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Autore	Coulombe Joseph L. <1966->
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Collana	Mark Twain and his circle series
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Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (p. 161-173) and index.
Nota di contenuto	Go east, young man : class conflict and degenerate manhood in Mark Twain's early writings -- Mark Twain as western outlaw : masculine language, violence, and success in <i>Roughing it</i> -- Moneyed ruffians : the new American hero in <i>Life on the Mississippi</i> -- Mark Twain's Native Americans and the repeated racial pattern in <i>Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i> -- The eco-criticized Huck Finn : another look at nature in the works of Mark Twain -- Mark Twain's influence on Willa Cather's <i>West</i> .
Sommario/riassunto	In <i>Mark Twain and the American West</i> , Joseph Coulombe explores how Mark Twain deliberately manipulated contemporary conceptions of the American West to create and then modify a public image that eventually won worldwide fame. He establishes the central role of the western region in the development of a persona that not only helped redefine American manhood and literary celebrity in the late nineteenth century, but also produced some of the most complex and challenging writings in the American canon. Coulombe sheds new light on previously underappreciated components of Twain's distinctly western persona. Gathering evidence from contemporary newspapers, letters, literature, and advice manuals, Coulombe shows how Twain's persona in the early 1860s as a hard-drinking, low-living straight-talker was an implicit response to western conventions of manhood. He then traces the

author's movement toward a more sophisticated public image, arguing that Twain characterized language and authorship in the same manner that he described western men: direct, bold, physical, even violent. In this way, Twain capitalized upon common images of the West to create himself as a new sort of western outlaw--one who wrote. Coulombe outlines Twain's struggle to find the proper balance between changing cultural attitudes toward male respectability and rebellion and his own shifting perceptions of the East and the West. Focusing on the tension between these goals, Coulombe explores Twain's emergence as the moneyed and masculine man-of-letters, his treatment of American Indians in its relation to his depiction of Jim in *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, the enigmatic connection of Huck Finn to the natural world, and Twain's profound influence on Willa Cather's western novels. *Mark Twain and the American West* is sure to generate new interest and discussion about Mark Twain and his influence. By understanding how conventions of the region, conceptions of money and class, and constructions of manhood intersect with the creation of Twain's persona, Coulombe helps us better appreciate the writer's lasting effect on American thought and literature through the twentieth century and into the twenty-first.
