

Time Present

The Newsletter of the T. S. Eliot Society

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Furies also evoked Harry's childhood, coming back to haunt him at the very moment when Amy (Gemma Jones), the ailing matriarch of the Monchensey family, expected him to resume residence at Wishwood. On yet another level, these adolescent sailors drew subtext to the surface, bringing to mind familiar images of Eliot on the Massachusetts shores of his youth, his boyish hair slightly upturned by the winds of Gloucester Harbor.

With its innovative spirit, Herrin's *The Family Reunion* was more than a centerpiece for the Donmar's festival: it was a fitting tribute to Eliot's decades-long presence on the London stage.

T. S. Eliot Festival in London

John Morgenstern

This past winter, the Donmar Warehouse brought Eliot's plays and poetry back to London's West End in a festival of sold-out performances. On 1 December and 5 January, audiences packed in to hear recitations from *Collected Poems* (including *The Waste Land*) under the auspices of novelist Josephine Hart. On 2 December, the Donmar's own Douglas Hodge gave Thomas à Becket new life in a directed reading of *Murder in the Cathedral*. Following up tragedy with drawing-room comedy two weeks later, Jamie Lloyd directed a rehearsed reading of *The Cocktail Party*. Throughout January, actor Stephen Dillane drew out the musical qualities of Eliot's introspective ruminations in *Four Quartets* to the harmony of a string quartet from London's Philharmonia Orchestra playing Beethoven's Opus 132 in A minor. And these were just the side acts. The main attraction of this landmark festival was a star-studded two-month run of *The Family Reunion*, commemorating the seventieth anniversary of the play's 1939 London premiere.

Part Greek tragedy, part drawing-room comedy, *The Family Reunion* presents any director with real staging challenges. Nonetheless, the Donmar's Jeremy Herrin devised innovative solutions to the biggest problems E. Martin Browne faced in 1939: the shift Ivy, Violet, Gerald, and Charles make from individual characters to members of a synchronized chorus, and the appearance of the Furies. With the assistance of set and lighting designers Bunny Christie and Rick Fisher, Herrin set the chorus outside of time, and outside the walls of Wishwood's haunted drawing room. The curtain opened to a single spotlight illuminating a thin stream of sand as it flowed from the ceiling to the stage. When Harry's aunts and uncles spoke as the chorus, however, the lights dimmed, obscuring the sand and Wishwood from view. Seemingly removed from any definite time or place, as in the setting of Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, Ivy (Una Stubbs), Violet (Anna Carteret), Gerald (Paul Shelley), and Charles (William Gaunt) spoke out of synch with one another, producing a fugue of overlapping words and meanings befitting of Eliot's poetry.

As a result of another inspired innovation, three identical, ashen-faced boys in sailing uniforms represented the Furies. Brandishing fishing nets as they advanced toward Harry (Samuel West) in an eerie, syncopated gait, the children seamlessly cut across several layers of plot. In their most obvious role, the Furies represented the guilt chasing Harry aboard a ship in the Mediterranean. As boys, the



Gemma Jones and Samuel West in *The Family Reunion*
Photo used by permission

Public Sightings

“April is the coolest month.” This tired pun, which has been previously reported in this column, turned up again in spring 2008 on the cover of a city guide—Jurys Washington Hotel [now The Dupont] in Washington, DC—accompanied by a photo of lush cherry blossoms.

“The Greatness Game.” (David Orr, *New York Times Book Review*, 22 Feb. 2009.) In 2005, *Poetry* magazine published a round-table discussion entitled (naturally) “Ambition and Greatness,” in which participants were alternately put off by the entire idea of “capital-G Great” ... or concerned that, as the scholar Jeredith Merrin suggested, the contemporary poetry world might be trying “to rewrite ‘great’ as small...” No one even mustered the contrarian hyperbole with which William Carlos Williams greeted *The Waste Land*: “It wiped out our world as if an atom bomb had been dropped upon it and our brave sallies into the unknown were turned to dust.” Instead, the panelists bickered mildly over Elizabeth Bishop (who had been dead for more than 25 years) and Frank O’Hara (who was born 15 years after Bishop but died in 1966), with Adam Kirsch concluding, “Good and enduring as they are, ... there is something not quite right about calling them great, in the sense that Eliot and Whitman and Dickinson are great.”

Stepping Stones: Interviews with Seamus Heaney, by Dennis O’Driscoll. (New York: Farrar, 2008).

O’Driscoll: Some years ago you spoke with admiration of Patrick Kavanaugh’s capacity “to retain the abundant carelessness of lyric action into his bleaker later life,” something you say Eliot lost. Can a poet take any steps to insure against suffering Eliot’s fate?

Heaney: Again, I can’t pretend to be Sir Oracle. When you write, the main thing is to feel you are rising to your own occasion. And different poets will aspire to that in different ways. The remarks you quote “privilege,” as they say, Kavanaugh’s carelessness over Eliot’s costiveness, but I’m not so sure about that anymore. I can accept, or nearly accept, dodgy doggerelly stuff from later Kavanaugh because there was always a who-cares, what-the-hell kind of energy in his best work—in “The Great Hunger” and the canal bank sonnets, for example. But Eliot’s genius was much greater and very different, his critical superego a lot more vigilant, so it was natural for him, early and late, to write poetry that was more strictly conceived and fastidious than anything Kavanaugh would ever have produced or wanted to produce.

“Eyes that last I saw in tears.” This line from one of Eliot’s “Minor Poems” appears among the clues to a mystery in *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull* (2008).

