

# Time Present

The Newsletter of the T. S. Eliot Society

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Don't miss our Annual Meeting, September 19–21!

Register at  
<http://www.luc.edu/eliot>

## In Memoriam

### Grover C. Smith, 1923–2014

By William Harmon

Readers all over the world have long known of Grover Smith as one of the foremost scholars and critics of T. S. Eliot, with publications beginning in 1948, when he was a twenty-five-year-old graduate student, and continuing for decades, with notes, letters, essays, articles, lectures, chapters in books, and books of unrivalled importance.

Born in Atlanta, Georgia, Grover Smith graduated from Columbia University in 1944 and went on to complete his Ph.D. there. He taught at Rutgers and at Yale and then for forty-one years at Duke University. A recipient of Guggenheim and NEH fellowships, Smith published six monographs, including *T. S. Eliot's Poetry and Plays: A Study in Sources and Meaning*, *The Waste Land*, *T. S. Eliot and the Use of Memory*, as well as books on MacLeish, Ford, and Yeats; he also edited the letters of Aldous Huxley and—an essential resource for Eliot scholars—Harry Costello's notes on Josiah Royce's 1913–14 seminar. Smith served from 1989 to 1991 as the second president of the T. S. Eliot Society.

Smith's variety of literary study, concentrating on sources in myth and ancient and modern literature, was ideally suited to Eliot's allusive poetry and drama. In many of Eliot's best-known works, for example, the appearance of water and fire resonates with familiar landscapes and situations and, further, with classic texts from Dante and Wagner, say, and with important figures in philosophy and religion. At the same time, the higher reaches of sophistication find echoes in the modest and even vulgar humor of jokes and songs. Without Smith, we should never be able to appreciate the richness of such titles as "The Fire Sermon" and "Death by Water." Smith made important contributions to the study of other writers, but his greatest impact lay in the large and varied world that he opened to readers of T. S. Eliot.

Members of the T. S. Eliot Society will cherish memories of Grover Smith's works, and several have had the privilege of personal acquaintance. I enjoyed the good fortune to know Grover and Barbara for more than forty years when he taught at Duke University and I taught at UNC Chapel Hill, a few miles away. At one period around 1990 to 2005 our families lived close together in Durham. He and I were involved in the activities of the Eliot Society during those years, and all it took was a local phone call to connect us in a long-enduring cooperative endeavour. During Eliot's centennial year, 1988, Grover invited me to speak to his Eliot class, and I invited him, along with Cleanth Brooks, to meet with my Eliot seminar. Grover and I worked together to stage a reading of *The Waste Land* at a bookstore between

*continued on page 4*

Steven Matthews, *T. S. Eliot and Early Modern Literature*. Oxford University Press, 2013.

Reviewed by Ben Lockerd  
Grand Valley State University

There is a tendency among Eliot scholars to assume that matters of influence have long been settled—an assumption reinforced by footnotes that quote the same few lines deemed most directly relevant from any number of past works. Led astray by such thoughts, we often assume that it would do no good to go back and read those works in their entirety, forgetting that Eliot himself had read and studied them whole. Everyone knows that Eliot was immersed in the Renaissance period, but which Eliot scholars have done half the reading he did in the poetry and plays of that era? Steven Matthews has not only read the Renaissance works Eliot read but also the critical books that informed his reading of them, which allows him to reinterpret in subtle and helpful ways much of Eliot's oeuvre.

There is no overarching narrative to this book. Matthews examines Eliot's knowledge of Renaissance literature and then proceeds chronologically, identifying vocabulary, images, and concepts from Renaissance texts that Eliot made use of throughout his career. He does point to a significant shift in the poet's engagement with the era, coincident with his conversion, noting (as Ronald Schuchard and others have done) that Eliot began then to see Donne and the other metaphysical poets not as the last of the undissociated intellects but as the first of the dissociated minds. Still, it seems to me that Matthews's analysis emphasizes continuity more than reformulation—and I think he is probably right to do so. The strength of this book is not so much in offering a new way of thinking of Eliot's career as in giving insightful new readings to individual works and passages, based on the author's thorough research. I would predict that other scholars will not feel compelled to read it right through, but will consult parts of it when considering individual works.

This book makes many connections that are interesting and valuable. Some examples:

∞ “Myself-possession gutters; we are really in the dark.” This line in “Portrait of a Lady” echoes one from John Webster's *The White Devil* (quoted by Eliot in “Reflections on *Vers Libre*”): “I recover like a spent taper, for a flash, / And instantly go out!” (63).

∞ Eliot's idea that the modern poet must be “difficult” is influenced by George Chapman's argument for a necessary “obscurity” in serious poetry (93–96).

∞ The phrase “vacant interstellar spaces” of “East Coker” may be partly from something G. Wilson Knight says in *The Wheel of Fire* about “the interstellar spaces that divide Hell from Heaven” (162).

∞ Matthews traces the “spectre of a Rose” (“Little Gidding”) to Sir Thomas Browne's *The Garden of Cyrus*, where he says the phantasms of dreams lack reality: the dreamer, “though in the Bed of Cleopatra, can hardly with any delight raise up the ghost of a Rose” (194).

