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 gave pleasure â€“ real intellectual enjoyment â€“ to millions, and his works will continue to give such pleasure to millions yet to come. His humor was American, but he was nearly as much appreciated by Englishmen and people of other countries as by his own countrymen. He has made an enduring part of American literature."Â  Overview. Mark Twain in his gown (scarlet with grey sleeves and facings) for his D.Litt. degree, awarded to him by Oxford University. Twain began his career writing