A Loss

Robert Giroux, Eliot’s American publisher, died on September 5, 2008. Among Giroux’s many accomplishments was publishing the first books of such noted authors as Flannery O’Connor, Randall Jarrell, Jack Kerouac, Robert Lowell, Bernard Malamud, Jean Stafford, William Gaddis, and Susan Sontag. He also edited Carl Sandburg, William Golding, Elizabeth Bishop, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Grace Paley, Walker Percy, Donald Barthelme, Katherine Anne Porter, Derek Walcott and Virginia Woolf.

Giroux left Harcourt in 1955 after office politics cost him the chance to publish *The Catcher in the Rye*. Many of the writers who had worked with him, including Eliot, moved with him to Farrar, Straus, out of loyalty to an editor who had shown loyalty in turn to them. Nine years later, his new firm became Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.

With reference to Giroux’s own authorial projects, the *New York Times* recounts the following anecdote:

His ambition to write might have prompted an exchange with Eliot, then in his late 50s, on the day they met in 1946, when Mr. Giroux, “just past 30,” as he recalled the moment in *The Oxford Book of Literary Anecdotes*, was an editor at Harcourt, Brace. “His most memorable remark of the day,” Mr. Giroux said, “occurred when I asked him if he agreed with the definition that most editors are failed writers, and he replied, ‘Perhaps, but so are most writers.’ ”

Giroux, who died at age 94, was an honorary member of the T. S. Eliot Society.



Call for Nominations

The supervisor of elections is calling for nominations for the position of Board Member—presently held by Jayme Stayer. The three-year term will run from June 1, 2009, to May 31, 2012. Board members must attend the annual meeting of the Society, at which the Board meeting is held, and may also take on other tasks in service to the Society. Nominations and self-nominations should be sent to the Supervisor of Elections, Dr. Benjamin Lockerd (lockerd@gsu.edu) by May 22.

Also, the Board of Directors will be electing three officers at its meeting in September: Historian, Treasurer, and Vice-President. These elections are for three-year terms, beginning January 1, 2010, and ending

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Call for Papers

The Society invites proposals for papers to be presented at the annual meeting in St. Louis. Clearly organized proposals of about 300 words, on any topic reasonably related to Eliot, along with biographical sketches, should be forwarded by June 15, 2009, to the President, William Harmon, 400 Broad St., Oxford, NC, 27565; or preferably by email to wharmon03@mindspring.com.

Papers given by graduate students and scholars receiving their doctoral degrees no more than two years before the date of the meeting will be considered for the Fathman Young Scholar Award. Those eligible for this award should mention the fact in their submission. The Fathman Award, which includes a monetary prize, will be announced at the final session of the meeting.

New for 2009: Eliot Society members who would like to chair a panel are invited to apprise the President of their interest, either with or independently of a paper proposal.

Peer Seminar: Mid-Century Eliot

This year's seminar will be led by Marina MacKay of Washington University in St. Louis. Professor MacKay is the author of *Modernism and World War II* (Cambridge UP), editor of *The Cambridge Companion to the Literature of World War II*, and co-editor of *British Fiction After Modernism* (Palgrave). She has articles published or forthcoming in such prestigious journals as *PMLA*, *Modern Fiction Studies*, *ELH*, *Twentieth Century Literature*, and the *Journal of Modern Literature*, as well as in several essay collections.

The seminar invites participants to share and discuss short papers that read Eliot's later poetry, drama, and criticism in relation to their political and cultural contexts at mid-century (1935–55). Important political contexts might include, for example, World War II, the Cold War, decolonization, the rise of the welfare state, and transformations of liberalism and conservatism in the era of the totalitarian regime. Among the cultural contexts we may wish to explore are those supplied by reading the later Eliot alongside other mid-century artists and thinkers, canonical or neglected, including (but not restricted to) the writers whose work Eliot edited or championed in those years. Other useful cultural contexts might include contemporary literary- and cultural-critical phenomena such as Leavisite humanism, the rise of the New Criticism, and the emergence of Cultural Studies. Participants are welcome to supplement or replace the specific examples named above with mid-century political and cultural contexts of their own.

The seminar is open to the first 15 registrants; registration will close July 1st. Seminararians will submit 4–5 page position papers by e-mail, no later than September 1st. To sign up, or for answers to questions, please write Jayme Stayer (jayme.stayer@gmail.com).

Memorial Lecturer: Ronald Bush

Ron Bush is the Drue Heinz Professor of American Literature at St. John's College, Oxford, where he has since 1997 taught courses in American literature from the beginnings to the present and in 20th-century English literature, especially modernist poetry and fiction. (Previously he taught at Harvard and Caltech.) He is the author of *The Genesis of Ezra Pound's Cantos* and *T. S. Eliot: A Study in Character and Style*; the editor of *T. S. Eliot: The Modernist in History*; and co-editor of *Prehistories of the Future: The Primitivist Project and the Culture of Modernism* and of *Claiming the Stones/Naming the Bones: Cultural Property and the Negotiation of National and Ethnic Identity*. Among his recent publications are articles on Eliot, Pound, Joyce, Nabokov, and Roth, as well as the chapter on "Modernist Poetry and Poetics" in *The Cambridge History of Twentieth-Century English Literature*.

Professor Bush is a native of Philadelphia. His interests include American, English, and continental modernism; poetry; Jewish-American literature; Anglo-Italian literary relations; and genetic and textual criticism. His current projects include no less than four books, all under contract and in progress: the monograph *The Composition of The Pisan Cantos* and a critical edition of those poems; *James Joyce: A Critical Biography*; and *Ezra Pound and the Ideologies of Modernism*.

