



Mark Twain Circular

Newsletter of the Mark Twain Circle of America

Volume 25

April 2011

Number 1

The President's Letter

James S. Leonard
The Citadel

Circling

The Year of Twain (i.e., 2010 as the 100th anniversary of Twain's death) ended with a bang—of course, since Twain enthusiasts would never whimper (no “hollow men” they). October saw the *En Route Symposium* (chaired by Terry Oggel) at Elmira, November the *Mark Twain at 175* symposium (arranged by Kerry Driscoll) at Hartford and two Twain sessions at SAMLA (led by Sharon McCoy and Jules Hojnowski); December featured a return to the Bahia Resort in San Diego for a joint (quadrennial) conference (chaired by John Bird and Janice McIntire-Strasburg) with our friends in the American Humor Studies Association.

But now in 2011, the greater truth emerges: every year is the *Year of Twain*—already evidenced by the strong showing of the two Twain panels at the 2011 MLA conference, and to be further demonstrated by the three outstanding Twain panels I've put together for the ALA conference in Boston in May. The schedule for that is posted on the ALA site at <http://www.calstatela.edu/academic/english/ala2/>.

And beyond the ALA horizon, there's the very notable event of the inaugural “Mark

Dates to Circle:

May 26-29, 2011. The Mark Twain Circle at the American Literature Association (ALA) conference, Boston, MA

October 20-23, 2011. The American Studies Association (ASA) conference, Baltimore, MD

January 5-8, 2012. The Modern Language Association (MLA) conference, Seattle, WA

Twain Conference” to be held in Hannibal, Missouri, August 11-13, 2011 (see the “Call for Papers” in this issue of the *Circular*).

Meanwhile Linda Morris is busily crafting the Mark Twain Circle presence at MLA in January 2012 in Seattle, Ann Ryan has brought out another outstanding issue of *The Mark Twain Annual*, and the *Mark Twain Circular* continues to thrive under the capable editorship of Chad Rohman.

In sum, I have nothing but good news to report. Twain and Twain studies live on! Long may they prosper!

See you in Boston (and Hannibal). □



CALL FOR PAPERS

MARK TWAIN CONFERENCE

**AUGUST 11-13 , 2011 –
HANNIBAL, MISSOURI**

The Mark Twain Boyhood Home & Museum is hosting our inaugural Mark Twain Conference in Hannibal, Missouri, August 11-13, 2011. The museum is calling for papers for presentation at the conference.

Abstracts for proposals are being accepted immediately through May 1. These should be e-mailed in Word format to Henry Sweets at henry.sweets@marktwainmuseum.org for review. The abstracts will be reviewed in timely fashion. Presenters will receive a discount on the conference fees.

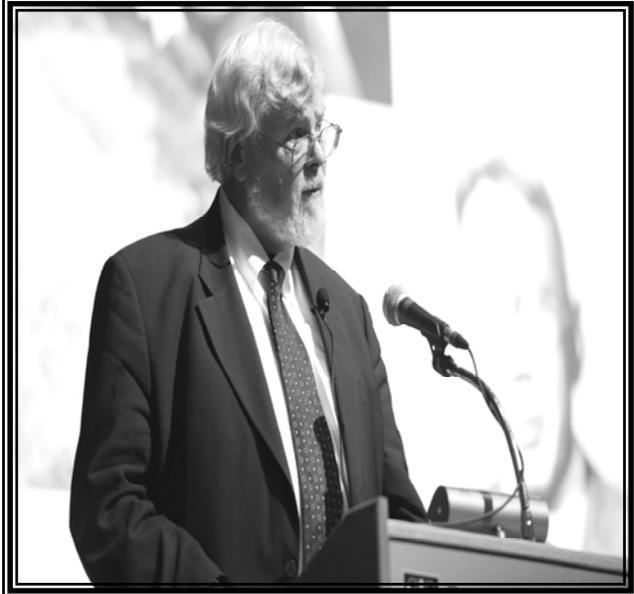
Subject matter is wide open. Presentations are expected to address some topic related to Mark Twain, his life, or his works.

Contact **Henry Sweets** with any questions.

henry.sweets@marktwainmuseum.org
573-221-9010 extension 405



**Mark Twain's Boyhood Home,
Hannibal, Missouri**



Robert H. Hirst, General Editor of the Mark Twain Papers & Project (Bancroft Library, Berkeley, CA), speaking at the November 2011 St. Joseph College (W. Hartford, CT) symposium: "Mark Twain at 175"

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.

