In her 1931 essay “Aurora Leigh,” Woolf wonders, with due irony, “what damage the art of photography has inflicted upon the art of literature” (218). Indeed, since she had already included photographs in Orlando (1928), and references to photography and notional photographs had found a place in much of her work before then, including in all of the novels, the suggestion that photography might have a deleterious effect on the literary seems decidedly tongue-in-cheek. Moreover, in addition to taking pictures on her own cameras and developing photographs with Leonard, she had also written an important introduction to a retrospective collection of her Great Aunt Julia Margaret Cameron’s photography, Victorian Photographs of Famous Men & Fair Women (1926). After 1931, she would continue to explore photography in her literature; Flash (1933), Three Guineas (1938), and Roger Fry (1940) use photographs to create the illusion of truth in a narrative, for rhetorical effect, and to illustrate aspects of her textual subject.

The timeliness of an issue on photography is occasioned by the attention in Woolf studies to visual culture and to her investment in various ocular mediums. Specifically focused on photography, Maggie Humm’s Modernist Women and Visual Cultures (2003) and Snapshots of Bloomsbury (2006) have been especially useful in making available photographs taken by and of Woolf’s circle; Humm has also offered theoretical frameworks for considering the camera work that we associate with Woolf. In addition, with the restoration of the photographs in the annotated Harcourt edition of Three Guineas (2006), introduced and edited by Jane Marcus (Mark Hussey, general editor), the text has become readily accessible in all of its original visual richness, properly returning it formally to something akin to the hybrid genre comprised of textual elements and photos that W. J. T. Mitchell has delineated as the “photo essay,” a generic term that he attributes to Tom Moran.1 The re-inclusion of those photographs necessitates a rereading of Woolf’s text and also suggests the need to restore images, facsimile covers, and other materials to other texts in her oeuvre. We can only hope that Harcourt will see fit to publish a new edition of Flash, complete with the original illustrations, including the photograph that Humm discusses in her essay in this issue. Here she asks about the woman posing as Elizabeth Barrett, sitting with the ostensible “Fluff,” in order to consider the range of “visual

1 See Mitchell (94), in which he discusses briefly the kinds of photo-essays that “contain strong textual element, where the text is most definitely an ‘invasive’ and even domineering element” (286), vis-à-vis the Eugene Smith account (included in Moran 14-15) of photo-essays without any texts.
the “origins, context, and archival location” of a specific photograph of Vanessa Bell modeling a dress of her own design. Her query implicitly proposes another issue surrounding photographs from the period: unlike texts or other works of art in modernism, questions of origin, attribution, and provenance proliferate for a medium that was almost infinitely reproducible and whose representational status as an art form was marginal and still tenuous.

The five essays in this issue suggest how Woolf studies can usefully consider photography and photographs to advance fresh questions about familiar materials and to relocate “lost” or overlooked materials for fresh contemplation. In such an undertaking, we might very well find ourselves in the position of her fellow diners that Woolf describes in her essay on Walter Sickert: “what excites them in those photographs is something so deeply sunk that they cannot put words to it” (191). Like Woolf, however, the effort to put images into (and in conjunction with) words can provide imaginative and theoretically fruitful results.

Thaine Stearns
Sonoma State University

Works Cited


International Virginia Woolf Society
Call for Papers for the 2009 MLA Convention
Philadelphia, Dec. 27-30

The Uses of Illness: Woolf and Medical Narratives. David Eberly, Chair. Illness is a dominant theme in Woolf’s work. This panel will examine the narrative strategies she deploys to explore illness including the physical, psychological, social, and ethical. Submit by March 15, 2009 a 500 word abstract to david.eberly@chtrust.org.

Twenty-First Century Woolf. Elizabeth Outka, Chair. Woolf’s continued relevance in and for the new century: topics might include transnationalism, new feminisms, the current war(s), emerging commercial strategies, blogs, and the common reader, etc. Submit by March 15, 2009 a 300-500 word abstract to eoutka@richmond.edu, using the subject line “Woolf MLA panel.”

MLA 2008 IN SAN FRANCISCO
THE PANELS
Saturday, 27 December

74. Troping the Light Fantastic: Woolf’s Use of Desire and Pleasure
5:15–6:30 p.m., Hilton San Francisco
Program arranged by the International Virginia Woolf Society
Presiding: Brenda S. Helt, Univ. of Minnesota, Twin Cities
2. “The Concentrated Camp of Between the Acts,” Sam Sec, Univ. of California, Los Angeles

For copies of abstracts, visit http://www.utoronto.ca/IVWS/

Monday, 29 December

499. Orlando’s “House Was No Longer Hers Entirely”: Property in Virginia Woolf
10:15–11:30 a.m., Hilton San Francisco
Program arranged by the International Virginia Woolf Society
Presiding: Jamie McDaniel, Case Western Reserve Univ.
1. “‘I’m Dead, Sir!’: The Writings of C. P. Sanger and the Influence of Intestacy Law in Orlando: A Biography,” Jamie McDaniel, Case Western Reserve Univ.
2. “Floating Real Estate, Modern(ist) Time, and Chronotopics in Mrs. Dalloway,” Janet Larson, Rutgers Univ., Newark
3. “Virginia Woolf, Great Men’s Houses, and Haunted Literary Properties,” Alison Booth, Univ. of Virginia
Respondent: Alexander M. Bain, Univ. of Oklahoma
For copies of papers, write to jim25@case.edu
For copies of abstracts, visit www.utoronto.ca/IVWS/
Also of interest:
Sunday, 28 December

28. Is Biography Modernist?
7:15–8:30 p.m. Continental 3, Hilton
Presiding: Patricia Laurence. Brooklyn Coll., City Univ. of New York
1. Rachel Brownstein, “Biography: The Modernist Turn,” Graduate Center, City Univ. of New York
3. Amy Johnson, “‘Human Beings are Too Important’: The Possibility of Biography After the Modernists,” Univ. of Wisconsin, Madison
Moderator: Patricia Laurence, Brooklyn Coll., City Univ. of New York

THE PARTY: Members of IVWS were cordially invited to attend the annual dinner party at MLA. This was on Dec. 28, starting at 6 p.m. at the home of Eileen Barrett and Elissa Dennis, 2821 Morgan Avenue, Oakland, CA 94602. Transportation from the West Oakland BART station was provided. Bay Area Rapid Transit information and schedules were available at www.bart.gov. Additional instructions were available at Woolf sessions at MLA. RSVP to Bonnie Scott by Dec. 22. bkscott@mail.sdsu.edu.

Many thanks to Dr. Selase W. Williams, Provost and Vice-President of Academic Affairs, Southern Connecticut State University, and to the International Virginia Woolf Society for generous and continuing support of the Virginia Woolf Miscellany.
To escape is the greatest of pleasures; street haunting in winter the greatest of adventures. Still as we approach our own doorstep again, it is comforting to feel the old possessions, the old prejudices, fold us round; and the self, which has been blown about at so many street corners..., sheltered and enclosed...And here—let us examine it tenderly, let us touch it with reverence—is the only spoil we have retrieved from all the treasures of the city, a lead pencil.

—Woolf, “Street Haunting” (1927)

Liberty seems clothed in radiant silver. The air here is about a thousand times clearer than the air in England. There is not a shred of mist or a wisp of fog: everything shines bright. The City of New York, over which I am now hovering, looks as if it had been scraped and scrubbed only the night before. It has no houses. It is made of immensely high towers, each pierced with a million holes.

—Woolf, “America, Which I Have Never Seen” (1938)

For the 19th Annual Woolf Conference, we return to the site of the first: New York City. With this return, we embark on new critical and theoretical ground. Our theme, Woolf and the City, encompasses the familiar and the new, the material and the imaginative.

Topics might include (but are not limited to):

- Woolf and urban theory
- mapping Woolf’s London
- public and private spaces in Woolf
- women in the modern city
- object theory, material culture, trash
- cities and empire
- cosmopolitanism in Woolf
- lesbians and the city, urban sexualities
- imaginary geographies, unreal cities
- teaching Woolf and the city
- films in and of the city
- print culture and the masses
- public memory, monuments, and memorials
- historical London, London past
- New York, Paris, Constantinople
- Wartime London
- Bloomsbury, neighborhoods, and suburbs
- streetwalking, street haunting, and flaneur

Proposals for individual papers and/or panels due by 1 February 2009. We also welcome alternative proposals such as workshops or readings. Independent scholars, high school teachers, and “common readers” are encouraged to submit proposals. Please send 250 word abstracts as Word attachments with a separate sheet indicating name(s), institutional affiliation(s) and email address(es).

Email address for submissions: woolf@fordham.edu
Conference Webpage: http://www.fordham.edu/english/woolf
Conference Organizer: Anne Fernald <fernald@fordham.edu>

20th Annual Woolf Conference
Georgetown College
Georgetown, Kentucky
June 3-6, 2010

Virginia Woolf and the Natural World, the 20th Annual International Conference on Virginia Woolf, will be held at Georgetown College in Georgetown, Kentucky, from June 3-6, 2010. Stay tuned for the call for papers and details on speakers and special events. Georgetown is just north of Lexington, about 60 miles east of Louisville, and 75 miles south of Cincinnati. The College looks forward to welcoming everyone to its campus, located on 104 acres of beautiful Kentucky bluegrass. Organizer: Kristin Czarnecki <Kristin_Czarnecki@georgetowncollege.edu>

A complete call for papers along with additional conference information will be out shortly. We will consider all proposals but will be especially interested in those relating to the conference theme. Topics might include (but are not limited to):

- Flowers
- Gardens and Gardeners
- Parks
- Animals
  (animality, animal imagery, domestic animals, animal pet names)
- Rhythms of Nature
- Seascapes
- Landscapes
- Cornwall
- St. Ives
- Vacations
- Country Homes and Estates
- Farmers and Farming
- Hiking
- Sailing
- Hunting
- Prehistory
- Nature as Restorative
- Nature as Punitive
- City “versus” Nature
- Woolf and Ecology
- Woolf and the Environment
- Teaching Woolf and Nature

The Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture Since 1900
February 19-21, 2009
F-10: Virginia Woolf (Panel organized by Kristin Czarnecki, International Virginia Woolf Society)
Friday, February 20
3:15 - 4:45 p.m.
Room: 215

Chair: Suzette Henke, Univ. of Louisville
Beth Rigel Daugherty, Otterbein College, “Educating the Reader: Virginia Woolf’s Pedagogical Essays”
Brian Richardson, Univ. of Maryland, “The Physical Book and the Site of Reading in To the Lighthouse”
Theresa Mae Thompson, Valdosta State Univ., “Woolf and Gandhi: The Raj in Jacob’s Room”
Bloomsbury Style / A year-long program at Duke revives the thinking of England’s Bloomsbury Group.

This year’s Duke in Depth weekend celebrates a culmination of the yearlong programs at Duke designed to illuminate the Bloomsbury Group and showcase the Bloomsbury exhibition of works at the Nasher Museum of Art.

