



The Trouble Begins

Spring 2024 Lecture Series

Wednesday, May 1 at The Quarry Farm Barn (7:00pm)

Gary Scharnhorst, University of New Mexico

“Mark Twain: Social Satirist”



Though often described as a humorist, Mark Twain was much more than a jokesmith, especially late in his career. He may more accurately be described as a social satirist, particularly on issues such as race, religion, free speech and censorship, aristocracy, imperialism, colonial oppression, and political corruption. During his career he was both celebrated and denounced for his activism and his public comments on controversial topics, as illustrated in caricatures and editorial cartoons published at the time, though at his death he was mostly remembered for his patriotism and progressivism.

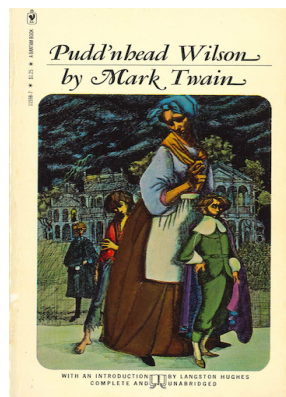
Gary Scharnhorst is Distinguished Professor Emeritus of English at the University of New Mexico and editor of the journal *American Literary Realism*. He is the former president of the Western Literature Association and former chair of the American Literature Section of the Modern Language Association. He is also the author of over a hundred scholarly articles and author or editor of over sixty books, including *Mark Twain: The Complete Interviews* (University of Alabama Press) and the three-volume *Life of Mark Twain* (University of Missouri Press).

Image: “The Brave Sir Mark, A Yankee Writer at King Arthur’s Court” in *Life* (v.42, 1903)

Wednesday, May 8 at The Quarry Farm Barn (7:00pm)

Brigitte Fielder, University of Wisconsin-Madison

“Genealogies of Mothering and Mammying in Twain’s Pudd’nhead Wilson”



Roxy, the mixed-race Black mother of *Pudd’nhead Wilson*, changes her child’s place with the child of her enslaver. She achieves this swap by performing the roles of mother and mammy, projecting race onto each child by virtue of these racialized relationships. Twain’s novel hereby illustrates how race is not simply constructed within individual bodies or identities but via racialized relationships.

Brigitte Fielder is an Associate Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She is the author of *Relative Races: Genealogies of Interracial Kinship in Nineteenth-Century America* (2020) and co-author (with Jonathan Senchyne) of *Against a Sharp White Background: Infrastructures of African American Print* (2019). Her essays have appeared in journals including *African American Review*, *American Literary History*, *American Quarterly*, and many others.

Cover of 1964 Bantam Classic Edition of *Pudd’nhead Wilson*

Wednesday, May 15 at The Quarry Farm Barn (7:00pm)

Rafael Walker, Baruch College, City University of New York

“The Mixed-Race Fiction of Charles Chesnutt and Mark Twain”

This lecture centers on the mixed-race novels of two contemporaries, Charles Waddell Chesnutt and Mark Twain. Walker examines their sometimes-deprecated novels, *Mark Twain’s Pudd’nhead Wilson* (1894) and Chesnutt’s *The House behind the Cedars* (1900), to suggest that the disorderliness of these works is the result of the disorderliness of their subject matter—race in an era convinced that the concept mattered yet couldn’t even consistently define it.

Rafael Walker is Assistant Professor of English at Baruch College, City University of New York, where he is also affiliate faculty in both the Department of Black and Latino Studies and in the Program and Women and Gender Studies. He has published on many topics both in American literature and in higher education

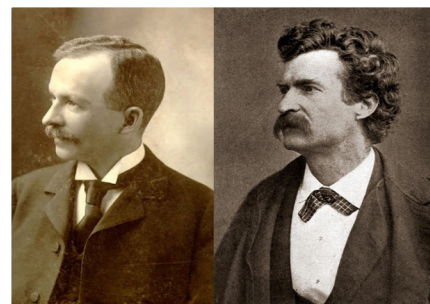
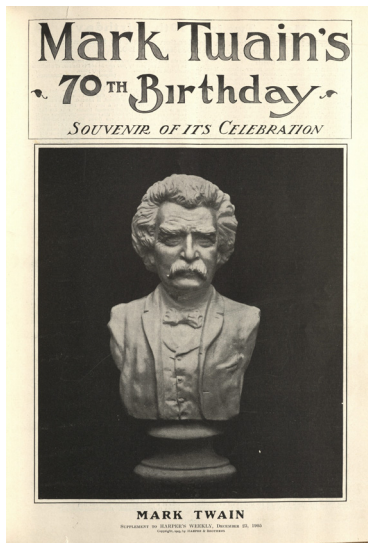