Lou Budd (1921-2011)

When an icon disappears we notice a change on the horizon or the building-scape. When a friend has died, perhaps a faint chill, not enough to stop us, for long, from going on. I don't know what that has to do with Lou Budd, who was always at great lengths to avoid anything pompous or overblown, but his passing means a lot. Lou Budd was a humble person, not because of the line he used to relish about Calvin Coolidge: "He was a humble man, and indeed he had much to be humble about." It simply was his nature, with his kindly disposed, smiling appreciation of life, and, of course, of life's ironies. He has meant a lot to Twain scholarship, but he has also meant a lot to Twain scholars, too, and the ways in which we relate to each other—and all to the good, as near as I can tell. To go much deeper into the generalities of funeral orgies would be pompous, and for Lou's sake anything would be better than that. He was a youngster during the depression, and at the height of his career he was not above picking up a penny in the street, professional dignity notwithstanding.

I read, in preparation for this brief memorial (feeling inadequate for it, might be more accurate), Jackson Bryers' thoughtful acknowledgement of Lou Budd as recipient of the 1998 Hubbell award, a statement which very well caught the essence of Lou Budd. But as I read the list of works and prizes, I was surprised at how little a bibliography or a list of honors had anything to do with the real Lou Budd I knew and admired, even though Prof. Bryers got the sense of Lou very well.

Lou Budd, for all his years and honors, was well aware that he started at the beginning just like all the rest of us. His mother wanted him to be a Catholic priest. That was no more his vocation than it was Twain's, but I think a great deal of pressure was put on him from that source. When he went from Wisconsin to the University of Kentucky, he was part of a "class" of freshly minted Ph. D.s who all came in together, and it was obvious that not all of them were going to stay. His coming to Duke in 1952, three years later, was a happy transfer... even for me, although I was only 9 at the time, for it was his work on Twain along with the other Duke luminaries that attracted me to Duke. When I cast my lot with the Twainians later on, *Mark Twain: Social Philosopher* (1962) was a major statement about the core of Twain's thought and expression, and very much in the direction of Twain's humor that I would pick up. His collection of minor unpublished pieces for the California edition of the "Complete Works" from the 1860-1890 era has many more pieces that fill out that work wonderfully, and Lou had his edition ready and on schedule—thirty years ago. When we finally get to see the volume, it will add a lot of depth and dimension that we are now missing. There was never any unhappiness with the delay though, as far as I knew, and he graciously handed me some of the most interesting pieces, like "Barnum's First Speech in Congress," as soon as he saw the direction my work was taking. He was always the most generous of scholars. The two-volume collection of short works which he meticulously compiled for the "Library of America" project was also a major beneficiary of his generosity as well as his knowledge from that work, and a wonderful resource for that reason.

I planned to do a dissertation from the beginning with Lou Budd, and the crucial day for that was one we laughed about once or twice later on. I proposed to Lou that I would write on Local Color and Dialect Poetry or Mark Twain. Lou declared that there was no field to study under the heading of local color poetry, so that might not work. I said I could show him there was, went to the Library, and brought back a file folder of sources. His surprised response was, "There is a field there!" and he kept the secret for many years, only telling his later graduate students that they shouldn't feel that everything had been done, because he recalled the graduate student who... How like him to show such deference to his students, optimism about their futures, and wise council. His next council to me came in the form of a gentle pun, "Do you want to be known as the man who wrote about King James?" James Whitcomb Riley was not at all what I wanted to write about; so it was Twain, after all—It was the right question to ask, light as it seemed, and so it gently led me to the right decision. I have collected further sources on the poetry for 40 years now, and am just starting to do the work on it, but when Lou wondered if he ought to have told me to go the other direction, I was glad to tell him flatly that he had been right... no regrets. It was typical of him to take a perspective that moderated between possibilities.

Lou's own philosophy was broad. Years back, his gloss on the discovery of the Pacific Ocean by Balboa was a brief play. His eyes became wide in wonder, his hands went up. He acted out the incident: "On being told that Balboa had discovered the Pacific Ocean, 5,000 Pi-Ute Indians (I'm not sure about the tribe) clapped their hands to their foreheads and exclaimed 'My God! We've been living here a thousand years and we've been looking the wrong way!'" That was cultural breadth. His breadth was shown in other ways. For a long time he tried to interest people in taking up the collection of Twain interviews, which he thought was a rich field and worth the doing. Failing to recruit someone else, he took it up and did it himself. After collecting for years, he brought forth the results, and they were indeed wonderful, and in the course of doing that, he collected all of the reviews on Twain's works he could find, making another important resource, and all of the popular material he found, which led to *Our Mark Twain: The Making of His Public Personality*.

