



Center for Mark Twain Studies | (607) 735-1941 | [twaincenter@elmira.edu](mailto:twaincenter@elmira.edu) | [MarkTwainStudies.org](http://MarkTwainStudies.org)

### Wednesday, October 5 at Quarry Farm (7:00 p.m.)

#### “There is no humor in heaven’: Mark Twain and Religious Liberalism”

Dwayne Eutsey, *Independent Scholar*

The reports of Mark Twain’s atheism have been greatly exaggerated. That’s the thesis of “There is No Humor in Heaven,” a new book Dwayne Eutsey is writing that sees religious liberalism as an overlooked source of Twain’s sharp, irreverent humor.

In this talk, Eutsey traces the influence various 19th century liberal theologies had on Twain, mainly through his friendships with several popular clergymen. This heterodox influence not only informed Twain’s unorthodox religious views, but contributed to his writing style and lecture performance as well.

Eutsey presents evidence that Twain’s engagement with liberal religion spanned his lifetime: from his formative years in Hannibal to his time in the Wild West, and from his literary ascendancy in Hartford through the private “dark writings” of his grief-stricken final decade. Ultimately, Eutsey shows how Twain, a frustrated preacher of the gospel who detested religious orthodoxy, found his “low” calling to “excite the laughter of God’s creatures” as a humorist amid the liberal religious tumult that helped to define his era.

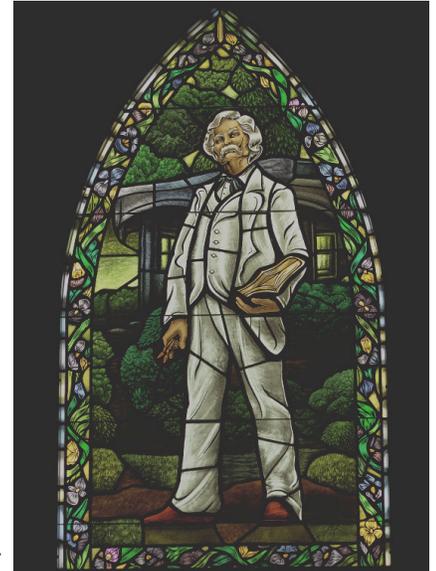


Image of Mark Twain in Peterson Chapel, Elmira College

**Dwayne Eutsey** completed his master’s thesis on Mark Twain’s complex religious views (Georgetown University, 1997). Since then, Eutsey has continued over the decades to research the topic as a labor of love. Establishing himself as an independent scholar in Twain studies through the encouragement of the Center for Mark Twain Studies at Elmira College, he has gone on to publish several academic articles and to present his findings to scholars and general readers alike at conferences and public lectures. Eutsey is a writer/editor with a nonprofit organization on Maryland’s Eastern Shore.

### Wednesday, October 12 at Quarry Farm (7:00 p.m.)

#### “Haunted by the River”

Shirley Samuels, *Cornell University*

For Mark Twain, the Mississippi River appears as a recursive site of memory and loss. For Herman Melville, in his last, notoriously complicated novel, the transformations enabled by a confidence man on a steamboat called the *Fidèle* become at once bitter satire and a ferocious form of rootlessness. Melville’s novels typically take place on the ocean, but these fictions address a precarious river that runs to the sea. What draws me to considering these works together? Both overlap with violence on shore and lead me to the autobiography known as the story of Black Hawk. To read the face of the river is to read the faces of men on the river, in his account as in others, to anticipate whether they bring violence.



George Caleb Bingham, “Raftsmen Playing Cards” (1847) Oil on canvas

**Shirley Samuels** teaches at Cornell University. She is the director of American Studies, and teaches courses within Literatures in English, History of Art and Visual Studies, and Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. Her books include: *Reading the American Novel 1780-1865*, *Facing America: Iconography and the Civil War and Romances of the Republic: Women, the Family, and Violence in the Literature of the Early American Nation*. Her edited works include the *Cambridge Companion to Abraham Lincoln*, *Companion to American Fiction, 1780-1865*, *The Culture of Sentiment: Race, Gender, and Sentimentality in 19th Century America*, and, most recently, *Race and Vision in the Nineteenth-Century United States* (Lexington, 2019). The working title of her current book project is *Haunted by the Civil War*.