Such interesting connections are not left to stand by themselves, but are woven into extended analyses—this is not just a series of footnotes. Matthews makes many larger points. He suggests, for instance, that Colin Still's book on *The Tempest*, which speaks of the “psychology of salvation,” had a marked influence on “Marina.” (I would suggest that we also get hints of that salvific note in the *Tempest* references in *The Waste Land*.) Elsewhere, he writes persuasively of *The Confidential Clerk* as an offspring of Shakespearian romance.

There are a few surprising omissions. When Matthews discusses the “familiar compound ghost” in “Little Gidding,” he does not mention the echo of Sonnet 86, in which Shakespeare speaks of an “affable familiar ghost.” (This allusion, by the way, was identified long ago by the late lamented dean of Eliot studies, Grover Smith.) At times, too, the influence of writers from other periods is minimized. For instance, the image of the dance in *Four Quartets* certainly owes much to Sir Thomas Elyot and Sir John Davies, and is profoundly linked with the dance in the *Paradiso* as well. But such omissions and exaggerations are inevitable in a work of such scope.

Matthews indeed tackles a large topic here, and readers conversant with Renaissance literature will naturally take issue with him here and there. For instance, I myself am not convinced by his reading of the line from Spenser's

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# T.S. ELIOT SOCIETY 35TH ANNUAL MEETING

## St. Louis, September 19–21

### FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

#### Washington University in St. Louis

Board Meeting 9:00–12:00  
Coffee Room, Duncker Hall

Peer Seminar 10:00–12:00  
Eliot and History  
Chair: T. Austin Graham,  
Columbia U  
Room 217, Eads Hall

Scholars Seminar I 10:00–12:00  
Chair: Patrick Query, West Point  
Room 205, South Brookings Hall

Scholars Seminar II 10:00–12:00  
Chair: John Whittier-Ferguson,  
U of Michigan  
Conference room, Duncker Hall

*No auditors in seminars, please*

Lunch *ad lib*

Registration 12:00–1:30  
Duncker Hall

President's Welcome 1:30

Opening Lecture 1:45–2:15

Ronald Schuchard, Emory U  
The Legacy of Valerie Eliot and  
the Future of Eliot Studies

Session I 2:30–4:00  
Chair: Anita Patterson, Boston U

John Morgenstern, Clemson U  
T. S. Eliot and Impressionism  
Roderick Overaa, U of Tampa  
“The Lotus Rose, Quietly”: Eliot,  
Asia, and the 1904 World's Fair  
in St. Louis

Matt Seybold, U of Alabama  
Astride the Dark Horse: Eliot  
and the Lloyds Bank Intelligence  
Department

#### Memorial Lecture

4:15–5:30  
Sarah Cole, Columbia U  
In the Cave, in the Valley, in the  
Cathedral, in the Body: Scales of  
History in Eliot and Modernism

#### Reception

5:30–6:30

Dutch Treat Dinner 7:30  
Central Cafe, 331 N. Euclid Ave

### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

#### The St. Louis Woman's Club 4600 Lindell Boulevard

Session II 9:00–10:30  
Chair: Cyrena Pondrom, U of  
Wisconsin-Madison

Aakanksha Virkar-Yates, Institute of  
English Studies, London  
Absolute Music: Schopenhauer,  
Beethoven, and Eliot's *Four  
Quartets*

Giuliana Ferreccio, U of Turin  
About Time: T. S. Eliot and  
Walter Benjamin

Michael Bogucki, Stanford U  
Eliot's Language-Shelters

Session III 10:45–12:15  
Chair: John Whittier-Ferguson, U of  
Michigan

David Chinitz, Loyola U, Chicago  
Integrity and Ideology in *Murder  
in the Cathedral*

Mary Kim, Stanford U  
“I Don't Hear Any Voices”: The  
Changing Allusions of T. S. Eliot  
Ria Banerjee, CUNY Guttman  
Dismantled Modernity: Built  
Spaces in the Onstage Eliot and  
Beyond

Society Luncheon 12:30–2:00

Session IV 2:00–3:00  
*The Complete Prose of T. S. Eliot:  
A Closer Look*  
Chair: Ronald Schuchard, Emory

Vol. 1: Jewel Spears Brooker,  
Eckerd C

Vol. 2: Anthony Cuda, U of NC  
Greensboro

Reception 3:00–4:30  
*Courtesy of Johns Hopkins UP*

Society Dinner 6:00

Home of Tony & Melanie Fathman  
4967 Pershing Place

Announcement of Fathman Award

### SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

#### First Unitarian Church 5007 Waterman Boulevard

Session V 10:00–11:30  
Chair: Chris Buttram, Winona State

Patrick Query, West Point  
The Activist's Eliot: Shantih,  
War, and *The Waste Land*  
Stefano Casella, IULM-Milan  
*Ash-Wednesday* Between  
Conversion and Initiation  
Benjamin Hagen, U of Rhode Island  
A Good Deal of Looking Back:  
Passionate Aging in T. S. Eliot  
and Wallace Stevens

Eliot Aloud 11:45–12:15  
Chair: Julia Daniel, West Virginia U

## T.S. ELIOT SOCIETY 35TH ANNUAL MEETING

### Peer Seminar Participants

Grace Lillard, Wash U  
Gabrielle McIntire, Queens U,  
Toronto  
Stephen Pasqualina, U of Southern  
California  
Shawn Worthington, Boston U

