of death in all three books,” they end in “a pang of regret for the lost freedom of unself-conscious childhood.”

TWAIN, MARK. “Jim and the Dead

Man.” *New Yorker* (June 26 & July 3, 1995): 128–30. A passage from the newly discovered manuscript of *HF* not included in the published book, in which a comic Jim describes the consequences of warming up a cadaver for dissection by a medical student.

This is followed by “Huck, Continued: Five American Writers Reflect on Twain’s Novel and Our Most Persistent Moral Dilemma” (130–33). Bobbie Anne Mason praises MT’s inventive use of language; Roger Angell finds MT “had it right” on the flow of the river and time; E. L. Doctorow is disappointed that *HF*, after breaking away from the world of *TS*, returns to it in a minstrel ending that demeans Jim; to William Styron, *HF* “reveals the mind of a writer with equivocal feelings about race,” and Huck and Jim “remain symbols of our own racial confusion”; and David Bradley, beginning with his own response to being called a “nigger” as a child, traces his own growing understanding of how MT used the word in *HF*: “America ought to be a place where ‘nigger’ has only historical meaning. Until that happens, the safest place for a child to learn about the word is in a book. From there, it cannot bloody any child’s nose.”

Exhibition: “Mark Twain: An American Voice to the World”

Kennesaw State College (Marietta, GA); June 1–August 15, 1996.

An exhibition of original manuscripts, first editions, artifacts, memorabilia, photographs, and images of America’s most celebrated author. Also featuring Mark Twain’s personal high-wheel bicycle. Materials from the collections of the Mark Twain Papers, Mark Twain House, New York Public Library, Smithsonian Institution, Nick Karanovich, and others.

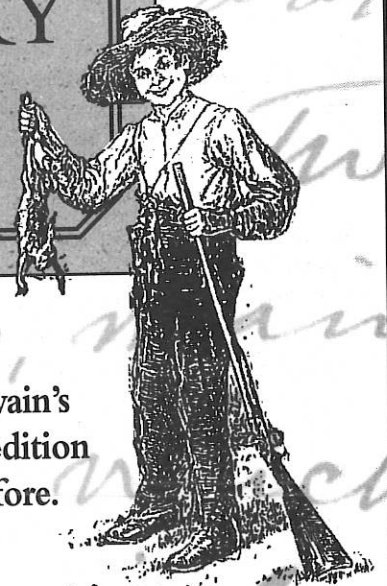
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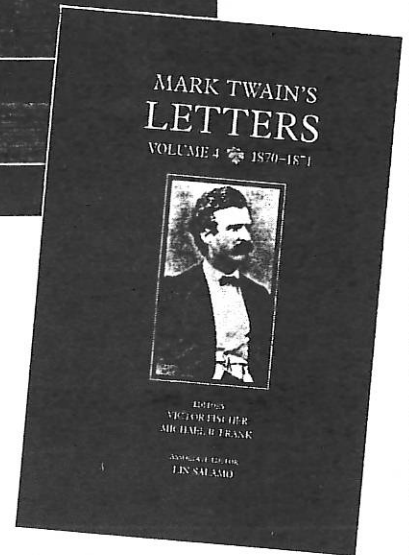
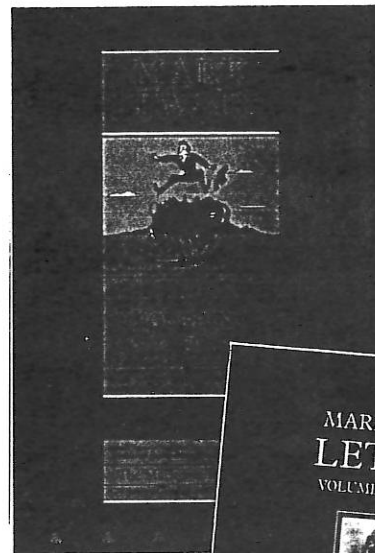
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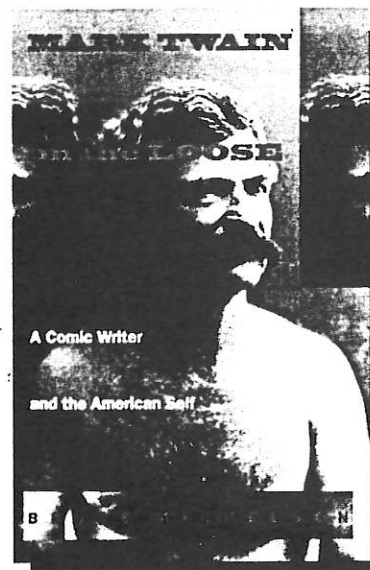
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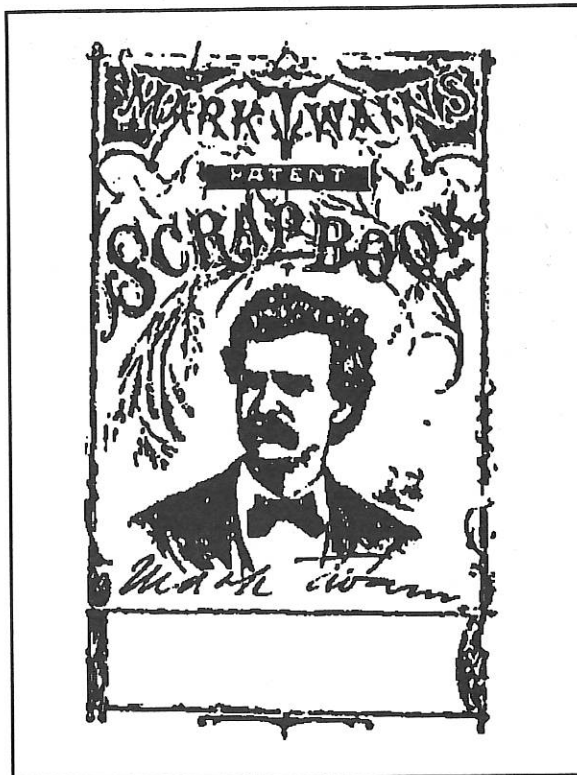
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ABOUT THE CIRCLE. The Mark Twain Circle of America was formed at an organizational meeting held at the 1986 Modern Language Association convention in New York; the membership has since grown to approximately 400. Current officers are displayed on p. 2. Past Presidents are Louis J. Budd, Alan Gribben, Pascal Covici, Jr., David E.E. Sloane, and Victor A. Doyno. Past Executive Coordinators: Everett Emerson, James D. Wilson, Michael J. Kiskis, and Laura Skandera-Trombley. 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 MARK TWAIN JOURNAL. The *Mark Twain Circular* is published in cooperation with the *Mark Twain Journal*. 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), and the *Mark Twain Circular* is mailed (though often not in a very timely fashion) to *Journal* subscribers (usually bundled with *Journal* issues).

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