News

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December 31, 2012. The Vice-President automatically becomes President at the end of three years and Supervisor of Elections after that. All members of the Society are welcome to make nominations for these positions, and any member of the Society is eligible to be nominated. Please send your nominations to Dr. Benjamin Lockerd (lockerdb@gvsu.edu), Supervisor of Elections, by August 15.

Members may also make nominations for honorary membership and for distinguished service awards. These nominations should be made to the President, Dr. William Harmon (wharmon03@mindspring.com), by August 15.



Erratum

In the Fall 2008 issue of *Time Present*, the reviewer of Jeroen Vanheste's *Guardians of the Humanist Legacy* was listed erroneously in the table of contents. In the body of the newsletter, the review was correctly attributed to Anderson Araujo. The editor regrets the error.

American Literature Association

Boston, May 21–24, 2009

Sessions sponsored by the T. S. Eliot Society

Selves and Others in Eliot's Poetry

William Harmon, Chair

Thursday, May 21, 9:00–10:30 AM

1. David Ben-Merre (Buffalo State College), "Now, here, and nowhere: 'the intersection of the timeless moment' in T. S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*"
2. Elisabeth Däumer (Eastern Michigan University), "T. S. Eliot and Empathy"
3. Denell Downum (Suffolk University), "Sweeney and Philomela: T. S. Eliot's Odd Couple"

Eliot's Critical Maneuvering

Earl Holt, Chair

Thursday, May 21, 12:00–1:20 PM

1. David Ayers (University of Kent), "The Russian Revolution and the Literary Public Sphere in Eliot's *Criterion*"
2. James Stephen Murphy (Harvard University), "Such a 'civilized' rebel": T. S. Eliot, Tradition, and Revision"
3. John Paul Riquelme (Boston University), "Wilde & Eliot: The Artist as Critic, Revenger, and Thief"

BOOK REVIEWS

Juan A. Suarez. *Pop Modernism: Noise and the Reinvention of the Everyday*. Urbana: U of Illinois P, 2007.

Reviewed by Erin E. Templeton
Converse College

A quote from Paula Rabinowitz adorns the back cover of Juan Suarez's 2007 book, *Pop Modernism: Noise and the Reinvention of the Everyday*:

In all my years of reading, only once before have I had this kind of positive immediate reaction. I kept wondering, "How can Suarez possibly know so much, keep all his material straight, write about it with such flair, dig up so many corpses, and say something new about *The Waste Land* that makes it a less odious poem?" A book of encyclopedic proportions, *Pop Modernism* is brilliant, and will set a new path for modernist studies.

As one who has never found *The Waste Land* "odious," even when I didn't understand more than a few words of it, I wasn't sure how to take Paula Rabinowitz's praise. But whatever one's opinion of Rabinowitz (or her taste in poetry), she sets rather high expectations for Suarez's book. The book makes interesting connections between various modernist figures, some well-known and others less so, and

the interdisciplinary nature of the study is valuable. Suarez writes in an engaging style and makes persuasive claims. Unfortunately, the "new paths" that this book would set have long been charted. By 2007, the "Great Divide" that *Pop Modernism* had aimed to cross, that which separated the high brow from the low brow and the *avant-garde* from the popular had already been bridged.

Suarez claims that "the tight interpenetration of modernism and the popular, which has been excavated by numerous scholars in the last decade and a half, is the point of departure for the present book"; ultimately he wants to "rescue forgotten concerns, histories, and webs of connection and influence" (4). *Pop Modernism* explores various points of intersection, or "discourse networks," in film, literature, music, photography, and the visual arts. The book is divided into three sections: "Noise Abatement," "The Rustle of the Quotidian," and "The Murmur of Otherness." The chapter on *The Waste Land*, titled "The Art of Noise: The Gramophone, T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, and the Modernist Discourse Network," appeared in *New Literary History* in 2001, and it is largely unchanged. As he explains in his introduction, Suarez aims to question "the centrality of the visual in discussions of modernity and modernism ... and explore the

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A Reply to a Review

A. David Moody

In his review of my *Ezra Pound: Poet; Volume I: The Young Genius 1885–1920* (*Time Present* 66, Fall 2008), Leon Surette wrote that “a disappointment for readers who know Moody as an Eliot scholar is the almost complete neglect of the early relationship between Pound and Eliot.” Let me reassure my fellow members of the Society that this is not the case. Reference to the index alone will indicate that their relationship is far from neglected. I can only assume that Surette had so taken against the book that he did not get as far as the chapters covering the years 1915 to 1920, i.e., pp. 276–410, in which Eliot becomes an important presence, along with Yeats, Hueffer, Lewis, and Joyce.

Surette is put out because his own book, *Pound in Purgatory*, is not listed “in Moody’s highly selective list of ‘Writings by Others.’” But that is a list of *abbreviations*, and its head-note states that “Abbreviations are used only for books referred to frequently throughout the notes.” *Pound in Purgatory* is not such a book, since the Pound it is concerned with develops after 1920, my cut-off point. The same applies to Tim Redman’s (indeed “excellent”) *Ezra Pound and Italian Fascism*. Surette is also put out at not being named on p. 242 as one of those

who argue that Pound shared Yeats’ fascination with the occult: “The unnamed ‘some,’” he protests, “are notably myself and Demetres Tryphonopoulos.” If only he had referred to the note to p. 242 he would have found that he is indeed named, along with others, in this connection. I hope he noticed that he is named again in the Acknowledgments, as is Tim Redman, among “The good and useful critics and interpreters of Pound’s work ... to whom I feel especially indebted.”