### Scholars Seminar I

Caleb Agnew, U of Virginia  
Ria Banerjee, CUNY  
Annarose Fitzgerald, U of New  
Mexico  
Mary Kim, Stanford U  
Deborah Leiter Nyabuti, Southern  
Illinois U  
David Partenheimer, Truman State  
Michael Rizzo, Queens U

### Scholars Seminar II

Adam Cotton, Queens U, Toronto  
Armen Davoudian, Stanford U  
Darcy Egan, John Carroll U  
Lyle Enright, Loyola U Chicago  
Yvette Mylett, Loyola Marymount  
Jonathan Patterson, U of Kansas  
Bryan Salmons, Lincoln U

## IN MEMORIAM

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Durham and Chapel Hill, with recorded passages from *Tristan und Isolde*, *Götterdämmerung*, and *Parsifal*. In 1990, for the Thomas Hardy sesquicentennial, Barbara Smith joined Christopher Armitage of UNC in a reading of *Poems of 1912–1913*. (I don't suppose Grover was a Hardy enthusiast, but I may have pointed out that Hardy and Eliot were both poets named Thomas whose resting places were Saint Michael's parish churches in adjacent counties, Somerset and Dorset.)

I mention that because it is the kind of linkage that Grover seemed to like. One afternoon he telephoned to ask if I were at home. He asked if he could bring me something. I said that would be a pleasure. When he came to our unit in an apartment complex, he noticed that the number was 1919, adding "That must be your favorite number." I said I didn't know why it should be. "Well," he said, in his only-connect mood, "'Gerontion' was written in 1919." Indeed, at the time I was working on "Gerontion." A more recent demonstration of only-connecting came in 2008, during a presidential election. By then Anne and I had moved thirty miles away, to Oxford, NC, so that Grover and I communicated mostly by telephone. He was as far to the right as I was to the left, but we were alike in being bemused by developments. "I don't get it," Grover said. "For a very long time, 'red' has meant left-wing,

socialist, communist, and so forth. Now, suddenly, 'red state' means right-wing... What's going on?" That was

Grover in his philological element, always probing symbols and meanings.

It may be hard to realize now, in 2014, that Eliot and Joyce had to struggle against ridicule and insult before attaining classic status. The first issue of *Time* magazine, issued in 1923, the year Grover was born, made fun of *Ulysses* and *The Waste Land*, which had been published a year earlier. Asking "Has the Reader Any Rights Before the Bar of Literature?" the article sneers, "There is a new kind of literature abroad in the land, whose only obvious fault is that no one can understand it."

In time, Joyce and Eliot were both honored on the cover of *Time*, but not without first suffering a measure of persecution. Writers could have a hard time being taken seriously,

and scholars could face similar handicaps. When I began graduate work in the 1950s, some programs discouraged study of anything but poetry and drama and anything by a living author. Battles had to be fought for authors to gain recognition and for critics to receive a hearing. Artists like Eliot needed to be more than brilliant and creative: they also needed courage and determination. Commensurately, critics needed courage and determination, qualities that Grover Smith possessed in heroic amounts.



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marriage song, “Prothalamion,” in *The Waste Land*: “Sweet Thames, run softly till I end my song.” Matthews is right to say in general that Eliot’s insertion of Renaissance lines into modern contexts is not simply a contrasting of better times with degenerate modernity, but I cannot agree with him when he says, “reference to the moment at which true relation might be established through marriage is circumscribed, in Spenser’s original, as in Eliot’s later text, by suspicion that detritus might clog or corrupt the union” (107). While it is true, as he points out, that for Spenser the Thames “could seem already ‘foule’ and tainting, in comparison to the swans upon it” (107), it seems to me that Spenser is merely praising the purity of the two white swans (the two brides in the double wedding he celebrates). Here is the stanza as it appears in *The Yale Edition of the Shorter Poems of Edmund Spenser* (1989), edited by William Oram:

With that I saw two Swannes of goodly hewe,  
Come softly swimming downe along the Lee;  
Two fairer Birds I yet did never see:  
The snow which doth the top of Pindus strew,  
Did never whiter shew,  
Nor Jove himselfe when he a Swan would be  
For love of Leda, whiter did appeare:  
Yet Leda was they say as white as he,  
Yet not so white as these, nor nothing neare;  
So purely white they were,  
That even the gentle streame, the which them bare,  
Seem’d foule to them, and bad his billowes spare  
To wet their silken feathers, least they might  
Soyle their fayre plumes with water not so fayre,  
And marre their beauties bright,  
That shone as heavens light,  
Against their Brydale day, which was not long:  
Sweete Themmes runne softly, till I end my Song.

Perhaps a reviewer should not spend so long dwelling on one passage (which is the subject of one slight paragraph in this book), but since Matthews has led the way in considering the larger contexts of the Renaissance works Eliot quotes, it seems fair to do so. I think the reader can easily see that the waters of the river are “foule” only in comparison with the supremely pure feathers of the swans, next to which even the snow on Mount Pindus and the feathers of Jove are not really white (and this comparison reminds us that the union of Leda and the Swan was not a marriage). Spenser

is using hyperbole, not undercutting the purity of the marriages of which he sings. In this case, it does seem to me that Eliot is indeed contrasting the dirtiness of the modern river and the impurity of modern lovers with an ideal set forth by the Renaissance poet.

This book will engender such arguments, not because it is poorly done but, on the contrary, because it has intelligently opened up a rich array of texts for further discussion.

