includes works by Samuel Butler, Molière, William Congreve, John Dryden, Aphra Behn, Jeremy Collier, Henry Fielding, Oliver Goldsmith, Immanuel Kant and a host of additional scholars and writers. Section 4, "The Industrial Age," includes, for example, work by Søren Kierkegaard, Mark Twain, and Sigmund Freud. And the final section, "The Twentieth and Early Twenty-First Century," includes a wide range of scholars and authors from Luigi Pirandello to Mikhail Bakhtin, Northrop Frye, Linda Hutcheon, Glenda R. Carpio, Ruth Wisse, and others who address politics, literary criticism, film theory, and history. *Reader in Comedy* presents a rich resource in helping students and scholars chronologically organize theories of humor, laughter, and comedy and demonstrates the dialogic nature of humor theories across continents and over centuries as well as the ways in which these theories are so often interrelated.

Another significant contribution to humor theory is Elliott Oring's *Joking Asides: The Theory, Analysis, and Aesthetics of Humor*, which draws on folklore, anthropology, linguistics, philosophy, and psychoanalytic studies to examine laughter, humor, and jokes. Oring covers Sigmund Freud's *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious* in chapter 1, Victor Raskin's *Semantic Mechanics of Humor* and his semantic script theory of humor in chapter 2, cognitive linguistics and blending theory in chapter 3, and A. Peter McGraw and Caleb Warren's benign violation theory in chapter 4. In chapter 5, Oring reviews *Inside Jokes: Using Humor to Reverse-Engineer the Mind* by philosopher Daniel C. Dennett and psychologists Matthew M. Hurley and Reginald B. Adams. This last discussion covers the theory and use of cognitive psychology and the evolution of humor, particularly with respect to incongruity and perceptions of what is considered appropriate incongruity. In chapter 6, "Framing Borat," Oring examines the film *Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit for Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan* and its controversial international reception and considers why the film was banned in particular regions. Chapter 7 focuses on the charged nature of political jokes, particularly in repressive regimes, and chapters 8 and 9 turn to the internet to examine online jokes as lists and jokes that are defined as a narrative, most notably those that reflect the humor of a residual class. In chapter 10, Oring returns to Freud in his analysis of Jewish jokes and humor; he reviews definitions, quality, origins, characteristics, impetus, and functions and argues that it is necessary to debunk the mythology surrounding Jewish humor in order to better ground its historical aspects. Chapter 11 examines

the aesthetics of humor and why jokes have been overlooked as a category of art, and in his final chapter, Oring examines jokes told at a dinner party, analyzing how the joke tellers interpret each other's witty banter as well as the qualities that constitute a good joke and humorous performance. *Joking Aside* approaches questions of humor, jokes, and amusement from a wide range of theoretical angles and disciplines and poses as many questions for continued analysis as it answers. Oring's writing is sophisticated yet clear, and he delivers an extensive overview of theoretical approaches in the field of humor studies.

Several projects enrich the field of Mark Twain scholarship in significant ways; for example, Gary Scharnhorst adds an interesting dimension to the discussion regarding the source of Sam Clemens's penname in his essay "A Note on Samuel Clemens's *Nom de Guerre*." Scharnhorst recalls the common view that the name derived from the river call to signal "a depth of at least two fathoms or twelve feet, safe water for a steamboat in a channel but dangerous water in shallows."[35] Scharnhorst also notes the perspective from *Life on the Mississippi* that Clemens stole the penname from his nemesis Isaiah Sellers to pay homage to him after his death but points out that there is no record of Sellers using the name and that Sellers was still alive when Clemens first used the nom de plume in February 1863. Scharnhorst contends that Sam Clemens's explanation of his penname was a decoy to suppress rumors that friends had given him the moniker to suggest his capacity to drink for two and his practice of buying drinks on credit in a number of saloons throughout Virginia City. This barroom version adds an additional layer to the source discussion regarding Clemens's illustrious *nom de guerre*.

Tracy Wuster's *Mark Twain: American Humorist* begs the question of what more could be said on this subject. As it turns out, quite a lot. Wuster examines Mark Twain not as the penname of an author but as a performative role by Samuel Clemens and as a cultural figure that was shaped by Clemens, his books, his critics, newspaper articles, journal publications, lyceum performances, and changing perspectives regarding humor and humorists. Wuster explains that

> by discussing the "meanings" of Mark Twain, I am referring to the discussion and debates over what Mark Twain meant to the diverse national and international audiences who encountered him both in print and in person. My aim is to trace how the development of Mark Twain's reputation occurred, not as