On the matter of Pound and the occult I make explicit my quite profound disagreement with Surette. I understand his position, and think it wrong. He will naturally think my position wrong, but I wish he would not misrepresent both the argument and the tone of my pp. 240–44. I explicitly do not claim for Pound the kind of “hidden” knowledge that Surette is concerned about; and I quote Pound’s 1912 declaration, “As the abstract mathematician is to science so is the poet to the world’s consciousness, and neither of them is superhuman or arrives at his utility through occult and inexplicable ways.” Surette can’t see the difference, but it is there.

As an instance of the “devious defensiveness [that] characterizes the book throughout,” Surette makes much of my being “distressed by Pound’s well-documented belief that the Albigensian heretics of twelfth century France possessed forgotten ancient wisdom, which they shared with the Provençal troubadours.” My supposed distress is all in his eye. And when he writes that “Moody triumphantly points out on p. 191 that Pound ignored Montségur” when near it on his 1912 walking tour, the triumphant note is all his, since I was simply noting the interesting fact that, as Richard Sieburth put it in his edition of Pound’s notebooks, “Pound’s

1912 notes ... indicate that he was still more or less oblivious to the Albigensian history of the Ariège.” Surette is himself being devious when he picks up my comments from p. 359 about what Pound made of Montségur when he did visit it seven years later, and pretends that he has caught me out admitting what he claims I had denied. “Pound’s alleged lack of interest in the heretics,” he writes, “has now morphed for Moody—quite accurately, incidentally—into just one of many such interests.” So I admit that he had been preoccupied with those heretics? Surette puts in. But I nowhere make a general allegation about Pound’s interest, or lack of it, in “the heretics,” so Surette’s premise is false. When he concludes his paragraph thus, “This kind of thing makes the book a seriously unreliable guide to Pound’s career and opinions,” it is a judgment that can be turned against his own review.

“Both Redman and I have argued that Pound’s economic radicalism underpinned his enthusiasm for Mussolini, and ultimately led to his anti-Semitism,” Surette wrote, and went on, “Moody, of course, begs to differ, but he gives no hint as to what Social Credit policies and theories were. He

dismisses the economic arguments by (falsely) alleging that Pound ‘hardly bothers with the technical and strictly economic arguments.’” As a matter of fact, I do not beg to differ, as Surette should know since he was present when I gave a paper

(since published in *Paideuma* 29.3) arguing precisely that “Pound came to his anti-Semitism by way of his economics.” There is nothing in *Ezra Pound: Poet* to warrant Surette’s assertion. His further statement that “he gives no hint as to what Social Credit policies and theories were” is equally untrue—see pp. 369–76. Nor is it the case that I “dismiss the economic arguments.” I simply observe, quite accurately, that in the two reviews of Douglas which he published in 1920, Pound “hardly bothers,” etc. Pound’s enthusiasm for Mussolini is of course outside the scope of the volume under review.

A possibly more damaging misrepresentation is this give-and-take-away: “To some degree one must grant merit to Moody’s study since he has access to the multitude of specialized editions of Pound’s letters.... However, in Moody’s case it is a mixed blessing. His narrative is fragmented by his practice of redacting details from Pound’s correspondence with a particular individual for ten pages or so, and then turning either to another edition, or to Pound’s poetry published during the period in question.” This is simply not true as a description of my practice in general, and it is not true in respect of my use of the editions of Pound’s correspondence in particular, as anyone can see by referring to the notes where the multiple sources are fully acknowledged. I do make grateful and acknowledged use of the many invaluable editions of Pound’s letters; but in only one instance could I be said to “redact details ... for ten pages or so,” and that is where the correspondence between Dorothy

Engaging with
[Pound’s] complexity
is what I believe in.

Book Reviews

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Shakespeare and Ezra Pound is the primary source for the story of their developing relationship. (As for Pound's poetry fragmenting the narrative, well, the title of the book is *Ezra Pound: Poet*.)

That I am "a dyed-in-the-wool Poundalator" is how it must look to a dyed-in-the-wool iconoclast who has devoted three scholarly books to exposing Pound's errors and failures. The fact is that Pound's errors and failures interest me as a biographer quite as much as his positive achievements—without them there would be so much less challenge, so much less comedy, and in the end no tragedy. When Surette states, "Clearly Moody believes that we need yet another biography so as to defend Pound from mildly negative assessments in such works as Redman's and mine mentioned above," he grievously misrepresents my approach. "This book," I declared in the preface, "is devoted to recovering a sense of the complexity of the man, and to engaging with the challenging originality of his poetry, and the disruptive, regenerative force of his genius"—engaging with the complexity is what I believe in.

Finally, "Moody's wide-eyed amazement at Pound's genius at every stage of his career [as a poet] becomes wearing"—a comment which the editor thought worth featuring. Surette is of course entitled to call it as he sees it, but what I have had to point out above should induce caution about his judgment. Since he has brought Tim Redman into his attack, let Redman have the last word, from the *Dallas Morning News* of April 13, 2008:

David Moody's splendidly researched and well-written book is greatly needed. As his title indicates, it is a critical biography, one that focuses on the poetry of Pound. Mr. Moody provides exhaustive commentary on Pound's poetic achievement, and he does so with discernment and taste. As the author of an earlier acclaimed volume, *Thomas Stearns Eliot: Poet*, Moody must now be considered among the best readers of modernist poetry.... If you wish to understand why Pound is so important, Mr. Moody is the indispensable guide.