The real Lou Budd was bemused by his so-called "retirement": he never retired, of course, whether or not an "emeritus" got tacked on to his name-plate. It's not so much that he scoffed at the idea, for *scoffed* would not be his word, but he did describe the morning after he retired. As he walked into the Duke library, someone turned to him and said, "You're retired, what are you doing here?" His response was simple, and smiling, "Well, where else should I be? When you tell me some better place to be, I'll go and be there!" Of course, since no one did, he didn't,... as you knew. Thanks to Lou for all that; he will remain in our memory and our mental landscape. Here or not here, Lou's memory will benefit those of us who knew him, and Twainians who didn't may feel the faint currant of his presence even if they will only consciously know him by the achievements on the page. □

David E. E. Sloane

University of New Haven

**Mark Twain Circle Sessions
at the American Literature
Association (ALA) Conference
Boston, MA**

May 26-29, 2011

Thursday, May 26:

9:00—10:20 A.M.

Session 1-A Reassessments of Mark Twain

Chair: James S. Leonard, The Citadel

1. "Pay no attention to that man behind the curtain": Mark Twain's Autobiography and the Wizard of Misdirection." Michael Kiskis, Elmira College
2. "When Did Susy Become Mark Twain's Favorite Daughter?" Linda Morris, University of California, Davis
3. "Real Property and Fictional Land: The Fact and the Fiction of the Tennessee Land." Larry Howe, Roosevelt University

1:30—2:50 P.M.

Session 4-A Mark Twain Abroad

Chair: Linda Morris, University of California, Davis

1. "Mark Twain and the French." Paula Harrington, Colby College
2. "Mapping Race and Caste in *Huckleberry Finn* and *Godan*." Seema Sharma, University of Mumbai, India
3. "Mark Twain and Cannibalism in Modern Chinese Fiction." Xilao Li, Harper College

4:30—5:50 P.M.

Session 6-A Mark Twain and Societal Values

Chair: Sharon McCoy, University of Georgia

1. "Beneath Pitifulness": Twain's Anti-Gallows Sentiment, 1861-1885." Jarrod Roark, University of Missouri-Kansas City
2. "The Average Man, the Half a Man, and the Three-Fifths of a Man: The Colonel Sherburn Episode in *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*." Frank P. Fury, Monmouth University
3. "The Hidden Hand in *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*." Catherine Kunce, University of Colorado, Boulder

Saturday, May 28:

11:00—12:20 A.M.

Session 17-P Mark Twain Circle Business Meeting

To:

**Prof. Sharon McCoy
165 Weatherly Woods Drive
Winterville, GA 30683**

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)

**Thank You to the
Former and the
New Mark Twain
Circle Officers!**



Original Mark Twain image by Tom Kovacs, Professor Emeritus,
University of Illinois

Report on the San Diego Conference (Dec. 2010)