Patrick R. Query, *Ritual and the Idea of Europe in Interwar Writing*. Ashgate 2012.

Reviewed by Gabriel Hankins  
Clemson University

Query’s study provides a deep exploration of three specific ritual forms in British and Irish interwar poetry and prose: verse drama, bullfighting, and the Mass. These disparate genres and forms of ritual activity represent for Query a shared response to the call for a renewed “idea of Europe” between the wars, a response that points back to the “particulars of Europe’s local cultures” (3) rather than to abstractions such as the rights of man, League of Nations humanism, or communism. Query focuses on well-known cultural conservatives (Eliot, Yeats, David Jones) as well as politically dissimilar British and Irish writers such as Louis MacNeice, Stephen Spender, Cecil Day Lewis, George Orwell, and Aldous Huxley. Query convincingly argues that figures from Eliot to Huxley saw ritual practice as useful lenses for “viewing the crisis of European identity”; as opposed to mythic schemas, aesthetic fideism, or occultism, ritual was an important “political testing ground” (3) for various kinds of political and aesthetic work.

In the first section, Yeats, Eliot, and Auden are taken up as verse dramatists of European identity. Query elucidates some of the appeal of apparently archaic verse drama forms for Eliot, Auden, and others as an explicit recollection of “ghosts of the European past” (30) recalled as guides in the present European crisis. Eliot’s “primary creative project” (33) of the interwar

period, the creation of a new kind of European theater, connects with his notion of the “mind of Europe.” Query reads Eliot’s verse dramas and borrowings from the Mass as attempts to reintroduce the structures and traditions of a residually Catholic Europe, with a coherence and accessibility that *The Waste Land* could not achieve. Yeats’s Noh-inspired verse dramas like *The Dreaming of the Bones* (1919), by contrast, are both more mystically universalist and more grounded in a particular Irish western countryside landscape. In an appropriately non-teleological discussion, Query takes up the question for both writers of ritual drama’s connection to and repulsion from contemporary fascist aesthetics. In Auden, on the other hand, verse dramas meditate on the “impossibility of their own objective, which was to rejuvenate ritual drama within a European cultural context that had lost its spiritual identity” (88).

The second section argues that bullfighting provides a microcosmic view of European agonisms in general and Spanish cultural motifs during the Civil War in particular. Query claims that in his 1926 novel *The Plumed Serpent*, D. H. Lawrence plays out a cultural anxiety about the relationship of European and non-European on the central stage of the bullfighting ring. With Mexico as the novel’s backdrop, however, the example offers an inconclusive treatment of the crisis of the European mind. Participation in the crowd of the bullfight, for Lawrence as for others, provides a sense of communal identity within a process of sacred violence, thus providing a central motif for male modernists in particular. During the Spanish Civil War, this formal response to the bullfight also accreted immediate political valences, as bullfighting became associated for English poets like Jack Lindsay and Stephen Spender with the battle of the Republicans and Nationalists. Such English figurations always run the risk of cultural reification and projection, as Orwell and others acknowledge. Nevertheless, in Query’s analysis, bullfighting offers a graphic symbol of the unacknowledged violence permeating the interwar period: “as Spain bled, most of liberal Europe responded with nausea and terror, as though the essential insides of Europe were suddenly made visible” (164).

...in Query’s analysis, bullfighting offers a graphic symbol of the unacknowledged violence permeating the interwar period...

The final section takes up the central Catholic ritual of the Mass as a potentially secular as well as religious form, remade by David Jones, Graham Greene, and Evelyn Waugh. “The Church as the site of ritual action, the Church as the framework for a civilization, and the Church as an oppositional instrument” (166) are the bases of these writers’ respective Catholic writings, according to Query. As in earlier sections, the ritual Catholic framework occurs in a setting (Mexico in the case of Waugh and Greene) that functions as a “distorting mirror” (173) of Europe, a troubling yet apt metaphor. Some slippage between the ritual of Mass and Catholicism as a whole occurs in this section, a problem that Query acknowledges but does little to mitigate. Such conflation is part of a larger formalist question for the book as whole: how do the specific genres and forms of ritual practice affect questions of politics, social meaning, and collective identity? While political and social-historical intellectual history is comprehensively presented here, questions of genre

and form fall out of focus in later chapters. That problem is somewhat alleviated by the rich reading of David Jones’s sacramental form in *In Parenthesis* as a particular mode of enclosing the universal (Catholic) in the

particular (Welsh). “The idea of Europe” functions here as a “middle term” (201), mediating the classical dialectics of universal and particular, as well as revolutionary and conservative. Query’s conclusion makes clear the contemporary political resonances for that idea, even as he notes that the aesthetic course set out by his authors was “a program that ran its course long ago” (230). Yet he ends on a redemptive note: behind the strangeness of ritual “lie parts of the mind of Europe that, when recalled,” clarify “Europe’s vision of its present possibilities” (231). This far-reaching and carefully documented study clarifies the role of ritual and its relation to interwar politics while illuminating the sources for the appeal of its ritual forms across a variety of political and aesthetic positions in the interwar period.

Carl Krockel, *War Trauma and English Modernism: T. S. Eliot and D. H. Lawrence*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

Reviewed by John Worthen  
University of Nottingham

This book is full of suggestions and insights focused upon a subject of the greatest interest, war trauma, and in putting together the noncombatants Lawrence and Eliot, Carl Krockel has constructed a way of looking at the subject that is very much his own. He also helpfully, and at times brilliantly, draws on the range of periodicals between 1916 and 1942 containing Eliot's work.