The Bloomsbury Group was a societal phenomenon in Great Britain at the close of the Edwardian Age. Members Virginia Woolf, John Maynard Keynes, E. M. Forster, and Lytton Strachey professed radical views and lived lives that were considered scandalous in the early 1900s. Collectively, they deeply influenced literature, aesthetics, criticism, and economics as well as modern attitudes towards feminism, pacifism, and sexuality. For more history and biographies of this group, go to the website (see below).

Nasher Exhibition
An exhibition, A Room of Their Own: The Bloomsbury Artists in American Collections, at the Nasher Museum of Art has been organized to coincide with the 100-year anniversary of Bloomsbury’s beginnings that will examine how America reacted to the art produced between 1910 and the 1970s by the Bloomsbury artists, their associates, and collaborators. For more information, please go to <http://nasher.duke.edu/exhibitions_roomoftheirown.php>.

Yearlong Programs
In conjunction with the exhibition, Vision and Design: A Year of Bloomsbury, a series of programs has been organized at Duke to celebrate how Bloomsbury challenged conventional wisdom through active and ongoing conversation—in their art, their writings, their activism as well as in one-on-one repartee in each others’ living rooms. While showcasing an important exhibition of Bloomsbury art, this yearlong programming is an extraordinary model of what can be achieved in a university setting. A schedule of programs is listed at right. For more information on each session, please go to the website.

Duke in Depth Weekend
Return to campus on February 27-29 to join fellow Duke alumni and friends for a scholarly and hands-on immersion into the world of Bloomsbury:

• Conversations with such renowned guests as Julian Bell, Simon Watney, Gretchen Gerzina, S.P. Rosenbaum, Craufurd Goodwin, and Alan Gurganus
• A private reception and viewing of the Nasher exhibition of Bloomsbury art in American collections
• Workshops that recall the days of the Omega Workshops
• A staged reading of the steamy Carrington-Strachey letters
• A festive dinner highlighted by a viewing of the Duke Libraries' exhibit of Bloomsbury materials

CALL FOR PAPERS: 10TH ANNUAL GRADUATE ENGLISH CONFERENCE AT SOUTHERN CT STATE UNIVERSITY
Saturday, April 18, 2009
9:00 am-4:30 pm

ENCOUNTERING THE TEXT: READING, TEACHING, THEORIZING, WRITING

Deadline for Submissions: March 9, 2009
For more information contact:
Dr. Kenneth Florey <floreyk1@southernct.edu>
A ROOM OF THEIR OWN:
THE ARTISTS OF BLOOMSBURY IN AMERICAN COLLECTIONS

This exhibit of Bloomsbury art, celebrating the centennial of its origins will include more than 100 paintings, numerous works on paper, and examples from the decorative arts and book arts. Organized by the Johnson Museum of Art at Cornell University with the assistance of the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, the exhibit will premier at the Nasher Museum and then travel to the Johnson Museum, the Block Museum of Art at Northwestern University, the Smith College Museum of Art, and the Palmer Museum of Art at Pennsylvania State University. The catalog, published by Cornell UP, is now available for $35 at <http://www.cornellpress.cornell.edu>.

The anticipated dates for the exhibit are listed below.


Nasher Museum of Art, Duke University
December 18, 2008 - April 5, 2009 <http://www.bloomsburyatduke.com/>

Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University
July 18 - October 18, 2009

Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University
January 15 - March 15, 2010

Smith College Museum of Art
April 1 - June 15, 2010

Palmer Museum of Art, Pennsylvania State University
July 6 - September 26, 2010

A Brief Overview of Resources for Woolfians

The Virginia Woolf Miscellany is an independent publication, which has been hosted by Southern Connecticut State University since 2003. Founded in 1973 by J. J. Wilson, the publication was hosted by Sonoma State University for 30 years. The publication has always received some additional funding from the International Virginia Woolf Society.

The Annual Conference on Virginia Woolf is an independent entity. It was envisioned by Mark Hussey and launched in 1991 at Pace University. The conference is overseen by a Steering Committee consisting of all previous conference organizers. Permission to host a Woolf conference is authorized by Mark Hussey, who chairs the Steering Committee. Those interested in hosting the conference should contact Mark Hussey at mhussey@pace.edu. Each annual conference is organized by one or more individuals associated with the host institution. The host institution finances the event and uses the registration fees of attendees to offset the costs of the event. The Annual Conference has no formal association with the International Virginia Woolf Society or the Virginia Woolf Society of Great Britain or any other Woolf society.

The Selected Papers of the Annual Conference on Virginia Woolf 2001-present (excluding 2004) are published by Clemson University Digital Press under the auspices of Wayne Chapman. The editors of the publication vary from year to year. Electronic versions of the selected papers from 2001-present, including selected works from 2004, are available on the Center for Woolf Studies website at http://www.csub.edu/woolf_center/ (a subscription is required to access the materials).

The Selected Papers of the Annual Conference on Virginia Woolf 1991-2000, launched by Mark Hussey in conjunction with the conference, were published by Pace University Press under his auspices. While early volumes of the papers are out of print, a number of the more recent ones are still available from the press (see http://www.pace.edu/press)

The IVWS was founded in 1973 as the VWS. The society has a direct relationship with the Modern Language Association and has had the privilege of organizing two sessions at the annual MLA Convention. MLA is currently in transition in regard to the annual convention. In the new model, the IVWS will continue to have one guaranteed session.

The IVWS website is hosted by the University of Toronto. The website was founded by Melba Cuddy-Keane, Past President of the International Virginia Woolf Society, who continues to oversee the site (http://www.utoronto.ca/IVWS/).

The VWoolf Listserv is hosted by the University of Ohio. The list administrator is Anne Fernald. The founder of the list is Morris Beja. To join the list, send a message to: listproc@lists.acs.ohio-state.edu. In the body of the email, write: subscribe VWOOOLF Your firstname Your last name. You will receive a welcome message with further information about the list. To unsubscribe, please send a message *from the exact account that you originally subscribed with* to: listproc@lists.acs.ohio-state.edu. In the body of the email, write: unsubscribe VWOOOLF.

Materials from most of these sources mentioned above are included in the IVWS/VWS archive at University of Toronto even though they are entities separate from the Society itself. Contributions to the archive should be handled through the current Historian-Bibliographer of the IVWS at http://www.utoronto.ca/IVWS/.
Summer School for Adults at University of Sussex

Reading Virginia Woolf
Using the University’s Special Collection of Woolf papers

In August 2009, the University of Sussex is holding a summer school for adults, which includes a week-long course called Reading Virginia Woolf. As well as being taught by an expert on the subject, Sue Roe, it will include the opportunity to visit Charleston and Monks House, both of which are nearby. There is more information at <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/sussexinsummer>.

Discover the extraordinary work of Virginia Woolf: lyrical, painterly and innovative author of Mrs. Dalloway and To the Lighthouse, whose work continues to inspire readers and writers worldwide. You will not only read and discuss her work but also visit the University’s Special Collections to look at documents that offer insights into the life, mind and working practices of ‘the Bloomsbury Group’.

Tutor Sue Roe is the author of Writing and Gender: Virginia Woolf’s Writing Practice; editor of the Penguin Modern Classics edition of Jacob’s Room; Co-editor of The Cambridge Companion to Virginia Woolf; regular workshop leader at Charleston; Lecturer in Creative Studies; and Convener of the MA in Creative Writing and Authorship at the University of Sussex.

Excursion
Charleston, the home of Virginia Woolf’s sister, the painter Vanessa Bell, and of Duncan Grant, visited frequently by all members of the Bloomsbury Group and focus of immense creative activity; and Monks House (Rodmell), where Virginia Woolf lived for much of her adult life. You will see parts of the house and also the workroom in the garden where she wrote most of her novels.

Grade: Easy
Cost: £25
Further information <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/library/speccoll> <http://www.bloomsburyinsussex.org.uk>
Newnham College, Cambridge, is an extraordinary institution with a distinguished tradition of women’s education and many achievements in the field of literature. With Sylvia Plath, Iris Murdoch, A. S. Byatt, Margaret Drabble, Katharine Whitehorn, Claire Tomalin and Ali Smith among our alumnae, we have much to celebrate in women’s writing.

To commemorate the 800th anniversary of the University of Cambridge, we are building on this heritage to expand our literary archive and develop a programme of events that will raise funds to support and enrich the current teaching of English, a subject which remains a key priority for the College.

So we are delighted to invite you to take part in a unique series of private events celebrating a key moment in women’s education and women’s writing – Virginia Woolf’s visit to Cambridge and the lectures she gave there which formed the basis of her influential book, A Room of One’s Own.

The Iconic Table

In October 1928 Virginia Woolf was invited to luncheon in Kings College by Dadie Rylands, one of its Fellows and a friend of various members of the Bloomsbury Group. The other guests belonged to the Apostles, a Cambridge society to which Dadie had been elected on the recommendation of John Maynard Keynes.

Dadie bequeathed the table at which he and Virginia dined to the Charleston Trust, which has generously offered us the chance to showcase it for the next five years. Thanks to the generosity of one of our alumnae, the original eight chairs have now also been restored, and are back round the table for the first time since they were left to Charleston.

The table and chairs are now situated in one of our private rooms. Although these are museum pieces, the table remains exactly as it was—the original rings created by the wine glasses used by the Apostles evoke a wonderful sense of history which we are thrilled to be able to share with our invitees.

Background

A Room of One’s Own is a partly fictionalised account of Woolf’s visit to Cambridge. Luncheon in Dadie’s rooms ‘began with soles, sunk in a deep dish’, spread with the ‘whitest cream’; the effect was to light ‘half way down the spine which is the seat of the soul, not that little electric light which we call brilliance…but the more profound, subtle and subterranean glow which is the rich yellow flame of rational intercourse’. Course follows course whilst wine flows, College silver sparkles and servants abound. Intellectual discussion and debate fill the afternoon in the luxurious surroundings of Kings College.

A sense of well-being is generated in Woolf, but, as she leaves this privileged and male-dominated environment from which she, as a woman, is excluded, she feels that world closing behind her: ‘...gate after gate seemed to close with gentle finality behind me. Innumerable beadles were fitting innumerable keys into well-oiled locks: the treasure house was made secure for another night.’ As a woman unaccompanied by an exclusively male member of the University she is refused admittance to the University Library, and gets into trouble for walking on a hallowed Kings College lawn. (It is still forbidden to walk on the grass in most Cambridge Colleges today.)

As dusk draws in, Woolf walks down to the road to a very different College, a women’s College, ‘Fernham’ (her fictive hybrid of Newnham and Girton). There she notices a student ‘race across the grass’ with no one to stop her, and dinner, whilst nourishing, is plain – she is given broth and water (no wine).

Woolf used the contrast between the two meals as a metaphor for the difference in the funding of men and women’s education, asking ‘What were our mothers thinking of that they had so little wealth to leave us?’ She concludes that a woman needs a ‘room of her own’ if she is to be able to intellectualise, write, expand her education and develop her ideas.