Leon Surette responds:

I would assure readers of *Time Present* that I did in fact read David Moody's book from cover to cover. I did not consult the files of *Paideuma* to learn what the author had written in other venues. I can only take his word that I was present at the paper he delivered on Pound's anti-Semitism, but he is very defensive on that subject in the book under review.

I stand by my assertion that his treatment of the Pound–Eliot relationship is disappointing. Certainly pp. 276–410 are not dominated by exploration of that relationship as he implies. That Moody regards my scholarly work on Pound as iconoclastic only confirms my characterization of him as a Poundalator. Finally, I am happy for Moody—though surprised—that Tim Redman has reviewed his book favorably.

effect of the voice media on modernist writing, and more specifically, the influence of gramophone technology, noise, and popular music on Eliot's *The Waste Land*" (14).

Suarez makes a number of provocative claims in the book, among them that "T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, [is] essentially a DJ session that treats the literary tradition as a sound archive to be manipulated by means of gramophone technology" (7) and that one of modernism's "well-kept secrets [was the fact that] during the composition of *The Waste Land*, Eliot was attached to his gramophone much in the same way that Andy Warhol was later 'married' to his movie camera" (121). And yet, one wonders, beneath the surface, whether Suarez's DJ session, with its loops, samples, and disembodied tracks is really all that different from the ventriloquism to which Eliot seemed to allude with his working title for the poem, "He Do the Police in Different Voices." In both cases, a text is unmoored from its original context and set into a new network of meaning, challenging the expectations of its readers/listeners and forging new relationships. But such is not the focus of Suarez's attention. Rather, he is seeking to situate *The Waste Land* "within a discourse network that brings together the electronic media, language automatism, psychotherapy and the discourse of the unconscious, and the idiom of popular culture" (122). To such an end, the chapter centers on two sections of *The Waste Land*: the typist's vapid sexual encounter with the young man carbuncular in "The Fire Sermon," and the pub scene that closes "A Game of Chess." More specifically, it contrasts the deliberate noise of the gramophone in the typist's flat with the incidental noise of the pub ("HURRY UP PLEASE ITS TIME").

Forgoing familiar questions of formal unity, symbolism, and meaning, Suarez is interested less in what the poem means than in how it works (123). Suarez's historical focus on listening technologies of the early twentieth century takes the chapter in interesting directions as he contrasts various mechanical sound media, chief among them the gramophone and the radio, and then connects these to other cultural fascinations, such as the introduction of machine noise into classical music by composers Edgar Varèse and George Antheil, as well as Thomas Edison's flirtation with spiritualism and theosophy.

While Suarez's main claims have stood the test of time, it is regrettable that its author did not update *The Waste Land* chapter to engage with some of the more recent scholarship that has explored Eliot's relationship with the various technologies of the early twentieth century. In particular, Lawrence Rainey's work on the emergence of the typist in modern literature, Michael North's *Reading 1922*, and David Chinitz's *T. S. Eliot and the Cultural Divide* would have added additional layers of complexity to the argument.* Suarez does cite Chinitz's essay of the same title from *PMLA* 110 (1995) in a list of sources that discuss "traces of

the popular in Eliot's work ... but do not point out to what extent the popular (and modern) elements in his work take shape dialogically against the media and technological environment of the time" (294 n. 38). Even so, the chapter would benefit from more attention paid to Eliot's complicated relationship to popular music, and by extension, the machines that produced it. But the larger problem here is the lack of engagement with current scholarship more generally, which gives it an unfortunate feeling of belatedness: the book cites few sources published after 2000, and these are relegated to the notes.

And yet, despite these misgivings, *Pop Modernism* is worth reading. Eliot enthusiasts might not spend much time with *The Waste Land* chapter, but the book in its entirety brings together a wide variety of modernist art and puts figures as diverse as John Dos Passos, Vachel Lindsay, Joseph Cornell, and Zora Neale Hurston into conversation with each other. Combining leftist documentary film, surrealist assemblages, zombie folklore, and gramophones is no easy task, and Suarez pulls it off in a way that is both engaging and persuasive. Given the sheer mass of detail in the book, one wishes for a more thorough index and a bibliography, but as it is, *Pop Modernism* surpasses 300 pages. Ultimately, the book encompasses worlds, and scholars in many different fields will benefit from the confluence of materials that Suarez has assembled.

*Lawrence Rainey, "Eliot Among the Typists: Writing *The Waste Land*," *Modernism/modernity* 12.1 (2005): 27–84; Michael North, *Reading 1922: A Return to the Scene of the Modern* (New York: Oxford UP, 1999); and David Chinitz, *T. S. Eliot and the Cultural Divide* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2003).



Sharon Stockton. *The Economics of Fantasy: Rape in Twentieth-Century Literature*. Columbus: Ohio State UP, 2006.

Reviewed by Gabrielle McIntire
Queen's University

Sharon Stockton's three key words—"economics," "fantasy," and "rape"—which title her study of twentieth-century literature generate provocative analogies that help illuminate the dependence of violent sexual fantasies on capitalist mechanisms of culture-making. Indeed, the book starts out with a wonderful clarity of purpose, with her introductory chapter putting into play an exciting set of questions about the interrelations between class, capitalism, fantasy, and rape that she promises to explore within a broad spectrum of English and American writers, including D. H. Lawrence, William Faulkner, John Barth, Vladimir Nabokov, Ezra Pound, and T. S. Eliot.

