MARK TWAIN

Coordinator: Tom Grant

This study group follows the transformation of Samuel Clemens, an obscure Missouri "border ruffian" into "Mark Twain," the wealthy, critically acclaimed, globe-trotting author - and, by all accounts, the most famous American of his time. Clemens' timely discovery of his pseudonymous "other self" proved to be both a blessing and a curse, and created the central conflict in most of his writings - that between Sam Clemens' yearning for respectability and security and Mark Twain's irrepressible, often subversive, desire to perform before an adoring public. We examine this central conflict chronologically in representative humorous sketches, tall tales, public lectures, adventure stories and fantasies, including two essential novels, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn and A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court.

Readings and other Required Materials:


Tom Grant has published and lectured widely about Mark Twain during his career as a college teacher in Clemens' adopted home state of Connecticut.

************ Syllabus ************

1. Sam Clemens Discovers His Gold Mine: The Vein of Humor
   Selections from The Signet Book of Stories
2. "The Sagebrush Bohemian" Among the WASP "Elect" Innocents Abroad (1869), Selections (in the course pack)
3. "The Wild Humorist of the Pacific Slope" Roughing It (1872), Selections (in the course pack)
4. Nook Farm, Hartford: Marrying Up, Settling Down, Cashing In Selections
from *The Signet Book of Stories*

5. Recapturing Memories: Return to the River of Boyhood Memory
   Selections from *Life on the Mississippi* (1883) in the course pack


9. 10. The Clash Between Medieval Order and Modern Speculation
   *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*

11. The "Damned Human Race" The Making of a Misanthrope
    Selections from *The Signet Book* and the course pack

12. Loneliness at Twilight
    Selections from *The Signet Book* and the course pack
Mark Twain was an American author and humorist. Check out this biography to know about his childhood, life, achievements, works & timeline. Image Credit. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mark_Twain_DLitt.jpg. Image Credit.
Mark Twain. Born in Florida, Missouri, the United States. Samuel Langhorne Clemens, better known by his pen name Mark Twain, was an American author and humorist. He is noted for his novels Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (1885), called "the Great American Novel," and The Adventures of Tom Sawyer (1876). Twain grew up in Hannibal, Missouri, which would later provide the setting for Huckleberry Finn and Tom Sawyer. He apprenticed with a printer. Mark Twain, the writer, adventurer and wily social critic born Samuel Clemens, wrote the novels 'Adventures of Tom Sawyer' and 'Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.' When very angry, swear. We can't reach old age by another man's road. My habits protect my life, but would assassinate you. Be good and you will be lonesome. —Mark Twain. Mark Twain Biography. (1835–1910). Updated