Newnham—where you can still race across the grass—remains one of two all-female undergraduate Colleges at the heart of the University of Cambridge. Founded in 1871, the College’s statutes enshrine a progressive commitment to freedom of thought, fairness, outstanding education, learning and research—ideals as relevant now as they were then. The College takes pride in continuing to break down barriers and seeks to ensure that the education we provide can be available to all, regardless of background or circumstances.

Exclusive Events

We are delighted to offer two opportunities each year to host an exclusive and intimate event based round Dadie Rylands’ table in one of the College’s private rooms, previously used by a Senior Member (our name for Fellows), with lovely large windows overlooking the gardens, among the most beautiful in Cambridge.

We propose that eight guests sit round the table and sip champagne whilst listening to an eminent scholar speak on some aspect of Woolf, Bloomsbury or women’s writing and education.

The format of each event can be tailored to the host’s request, but the College head chef has devised a modern menu to reflect the food served in Kings eighty years ago and a full wine list is available for discussion with the High Table Steward. Woolf would be pleased to see that Newnham now has its own College silver which will of course be used, and each guest will receive a copy of A Room of One’s Own as a memento of the evening.

With a formal place setting, eight guests would be unable to dine comfortably on the table itself (and this would also involve the table being covered for protection which would be a pity), so we propose that, following pre-dinner drinks, guests move to a larger table in the same room to enjoy their meal at leisure whilst being able to talk informally with the chosen speaker. If a larger event were required we would propose that a maximum of 20 guests have pre-dinner drinks round the table during the talk, with dinner served in either College Hall or our new modern room—the Lucia Windsor Room.

We are of course flexible and will try to meet the requirements of the host as to subject matter and speakers, but have connections with a number of eminent Cambridge and other writers and lecturers, including our Graduate Tutor, Dr Pam Hirsch, a seasoned speaker on both radio and television who lectures on A Room of One’s Own, and alumna Isabelle Ancombe, author of Omega and After: Bloomsbury and the Decorative Arts, who met many surviving members of the Bloomsbury Group, including Dadie Rylands, and spent a few weeks living at Charleston, the Sussex home of Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant.

Fund-raising

Our English students are incredibly excited to have such an inspirational and iconic artefact housed in College, and it is entirely appropriate that they should benefit from this wonderful loan. We therefore intend to apply funds raised to support teaching in English.

Oxford and Cambridge have a unique system of small group tuition (supervisions) which we are determined to preserve. This involves College Teaching Fellows in intensive teaching. College Teaching Fellows are appointed initially on a five-year contract, which costs £225,000 for five years. To endow a position in perpetuity costs £1,125,000.

We are delighted to announce that we have received a gift of £25,000 to ‘pump prime’ this initiative and are now at the first stages of fundraising to build from this excellent start.

To host dinner for eight, we propose a minimum donation of £5,000, or £10,000 for the larger event of up to twenty. If however a donor was interested in naming the College Teaching post (either for the 5-year period or in perpetuity) we will of course be delighted to discuss an additional donation to secure this recognition.

We believe this will be a unique opportunity to host an exclusive event in very special surroundings whilst contributing to the costs of a key priority for the continued tradition of Newnham. Should you wish to take part, we are sure that your support for women’s education, especially in the study of literature, would be applauded by Virginia Woolf, whose spirit surely inhabits both Newnham and Dadie Rylands’ iconic table.

We very much hope that you will be interested in talking to us. For more information please contact:

Penny Hubbard Development Director and Registrar of the Roll Email: penny.hubbard@newn.cam.ac.uk
Thanks to the diligent efforts of Karen Levenback, Past President of the VWS, Melba Cuddy-Keane, Past President of the IVWS, and Carmen Königsreuther Socknat, Head of Bibliographic Services at E. J. Pratt Library, Victoria University, University of Toronto, the archive of the VWS and the IVWS has at last found a secure and permanent home. The archive is now officially housed in the collection.

All archival materials such as correspondence, memorabilia and photographs should be sent to the IVWS Historian-Bibliographer who will then arrange the transfer of materials.

Contact information for current IVWS officers is on the IVWS website:

<http://www.utoronto.ca/IVWS>

---

**EDITORS**

Jeanne Dubino, Appalachian State University  
dubinoja@appstate.edu

Mark Hussey, Pace University  
mhussey@pace.edu

Vara Neverow, Southern Connecticut State University  
everowv1@southernct.edu

Merry Pawlowski, California State University-Bakersfield  
Merry_Pawlowski@firstclass1.csubak.edu

---

**REVIEW EDITOR**

Karen Levenback  
kllevenback@rnc.com

**ASSOCIATE EDITOR**

Susan Wegener  
s.wegener@sbcglobal.net

**ASSISTANT EDITORS**

Jennifer A. Hudson, Southern Connecticut State University  
hudsonj1@southernct.edu

Pamela St. Clair, Three Rivers Community College  
pstclair@fastmail.fm

**EDITOR-AT-LARGE**

Debra Sims  
simsdebra@yahoo.com

---

**BOOK REVIEW EDITOR**

All publishers, authors and scholars should direct inquiries regarding book reviews to Karen Levenback at kllevenback@rnc.com

---

**Virginia Woolf Miscellany**

**GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSIONS AND EDITORIAL POLICIES**

The Miscellany gladly considers very short contributions including scholarly articles, essays, poems, fiction, notes and queries as well as line drawings and photographs.

If you are responding to a call for papers for a themed issue, the submission should be sent directly to the Guest Editor.

Even when individual issues are themed, the Miscellany accepts submissions unrelated to the theme. Such submissions should be sent to the Managing Editor, Vara Neverow, rather than to the Guest Editor (for contact information, see page 47).

Submissions should be no longer than 2500 words at maximum and shorter articles are strongly preferred. Articles should be submitted electronically, in .doc or .docx MS Word format and in compliance with current MLA style (see the 6th edition of the MLA Handbook).

The Editorial Board reserves the right to edit all submissions for length and to correct errors. If time permits, contributors will be consulted about changes.

Contributors are responsible for obtaining permissions related to copyrights and reproductions of materials.

Contributors must provide the Editorial Board with original written documentation authorizing the publication of the materials.

The Editorial Board will assist contributors to the best of its ability with regard to permissions for publication, including costs of up to $50 per item. However, the Editorial Board has the option to decline to publish items or to pay for items. The Editorial Board will consider requests to publish more than one item per article or more than five items per issue but will be responsible for funding items only at its own discretion.

The Editorial Board takes no responsibility for the views expressed in the contributions selected for publication. Submissions accepted for publication may be published in both hard and electronic copy.

The Miscellany backfile is currently available online in full text digital format through EBSCOhost’s Humanities International Complete and Literary Reference Center.
ANNOUNCING the publication of

Virginia Woolf: Art, Education, and Internationalism: Selected Papers from the Seventeenth Annual Conference on Virginia Woolf,

Editors Royer and Detloff note that “the Seventeenth Annual Conference on Virginia Woolf, hosted by Miami University on June 7-10, 2007, focused on the themes of art, education, and internationalism. This volume presents the plenary addresses of Jane de Gay and Patricia Laurence, along with works by Judith Allen, Suzanne Bellamy, Diane F. Gillespie, Elisa Kay Sparks, and Diana L. Swanson. Other Woolf scholars, including some new to the community, address topics as diverse as Woolf’s response to war, Woolf and desire, Woolf’s literary representation of Scotland, Woolf’s connection to writers beyond the Anglophone tradition, and Woolf’s reception in China, to name just a few. The three themes of the conference elicited thought-provoking presentations, and the cluster of 22 papers in this volume represents the richness of that new scholarship on Virginia Woolf.”

Order forms for the print edition of this volume, as well as the Selected Papers from conferences number 13 (Smith College, 2003), 15 (Lewis & Clark College, 2005), and 16 (University of Birmingham, 2006) may be obtained at the following web address of The South Carolina Review themed series “Virginia Woolf International”:

<http://www.clemson.edu/caah/cedp/SCRThemed_Iss_VWoolf.htm>. The price is $19.95 plus shipping, which is $3 for US and Canada and $6 overseas. Contact Wayne Chapman <cwayne@clemson.edu> if you’d like to arrange by purchase order the acquisition of copies for your school library. Productions are presently underway to publish a Selected Papers for conference number 11 (University of Wales, 2001) as well as 18 (University of Denver, 2008), hopefully in time for the 2009 conference at Fordham University in early June.

Selected Papers 13, 15-17 are also available for viewing in read-only format at the website of the Center for Virginia Woolf Studies, California State University, Bakersfield. Also, a selection of papers apart from the Palgrave anthology but assembled by the organizers of the 14th conference (University of London, 2004), as well as from the 12th conference (Sonoma State University, 2002) are posted on that site. Go to <http://www.csub.edu/center> and click the Publications link for information about subscribing. Subscriptions are a bargain for the six volumes cached there (soon to be eight), not to mention Virginia Woolf’s Three Guineas notebooks, edited by Merry Pawlowski and Vara Neverow.
# Table of Contents

## TO THE READERS

**Thaine Stearns**

## EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- MLA 2009—CFP
- MLA 2008—Panels and Party (see also page 35)
- Annual Conference on Virginia Woolf 2009—CFP (Feb 1 deadline)
- Annual Conference on Virginia Woolf Conference 2010—CFP
- Louisville 2009 Conference Panels
- A Year of Bloomsbury at Duke University
- 10th Annual SCSU Graduate English Conferenceat SCSU—CFP
- A Room of Their Own Exhibit
- A Brief Overview of Resources for Woolfians
- Summer School for Adults—University of Sussex
- How to Join the Virginia Woolf Society of Great Britain
- “A Woman Must Have Money and a Room of Her Own” — Events at Cambridge University’s 800th Year

## VWM Editorial Board

## The I/VWS Archive

## VWM Book Review Editor

## VWM Guidelines for Submissions


### SPECIAL ISSUE ON WOOLF AND PHOTOGRAPHY

**Guest Editor, Thaine Stearns**

- Reflecting on the Lady in the Looking-Glass: **Kimberly Lamm**
  Virginia Woolf’s Feminism and the Maternalization of Photography
- *Flush*, or “Who Was the Woman in the Photograph?” **Maggie Humm**
- Searching the Archive: “Lost” Omega Publicity Photographs? **Jane Garrity**
- How it Struck a Contemporary: Negative Press on the Omega **Celia Marshik**
- *Three Guineas*: The Movie? **Jean Mills**

### MISCELLANEOUS

- At the Bottom of the Sea: **Stefanie Heine**
- Death and Textuality in *The Voyage Out*

## REVIEWS

### THEATER REVIEWS: THREE RESPONSES TO “WAVES”

**Review:** Some Impressions of “Waves” **Mark Hussey**

(Duke Theatre, New York, Nov 20, 2008)