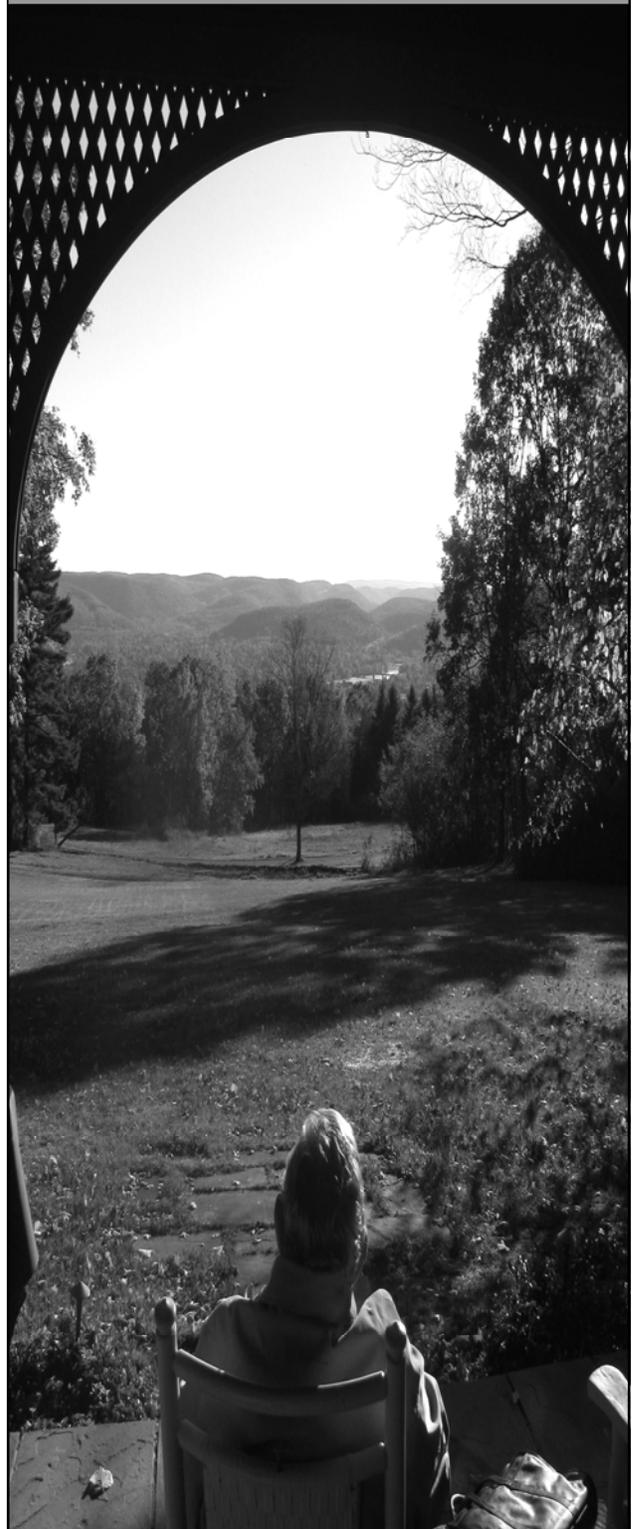
The Mark Twain Society of America and the American Humor Society jointly sponsored its quadrennial conference in San Diego in December. Sessions alternated, more or less, between sessions on Mark Twain and sessions on American humor, with a total of 46 papers on the schedule. Among the Mark Twain scholars there was a nice mix of senior, established scholars, and graduate students bringing new perspectives to bear on Twain's work. The conference drew scholars from abroad, as well—from Japan, Taiwan, Denmark, and England—and independent scholars. In addition to regularly scheduled papers, there were two roundtables in which people read favorite humor pieces from American humor and from Twain's works, and an after-hours joke-telling session in a nearby bar.

One of the major pluses of this conference was that everyone was able to hear everyone else's papers because sessions did not compete with each other for audiences. The American humor folks may have heard more about Mark Twain than they bargained for, while the Mark Twain folks certainly were able to hear papers that expanded the scope of the canon beyond, for instance, the familiar Southwest humorists (though they were well represented) to cartoons, Charlie Chaplin, and war humor, to name just a few topics.

Of special note on the Twain side were papers on the Diaries of Adam and Eve, Mark Twain's adventures with a bicycle, Jim and Huck, Twain and Huck, Twain in translation, and Twain and other writers. We were also treated to two creative pieces (not that scholarship is not creative), one by John Bird who read us a fairytale he has written based on Twain's "Prince Oleomargarine," and a moving excerpt from a longer piece by Sharon McCoy, written in Jim's voice and telling the familiar tale from his perspective. It's the kind of conference where people felt they could take risks, and all present were rewarded for their doing so. The only thing missing from the conference was the sunshine many had hoped would greet them in San Diego.

Linda Morris
President-Elect
Mark Twain Circle of America

View of the Chemung River valley,
looking west from the porch of
Quarry Farm, October 2010:
"En Route" Mark Twain
fall symposium, Elmira, NY



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

Berkove, Lawrence I., and Joseph Csicsila. *Heretical Fictions: Religion in the Literature of Mark Twain*. Hardback. 288 pages. University of Iowa Press, 2010. \$39.95. ISBN: 978-1-58729-803-2. Challenging the prevailing belief that Mark Twain's position on religion hovered somewhere between skepticism and outright heresy, Lawrence Berkove and Joseph Csicsila marshal biographical details of Twain's life alongside close readings of his work to explore the religious faith of America's most beloved writer and humorist. They conclude not only that religion was an important factor in Twain's life but also that the popular conception of Twain as agnostic, atheist, or apostate is simply wrong. *Heretical Fictions* is the first full-length study to assess the importance of Twain's heretical Calvinism as the foundation of his major works, bringing to light important thematic ties that connect the author's early work to his high period and from there to his late work. Berkove and Csicsila set forth the main elements of Twain's "counter-theological" interpretation of Calvinism and analyze in detail the way it shapes five of his major books—*Roughing It*, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, and *No. 44, The Mysterious Stranger*—as well as some of his major short stories. [Text drawn from publisher's website.]