The introductory chapter gives the reader much to hope for in the coming pages. Stockton delineates her aim of scrutinizing and querying "the persistence of the evolution of the rape narrative in twentieth-century literature—the old story of male power and violence, female passivity and penetrability" (2). "What," she asks, "accounts for its persistence? And how, precisely, has the story changed over the course of the twentieth century?" (2). "[T]he violent intimacy of the rape story," she proposes, "discloses the increased desperation with which the body has been made to carry ideology under systems of advanced capitalism" (18). We quickly learn that her "economic" standpoint is indebted to Marxist critiques—with particular interest in "aestheticized images of capitalism" (7)—while her perspectives on "fantasy" rely especially on Freudian, Lacanian, and post-Freudian feminist psychoanalysis. Stockton outlines "desire" in Lacanian terms, and she shows herself in control of theories of fetishism, sadism, spectacle, and gender, turning to a range of theorists including Catherine A. MacKinnon, Luce Irigaray, Alice Jardine, and Judith Butler.

Stockton also knows T. S. Eliot well, and she spends careful time close reading *The Waste Land*, *Murder in the Cathedral*, and "La Figlia Che Piange." That said, she does tend to reduce Eliot to one of his most common stereotypes: that of the misogynist with fascist political leanings—a stereotype that has been increasingly unsettled and complicated in the last ten to fifteen years of scholarship. Stockton's initial approach to Eliot occurs by way of Yeats's "Leda and the Swan," which she convincingly argues is commensurate with both E. M. Forster and Eliot's renditions of female sexual vulnerability insofar as each writer illuminates that "it is the woman's body (Leda, Adela Quested, Philomela) which legitimates violence as divinity" (26). Still, one wonders about the other kinds of divine violence at work within *The Waste Land* that are legitimized through figures other than "the woman's body"—including, for example, the mythic curse on the Fisher King; the pronouncement "I will show you fear in a handful of dust" (line 30); and the voice of the thunder in "What the Thunder Said." Stockton's study does contain some attentive close readings whose implications it would have been great to see extended with perhaps fewer prior assumptions about Eliot's stances on gender and sexuality.

When discussing "The Fire Sermon" segment of *The Waste Land*, Stockton provocatively grants Eliot's speaker the role of compassionate witness to the "rape" of "the typist" by the "the young man carbuncular," finding that "the point of view remains with her who is violated and not with the violator; the reader, then (by virtue of reading—by virtue of entering Eliot's wasteland), must not only side but remain with the victim" (30). Stockton, however, then goes on to insist that "rape fantasies in *The Waste Land* speak more to Eliot's need for a palatable vision of submission than to his desire for androgyny" (30). One wonders how the argument moves so quickly from noting that the "point of view" de-

mands that the reader “remain with the victim,” to condemning Eliot’s wish to make violence against women “palatable.” One ends up feeling, here and elsewhere, that the Eliot who emerges in the book must inevitably fit a paradigm that declares that women are pre-eminently constituted in the social realm by the fact that they are “rapable.” Indeed, following Catherine MacKinnon—whom Stockton reminds us claims that “‘To be rapable ... defines what a woman is’” (10)—Stockton also affirms that to be female is to be “rapable.” Under this lens, even the transgendered Tiresias is compelled to vacillate “between the prescribed gender positions of rapist and rape victim” (37).

At times Stockton sets up wonderful potential subversions of our expectations, and these are the places her study breaks important new ground. Regarding the Philomela segment of *The Waste Land*, Stockton initially suggests that “material excesses of the female body (chatter, sexuality, children, feces) are ideally emptied out, or silenced, by rape; in this way the unruly female body is forced to speak only the music of the transcendent” (35). But she then goes on to conclude that the raped Philomela “eroticizes submission for the modern reader/voyeur at the same time that rape is re-scripted as graceful subordination to an external force” (36). If anything, though, does not the Philomela section show precisely how *ungraceful* the disconnect is that occurs after an incest/rape victim is left violently bereft of a voice except by way of the non-linguistic animal sounds of the nightingale? The cry that rings out, “Jug jug to dirty ears” (line 103), sounds more like a narrative condemnation of Philomela’s forced transformation than a celebration.

Stockton also offers brief, intriguing forays to the language and logic of capitalism and politics, suggesting, for example, when she turns to *Murder in the Cathedral*, that the play unites the reader “with the rootless, democratized mass that, paradoxically, speaks for the poet even as it is crushed by some Other power” (41). Slightly later, Stockton proposes that “the modernist female image ... is ... the anarchy that must be crushed by power, the democratization that must be subdued to social hierarchy, the proliferations of capitalism that must submit to (state? monopoly?) control” (45). On these points, though, one longs for further support on Eliot’s vilification of “anarchy” and “democratization”: others have argued that Eliot in fact embraces such democratic and anarchic free play through his poetics while overtly condemning them in some of his criticism.

Stockton’s book devotes about one tenth of its pages to T. S. Eliot, but in this short and densely woven section she raises provocative questions of interest to the ongoing debates about Eliot, sexualities, politics, and culture. One might have hoped that she would take her bibliography into some of the more recent criticism on both Eliot and gender theory, but her book does open doors that need to be opened, and Stockton approaches debates about Eliot in relation to sexual violence that need to be addressed.

Radio may even have given
shape to the very concept
of modernism.

Avery, Todd. *Radio Modernism: Literature, Ethics, and the BBC, 1922–1938*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006.

Reviewed by Keith Cavedo
University of South Florida

Radio Modernism examines the relationship between radio broadcasting, a nascent technology in the 1920s and 30s, and various modern writers including T. S. Eliot. Avery seeks to complicate or refute the entrenched notion that modernists such as Eliot held circumspect and prejudicial views of popular media like radio because these catered to the “masses” and even standardized, homogenized, and by implication debased literature (at least according to one interpretation, Theodor Adorno’s school of cultural criticism). The conventional understanding has emphasized the modernists’ interest in creating an exclusive, elitist literary art. Avery does a fine job overturning these conventional assumptions, especially in regard to Eliot.