**Review:** A Performance of “Waves” A Commentary **Margaret Gosden**

**Review:** The “Play” and The “Playpoem”: A Response to “Waves” **Marilyn Slutzky Zucker**

### BOOK REVIEWS

**Reviews:**

- *Virginia Woolf and the Nineteenth Century Domestic Novel* by Emily Blair. **Georgia Johnston**
- *Woolfian Boundaries: Selected Papers from The Sixteenth Annual International Conference On Virginia Woolf* **Vara Neverow**
- *The Virginia Woolf Writers’ Workshop: Seven Lessons to Inspire Great Writing* by Danell Jones. **Celia Marshik**
- *Gender In Modernism: New Geographies, Complex Intersections* Edited by Bonnie Kime Scott. **Catherine W. Hollis**
- *Julian Bell, the Violent Pacifist* (Bloomsbury Heritage Series 46). by Patricia Laurence. **Emily Kopley**
- *Conversation with Julian Fry* (Bloomsbury Heritage Series 43). by S. P. Rosenbaum. **Emily Kopley**
- *Roger Fry, Apostle of Good Taste, and Venice* (Bloomsbury Heritage Series 44). by John Lello. **Emily Kopley**
- *Bombay to Bloomsbury: A Biography of the Strachey Family* by Barbara Caine. **Emily Kopley**
- How to Join The International Virginia Woolf Society **Bonnie Kime Scott & Georgia Johnston**
- The IVWS dinner at the MLA in SF **Bonnie Kime Scott & Georgia Johnston**
- The Society Column **Bonnie Kime Scott & Georgia Johnston**

### EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

**MLA 2009—CFP**

**MLA 2008—Panels and Party (see also page 35)**

**Annual Conference on Virginia Woolf 2009—CFP (Feb 1 deadline)**

**Annual Conference on Virginia Woolf Conference 2010—CFP**

**Louisville 2009 Conference Panels**

**A Year of Bloomsbury at Duke University**

**10th Annual SCSU Graduate English Conferenceat SCSU—CFP**

**A Room of Their Own Exhibit**

**A Brief Overview of Resources for Woolfians**

**Summer School for Adults—University of Sussex**

**How to Join the Virginia Woolf Society of Great Britain**

**“A Woman Must Have Money and a Room of Her Own” — Events at Cambridge University’s 800th Year**

**VWM Editorial Board**

**The I/VWS Archive**

**VWM Book Review Editor**

**VWM Guidelines for Submissions**

**Promotional: Virginia Woolf: Art, Education, & Internationalism: Selected Papers from the 17th Annual Conference on Virginia Woolf**

**SPEcial Issue On Woolf And Photography**

**Guest Editor, Thaine steaRns**

- Reflecting on the Lady in the Looking-Glass: **Kimberly Lamm**
  Virginia Woolf’s Feminism and the Maternalization of Photography
- *Flush*, or “Who Was the Woman in the Photograph?” **Maggie Humm**
- Searching the Archive: “Lost” Omega Publicity Photographs? **Jane Garrity**
- How it Struck a Contemporary: Negative Press on the Omega **Celia Marshik**
- *Three Guineas*: The Movie? **Jean Mills**

**Miscellaneous**

- At the Bottom of the Sea: **Stefanie Heine**
- Death and Textuality in *The Voyage Out* **Stefanie Heine**
Virginia Woolf’s Feminism and the Maternalization of Photography

When Virginia Woolf writes in A Room of One’s Own that “we think back through our mothers if we are women,” she is attempting to forge lineages that establish the value and visibility of women artists (76). However, thinking back through mothers is fraught with complications. Her 1929 text makes it clear that within patriarchy, motherhood has been a crucial impediment to women’s full participation in culture. The Victorian imago of motherhood, which Woolf astutely identifies as “The Angel in the House,” made writing against these intersecting realities all the more difficult (DM 236-7).

In “Mediating Generations: The Mother-Daughter Plot,” Lisa Tickner connects “The Angel in the House” to Woolf’s own mother, Julia Stephen: “Feminine creativity required the murder of ‘the Angel in the House,’ the internalized imago of their dead mother, Julia, the embodiment of purity, deference and chronic unselfishness” (87). Tickner argues that Woolf and her sister Vanessa Bell turned to the work of their great aunt, Julia Margaret Cameron, for a model of artistic ambitions: “Bell, like Woolf, could draw on...Cameron’s photographs of their mother (her niece and namesake) as a way of memorializing her while staking a claim to a specifically matrilineal artistic heritage” (87). Cameron’s photographs of their mother helped Woolf and Bell mourn their mother’s absence and negotiate with “the Angel in the House.”

Softly focused, full of gauzy folds of fabric and light, patterned with glowing halo whites and velvet blacks, Cameron’s work was perfect for this negotiation. Her photographs made “the Angel in the House” hysterically visible. She had a predilection for photographing fleasy children and gauzily dressed children posed as cupids, angels, or maidens who are kissed, gazed at, and touched by Madonna figures. Carol Armstrong identifies these themes and their accompanying aesthetic in the subtitle of her 1996 article, “Cupid’s Pencil of Light,” as “the maternalization of photography.” While Cameron’s photographs stage and crystallize the maternal gaze, they also take photography and the woman artist in proto-feminist directions. Armstrong argues that Cameron’s images so obsessively reflect Victorian ideas of maternity and femininity they helped foster a strain of photographic practice that reflected on photography itself rather than making it subservient to the traditions of painting and drawing. Cameron’s images implicitly argue against technological mastery and Oedipal control. As Armstrong writes, her photographs were produced under “the sway of the Mother, rather than the Law of the Father” (118).

Creating images that reflected “the sway of the Mother,” Cameron exemplified the typology of what Armstrong calls the “Lady Amateur” in her 2001 article “From Clementina to Käsebier: The Photographic Attainment of the ‘Lady Amateur.’” Because of photography’s uncertain status as an art form, and because art institutions almost exclusively educated men, Victorian women took up photography with an enthusiasm that possessed feminist stealth. Practicing photography as “amateurs” and within the domestic sphere, their ambitions were made acceptable. However, “Lady Amateurs” also created a distinctive style that highlighted the photograph’s haptic over its optic qualities, the grainy texture over the sharply focused visual geometries of modernist photography (108). This style emerges from an attention to the indexical relationship in the photograph to that which it represents. Roland Barthes described in Camera Lucida the light a photograph requires as an “umbilical cord” because it ties the person looking at the photograph to the material actuality of the person or object now traced, or, one could say, written upon the photographic paper (81). In the nineteenth century, photography was called light-writing, and following Barthes, Armstrong sees Cameron’s work as a visually “written” meditation on the biological tie between mother and child. Cameron’s photograph Cupid’s Pencil of Light (1870), which depicts a child as cupid who, with a slim pencil, writes on a piece of paper lit up with bright light, allegorizes the correspondences among photography, writing, and the maternal in the Victorian imagination.

Though the “maternalization of photography” might strike some as essentialist, its emergence was coincident with the “Lady Amateur,” and together they foresaw the cultural association between the “New Woman” and the accessibility of visual technologies. A “New Woman” looking through a camera represented women’s fuller participation in visual culture, and inspired the work of Bell and Woolf. As Maggie Humm writes in Modernist Women and Visual Cultures, the sisters “belonged to the first generation of women to be active photographers and cinema goers from childhood” (18). Focusing specifically on Woolf, Humm reports that “[f]rom the age of fifteen, photographs framed Virginia Woolf’s world. She wrote about photography in her diaries, letters and essays, and used photographic terms descriptively in her fiction” (40). Photography provided a way for Woolf to think back through the maternal and “stak[e] a claim to a specifically matrilineal artistic heritage” (Tickner 87), but I also want to analyze moments from Woolf’s oeuvre in which she questions the link between photography and the maternal and understand that questioning in terms of Woolf’s feminism.

Photography was an “amateur” activity for both Woolf and Bell, but it informed their artist pursuits in multiple ways. One of Bell’s portraits, The Red Dress (1929), is a painted rendition of a photograph Cameron took of Bell’s mother in 1866. Similar to the children in Cameron’s photographs, Bell took many photographs of her son Julian frolicking naked. Woolf also saw the affinities between Bell and Cameron. Her casting notes for Freshwater (1929) reveal that Woolf imagined Bell playing their great aunt. And we can certainly see the visual echoes of Cameron’s tableaus of Alfred Lord Tennyson’s work in this evocation of Woolf’s mother from Reminiscences: “She had passed like a princess in the pageant from her supremely beautiful youth to marriage and motherhood, without awakenments. If I read truly, indeed the atmosphere of her home flowed such dreams and cast over the figure of her bridegroom all the golden enchantments of Tennysonian sentiment” (32).

Woolf clearly found Cameron’s work an inspiration, but there are also moments in which she wrote against its celebration of maternity. One such moment appears early in Reminiscences. Composed for her nephew Julian Bell about her sister Vanessa, this memoir functions the way family photographs can, in that the text is meant to provide Julian with a fuller picture of his relations, and shows the son images of his mother before he was born. It begins with a gap in time and knowledge, between Vanessa’s birth and Woolf’s conscious awareness of her sister: “Your mother was born in 1879, and as some six years at least must have passed before I knew that she was my sister, I can say nothing of that time” (28). Woolf then defers to a photograph to fill that gap and to evoke a sense of Vanessa’s character: “A photograph is the best token there is of her appearance, and the face in this instance shows also much of the character. You see the soft, dreamy and almost melancholy expression of the eyes” (28). Woolf’s simple description of this photograph echoes the stylistic qualities of Cameron’s work, particularly the portraits of their mother. However, Woolf subtly undermines the idea of a “soft, dreamy, almost melancholy” femininity in the next sentence by suggesting that there is a spark of resistance in Bell’s look: “it may not be fanciful to discover some kind of test and rejection in [her eyes] as though, even then, she considered the thing she saw and did not always find what she needed in it” (28). But this “test and rejection,” Woolf admits, was probably unconscious and so she turns to aspects of Bell’s character that are not defiant—her beauty and her maternal grace. “For the rest,” Woolf writes, “a mother who gazed in her face might
feel her heart leap at the endowment already promised her daughter, for she was to have great beauty” (28). This rendition of Vanessa’s beauty moves easily into an evocation of her maternal instincts: “I can imagine that [Vanessa] attached great importance to the way in which Thoby sat in his highchair, and appealed to Nurse to have him properly fastened there before he was allowed to eat his porridge. Her mother would smile silently at this” (28). Pleased by her daughter’s beauty and maternal attentiveness, Julia Stephen’s gaze sanctioned these qualities. However, the “test and rejection” in Bell’s eyes remains, and so does the fact that Woolf does not specify “the thing she saw.” Perhaps Woolf imagines Bell scrutinizing Victorian gender ideologies, which made motherhood the social category through which women could become valued and recognized.

“The Lady in the Looking-Glass” is one of Woolf’s short stories that “experiment with the features of vision” to “radically reframe the visible world” (Humm 5). In this story Woolf draws on features of photography—perspective, reflection and framing; the spatialization of vision; the “writing” of light on paper—to thematize how women are seen within the frame of culture. She draws from the image-repertoire of photography to speculate about whether it is possible to see a woman’s life unhinged from maternity and biological reproduction.