On the other hand, he is primarily—and at times only—concerned with the defences Eliot and Lawrence erected against their sense and experience of trauma. As a result, he has to contort his understanding of Eliot's early writing so that it “does not record trauma experienced, but anxiously anticipated” (45), a peculiar concept. And whereas it is at least arguable that Eliot's quatrain poems between 1917 and 1919 are responses to and enactments of war trauma, it does not follow, as Krockel suggests, that they contain images from the conflict. Krockel's reading of “Sweeney Among the Nightingales,” for example, depends almost entirely upon the “man in mocha brown” being “a soldier dressed in khaki” (106). But khaki was never mocha brown: it varied between pale brown and (most commonly of all) a drab brownish yellow. (Earlier in his book, Krockel even quoted Wyndham Lewis's description of “drab and colourless uniforms” [25].) Krockel cites Moody saying that the man is “probably” a soldier (106), but Moody is not always right; and seeing the figure as a soldier leads to the weirdest consequences. For example, it allows Krockel to see in the poem a “deployed army . . . withdrawing from the firing line” (106). Krockel can make his point well enough without such damaging expansions and overloads of his thesis. The anxiety and violence of Eliot's writing is clear, again, without the whimsical suggestion that people supposed by Krockel to be in the London Underground in “Burnt Norton” are anxious about being grasped by the roots

of sunflower and clematis, or “Chill / Fingers of yew” (180). That seems unlikely; people sitting in tube trains rarely experience such anxiety.

The subject of Eliot's marriage figures often in the book, usually with a regrettable air of all-knowing superiority. We are told, for example, that Eliot “experienced a deluded sense of spontaneity in his brief courtship then marriage to Vivienne in 1915” (89) (i.e. he thought he was acting spontaneously, but we know he was deluded), while his “trauma is deeply bound up with his sexuality” (90). The material on which such conclusions might be based is practically nonexistent. But academics often think they know (and at times have little respect for) their subjects, so long as they can make them fit the scheme appointed for them.

It should be said, too, that Krockel is fairly hostile to all manifestations of religion in Eliot's work. A complex sentence about “Burnt Norton” is not helped by its dangling participle: “He attempted to integrate the fantasy of memory into religious aspiration, but failing to do so, religion represented escapism in another form” (180). It is impossible to say whether the last six words are Krockel's sardonic commentary or Eliot's own grim realization; and, anyway, integrating a fantasy of memory into religious aspiration sounds an extraordinarily difficult procedure, for writer and readers alike. Krockel's writing throughout needs work to be comprehended; I wish he had done the work himself rather than leaving it to us. I am frequently left doubtful whether I have understood. He quotes Eliot: “It is easy to convince people of the horrors, and of the harm that war does; but it is at least as important to convince them that it does no good . . .” (164). But Krockel's conclusion is that Eliot dismisses “the value of remembrance of the war.” If it is important to convince people of what war is like, how can that be a dismissal “of the value of remembrance” of it? Or have I missed the point?

Krockel's writing about Lawrence is more illuminating. I don't, for example, know of another study that so successfully links Lawrence's rage with Europe in the 1920s with his continuing savage response to the First World War: “having regarded the root of his sickness as rage against Europe since the beginning of the war, with only a couple of months to live Lawrence faced defeat: ‘I feel my life leaving me, and I believe it's this old moribund Europe just killing me’” (154). That couldn't be better said. Krockel is also clear and good on the way

## REVIEWS

in which John Middleton Murry damaged Lawrence's reputation (and on the way in which Eliot used Murry further to damn Lawrence). Krockel uses his material from Lawrence's writing astutely and convincingly. In particular his comparison between the events of the World War and those of the Boer War in *The Rainbow*, and how the figure of Skrebensky is deployed, is detailed and beautifully developed.

There are some sensible and illuminating remarks about F. R. Leavis and the First World War toward the end, but in an unreferenced quotation Krockel appears to locate Leavis's anxiety about *Women in Love*—"a work

of merely 'diagnostic interest'" (208)—to his book *D. H. Lawrence: Novelist* (1955), the only Leavis text listed in the bibliography. In fact, the remark appears in Leavis's 1930 Minority Press pamphlet, reprinted in *For Continuity* (1933). The book's proofreading was also ineffective elsewhere; words slip, slide, perish. Finally, the book is an unfortunate example of PCP (Paper Case Printing), the cheap and nasty method of bookmaking that publishers now use for British academic books, rather than binding. Pages have, absurdly, already started to fall out of my review copy. The book's contents—especially the writing on Lawrence—are a great deal more fortunate.

## PUBLIC SIGHTINGS

Compiled by David Chinitz

**He's known rivers.** The Chicago Symphony Orchestra convened its "Rivers Festival" in spring 2013 "with the hope that its offerings—musical and otherwise—will encourage a wide and continued dialogue about our natural resources." The cover of the festival's brochure reads:  
RIVERS  
Nature. Power. Culture.  
"The river is within us"  
T. S. Eliot

Within, a two-page spread quotes the opening lines of "The Dry Salvages."

