

*Presented by:*  
**Center for Mark Twain Studies**

The Center for Mark Twain Studies (CMTS) is dedicated to promoting the life and legacy of the American author Mark Twain. CMTS manages Quarry Farm, where Mark Twain and his family spent over twenty summers and Twain wrote his most iconic works.

Quarry Farm, situated over the Chemung River Valley, is a cultural humanities site, a retreat for scholars, writers and artists working in the field of Mark Twain Studies. The Langdon family, Twain's in-laws, gifted Quarry Farm to Elmira College in 1982. Twain's famous octagonal Study, once situated at Quarry Farm, is now located on the Elmira College campus and is available to the public year round.

CMTS offers a variety of academic programs and resources related to Mark Twain's life, work, and contemporaries, including research fellowships, academic conferences, and public lectures. CMTS also maintains an extensive collection of Mark Twain-related materials, including a large library of secondary sources, letters, photographs, and marginalia, which are available for scholarly research.



*Lectures at* **THE PARK CHURCH**  
*are* **FREE** *and* **OPEN** *to the PUBLIC*

*Made possible through the generous  
support of* **The Mark Twain Foundation  
and Katherine Roehlke**

**PARK**  
**CHURCH**  
LECTURE SERIES

*Summer 2023*



Wednesday, July 12

## The Ruins, Relics, and Reshapings of Mark Twain's Mississippi Memory

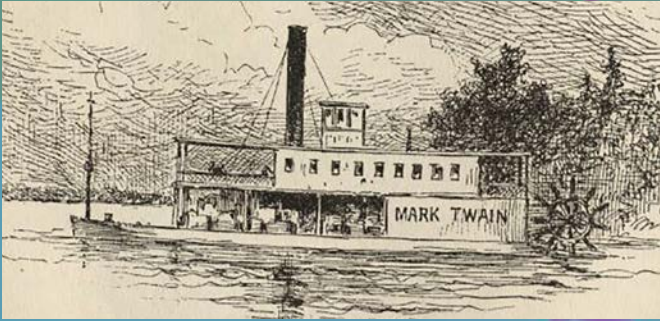


Illustration detail, "Mark Twain," *Life on the Mississippi* (1883)

In Twain's *Life on the Mississippi*, readers encounter recollections of the South shaped by multiple texts, histories, geographic locations, and identities. Ashland explores the relationship between memory and language, suggesting that Twain's South becomes a vernacularized approximation of the past. The *Life* that Twain describes is not so much a memoir of a historical person as it is an autobiographical narrative of a persona.

**Alexander J. Ashland** is an Assistant Professor of English at Viterbo University where he teaches courses in nineteenth- and twentieth-century U.S. literature and culture. His current book manuscript, *The Documentary Turn: U.S. Literature in the Age of Compromise, 1820 – 1877*, establishes a prehistory and theory of documentary aesthetics as it emerged via the hybrid literatures of the nineteenth century. His work has appeared in the *South Atlantic Review*, *Iowa Journal of Cultural Studies*, as well as in edited collections, including *The New Walt Whitman Studies* and *Ekphrasis in American Poetry*.

**Lectures at 7:00 PM, The Park Church  
208 W. Gray Street, Elmira, NY 14901**

Wednesday, August 2

## Twain's Machiavellian Princess: Personal Recollections and Political Philosophy



Engraving, Joan of Arc by Albert Lynch, *Figaro Illustré* magazine (1903)

Dobski puts forth a political study of *Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc*. The novel's treatment of divine right kingship and particular providence was initiated in *Connecticut Yankee* and explored in several other works published around the turn of the century, most notably "What is Man?". Twain's approach to providence in *Personal Recollections* represents a dramatic portrayal of the origins of modern politics through the figure of Joan of Arc as Machiavellian founder. This portrait allows the reader to reflect anew on the tensions between moral freedom and determinism at the heart of Twain's corpus.

**Bernard Joseph (B.J.) Dobski** is a Professor of Political Science at Assumption University in Worcester, MA, where he teaches courses on political philosophy, international relations, and American foreign policy. His published work on Mark Twain appears in *The Review of Politics* (2007), *The Journal of American Political Thought* (2020), and *The Artistic Foundations of Nations and Citizens: Art, Literature, and the Political Community* (2021). He has recently completed a book-length commentary on Twain's *Personal Recollections* currently titled *Twain's "Prince": Joan of Arc and the Origins of Modernity*.

Wednesday, August 16

## The Monetary Imagination of Mark Twain: From the Nevada Mines to the £1,000,000 Bank-Note



"Give me the change, please."

Illustration, "The £1,000,000 Bank-note," *The American Claimant and Other Stories and Sketches* (1896)

This lecture considers Samuel Clemens / Mark Twain's preoccupation with money and its role in his creative life. From early works like *Roughing It* where silver, gold, and greenbacks are front and center, to later works about million-pound bank-notes, \$30,000 bequests, and the vanity of small towns corrupted by life-changing bags of gold, Twain's obsessions with money and speculation show how he came to use his imaginative powers in monetary terms.

**Stephen Rachman** is Associate Professor in the department of English at Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan and former Director of the American Studies Program and Co-Founder of the Digital Humanities Literary Cognition Laboratory at Michigan State University. He is the editor of *The Hasheesh Eater* by Fitz-Hugh Ludlow. He is a co-author of the award-winning *Cholera, Chloroform, and the Science of Medicine: A Life of John Snow*, and the co-editor of *The American Face of Edgar Allan Poe*. He has written numerous articles on Nineteenth-Century American literature, and created an award-winning website on Sunday school books for the Library of Congress American Memory Project.