The central image of a mirror in “The Lady in the Looking-Glass” connects to a crucial insight in A Room of One’s Own: “Women have served all these centuries as looking glasses possessing the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size” (35). Isabella Tyson, the lady in the title, has not served as a looking glass for men. She is a woman with an income and a room of her own, but can British culture actually recognize a woman who does not embody the roles of wife and mother, the roles through which she mirrors patriarchy’s power back to itself? The opening sentence, which links the mirror to written documents, suggests that Isabella will be subsumed in writing. “[I]t was strange,” the narrator tells us that “the letters and the table and the grass walk and the sunflowers…separated and opened out into the space of the mirror. The mail’s reflections, and initially, the pile of letters lay on the table ‘all dripping as she stood there, old and angular, veined and lined, with her high nose and her long shoes, her basket, and something sparkling at her throat. She came so gradually that she did not seem to derange the pattern in the glass, but only to bring in some new element which gently moved and altered the other objects as if asking them, courteously, to make room for her” (225). Isabella walks through the path of vision the narrator traced in the story’s opening paragraph, and the images welcome her into the space of the mirror. The narrator tells us that “the letters and the table and the grass walk and the sunflowers…separated and opened out so that she might be received among them” (225). But by entering the room, Isabella is reduced and fixed to the way she is perceived within culture, and the mirror plays a crucial role in this reduction: “At once the looking-glass began to pour over a light that seemed to fix her” (225). After telling readers the letters are “all bills,” the narrator states: “as she stood there, old and angular, veined and lined, with her high nose and her wrinkled neck, she did not even trouble to open them” (225).

The conclusion of “The Lady in the Looking Glass” is bleak. Readers are confronted by Isabella’s “standing naked in [a] pitiless light” (225), an image analogous to a documentary photograph taken at the scene of a crime. Represented by the letters on the table, language, writing, and all its possibilities for reconfiguring the way we see fold into the mirror and reflect a harsh, pitiless gaze that renders an older woman without children as someone “perfectly empty” and more importantly, makes that image “the woman herself” (225). What is not bleak is Woolf’s artistry arranging the imagery of this conclusion, which attests to the difficulty of reflecting critically on the Victorian image-repertoire of femininity and composing an imaginary capable of resisting the maternal as the primary way women are perceived.

Kimberly Lamm

Works Cited


Flush, or “Who Was the Woman in the Photograph?”

At a plenary in the 18th Annual Virginia Woolf Conference, Denver 2008, Stuart Clarke posed a very pertinent question: “Who is the woman in the photograph frontispiece in Flush?” The photograph depicts Pinka as Flush sitting on the lap of a woman. The writing of Flush did begin with photography. On 16 September 1931, Woolf wrote to Vita Sackville-West: “have you a photograph of Henry? [the Nicolson’s cocker spaniel]. I ask for a special reason, connected with a little escapade [Flush]” (L4: 380). It was another dog, Pinka, given to Woolf by Vita, who eventually became Flush.

Earlier, in July 1931, Virginia was happy that Leonard bought “a superb Zeiss camera” (probably the Lloyd or Nixe rather than the more expensive Cocarette) and pleased that “my Kodak can be made perfect for 5/- (five shillings) (L4: 361). During the 1930s the Woolfs were compiling their third photo album, having taken, developed, and mounted over approximately five hundred photographs. Woolf first conceived of Flush as a visual figure; she wrote to Ottoline Morrell: “Read the Browning love letters, and the figure of their dog made me laugh so I couldn’t resist making him a Life” (L5: 161-2). In October 1933, following the huge success of Flush in Britain and America, Woolf was again excited by the visual possibilities of Flush. “It’s possible that Flush is to be pictured,” she wrote in her diary, “Brace [Woolf’s American publisher] yesterday talked of a substantial sum” (D4: 186).

In a signed letter, dated 12 June 1933, to Vanessa her sister, who designed many of Woolf’s books, Virginia described in detail the visual appearance she wanted for Flush:

We should like if possible to have them [the four illustrations] bound in on separate pages in the large sized edition. The size of the page in the large sized edition works out roughly at 8 ½ inches by 5 ½ inches. I imagine therefore that for this to be possible you would have to redraw the designs, quite apart from the fact that each two as they now are form one whole. (Unpubl. letter)

And Woolf realised further visual possibilities: “I shall have to set about getting extra photographs” (which were not included). Reproducing the National Portrait Gallery’s portraits of Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Robert Browning was not free. D. R. Pond of the NPG Publications Department requested a fee of one shilling and sixpence for each print and “a copyright fee of 7/6 [seven shillings and sixpence] is charged for each reproduction” (Pond letter). The correspondence reveals Woolf’s constant involvement in visual design.

The photograph of Pinka as Flush is positioned as a significant frontispiece and the illustrations are not only an important visual carapace for Flush, but references to the visual also appear throughout the novel. Woolf’s diaries, like the artist’s sketchbooks of her sister Vanessa, show her sustained thinking about visual scenes for Flush. Woolf was particularly concerned to accurately portray the visual appearance of Barrett Browning’s home. Luckily, a visit with Leonard to his Wimpole Street dermatologist, whose “house was almost opposite Flush’s,” enabled Woolf to “count the storeys & verify the knockers—its true they have none, but the houses are very well pointed (D4: 144). Woolf was also simultaneously reading Sir James Jeans’s The Universe Around Us and was intensely interested in the ways in which the physical sciences depicted light as a ray and as a wave. Additionally, during the writing of Flush there are a significant number of contemporary references in the diaries to the Woolfs’ domestic photography, as well as to professional photographs taken of Woolf at this time. For example, Leonard and Virginia took photographs of Tom and Vivienne Eliot who stayed at Monks House for the weekend. About this visit, she wrote in her diary, “She wild as Ophelia—alas no Hamlet would love her, with her powdered spots—in white satin. L. said” (D4: 123).

It is as if engaging in photography’s representative techniques enables Woolf to figure and finish Flush as a series of connected visual objects: “I visualise this book now…as a series of great balloons[…]…I can take liberties with the representational form” (D4: 142). In Florence, Flush witnesses street politics from above, the typical point of view of the modernist urban photographer; see, for example, the street scenes of Andre Kertesz. Under Barrett Browning’s balcony, “A vast crowd was surging underneath[…]…the people in the street—grave men, gay young women—were kissing each other and raising their babies to the people in the balconies[…]…banner after banner passed” (F 79-80). Photography had maximised panoramic and elevated urban vantage points of view by developing faster shutter exposure times and combination printing to better capture urban scenes. Woolf uses this photographic technique of multiple perspectives in many of her works; for example, the Outsider women in Three Guineas spy on men’s patriarchal processions from above with a bird’s eye view (TG 27). In Flush Woolf expands the scope of her visual repertoire, moving between aerial and ground levels. Imprisoned among the poor of Whitechapel, Flush perceives people as visual objects: “Terrible faces passing outside, leering at the window…these horrible monsters—one were ragged, others were glaring with paint and feathers—squatted on the floor; hunched themselves over the table” (56). Flush theorizes as much through his visual imagination as through his sense of smell. There are many explicit references in Flush to the visual frozen moment, the instance. Flush experiences the visual as a series of snapshots; as a flat visual series. Even in the country Flush’s perspective is intensely visual. Visiting Farnham there were “fields of green grass; there were pools of blue water” (93). Similarly, dog and mistress depart from Wimpole Street in a “cinematic” scene: “They stood looking round the room. There was the sofa and by it Mr. Browning’s armchair. There were the busts and the tables. The sun filtered” (70). The scene resembles Greta Garbo’s famous farewell to her lover in Queen Christina, with its slow camera tracking from object to object, here enabling Flush and Barrett Browning to retain memories of Wimpole Street.

It is as if Woolf cannot resist the desire to see through a lens. Rooms are often perceived visually by Flush before their olfactory qualities intrude. In Italy “light poured over him…in a vast bare room flooded with sunshine” (72-3). Flush’s unremitting effort to visualise his surroundings through the photographic enables Woolf to create a humorous distancing. When Flush sees Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s new baby, “it was a live animal. Independently of them all, without the street door being opened, out of herself in the room, alone, Mrs. Browning had become two people” (83). A photographic perception permits the surreal scene.
Woolf uses this mode of visual distancing to suggest the essential unknowability of humankind to animals. Flush, as it were, composes a number of photographic scenes in his head in the vain hope of capturing and understanding his peopled world. It is precisely because the visual makes such continuous interventions in Flush that Woolf's works, shows the crucial importance of photography to Woolf.

Oh—and who was the woman in the photograph frontispiece? The woman's pose resembles photographs of Angelica taken by Vanessa. The photograph could have been taken at Angelica’s “honorary” birthday party on 16 September 1932. But the hand and wrist seen seem those of an older woman than the teenage Angelica. In addition, Pinka’s happy stillness suggests that he is sitting on his mistress. Virginia attended a fancy-dress party for Angelica’s birthday in January 1933 dressed as Queen Victoria. The skirt in the photograph is certainly Victorian. My guess is that the answer to Stuart’s question is Virginia.

Maggie Humm
School of Social Sciences, Media and Cultural Studies
University of East London

Works Cited
—. “WOOLF FLUSH.” Letter to Vanessa Bell. 12 June 1933. Hogarth Press Archive, University of Reading.

1 See my Snapshots of Bloomsbury 178.
2 Although not Woolf’s mother’s dresses—see Snapshots 42, 82.

Searching the Archive: “Lost” Omega Publicity Photographs?

I first became interested in Vanessa Bell’s dressmaking project when I read Judith Collins’s The Omega Workshops, which features a black and white photograph of Bell modeling an Omega dress of her own design. I was immediately intrigued by this image and wanted to learn more about Bell’s role in organizing the Omega Workshops’ dressmaking department. The only information Collins offers about this photograph is that it is an Omega publicity image dating from the summer of 1915 (299 n55). We never learn precisely where the photograph is archived, but Collins lists three sources for the archival materials that she cites in her book: the Contemporary Arts Society; King’s College, Cambridge; and the Tate Gallery Archive. Since the Tate houses Vanessa Bell’s photograph albums, I started my archival research there in the summer of 2004. I looked through all of Bell’s albums, fully expecting to find the Omega dress image reproduced in Collins’s book, and I was hopeful that I would find additional publicity photographs of Omega garments. Collins discloses that a second, doctored version of the Bell press photograph exists, featuring Vanessa modeling her own dress but with seamstress Joy Brown’s head superimposed over her own, arguably because—for Omega publicity purposes—the “conventional good looks of Miss Brown” were preferred to the “pensive, sad-eyed face of Vanessa Bell, who was left bewildered by the change” (108). Collins offers readers no information on the whereabouts of the doctor photograph of Joy Browne, nor does she document the archival location of other photographs of Omega garments that she mentions but does not reproduce: Nina Hamnett wearing an Omega tunic in “Maud” printed linen fabric; and Joy Browne wearing a similar tunic in “Margery” fabric (106). During my research at the Tate I never found the original Bell image, the doctor photograph of Joy Browne, or the photographs of Hamnett and Browne wearing Omega tunics, but since then I have been searching endlessly for these archived images—with no luck.