**More crosswords.** In the *New York Times* Sunday crossword puzzle for 29 Dec. 2013, the clue for 29 Across was "He said the most important thing for poets to do is to write as little as possible." The answer was of course TSELIOT. Just six weeks later, the puzzle for Sunday, 9 Feb. 2014—whose theme was the fiftieth anniversary of the Beatles' appearance on the Ed Sullivan Show—had the clue "Literary inits." for 38 Across. The answer: TSE.

**Double Jeopardy!** "Cruel—in fact it's the cruelest month, according to this T. S. Eliot poem." Category: "April." Air date: 23 Apr. 2014.

**Thoroughly refuted.** "Apologies to T. S. Eliot, but in New Orleans, April is NOT the cruelest month," according to the April 2014 issue of *Sky*, the Delta Airlines magazine. "In fact, it's downright festive. The weather is pleasant, with temperatures usually in the high 70s. Gardens are in full bloom, and scented confederate jasmine wafts romantically in the air."

**That corpse you planted...** Maureen Dowd reported in the *New York Times* ("Burning the Beret," 6 May 2014) that she had recently interviewed the reemergent Monica Lewinsky. "Disingenuously and pretentiously," wrote Dowd, "Monica said that the tragedy of Tyler Clementi, the Rutgers freshman who committed suicide in 2010 after his roommate secretly streamed his liaison with another man over the Web, had wrought 'a Prufrockian moment': Did she dare disturb the Clinton universe to become a spokeswoman against bullying?" Eliot might at least have appreciated the company in which Lewinsky's rather mixed literary metaphor placed him. She began the interview by telling Dowd that she was "ready to rip off her 'scarlet-A albatross.'"

**The Other Typist.** "The night Odalie brought me along, her fellow *bohèmes* were rapturously reading and discussing a long poem that had been published over a year or two ago in a rather poor-looking magazine called *The Dial* and had evidently caused quite a stir in the process. If I recall correctly, the poet was called Eliot Something-Or-Another and the poem itself was all a bunch of jibberish [sic], the ravings of an utter lunatic. But they ate it up with surprising zeal." So says Rose, the callow narrator of Suzanne Rindell's 2013 novel *The Other Typist*. Her sophisticated new friend Odalie is the "other typist." There are other, less direct references to *The Waste Land* in the book, which is set in 1923 New York.



## Auction of T. S. Eliot Materials

By Charles James Grimble

When the publishing firm Faber & Gwyer was reorganized as Faber & Faber in April 1929, Morley Kennerley joined T. S. Eliot on its board of directors. For more than thirty years Eliot and Kennerley sat side by side at the famed octagonal table during Faber book committee meetings, and Kennerley and his wife Jean were among the fifteen guests invited by Valerie Eliot to stand by her side at the unveiling of her late husband's memorial stone in the Poet's Corner of Westminster Abbey. A cache of manuscripts and ephemera sold at auction on July 25, 2014 by Lawrences Auctioneers in Somerset tells of the decades-long friendship



original Faber offices at 24 Russell Square

between the Eliots and the Kennerleys. From sepia portraits of Eliot's public face to caricature sketches signed "Old Possum," the collection also shows the many sides of a man who took poetry and publishing seriously but who could also be the life of a party.

Representing predominantly the last fifteen years of Eliot's life, the collection abounds with press clippings, theater programs, and other evidence of his ever-mounting eminence as a poet and playwright. Among the ephemera is a signed calling card for a rehearsal of *The Elder Statesman* at the Cambridge Theatre in London's West End on August 15, 1958. The sale also includes a handwritten invitation to a private viewing

of Sir Gerald Kelley's well-known portrait of Eliot. Another portrait, of a visibly daunted Eliot surrounded by fans in Munich, is playfully titled *The Autograph Hunter* and the back is inscribed "to Jeanie Kennerley" with compliments from "the hunted T. S. Eliot."

The collection's real strength lies in its far rarer glimpse of Eliot behind closed doors, often seated around the directors' table at Faber's offices in Russell Square. During Wednesday book committee meetings, which fellow director Frank Morley once recalled lasting from "lunch till exhaustion," Eliot at times amused himself with games of tic-tac-toe, drawing sketches of his fellow directors, and responding to deliberations in playful verse. On March 12, 1952, for instance, Eliot rendered Richard de la Mare's plea for a spiritualist manuscript in satiric verse, rife with solecisms and phonetic spellings. In another committee meeting Eliot drafted a visual poem, "Sonnet Funèbre," inspired by the German poet and abstract painter Joseph Anton Schneiderfranken, who published under the self-styled moniker Bô Yin Râ. The poem repeats the three parts of the German's pseudonym in varying combinations, giving rise to a rhythmic chant that culminates in the title of Mallarmé's typographically idiosyncratic poem, "Un Coup de Dés n'Abolira le Hasard."

Miscellaneous correspondence and handmade greeting cards recall the poet of the Bolo verses, whose humor inclined to debauchery. A valentine fashioned by Eliot for Kennerley out of typing paper features a sketch of the latter's wife in a nightgown with a cigar hanging out of her mouth, a tankard of beer frothing over in one hand, and Cupid's bow in the other. A get-well card to Jean contains prescriptions from Old Possum in two brief stanzas, accompanied by a sketch of the addressee lying supine on a chaise longue with an empty wine bottle on the floor in front of her. Two signed copies of the menu for W.J. Crawley's retirement party at the Ivy on June 1, 1961, printed in the style of a Faber dust jacket, bear a few lines from Eliot alongside a comic illustration of gluttony and overindulgence. While modest in its scope, this collection of manuscripts and memorabilia provides insight into Eliot's last years at Faber and gives some sense of his friendship with a man whose name is surely to appear more and more frequently in forthcoming volumes of letters and prose.