Eliot appeared numerous times on the BBC to present his views first on literature and later on culture, ethics, and religion. Eliot welcomed the nascent technology in part because by means of radio he could reach millions of listeners who otherwise would never have heard—or even heard of—

his poetry and criticism. Radio in general, and the BBC in particular in its early days, may even have given shape and sensibility to the very concept of modernism, otherwise an amorphous collection of discrete

writers who held conflicting and incompatible views on a variety of political, social, and aesthetic subjects. In its early days, the BBC successfully served as a forum for modernists to articulate their ideas and as a vehicle for modernists to reach a large number of listeners. In this sense, radio represented far more than a novel technology: as an agent that contributed to Britain’s literary and social culture, it was unsurpassed. Avery maintains that radio was a “technocultural phenomenon” whose powerful influence deserves more critical attention in media, cultural, and literary studies (1).

Avery focuses his first chapter on John Reith, a BBC official who served from 1922 to 1938 as its Director-General. Reith envisioned broadcasting essentially as a “moral endeavor no less than a technological, political, social, and cultural one,” and he believed that the company’s primary goal was to guide, influence, and shape British culture through radio broadcasting, particularly the “common-sense Christian ethics” he espoused (7).

Avery then discusses the Bloomsbury group of modern writers in chapter two before devoting one chapter each to H. G. Wells (chapter three) and Eliot (chapter four). Wells and Eliot present a study in contrasts not only in their writing but also in their world views and radio personalities during the Reithean tenure. Wells’s views—especially his Huxleyian version of evolution and his anti-nationalistic, world-state ideal—could not be more diametrically opposed to

Reith's "common-sense Christian ethics." Ideological differences aside, Wells proved to be one of the most popular speakers on the BBC in its early days, and much more popular than Eliot. On the other hand, Eliot found that the "BBC's stated moral and cultural agenda dovetailed more smoothly with [his] own" (31). But Reith's encouragement of diverse views and public discourse in his management of the BBC is a testament to the effective open-mindedness of early radio broadcasting.

In chapter four Avery points out that recent studies like *T. S. Eliot and the Cultural Divide* (2003) by David Chinitz have begun to revise the assumed antagonism between modernists like Eliot and popular media. Chinitz's book "convincingly shows the 'deeply ambivalent' but 'culturally elastic' character of Eliot's engagements with a wide range of early and mid-twentieth century mass and popular culture arenas" (112). Chinitz, according to Avery, represents modernism as a "cultural movement" that is "much more complex than has been permitted by the orthodox assumption of modernism's adversarial cultural elitism" (112). Indeed, one of Chinitz's principal arguments is that "between modernist art and popular culture there was in fact substantial interchange" and that Eliot in particular "'not only welcomed but actively supported' media such as radio" (112–13).

Eliot delivered no less than "80 broadcasts (both prose talks and poetry readings) between 1929 and 1963" (113), a substantial number for a modernist who presumably feared the new technological medium. Avery also quotes from Michael Coyle, "the only critic who has offered a vigorous commentary on Eliot's interest and participation in radio" (113), to further his revisionist argument. Coyle has correlated Eliot's broadcasting experiences with Eliot's "development as a cultural theorist": Eliot's "commitment to the BBC proved one of the most sustained and principled engagements in modern literary history, inseparable from his interest in radio itself" (113). In sum, Eliot was fascinated with "the opportunity that radio offered speakers to connect in a new way with their audience ... in the absence of a shared set of common values" (113, 123). Eliot's desire to utilize radio "to foster national unity as a public service in the national interest" shares much in common with the aspirations of John Reith (114). In this sense, radio appealed to Eliot because he perceived the medium as a positive cultural force—one that could influence, shape, and reconstitute culture in a modern age that Eliot regarded as inclining (or declining rather) towards loss, fragmentation, and mechanization.

Avery has written a pioneering study arguing for a new way to view Eliot and other modernists in terms of their problematic relationship with popular media. *Radio Modernism* can be read as a well-rounded and convincing argument in an emergent, interdisciplinary field—one that, like BBC radio in its early days, allows for the inclusion of a variety of "voices." Eliot, as one early broadcaster stated, was accused of an unwillingness to "make any effort either to compre-

hend the experiences of more ordinary people or to render his own experiences comprehensible to them" (125). Yet his perception and use of radio broadcasting demonstrates a "modernist who was nevertheless keenly aware of his 'fellow citizens' and, moreover, deeply 'concerned with the hopes and sufferings of the rest of humanity'" (125). Living in an age in which "video killed the radio star," we may have forgotten the significance of radio, but scholarly works like *Radio Modernism* help us to reconceive radio as an influential popular medium and, especially, to rediscover it as the "technocultural phenomenon" that it was in the hands—or mikes—of many modern writers.

Abstracts

Conference on Literature and Culture Since 1900 Louisville, KY, Feb. 19–21, 2009

T. S. Eliot, Henri Alain-Fournier, and Jean Verdenal

When Eliot had what he called the "exceptional good fortune" to spend the academic year 1910–1911 in Paris, he made the acquaintance of two young Frenchmen who became his close friends. Both were ideal friends for him as they were intelligent, sensitive, and greatly interested in literature, music, art, and drama. Alain-Fournier, who tutored him in French conversation and introduced him to the works of French writers who were to influence his own literary creations, has not received a great deal of attention in Eliot studies despite the fact that he was an extraordinary young person whose critical and creative pieces were published in the major French literary journals of the day and whose novel *Le Grand Meaulnes*, on which he was working during Eliot's sojourn in Paris, was well-received.

