

Modernist Poetry: Magazines, Volumes

Further, juxtaposing the analysis of specific works with discussion of institutional networks would encourage, however inadvertently, a vulgar materialism that I also disclaim.

Rainey, *Institutions of Modernism*, 6–7.

T.S. Eliot's *Waste Land* is a prime example—perhaps the preeminent example—of a modernist text that is certainly cosmopolitan in its posture of worldliness, in its collage of national traditions, and in its resistance to the moral niceties of modern culture, but it is not especially interested in representing patterns or fictions of affiliation, in rejecting fixed conceptions of the local, or in comparing the uses and histories of global thinking.

Rebecca L. Walkowitz, *Cosmopolitan Style: Modernism Beyond the Nation* (New York: Columbia, 2006), 7.

Two boys went to Harvard. One stayed home afterward, and became an insurance executive. The other went abroad, and became a banker and a publisher. Both wrote poetry.

Two boys went to Penn. One stayed home afterward and became a physician. The other went abroad, and became Ezra Pound.

Stevens: Eliot. Williams: Pound. It is as neat as a laboratory experiment.

Hugh Kenner, *The Pound Era* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), 516.

Because the exponential growth of the commercial mass market and its institutions was a relatively new phenomenon, British and American modernists were initially optimistic about effecting change from within by utilizing commercial advertising and publication tactics for a noncommercial “product” [the little magazines]. They did not, in fact, display the pessimism about the role of art and literature in the public sphere commonly ascribed to modernism. But modernists were often unable to use these opportunities as successfully as they had hoped. The early modernist enthusiasm about influencing the dominant public sphere by appropriating mass market tactics seems to have been somewhat blunted by the twenties.

Mark S. Morrisson, *The Public Face of Modernism: Little Magazines, Audiences, and Reception, 1905–1920* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2001), 203.

WILLIAMS: MOORE (1923)

Marianne Moore escapes. The incomprehensibility of her poems is witness to at what cost (she cleaves herself away) as it is also to the distance which the most are from a comprehension of the purpose of composition.

Williams, *Spring and All* (Paris: Contact, 1923), 21.

STEVENS: WILLIAMS (1934)

There are so many things to say about him. The first is that he is a romantic poet. This will horrify him. Yet the proof is everywhere....The man has spent his life in rejecting the accepted sense of things. In that, most of all, his romantic temperament appears.

Stevens, preface to William Carlos Williams, *Collected Poems 1921-1931* (New York: Objectivist Press, 1934), in *Collected Poetry and Prose*, ed. Frank Kermode and Joan Richardson (New York: Library of America, 1997), 768-69.

MOORE: STEVENS (1924)

The riot of gorgeousness in which Mr. Stevens's imagination takes refuge, recalls Balzac's reputed attitude to money, to which he was indifferent unless he could have it "in heaps or by the ton."

Moore, "Well-Moused, Lion," review of *Harmonium*, *Dial* 76, no. 1 (January, 1924): 84, HathiTrust.

MOORE: WILLIAMS (1934)

William Carlos Williams objects to urbanity—to sleek and natty effects—and this is a good sign if not always a good thing. Yet usually nothing could better the dashing shrewdness of the pattern as he develops it and cuts it off at the acutely right point.

Moore, "'Things Other Never Notice,'" review of *Collected Poems, 1921-1931*, *Poetry* 44, no. 2 (May 1934): 104, JSTOR.

MOORE: POETRY (1967)

I, too, dislike it.

Reading it, however, with a perfect contempt for it, one discovers in it, after all, a place for the genuine.

The Complete Poems of Marianne Moore (1967; New York: Macmillan, 1981), 36.

POETRY

I too, dislike it: there are things that are important
 beyond all this fiddle.
 Reading it, however, with a perfect contempt for it,
 one discovers that there is in
 it after all, a place for the genuine.
 Hands that can grasp, eyes
 that can dilate, hair that can rise
 if it must, these things are important not because a
 high sounding interpretation can be put upon them
 but because they are
 useful; when they become so derivative as to
 become unintelligible, the
 same thing may be said for all of us—that we
 do not admire what
 we cannot understand. The bat,
 holding on upside down or in quest of something to
 eat, elephants pushing, a wild horse taking a roll,
 a tireless wolf under
 a tree, the immovable critic twinkling his skin like a
 horse that feels a flea, the base-
 ball fan, the statistician—case after case
 could be cited did
 one wish it; nor it is valid
 to discriminate against “business documents and
 school-books”; all these phenomena are important.
 One must make a distinction
 however: when dragged into prominence by half poets,
 the result is not poetry,
 nor till the autocrats among us can be
 “literalists of
 the imagination”—above
 insolence and triviality and can present
 for inspection, imaginary gardens with real toads
 in them, shall we have
 it. In the meantime, if you demand on one hand,
 in defiance of their opinion—
 the raw material of poetry in
 all its rawness and
 that which is on the other hand,
 genuine then you are interested in poetry.

Others 5, no. 6 (July 1919), 5, Modernist Journals Project. This final issue of *Others* was guest-edited by Williams: “Do we want to publish our own filth? Is that what we want?” (“Gloria!” 3).

1879	Wallace Stevens b. Reading, PA
1883	William Carlos Williams b. Rutherford, NJ
1887	Marianne Moore b. Kirkwood, MO
1888	Thomas Stearns Eliot b. St. Louis, MO
1900	Stevens leaves Harvard (special student: no degree)
1902	Williams MD, Penn
1908	Williams establishes pediatric practice in Rutherford
1909	Moore BA, Bryn Mawr (biology and histology)
	Stein, <i>Three Lives</i> (New York: Grafton)
1909	Eliot AB, Harvard, begins PhD in philosophy (abandoned 1916)
	Williams, <i>Poems</i> (self-published, disavowed)
1911–1915	Moore teaches at U.S. Industrial Indian School, Carlisle, PA
1913	Williams, <i>The Tempers</i> (London: Elkin Matthews), thanks to Pound
1914	Eliot moves to London
1916	Stevens hired by Hartford Accident and Indemnity Co.; later VP
1917	Eliot hired by Lloyds Bank, London
	Eliot, <i>Prufrock and Other Observations</i> (London: Egoist Press)
1920–1923	Williams and Robert McAlmon edit <i>Contact</i> (five issues)
1921–1925	Moore works at NYPL
1922	Eliot founds <i>The Criterion</i> with support from Lady Rothermere
	“The Waste Land,” <i>Criterion</i> 1, no. 1 (October)
	“The Waste Land,” <i>Dial</i> 73, no. 5 (November)
	<i>The Waste Land</i> (New York: Boni & Liveright)
1923	Stevens, <i>Harmonium</i> (New York: Knopf)
	Williams, <i>Spring and All</i> (Paris: Contact)
	Eliot, <i>The Waste Land</i> (London: Hogarth)
1924	Hemingway, <i>in our time</i> (Paris: William Bird)
	Moore, <i>Observations</i> (London: Egoist Press)
1925	Eliot becomes editor at Faber & Gwyer, founded that year
	Moore, <i>Observations</i> , 2nd ed. (New York: Dial Press)
	Hemingway, <i>In Our Time</i> (New York: Liveright)
1926–29	Moore edits <i>The Dial</i> to the end of its run
1930	Porter, <i>Flowering Judas</i> (New York: Harcourt, Brace)