## Eliot News

The long-awaited first two volumes of *The Complete Prose of T. S. Eliot: The Critical Edition* have finally arrived, guided to press by the sure hand of general editor **Ronald Schuchard**. *Volume 1: Apprentice Years, 1905–1918*, is coedited by **Jewel Spears Brooker**, and *Volume 2: The Perfect Critic, 1919–1926*, is coedited by **Anthony Cuda**. Both volumes are now available online through Project Muse (see inside back cover of this issue of *Time Present*). Our annual meeting will feature a panel discussion of these volumes.

**Ben Lockerd's** *T. S. Eliot and Christian Tradition* was published by Farleigh Dickinson this summer, with essays by William Blissett, John Morgenstern, William Marx, Shun'ichi Takayanagi, James Mathew Wilson, William Charron, Lee Oser, Dominic Manganiello, Hazel Atkins, Christopher McVey, Anderson Araujo, Paul Robichaud, James Seaton, David Huisman, Charles Huttar, Thomas Dilworth, and Ben himself.

As well as editing Volume 1 of Eliot's prose, **Jewel Brooker** published articles on Eliot in the online magazine *Simply Charly*, the book *English Now* (edited by Li Cao and Li Jin), and the journal *Partial Answers*. Jewel has not been idle in retirement!

**John Whittier-Ferguson's** new book, *Mortality and Form in Late Modernist Literature*, a study of the late poetry and prose of Woolf, Eliot, Stein, and Lewis, will be released in August by Cambridge UP.

Set your calendars! Next year's **T. S. Eliot International Summer School** will take place in London from 11 to 19 July, 2015.

Montenegrin poet **Tanja Bakic** has published a bilingual book, *The Seed and Other Poems*, inspired by *The Waste Land*. She also translated "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" into Montenegrin. Her translation can be seen at <http://okf-cetinje.org/t-s-eliot-ljubavna-pjesma-j-alfreda-prufrocka/>

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Share your news! Send word of your publications, awards, promotions, and personal milestones for inclusion in this section to the editor at [dickeyf@missouri.edu](mailto:dickeyf@missouri.edu).

## Society Notes

**Christopher McVey** will be teaching classes on dystopian fiction and art and politics as a lecturer in the Boston University Writing Program this fall. He also celebrated the birth of his son, Nathan Anderson McVey, in January.

Congratulations to **James Matthew Wilson** on his promotion to Associate Professor of Religion and Literature at Villanova University, and on the anticipated publication of his two books, *The Catholic Imagination in Modern American Poetry* and *Some Permanent Things* (poems).

Congratulations and appreciation to former Eliot Society Treasurer **John Karel** on his retirement. John served as director of St. Louis's Tower Grove Park for 27 years, during which time the park achieved National Historic Landmark designation and many of its buildings and gates were restored. Annual Park visitation has increased from less than 500,000 in 1987 to more than 2.4 million in 2013. John's retirement is effective at the end of this year.

## Calls for Papers

**Call for Papers:** The T. S. Eliot Society will again sponsor a session at the annual Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture Since 1900, to be held at the University of Louisville, February 26–28, 2015. Abstracts on any subject reasonably related to Eliot are invited. For further information on the 2015 conference, please visit the website: [www.thelouisvilleconference.com](http://www.thelouisvilleconference.com). Those interested should send a 300-word abstract to John Morgenstern ([jdorgens@gmail.com](mailto:jdorgens@gmail.com)) no later than September 10, 2014. Please include your academic affiliation (if applicable) and a brief biographical note with your abstract.

**Call for Reviews:** *Time Present* is now soliciting book and performance reviewers of any publication, production, or cultural event reasonably related to Eliot's life and works. Any members interested in reviewing for *Time Present* should contact John Morgenstern, book reviews editor, at the following address: [jdorgens@gmail.com](mailto:jdorgens@gmail.com).

Jayme Stayer, John Carroll University

Andrew Powers, Eastern Michigan University

If you are aware of any 2013 citations that do not appear here, please contact Jayme Stayer at [jstayer@jcu.edu](mailto:jstayer@jcu.edu). Omissions will be rectified in the 2014 listing.

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## ABSTRACTS

### Teaching *The Waste Land*

In reinventing a Great Books course in the twenty-first century, Eliot's early masterpiece *The Waste Land* should be included because it was the major poem of the twentieth century, blasting away all previous concepts of poetry and changing forever the way poetry is written and read. Further, it gives great insight into the disillusionment following World War I, it's a great example of High Modernism, and, while it presents great challenges for its readers, students gain confidence in cracking its code. A fascinating approach is to focus on both its high and low culture, using Powerpoint illustrations and both live and recorded music to demonstrate Eliot's groundbreaking use of contemporary art, performances of the Ballets Russes such as *Parade*, and music from Wagner to Stravinsky to ragtime and music hall. I close by showing how his technique works in the dramatic scene between the upper-class husband and wife in Section II and that between Sweeney and Mrs. Porter in Section III. In

addition to making use of Powerpoint and music in the presentation, I distributed handouts of study questions about the poem that I give to students as well as quotations from the poem.