Fishkin, Shelley Fisher, ed. *The Mark Twain Anthology: Great Writers on His Life and Works*. Hardback. 528 pages. Library of America, 2010. \$35.00. ISBN: 978-1-59853-065-0. "Mark Twain," William Faulkner once observed, "was the first truly American writer, and all of us since are his heirs." In this unique collection scores of these literary legatees from the U.S. and around the world take the measure of Twain and his genius, among them: José Martí, Rudyard Kipling, Theodor Herzl, George Bernard Shaw, H. L. Mencken, Helen Keller, Jorge Luis Borges, Sterling Brown, George Orwell, T. S. Eliot, Richard Wright, W. H. Auden, Ralph Ellison, Kenzaburo Oe, Robert Penn War-

ren, Ursula Le Guin, Norman Mailer, Erica Jong, Gore Vidal, David Bradley, Kurt Vonnegut, Toni Morrison, Min Jin Lee, Roy Blount, Jr., and many others (including actor Hal Holbrook, philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, stand-up comedians Dick Gregory and Will Rogers, and presidents Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry Truman, and Barack Obama). Included are essays originally published in Chinese, Danish, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Russian, Spanish, and Yiddish that have not previously been available in English, as well as the work of several visual artists, such as James Montgomery Flagg (creator of the "Uncle Sam Wants You" poster), French playwright and artist Jean Cocteau, and Chuck Jones (of Bugs Bunny fame). Published to mark the centennial of Twain's death, this collection testifies to the enduring and continuing legacy of the man William Dean Howells called "the Lincoln of our literature." [Text drawn from advertising flyer.]

Fulton, Joe B. *The Reconstruction of Mark Twain: How a Confederate Bushwhacker Became the Lincoln of our Literature*. LSU Press, 2010. Cloth.. 232 pages. \$34.95. ISBN: 978-0-8071-3691. When Confederate forces fired on Fort Sumter in April 1861, thousands of patriotic southerners rushed to enlist to fight for the Confederate cause. Samuel Langhorne Clemens, who grew up in the border state of Missouri in a slave-holding family, was among them. Clemens, who later achieved fame as the writer Mark Twain, served as second lieutenant in a Confederate militia, but only for two weeks, leading many to describe his loyalty to the Confederate cause as halfhearted at best. After all, Mark Twain's novel *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885), his essay "The United States of Lyncherdom" (1901), and his numerous speeches celebrating Abraham Lincoln, with their trenchant call for racial justice, inspired his crowning as "the Lincoln of our Literature." In *The Reconstruction of Mark Twain*, Joe B. Fulton challenges these long-held assumptions about Twain's advocacy of the Union cause, arguing that Clemens traveled a long and arduous path, moving from pro-slavery, secession, and the Confederacy to pro-union, and racially enlightened. Scattered and long-neglected texts written by Clemens before, during, and immediately after the Civil War, Fulton shows, tout pro-southern sentiments critical of abolitionists, free blacks, and the North for failing to enforce the Fugitive Slave Act. These obscure works reveal the dynamic process that reconstructed Twain in parallel with and response to events on American battlefields and in American politics. Beginning with Clemens's youth in Missouri, Fulton tracks the writer's transformation through the turbulent Civil War years as a southern-leaning reporter in Nevada and San Francisco, to his raucous burlesques written while he worked as a Washington correspondent during the impeachment crises of 1867—1868. Fulton concludes with the writer's [→]



emergence as the country's satirist-in-chief in the post-war era. By explaining the relationship between the author's early pro-southern writings and his later stance as a champion for racial justice throughout the world, Fulton provides a new perspective on Twain's views and on his deep involvement with Civil War politics. [Text drawn from publisher's website.]