Jean Verdenal, a fellow-boarder in Eliot's pension, on the other hand, has received perhaps too much attention—of the wrong kind. While as recently as 2005 one critic was still trying to make the case for a homosexual relationship, what seems far more important than this irresolvable issue is that Verdenal was a sensitive and thoughtful young man who shared Eliot's interests in literature, the arts, and philosophy, despite studying to become a physician. Evidence in Verdenal's letters suggests that the two, perhaps accompanied on occasion by Alain-Fournier, attended art exhibitions, performances of Wagnerian opera, and even some of Bergson's lectures together as well as engaging in conversations about philosophy, their life-goals, and their values.

This paper explores the various facets of these two friends, whose influence on Eliot was to last a life-time despite the brevity of their relationships and their early deaths on the battlefields of World War I.

Nancy D. Hargrove
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Eliot and Pound vis à vis the Most Modern Generation

A quartet of poets born around 165 years ago—Thomas Hardy, Charles Montagu Doughty, Robert Bridges, and Gerard Manley Hopkins—occupy various niches in the literary canon, but none has a place quite as lofty and secure as that enjoyed by many earlier and some later writers. Hardy wrote a half-dozen masterpieces of prose fiction, but many readers hesitate to call him a master of poetry, since his diction and versification can be obscure, oblique, or opaque. (Toward his poetry, Eliot was all but silent, Pound enthusiastic.) Bridges was Poet Laureate from 1913 until his death in 1930, and a few of his poems remain in anthologies, but his reputation has been fading. Even so, he was the most resourceful versifier of any Laureate. (Eliot and Pound both had some acquaintance with him but said little about his poetry.) Hopkins probably has the highest station among the quartet, but many readers are put off by his diction and mystified by his versification. (Toward his poetry, both Eliot and Pound were both all but silent.) Doughty, rather like Hardy, is more respected for prose published in the nineteenth century than for poetry in the twentieth, but in both realms he is extremely problematic. (Eliot was skeptical about his poetry, at least in one review, but Pound seems to have been an adherent, helping himself to a number of words and phrases from Doughty's *The Dawn in Britain*).

The common article of faith—that the generation of poets born during the 1880s was the most advanced and experimental—may need revision to recognize the immense resourcefulness, invention, and audacity of a group about forty years older, who in some ways were more modernist conceptually if not more modern chronologically.

William Harmon
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The Deed is Dead: Ethics in *The Waste Land*

Does *The Waste Land* have an ethics? This question begs to be asked, for the shared need to get beyond the suffering is one in which the reader is implicated, as the striking quote from Baudelaire, “hypocrite lecteur,” reminds us.

The Waste Land, as this paper argues, is not a self-enclosed artificial landscape hermetically sealed from the reader, or the real world, a mere aesthetic storehouse of literary gems on display like artwork for the reader's amusement. The overall aesthetic form of the poem—the fragmented and layered heap of images—is vital, no doubt, to its effectiveness. However, reducing everything in the poem to mere effect, or worse, to *affect*, divests *The Waste Land* of what, I think, is one of its most dominant impulses: its concern with ethics, with, to put it in Eliot's often-cited words, the Baudelairean “problem of good and evil.”

The need for and fatal absence of committed action is ubiquitous in the poem, for what is missing most are not words, but deeds. Ethical responsibility and men of action, recalling Aristotle's *Ethics*, are the vital forces evacuated from *The Waste Land* and are yet, paradoxically, the very cure to breaking out of its epidemic torpor. Like the interspersed allusions in the poem, moments of inconclusive but dazzling insight, everything *is* and nothing can command or sustain. The deed is dead, and ethics, as Aristotle insists, is predicated upon deeds—deeds that in the poem are never initiated, consummated, or even dared (“the awful daring of a moment's surrender”). What haunts *The Waste Land* more than the memory of a crippling war is the terrifying ethical confrontation with its aftermath, an uncertain future in which each person fearfully withdraws into a solipsistic, self-constructed mental chamber, afraid to act and interact.

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American Literature Association San Francisco, CA, May 22–25, 2008

T. S. Eliot, Lancelot Andrewes, and English Hebraism

While there are many salient biographical reasons for Eliot's decision to embrace Anglicanism, in this paper I would like to examine one of the major intellectual catalysts leading up to Eliot's baptism and confirmation in the Church of England in 1927.

In 1923, Eliot met William Force Stead, an American who had been ordained as a priest in the Anglican Church in London. In one of their first meetings, Stead recommended the writings of Lancelot Andrewes to Eliot. If George Herbert “showed Eliot the way to Little Gidding,” as Ronald Schuchard so beautifully puts it, it was, without a doubt, because Lancelot Andrewes had shown Eliot the way to a religious orthodoxy in which “intellect and sensibility were in harmony” (345).

In the essay “For Lancelot Andrewes,” first published in 1926, Eliot claims that Andrewes's sermons “rank with the finest prose of their time, of any time” (341). “Andrewes takes a word and derives the world from it,” writes Eliot in one of the most striking passages, “squeezing and squeezing the word until it yields a full juice of meaning which we should never have supposed any word to possess” (347–48). Enough of Andrewes's writing has survived for us to begin to understand its appeal to Eliot: the way in which Andrewes manipulates and plays with language in both the sermons and in the private devotions is deeply reminiscent of Eliot's poetry, especially after 1927.

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