In an effort to narrow my research parameters I decided to focus primarily on finding the image of Bell reproduced in The Omega Workshops because I assumed this was an achievable goal. Thinking that perhaps I had overlooked the Bell photograph during my original research, I followed up with Adrian Grew, the Archive Curator at the Tate, but he recently assured me that the Tate does not have the image. I then consulted the other two archives listed in Collins’s book. Both Phil Ashcroft, the Office and Projects Manager of the Contemporary Arts Society, and Elizabeth Ennion, the Assistant Archivist at the Archive Centre at King’s College, assured me that the Vanessa Bell photograph reproduced in Collins’s book is not archived in their institutions. If the Bell photograph is not at one of these three places, then where is it? Collins offers the reader tantalizing information, but does not thoroughly document her sources; as a result, one is forced to consult vast amounts of archival material with no clear sense of direction. What is a scholar to do when an author states that certain material exists in an archive, while the curators of those archives say the material isn’t there? This is precisely the situation I have found myself in as I’ve been searching for the Vanessa Bell publicity photograph; this quest has become a kind of search for the holy grail because nobody has been able to tell me precisely where the image of Bell is archived, or even if it exists.

During this research odyssey, I have tried a variety of tactics—none of them successful. I have corresponded with the publisher of The Omega Workshops, the University of Chicago Press, but they have no information on the Vanessa Bell image. I have attempted several times to contact Judith Collins herself, to no avail. Despite repeated attempts, both via e-mail and snail mail, she has never responded, and her silence remains a mystery. Several people suggested to me that perhaps Collins has died or was no longer doing visual studies research, but I discovered

1 I am currently completing an essay, “Vanessa Bell’s Omega Dress,” about Bell’s role as dress designer.
that she has recently published an impressive new book, *Sculpture Today*, with Phaidon Press.² Despite the frustrated outcome of my search, this quest has led me to a wide range of Bloomsbury scholars who have generously shared fascinating information with me, although no one has passed on any clues as to the whereabouts of the photographs I am seeking.

Those of us who do archival work (especially on the Omega, whose objects are so fragmentary and elusive) often depend upon the kindness and generosity of others working in the field, and in the course of this research I have corresponded with and am grateful to (in no particular order): Virginia Nicholson, Frances Spalding, Lisa Tickner, Christopher Reed, Wendy Hitchmough, Hermione Lee, Peter Stansky, Isabelle Anscombe, Maggie Humm, Tony Bradshaw, Diane Gillespie, Richard Shone, Angelica Garnett, Cressida Bell, and Regina Marler. Marler, the editor of Vanessa Bell’s letters and the author of *Bloomsbury Pie: The Making of the Bloomsbury Boom*, wondered: “Where can Judith Collins be?!...There is probably a very good story in there—kidnapping, marriage to a gypsy king, something or other” (personal communication). Lily Sheehan, a graduate student who is also doing research on dress design, has similarly failed in her efforts to contact Collins. In January 2008, Cressida Bell kindly wrote to Judith Collins on my behalf, but she too never heard back from her. I guess the lesson here is that if even Vanessa Bell’s granddaughter can’t get a response, then the case is probably hopeless. In addition to the Tate Britain, I have also visited the archives at Charleston, the Victoria & Albert Museum, and the Courtauld Institute of Art, but none of these places had any information on the photographs that Collins discusses in her book.

One thing I have learned is that the list of resources associated with an archive is not always 100% correct, and there are instances where source material that an archivist says (over e-mail) is not there may surface in the course of doing research (in person). I have also learned that at times archivists at the same institution do not always report the same information regarding basic inventory. This is precisely what happened to me when I was corresponding with the Victoria & Albert Museum. Lynn Young, an archivist at the V&A, wrote in an e-mail message in 2003: “The Museum Archive does not hold any designs by Vanessa Bell or the Omega Workshops, but it does hold records relating to objects created by Bell which have been acquired by the Museum as part of its collection.” Then Fiona Leslie, at that time the curator of the Designs Collection in the Word and Image Department of the V&A, told me (also in 2003) that they had a number of Omega textiles, a carpet, and a plate, as well as an Omega screen in the Furniture department and about twenty other “designs for decoration” that were unspecified prints—but nothing directly relating to dress design. I was initially told that none of the textiles were designed by Bell, but later in a follow up message (in 2004) from Jennifer Wearden, the Senior Curator in the Department of Furniture, Textiles, and Fashion, I learned that the Museum had six Omega Workshop textiles—one definitely designed by Bell and two possibly designed by her. In all of my correspondence with the V&A, I was told that they had no Omega garments or accessories, such as hair ornaments or parasols. When I finally visited the Museum in August 2004, none of the curators I had corresponded with were available and so I met with a young woman who was fresh out of college and very eager to show me the Omega Workshops textiles. She patiently displayed the collection one textile at a time, and when she unearthed a woven waistcoat and shawl designed by Roger Fry, I was definitely surprised. Then, after I had seen all of the items on her check-list, she pulled out an unattributed, hand-painted silk parasol that was made by the Omega around 1913—perhaps even by Bell herself, who was known to have painted some parasols. Needless to say, I was thrilled to see all of these objects, but I wondered about the Museum’s acquisition records—particularly for researchers, like myself, who depend upon electronic records and e-mail correspondence in order to access the information upon which our research depends. If I had not been able to visit the V&A in person, would I have ever learned about that seemingly uncataloged parasol? I have no idea, but the point is that luck seems to play a significant role when one is doing archival research.

I have one additional example related to my research which vividly illustrates this point: a serendipitous e-mail message from Richard Shone, the editor of *The Burlington Magazine* and author of several books on Bloomsbury, told me in 2005 that the Witt Library at the Courtauld had a folder of photographs (filed under Omega Workshops or possibly under Roger Fry / Omega) that included an image of Nina Hamnett and Winifred Gill modeling Omega dresses. He also said that other Omega photographs were contained in this folder. I knew right away that the Hamnett and Gill photograph he was referencing had been reproduced in Isabelle Anscombe’s book, *Omega and After: Bloomsbury and the Decorative Arts*, but I was eager to learn if perhaps other Omega publicity photographs were included in this file (85 plate 12).³ I immediately wrote to the Courtauld to ask about this archival material, but was told by Witt librarian Barbara Thompson that no photograph of Nina Hamnett and Winifred Gill was included in the Roger Fry boxes, nor did anything relevant exist in their “Omega” or “Vanessa Bell” files. Then, about a week later, I received a follow-up message from Thompson informing me that the Hamnett and Gill image had—much to everyone’s surprise—“been unearthed”! She wrote: “I remembered material being borrowed for a Fry exhibition here that was never returned to the Witt Library. I had copy photographs taken and (by sheer luck) the copy photographs were discovered in a file in the gallery offices.” No additional photographs of Omega dresses surfaced at the Courtauld, but this experience taught me another lesson about the unpredictability of archival research. In this case, I was indebted both to Richard Shone, who remembered the folder of photographs and was kind enough to tell me about it, and to Barbara Thompson, who remembered that material had been borrowed and had then persevered in following up on my request.

I have found that the concept of “sheer luck” perfectly encapsulates the nature of archival research, and for that reason I am hopeful that perhaps someone out there reading this will know something and pass information on that will ultimately lead to an archival treasure trove of Omega publicity photographs that will include the elusive image of Vanessa Bell modeling her Omega dress.⁴ In the meantime, I plan to follow the advice of an archivist who told me—off the record—the following: “Under UK copyright law if a photograph was taken before 1 July 1912, the copyright holder is the person who took the photograph. Duration of copyright for photographs taken before 1 June 1957 is fifty years, so this particular image is now out of copyright and could be scanned if necessary (assuming due credit is given to the publication, etc.). This is my own personal reading of copyright regulations and is not a legal opinion.” Thus even if I am ultimately unable to locate the original of the Bell image I can still reproduce it, no doubt thereby frustrating future readers who will long to know more about the photograph’s origins, context, and archival location.

Jane Garrity
University of Colorado, Boulder

³ The Hamnett and Gill image is also reproduced in *The Omega Workshops 1913-1919: Decorative Arts of Bloomsbury* 16.

⁴ I welcome tips, clues, or suggestions for further research, so please feel free to contact me: Jane.Garrity@Colorado.edu. I also welcome information on the textile of Vanessa Bell’s dress, as well as the material in the background of the photograph in *The Omega Workshops* (Plate 55).

---

² For a link to Collins’s new book, see: <http://www.phaidon.com/Default.aspx/Web/sculpture-today-9780714843148>
How it Struck a Contemporary: Negative Press on the Omega

On 14 December 1913, Roger Fry reported on public reaction to the opening of the Omega Workshops in a letter to his mother. Omega “certainly arouses an immense amount of interest,” he wrote, “but also a bitter opposition. I suppose it’s natural that people should dislike it when you try to do something new, but I’m always a little surprised at the vehemence and the personal antagonism that it stirs up” (375).

Scholarship on the Omega provides ample evidence of this antagonism; as Christopher Reed’s Bloomsbury Rooms amply documents, critics called the products of the workshops “futurist nightmare[s]” and suggested that the style of décor was bad for the nerves (128). As the popularity of Omega design has grown over the years, scholars and common readers alike have read such comments as evidence that Bloomsbury heroically persevered in the face of discouragement and criticism—as confirmation that the Omega was ahead of its time.

While negative criticism undoubtedly illuminates the struggles of the Bloomsbury avant-garde to continue to create by their own lights—to insist, as To the Lighthouse’s Lily Briscoe does, “this is what I see” (19)—such criticism can also provide valuable information about Omega designs and artifacts. However tempting it is to dismiss the Omega critics as philistines, I suggest that such criticism can help to piece together the “look” of objects and rooms that are only partially represented in photographs and other extant records of the Omega’s activities. My case in point will be drawn from columns published by The Sunday Pictorial, in part because (to the best of my knowledge) no one has yet recovered them. More important, however, is the fact that these columns comment on works that are poorly documented or have since been destroyed. Even though the evidence that can be gleaned from negative criticism must be treated with some skepticism, in general, the columnist emerges as a fairly reliable—if unappreciative—source about how Omega clothing and rooms looked and felt to contemporaries.
The Sunday Pictorial was launched on 14 March 1915, as an illustrated weekend addition to the Daily Mirror franchise. Like other illustrated papers, the Pictorial targeted female readers with several columns, including the “Mainly for Women” (later, “Page of Gossip Mainly For and About Women”) page that addressed new fashions and society events. The page was always written under a pseudonym, first “The Town Mouse” and then “Kiki,” but the tone and style of the column remained consistent throughout the 1910s. The writer’s— or writers’—attitude toward the unconventional is best illustrated by a 28 January 1917, account of the opening of a Bernard Shaw play. The audience in attendance failed to measure up to the column’s standards; as “Kiki” scoffed, “I’m sure more of us would go in for Art and Life and the Infinite, and all the other really serious things they speak in capitals, if it weren’t for the funny dress that goes with them” (13). While the feature was not conservative when it came to revealing a little skin in a dress or bathing costume, it valorized established designers and styles instead of the “funny dress” of the avant-garde.