Nancy D. Hargrove  
Mississippi State  
SAML A, Nov 8, 2013

### An Economic Waste Land: T. S. Eliot and John Maynard Keynes

*The Waste Land* is rarely considered a work about economics, but it resonates with Keynes's early twentieth-century analysis of a looming economic collapse. Keynes focuses on "pent-up demand," a concept close to the Freudian notion of "pent-up desire"; the similarity derives from their shared sense that human action starts with instinctual drives (or what

Keynes calls “animal spirits”). “Pent-up” states derive from excessive restraint imposed by the social order. *The Waste Land* traces the problem of pent-up desires, both sexual and economic, through images of wasted wealth, “undesired” sexual acts, and unproductive lands. To see Keynes in this poem is not anachronistic: during World War I, Keynes criticized the Victorian economic norm as the “vanity of abstinence”—wealth imprisoned in private savings accounts. Keynes’s phrase resonates with Eliot’s “age of prudence” which has buried wealth and desires under “seals” to be broken only after death. “A moment’s surrender” is Eliot’s alternative: breaking free of the restraints that are wasting both bodies and the economic system, to allow growth. To do so, Keynes argues, requires a stimulus—the redistribution of buried wealth. The poem is a version of that act: restoring into circulation potential buried cultural treasures, in order to stimulate demand and desire.

Michael Tratner  
Bryn Mawr College  
American Literature Association, May 2014

## The False Pretense of Being a Linguist: Eliot’s Economy and the Poetics of Corporate Banking

Aldous Huxley described T. S. Eliot as “the most bank-clerky of all bank clerks” after visiting him at his office in the “sub-sub-basement” of Lloyd’s London, marveling even then that “Prufrock” was written while “sitting at a desk which was in a row of desks with other bank clerks.” Eliot’s eight-year employment at Lloyd’s was not trivial, but rather saw him increasingly participating in what was the most ambitious program of corporate conglomeration in European banking up to that point. At the time, Eliot confessed to considerable job satisfaction, writing, “My thoughts are absorbed in questions more important than ever enter the heads of deans—as why it is cheaper to buy steel bars from America than from Middlesborough, and the probable effect—the exchange difficulties with Poland—and the appreciation of the rupee.” He was intensely proud of each promotion, especially when it promised him more insight and initiative into Lloyd’s macroeconomic strategies. In this paper, I intend to speculate as to how Eliot’s expertise in economics, fostered at Lloyds from

1917 to 1925, colored his understanding of the Crash of 1929 and the ensuing depression in America. I argue that Eliot’s evolving economic positions are part and parcel of this period in his poetic career, though it is more famously associated with his religious conversion.

Mathew Seybold  
University of Alabama  
American Literature Association, May 2014

## T. S. Eliot’s Great War of Inflection

On the centennial anniversary of the Great War, scholars are still trying to understand its precise relationship to the twentieth century’s most emblematic postwar text, *The Waste Land*. Eliot’s poem is often read as the apotheosis of psychosocial conditions at a particularly ominous moment in modern history, an account that too often reduces the text to a symptom of Europe’s postwar disarray. Rather than serving as a backdrop of desolation against which the poetic voice struggles to signify, the specters of military and imperial violence function for Eliot as tropes for the problems of constructing a literary voice. That is, *The Waste Land* uses the “unreal city” of postwar London to map an inchoate geography of psycholinguistic violence.

This argument is based in part on the poem’s manuscript history, which suggests that the war enters the text relatively late in its composition, offering a deliberately fungible organizing principle for the linguistic and metaphysical concerns that Eliot began grappling with in his earliest, pre-war writing. If the manuscript drafts offer a sort of X-ray of *The Waste Land*, they do not point to geopolitical chaos as the secret heart of “What the Thunder Said.” Rather, they reveal a voice continually struggling to speak from a place of linguistic alienation, a struggle that seems in retrospect to have needed an experience as catastrophic as the Great War to make itself understood. *The Waste Land* cuts against traditional elegy, resisting interpretations of its formal disjunctions mainly as testaments to war’s traumas; rather, those traumas allegorize forms of alterity intrinsic to modern language itself.

Kathryn Van Wert  
U of Minnesota Duluth  
American Literature Association, May 2014

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Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time.”


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## August 1914: The War Begins

“I shan’t have anything very exciting to narrate this summer; this is as peaceful a life as one could well find,” wrote Eliot from Marburg to his cousin Eleanor Hinkley on 26 July 1914 (*LI* 54). But less than a week later, Germany declared war on Russia, his German course was cancelled, and he and the other students waited in limbo, their funds running low, “penned up with no certain communications and no knowledge of when we could get out” (56). As neutrals, the American students were allowed to leave two weeks later, and after a five-day journey Eliot arrived in London. He settled

for the next month in “Shady Bloomsbury, the noisiest place in the world” (“many babies, pianos, street piano accordions, singers, hummers, whistlers”), finding the level of activity and rumor conducive to work (59–60). In September he met Ezra Pound, who soon promised to place “Prufrock” in *Poetry* “and pay me for it” (63). But being in Germany at the start of the war left “a very deep impression” on him; seeing “the great moral earnestness on both sides...has made it impossible for me to adopt a wholly partizan attitude, or even to rejoice or despair wholeheartedly.... I know that men I have known, including one of my best friends, must be fighting each other” (62).

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