Image: Charles Chesnutt (left) and Mark Twain (right)

Wednesday, May 22 at The Quarry Farm Barn (7:00pm)

Tess Chakkalakal, Bowdoin College

“Mark Twain’s 70th at Delmonico’s: The Dawn of a New Era in American Literature”



On Tuesday December 5th, 1905, the nation’s most revered and well-known writers from across the United States gathered in New York City to honor Mark Twain’s seventieth birthday. While Twain was the gathering’s undisputed center, the occasion featured several other writers, old and young, whose presence marked a new turn in American literature. The party included several women writers and, for perhaps the first time in the nation’s history, a Black and Native American author sat alongside their white counterparts. A close look at this event, the toasts, the menus, the clothes, and gossip gives us a view of Twain’s lasting influence on American Literature.

Tess Chakkalakal is the author *A Matter of Complexion: The Life and Fiction of Charles W. Chesnutt* (forthcoming, St. Martin’s) and *Novel Bondage: Slavery, Marriage, and Freedom in Nineteenth-Century America* (U of Illinois Press, 2011). She is co-editor, with Kenneth W. Warren, of a new edition of *Imperium in Imperio: A Critical Edition* (West Virginia University Press, 2022) and *Jim Crow, Literature, and the Legacy of Sutton E. Griggs* (University of Georgia Press, 2013). She is creator and co-host of a new podcast called “Dead Writers: Great American Authors and Where They Lived.” She teaches African American and American Literature at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine.

Cover of the supplement to Harper’s Weekly (September 23, 1905)

Wednesday, May 29 at The Quarry Farm Barn (7:00pm)

Susan Gillman, University of California, Santa Cruz

“Mark Twain’s Caste Studies in *Following the Equator*”

Comparisons between the US and India have often fueled caste studies today, and Mark Twain’s quasi-satirical, orientalist travel narrative, *Following the Equator* (1897) offers an unexpected late-nineteenth-century US literary example of comparative caste thinking. India, “the mother and home of that wonder of wonders—caste,” becomes a conduit to the racial divisions of Mark Twain’s America—to resonate in the twenty-first century and beyond.

Susan Gillman is Distinguished Professor of Literature at the University of California, Santa Cruz. She teaches 19th-century US literature and World Literature and Cultural Studies, and works on national literatures and cultures from a hemispheric perspective. She is the author of *Dark Twins: Imposture and Identity in Mark Twain’s America* (1989) and *Blood Talk: American Race Melodrama and the Culture of the Occult* (2003), honored by the MLA. She has worked collaboratively on several essay collections, most recently with co-editor Christopher Castiglia on *Neither the Time nor the Place: Today’s Nineteenth Century* (U. of Pennsylvania Press, 2022). Her new book, *American Mediterraneans* (U. of Chicago Press, 2022) traces the strange career of the “American Mediterranean,” a scholarly metaphor and folk geographical concept used from 1799 to the present in multiple disciplines, genres and languages, as a point of departure for a transnational and translational study of the Americas.

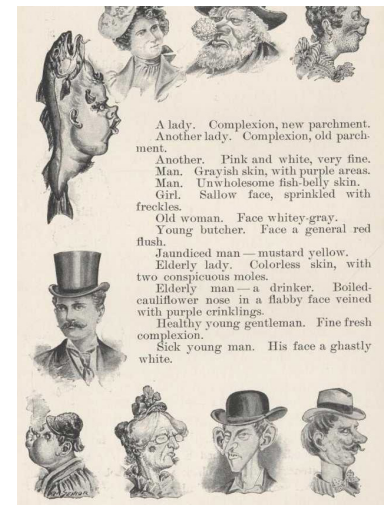


Image from *Following the Equator* (Chapter XLI, p.382)

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