Given such predilections, it seems obvious that the column would advance a negative view of the Omega Workshops. On 12 December 1915, “The Town Mouse” openly criticized the Workshops’ new venture into clothing:

Daphne suggests to me that I should follow the example of the Tree girls and buy my new frock at Roger Fry’s funny Omega workshop. Now really can you see me wearing a morning suit of yellow cotton with three blue elephants—or are they toadstools?—sprawled across it? Nir, my dears. When I’d finished laughing I went off with her to inspect. I found ‘some’ post-impressionism. Everything is patterned in weird angled shapes, and the most ‘scrutating colours. I think it takes an Iris or a Felicity Tree to carry them off. For myself, I don’t much think I’m strong enough. Particularly in such weather. Although I dare say it would cheer you quite a lot to meet me shopping in Bond-street dressed—well, you’d see the saucy purple spots a long way off, and the zuch green stripes would make you think of the Café Royal. I’d certainly get my photograph in the weeklies, wouldn’t I? (21)

An accompanying caricature depicted the writer wearing a dress with the caption: “Blue elephants, or were they toadstools?” The woman’s crossed pupils and outstretched arms make her seem an unwilling martyr to Omega dress. Although the writer was clearly informed about certain aspects of the Omega—the Trees were indeed patrons of the establishment—what emerges most definitely from this paragraph is her distaste for Omega colors and designs.

The construction of the paragraph makes it difficult to determine whether the elephant bodice is purely imaginary or a representation of an Omega design the writer had previously seen. As I discuss below, the column’s representations of Omega interiors are accurate, so the description of the elephant dress might point toward a design that has not been documented. Given the Omega’s interest in animals, which may also be interested in Jane Garrity’s article, “Searching the Archive: “Lost” Omega Publicity Photographs?” in this issue (see 14-16).

An accompanying caricature depicted the writer wearing a dress with the caption: “Blue elephants, or were they toadstools?” The woman’s crossed pupils and outstretched arms make her seem an unwilling martyr to Omega dress. Although the writer was clearly informed about certain aspects of the Omega—the Trees were indeed patrons of the establishment—what emerges most definitely from this paragraph is her distaste for Omega colors and designs.

The construction of the paragraph makes it difficult to determine whether the elephant bodice is purely imaginary or a representation of an Omega design the writer had previously seen. As I discuss below, the column’s representations of Omega interiors are accurate, so the description of the elephant dress might point toward a design that has not been documented. Given the Omega’s interest in animals, which may also be interested in Jane Garrity’s article, “Searching the Archive: “Lost” Omega Publicity Photographs?” in this issue (see 14-16).
Although pictures of the Underground fresco and others at the Ruck residence were printed in Colour Magazine and have since been reprinted elsewhere, the room itself no longer exists, making flat, two-dimensional representations all scholars have to draw upon.\(^3\) Kiki’s comments, however unappreciative, add an important piece of information to the Omega archive: although the photographs make it difficult to determine the room’s scale, it was evidently quite small. The Scenes from Contemporary London Life, Fry’s title for the Ruck decorations, thus surrounded the viewer with a panorama of vivid colors and city scenes. If Kiki’s verdict that the Rucks must like living in the Underground seems unjust—one wall alone depicted a tube station—her judgment nevertheless invites us to imagine the experience of being surrounded by life-size images of modern public life in a small indoor space.

In Woolf’s Roger Fry: A Biography, the closing of the Omega is marked by an elegiac paragraph that describes “the shades of the Post-Impressionists” joining “the other shades.” Woolf celebrates and mourns Fry’s unique artistic venture by dwelling upon the remnants of the Omega’s industry as well as the ongoing losses: “some of the things he made still remain—a painted table; a witty chair; a dinner service; a bowl or two of that turquoise blue....And if by chance one of those broad deep plates is broken, or an accident befalls a blue dish, all the shops in London may be searched in vain for its fellow” (218). In 1940, when Woolf published her biography, the archives of the Omega Workshops were already diminishing, one shattered dish at a time. At our own historical moment, when Omega products grace museums more often than private homes, it seems difficult to recover or document the appearance of garments and rooms that have long since joined the shades. And yet, the Sunday Pictorial provides valuable snapshots of Omega products even as its column mocks the Workshops’ aesthetic. Fry’s “bitter opposition” remains a source we should continue to explore and document, as the Omega’s contemporaries testify to its most surprising—and shocking—innovations.

\[\text{Celia Marshik}
\]
\[\text{SUNY Stony Brook}\]

Works Cited

\[\text{\(^3\) Images of the Ruck walls are reprinted in Collins (plates 78 and 79) and Reed (166) among others.}\]

---

“Blue elephants, or were they toadstools?”
The Sunday Pictorial 12 December 1915
Three Guineas: The Movie?

Three Guineas is a devil of a book. And one, I think, as has been said of Milton by Blake (my apologies, Virginia!), places Woolf in “the Devils party without knowing it.” I am patently unsurprised that readers and publishers alike have tried for over fifty years to drive a stake through the heart of its argument, and I “bow down,” as Djuna Barnes might have put it, before the 2006 publication by Harcourt (“with corroding fires”?) of Three Guineas, introduced and annotated by (the Devil’s helper?), Jane Marcus, the first American edition to restore the original five black-and-white photographs to their proper positions in the text. Marcus writes, “But one might say with impunity that if you have read Three Guineas without the photographs, you have not read the book Virginia Woolf wrote” (TG lxi), and such was the case with me.

When I “read” the maimed and corrupted text, sans photographs, as a generation of American undergraduates did in the early 1980s, I responded, dare I say it, much like Leonard Woolf did when Virginia presented him with a first look (I’m assuming at manuscript or typescript pages) of the book in February 1938, with indifference and a degree of veiled skepticism toward the piece. Woolf confides in her diary her disappointment that “My satire seems to him mild” or later that Leonard “Thinks it an extremely clear analysis….One can’t [sic] expect emotion, for as he says, it’s not on par with the novels” (D5: 127).

Leonard, of course, as the author three years earlier of Quack, Quack!, an emotional plea drawing parallels between the rise of fascism and a return to superstition and unreason, and as the editor of An Intelligent Man’s Way to Prevent War, which notably did not include a piece from his wife, may have been responding to Three Guineas from a point of indignation, perhaps, or a gendered blindspot at having to share political intellectual territory with his wife (Marcus “No More Horses” 117). But I think too that if he were reading her pages without the photographs, or having to imagine the placement of the images alongside the text, he would be reading, like the rest of us no-longer-young Americans, visually hobbled. Unlike Leonard, however, I didn’t encounter the text whole for the first time until fifteen years later (round number) as a graduate student, when I found a first edition in the public library shelved incorrectly (or was it?) under “Biography,” and the brilliance of Woolf’s argument emerged.

My initial indifference to the text without the photographs almost immediately transformed into a profound respect and appreciation (mixed in, of course, with the fear and trembling one inevitably experiences in the presence of Dark Forces) and of my consideration of the text as a masterpiece. But a masterpiece of what, to this day, (and I am sure I will take this to the grave), I cannot say. I, and no other critic, to my knowledge, can seem to agree, not even its author, on what to call it. Is it an essay? A novel-essay? An anti-war pamphlet? An anti-fascist pamphlet? A pacifist polemic? A documentary? An atom bomb in a slogin shot? As the project evolved from its beginnings in 1931 to 1938, a trajectory of composition, reception and publication beautifully outlined and researched by Rebecca Wisor in her 2008 dissertation “My Country and the Culture of Pacifist Dissent,” Virginia Woolf herself assigned it a number of working titles and referred to it with a variety of nicknames in her diary entries and letters—“Professions for Women” (from her 1931 talk); “Answers to Correspondents”; “On Being Despised”; “Men Are Like That”; “The Tap at the Door”; “The Knock at the Door”; and “The Next War”—before settling on “Three Guineas.”1 And even though it is so named and appears physically bounded by front cover and back, the text is also buttressed by pages of Woolf’s reading notes, newspaper clippings, and scrapbooks, which can now be accessed thanks to the research and web site of the Three Guineas Archives at California State/Bakersfield created by Merry Pawlowski and Vara Neverow. Three Guineas’ refusal to be categorized, its ability to remain elusive and louché stylistically and methodologically as its argument hits you in the face with a plank, is what separates it from the “herd” and “herd instinct” Woolf seeks to destroy, a struggle which Three Guineas inherits from its intellectual foremother, Jane Ellen Harrison’s “Epilogue on War: Peace with Patriotism.”

But setting aside for the moment the question of what to call Three Guineas in terms of genre and form or what it’s “about” in terms of theme(s), and even, for the moment, letting it slide that somehow someone somewhere dropped five big, important photographs from a book and continued to publish it that way for a long time, it becomes clear that Woolf’s argument lives, breathes (and died for decades until its revivification), on this business of photography. Indeed, with each re-reading of the text whole, I begin to storyboard Three Guineas, a task that would be impossible to accomplish for a book like, Quack, Quack!, for example, but an exercise which has led me to suggest here that Three Guineas, more than any other text in Virginia Woolf’s body of work, (including her novels, with the possible exception of The Years, which was, not incidentally, once tied in its early stages as The Pargiters [Leaska] to Three Guineas, as “a novel of fact”) lends itself to film. As early as 1932, Woolf had planned to include four of the five photographs, when she writes on 16 February about “the sequel then, for which I have collected enough powder to blow up St Pauls [sic]. It is to have 4 pictures” (D4: 77). And by 2 November 1932, she writes enthusiastically about how she is visualizing “an Essay-Novel” that she cannot stop thinking about and picturing in her mind: “I have been in such a haze & dream & intoxication, declaring phrases, seeing scenes, as I walk up Southampton Row that I can hardly say I have been alive at all, since the 10th Oct” (D4: 129). The “scenes” Woolf sees find their way relentlessly into the visual displays, anecdotes, and plots that fade in and out of Three Guineas as both photographs and word-pictures. Indeed, Three Guineas can be read, alongside or in addition to its multiple readings and attempts at categorization by critics, as a treatise on photographic theory. Furthermore, had its subtitle (and is there any other work in all of literature that screams out for a subtitle more than Three Guineas?) been “Reflections on Photography,” which I am borrowing from Roland Barthes’ classic Camera Lucida or, as I playfully suggest in the title of this essay, Three Guineas: The Movie, the photographs would have never been dropped from the book, and we would be reading it today—as we often read Camera Lucida as that book on photography that is really a beautiful homage to his dead mother—as that book Three Guineas, which, really a book about how to prevent war.