## Wednesday, October 19 at Quarry Farm (7:00 p.m.)

“Slate Mine, County Estate, Dairy, and Suburban Home: Evolution of the Landscape at Quarry Farm”

Martha Lyon, *Principal of Martha Lyon Landscape Architecture, LLC*

“The study is nearly on the peak of the hill; it is right in front of the little perpendicular wall of rock left where they used to quarry stones.” - Mark Twain, 1874

While the Quarry Farm is most often associated with Samuel Clemens, who spent the summers of 1870 to 1890 at the property writing from his hilltop study under the pen name of Mark Twain, the significance of the farm’s environs – its landscape – extends far beyond this twenty-year period. Initially territory of Native people, it was, in the early 19th century, eyed for land speculation and later, mined for slate. Acquisition in 1869 by Jervis Langdon marked the beginning of a 113-year family relationship with the property as a country estate and dairy farm, and lastly, a suburban home. *Evolution of the Landscape at Quarry Farm* will trace the landscape’s physical development through this history, and reflect on the economic and social shifts, both local and national, that influenced this development. The talk will conclude with a discussion of options for preserving the landscape as part of the larger effort to safeguard the Quarry Farm property.



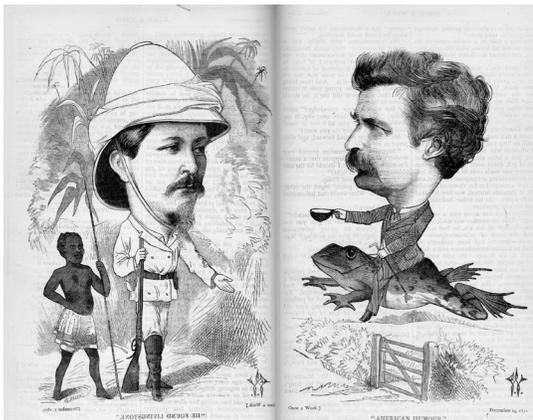
Quarry Farm (c.1875)

**Martha Lyon**, ASLA, is principal of Martha Lyon Landscape Architecture, LLC, a Northampton, Massachusetts-based practice specializing in planning and design for historic and cultural landscapes. Significant projects include restoration of landscapes at the Emily Dickinson Museum (Amherst, MA), Spencer Trask Memorial (Saratoga Springs, NY), Fort Allen Park (Portland, ME), and Charter Street Cemetery (Salem, MA). A licensed practitioner, Martha holds a master’s degree in landscape architecture from the University of Massachusetts. She is currently developing a Cultural Landscape Report for the Quarry Farm to help guide the Center for Mark Twain Studies in its efforts to preserve and more broadly interpret the property.

## Wednesday, October 26 at Quarry Farm (7:00 p.m.)

“‘Mr. Stanley, I Presume’: Mark Twain’s 1872 Visit to England and His Growth as a Writer”

Judith Yaross Lee, *Ohio University*



Samuel Clemens had three explicit reasons for visiting England in the fall of 1872. He sought to cement relations with his British publisher for the authorized UK editions of *Roughing It* and *Innocents Abroad*. He wanted to challenge John Camden Hotten’s unauthorized publications of his work. And he aimed to soak up English life for a book featuring Mark Twain’s comic take on local customs. He had not intended to reconnect with Henry Morton Stanley, whom he had met briefly in 1866, recently returned from his successful African mission to rescue missionary explorer Dr. David Livingstone. But after dutifully forwarded James Redpath’s invitation offering to manage a US lecture tour for Stanley that winter, Sam began a friendship with Stanley that not only fills in the biographical and historical details of a time when both felt the thrill and challenges of life as Yankees suddenly thrust into Queen Victoria’s England—but also tracks Mark Twain’s

growth as a writer shifting from topical sketches and travel books to fully developed fictions and a robust public persona.

**Judith Yaross Lee** is Distinguished Professor Emerita of Communication Studies at Ohio University and a 2022 Quarry Farm Scholar. In addition to her recent *Seeing MAD: Essays on Mad Magazine’s Humor and Legacy* (2020), edited with John Bird, her six books and five dozen essays on American humor and popular rhetorics include *Twain’s Brand: Humor in Contemporary American Culture* (2012) and “Brand Management: Samuel Clemens, Trademarks, and the Mark Twain Enterprise” (2014), for which she recovered the long-lost Mark Twain trademark documentation. Her leadership of the 2020 Quarry Farm Symposium, “American Humor and Matters of Empire,” and her article and special issue of *Studies in American Humor* with the same title, grew out of her early work on Mark Twain’s relationship to Henry Stanley.

Visit the “Trouble Begins Archives” at [MarkTwainStudies.org](http://MarkTwainStudies.org) for a downloadable recording of all these talks and other past lectures. You can also see past “Trouble Begins” programs and CMTS quadrennial conference and symposia programs.