Rasmussen, R. Kent, ed. *Mark Twain: Critical Insights*. Salem Press, 2010. Hardcover. 350 pages. ISBN: 978-1-58765-689-7. This volume in the Critical Insights series, edited by R. Kent Rasmussen, author of *Mark Twain A to Z* and *Critical Companion to Mark Twain*, collects a variety of new, classic, and contemporary essays on Twain's life and works. Rasmussen's introduction offers a reflection on the author's enduring popularity, and Sasha Weiss, writing for *The Paris Review*, praises Twain's skillful re-creation of an authentic American vernacular in "Jim Smiley and His Jumping Frog" and *Huckleberry Finn*. For readers studying Twain for the first time, Rasmussen outlines the essential details of Twain's life, and four new essays provide valuable introductory material. Stephen Railton situates Twain's work within the broad currents of nineteenth-century culture to show how intimately connected Twain was with his time period, and Alan Gribben surveys the author's critical reception to show just how his work has achieved the place it currently holds within the American canon. Hilton Obenzinger then analyzes Twain's view of masculinity, and Lawrence I. Berkove, in a comparative analysis of Twain and Ambrose Bierce, finds more than a few startling similarities between the two humorists. The volume continues with a selection of previously published essays that provide readers with a deeper understanding of the critical issues surrounding Twain's work. First, Larzer Ziff offers an analysis of two of Twain's travel books, *Innocents Abroad* and *Roughing It*. Moving into Twain's fiction, Cynthia Griffin Wolff unveils the darker side of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. *Huckleberry Finn* is then treated in three pieces: one by Tom Quirk, who discusses the novel's overall structure and theme; one by Everett Carter, who examines its humor; and one by David L. Smith, who addresses its treatment of race. Another essay by Berkove makes a case for the mastery of *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, and David Ketterer argues that Twain's later work presents convincing evidence of his skill as a science-fiction writer. Finally, Michael J. Kiskis offers an examination of Twain's relation to domesticity. Concluding the volume are a chronology of Twain's life, a list of his principal works, and a lengthy bibliography of critical works for readers desiring to study this quintessential American author in greater depth. Finally, the volume's appendixes offer a section of useful reference resources. [Text drawn from publisher's website.]

Scharnhorst, Gary, ed. *Mainly the Truth: Interviews*

with Mark Twain. Hardback. 344 pages. University of Alabama Press, 2009. \$24.95. ISBN: 978-0-8173-5539-5. *Mainly the Truth* is a collection of the most colorful and vivacious interviews that Mark Twain gave to newspapers and reporters throughout his career. A master storyteller and raconteur, Twain understood the value of publicity, and these interviews capture Twain both at his most lively and in moments of candor and introspection. In his interviews, Twain discussed such topical issues as hazing and civil service reform, and more enduring concerns, such as his lecture style, his writings, government corruption, humor, his bankruptcy, racism, women's suffrage, imperialism, international copyright, and his impressions of other writers (Howells, Gorky, George Bernard Shaw, Tennyson, Longfellow, Kipling, Hawthorne, Dickens, Bret Harte, among others). These interviews are both oral performances in their own right and a new basis for evaluating contemporary responses to Twain's writings. [Text drawn from publisher's website.]

Twain, Mark. *Who Is Mark Twain?* Harperstudio, 2009. Hardback. 208 pages. ISBN 978-0-06-173500-4. "You had better shove this in the stove," Mark Twain said at the top of an 1865 letter to his brother, "for I don't want any absurd 'literary remains' and 'unpublished letters of Mark Twain' published after I am planted." He was joking, of course. But when Mark Twain died in 1910, he left behind the largest collection of personal papers created by any nineteenth-century American author. Here, for the first time in book form, are twenty-four remarkable pieces by the American master—pieces that have been handpicked by Robert Hirst, general editor of the Mark Twain Project at the University of California, Berkeley. In "Jane Austen," Twain wonders if Austen's goal is to "make the reader detest her people up to the middle of the book and like them in the rest of the chapters." "The Privilege of the Grave" offers a powerful statement about the freedom of speech while "Happy Memories of the Dental Chair" will make you appreciate modern dentistry. In "Frank Fuller and My First New York Lecture" Twain plasters the city with ads to promote his talk at the Cooper Union (he is terrified no one will attend). Later that day, Twain encounters two men gazing at one of his ads. One man says to the other: "Who is Mark Twain?" The other responds: "God knows—I don't." [Text drawn from dust jacket.] □



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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 Spring issue of the *Mississippi Quarterly*).

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