And it is in kinship with photography, that in Three Guineas, such as it is, published whole, Virginia Woolf revolutionizes the act of seeing. She changes the spectacle of war, its drums and trumpets, the act of soldiering, the commemoration and memorialization of the war dead, women’s attraction and collaboration with the masculine fantasy of war, into a growing, terrifying crescendo that holds us by the ear and by the eye to self-reflection and personal responsibility for our lives. When she points to the word-pictures of Hitler and Mussolini, behind whom “lie ruined houses and dead bodies—men, women and children,” (TG 168) photographic images, along with pictures of the monarch she refuses to display, lest, she claims, they incite more emotion, violence, and bloodshed, she raises the more significant, wider scope issue that the word pictures of the Fuhrer and Il Duce convey, “that the public and the theme(s), and even, for the moment, letting it slide that somehow someone somewhere dropped five big, important photographs from a book and continued to publish it that way for a long time, it becomes clear that Woolf’s argument lives, breathes (and died for decades until its revivification), on this business of photography. Indeed, with each re-reading of the text whole, I begin to storyboard Three Guineas, a task that would be impossible to accomplish for a book like, Quack, Quack!, for example, but an exercise which has led me to suggest here that Three Guineas, more than any other text in Virginia Woolf’s body of work, (including her novels, with the possible exception of The Years, which was, not incidentally, once tied in its early stages as The Pargiters [Leaska] to Three Guineas, as “a novel of fact”) lends itself to film. As early as 1932, Woolf had planned to include four of the five photographs, when she writes on 16 February about “the sequel then, for which I have collected enough powder to blow up St Pauls [sic]. It is to have 4 pictures” (D4: 77). And by 2 November 1932, she writes enthusiastically about how she is visualizing “an Essay-Novel” that she cannot stop thinking about and picturing in her mind: “I have been in such a haze & dream & intoxication, declaring phrases, seeing scenes, as I walk up Southampton Row that I can hardly say I have been alive at all, since the 10th Oct” (D4: 129). The “scenes” Woolf sees find their way relentlessly into the visual displays, anecdotes, and plots that fade in and out of Three Guineas as both photographs and word-pictures. Indeed, Three Guineas can be read, alongside or in addition to its multiple readings and attempts at categorization by critics, as a treatise on photographic theory. Furthermore, had its subtitle (and is there any other work in all of literature that screams out for a subtitle more than Three Guineas?) been “Reflections on Photography,” which I am borrowing from Roland Barthes’ classic Camera Lucida or, as I playfully suggest in the title of this essay, Three Guineas: The Movie, the photographs would have never been dropped from the book, and we would be reading it today—as we often read Camera Lucida as that book on photography that is really a beautiful homage to his dead mother—as that book Three Guineas, which, really a book about how to prevent war.

And it is in kinship with photography, that in Three Guineas, such as it is, published whole, Virginia Woolf revolutionizes the act of seeing. She changes the spectacle of war, its drums and trumpets, the act of soldiering, the commemoration and memorialization of the war dead, women’s attraction and collaboration with the masculine fantasy of war, into a growing, terrifying crescendo that holds us by the ear and by the eye to self-reflection and personal responsibility for our lives. When she points to the word-pictures of Hitler and Mussolini, behind whom “lie ruined houses and dead bodies—men, women and children,” (TG 168) photographic images, along with pictures of the monarch she refuses to display, lest, she claims, they incite more emotion, violence, and bloodshed, she raises the more significant, wider scope issue that the word pictures of the Fuhrer and Il Duce convey, “that the public and the private worlds are inseparably connected; that the tyrannies and servilities of the one are the tyrannies and servilities of the other...that

---


2 [Editor’s note] MHH 6-7.

3 [Editor’s note] See also Julia Briggs, An Inner Life (NY: Harcourt, 2006).

4 [Editor’s note] Readers may be interested in Marilyn Schwinn Smith’s “Jane Harrison, The Society of Heretics, and Leonard Woolf’s ‘Communal Psychology: An Essay Written During Time of War’” in the Virginia Woolf Miscellany 72 (Fall/Winter 2007): 30-35.
we cannot dissociate ourselves from that figure but are ourselves that figure” (168). With the blending of the text images of the human figure, the dead children, and the ruined houses, along with the displayed photographs of figures of patriarchal power, Woolf casts her narrator as photographer once again, a rhetorical stance she has adopted throughout the book that is strange, awkward, and uncomfortable, but on purpose, as it is ultimately, “we,” the readers whose pictures, or eidola, are being targeted, captured, and “taken” by Woolf.

In addition to being about the war, about how to prevent war, about how to maintain peace, about the irreconcilable contradictions of women’s lives in education, in the professions, and in the home, about money and capital, property and assets, influence and indifference, Three Guineas, like photographic theory, is also about perception, the instability of perception, and the corruption of perception. What do we see? What do we see that’s the same? How do we see the same things differently? What accounts for those differences in perception? And she takes aim at the answers by writing about photographs we expect to see and displaying photographs from which we feel disconnected. Similarly, years later, in Camera Lucida, Barthes discusses, but never displays what becomes known as the Winter Garden photograph of his mother, for fear we might respond with indifference, as he yearns for an argument that she existed. He uses photography as a method to fight death, to perpetuate love, and to substantiate what he calls “thereness.” That he refuses to display the photograph we long to see, but offers others we have no real attachment to in relation to the discussion of his mother, speaks in part, at least, to his suspicions and fears about the medium, a response that is also shared by Woolf, who conceives of and composes Three Guineas during what is still considered the early years of modern photography, the 1930s. Although Woolf, according to many critics, begins her project in the bathtub in 1931 (D4: 6), and her first reference to using photographs as we have seen also dates to this early period, her focus on war—in addition to the professions and education—increases with the beginning of the Spanish Civil War. It intensifies with the death of her nephew Julian in 1937, who enlisted as an ambulance driver fighting for the Republicans against the Nazi and fascist-supported Franco, and with the weekly arrival of packets of war photographs that Elena Gualtieri and others suggest are related to Woolf’s letter to Julian on 16 November 1936, when she describes “a packet of photographs from Spain all of dead children, killed by bombs” (L6: 85).

Although the American Civil War is the first to elicit pictures of casualties of war and to use photography and pictures of dead bodies, sometimes staged, for propagandistic purposes, the technology of photography and film was still in its infancy, shutter speeds were slow and photographers had to in effect carry their darkrooms on their backs. The 1920s, with the invention of the Leica, and much faster shutter speeds, mark the advent of modern photography, but the camera is not tested under battle conditions until the Spanish Civil War in the 1930s. It was also the first war to be covered visually by a corps of professional photographers, in concert with the word pictures of her prose, is a visual tour-de-force that carries with it an irreducible logic that we ignore, dismiss, or deny at our own peril.

Jean Mills
John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Works Cite


Stavely, Alice. “Name that Face.” Virginia Woolf Miscellany 51 (Spring 1998): 4-5.

Wisor, Rebecca. “‘My Country is the Whole World’: Three Guineas and the Culture of Pacifist Dissent.” Diss. City University of New York, 2008.

Death plays an important role in Virginia Woolf’s texts and constantly seems to haunt her novels. As a close reading of a central passage of her first novel, The Voyage Out, shall illustrate, Woolf’s conception of death is a thoroughly Modernist one. In contrast to the Victorians, who see death as life’s other, which has to be excluded from it, for Modernists death does not designate the opposite of life, but its precondition. Death became the epitome of an enabling negativity for philosophers like Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Martin Heidegger or Maurice Blanchot. Pure death becomes a state of unity and wholeness which is inapproachable within life, but which has to be presumed as a radical alterity triggering the dynamic of life. Influenced by these philosophical approaches, the boundaries between life and death begin to blur from the Modernist period up to Poststructuralism. For many Modernists, literature represents a space between or even beyond life and death, as it has an aestheticist touch. This becomes obvious in the context of the new critical movement, which is considered as the modernist criticism. The “obsessive concern with the ‘text itself’” and the “close and ‘disinterested’ textual analysis” of New Criticism (Selden 14) clearly go back to Aestheticism. Some New Critics not only see aesthetic form as something significant, but as an end in itself. Form is not only relevant as addition to content or to underline it, but it becomes the essence of literature itself. Anticipating Poststructuralism’s purely textual domains, this Modernist tendency towards pure self-reflexivity and non-mimetic art attempts to leave behind referentiality. This gesture promises not only a self-enclosed world of art, but also an exclusion of any “outside” human world. The textual realm where language centers on itself turns into a liminal space beyond death, which also brings language to its edge. Reference is needed for language, because signs which do not refer to something else can no longer be regarded as signs. By the process of representation taking place in literary texts, they “kill” off their referents through the abstraction executed while translating into words. At the same time, Poststructuralists claim that it is only through this killing by language that things come into being, that is, to life. As a result, there is a constant dynamic play of cutting out the lived-in world or a complete dissolution of the human in a textual domain and a postulation of the need of the experience realm.

In the end of The Voyage Out, a connection between textuality and death as an in-between state can be observed in the context of the fatal tropical disease that befalls the protagonist Rachel Vinrace. From the beginning, this illness is deeply associated with textuality and especially with the materiality of words. Not coincidentally, Rachel notices a strong headache, which is the first symptom of the disease, almost immediately after her fiancé Terence Hewet "was reading Milton aloud" (317) to her. Following Terence’s suggestion, Rachel perceives the words read to her almost as pure signifiers reduced to their material: the words of Milton had substance and shape, so that it was not necessary to understand what he was saying; one could merely listen to his words; one could almost handle them. (317)

For Rachel, the words “seemed to be laden with meaning...[;] they meant different things from what they usually meant,” and they trigger off "unpleasant sights before her eyes, independently of their meaning” (317-318). What Rachel hears are words so overdetermined that they become empty and take on a life of their own. Bereft of clear reference, words lead attention to their material qualities, their substance, the shape of the letters, their sounds. These material words lacking meaning seem to drag Rachel into a purely textual domain.

If we look at the following course of Rachel’s illness, the words themselves play an important role. After going to bed to recover from the headache, Rachel’s:
chief occupation during the day was to try to remember how the lines [from Milton’s masque Comus] went: Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave, / In twisted braids of lilies knitting / The loose train of thy amber dropping hair[.] (320)

On the next day, Rachel’s obsession with Milton’s words is intensified, and she literally enters the text which has been read to her:

the world outside, when she tried to think of it, appeared distinctly further off. The glassy, cool, translucent wave was almost visible before her, curling up at the end of the bed, and as it was refreshingly cool she tried to keep her mind fixed on it. (320)

In this passage, the words of Milton’s masque take on flesh and are visible images before Rachel, who perceives them not as images but as real objects, as the wave is “at the end of the bed” and Rachel actually feels its refreshing coolness.

As the first sentence of the quote shows, Rachel’s retreat into a purely textual space happens only at the cost of the “real” world surrounding her. Already on the first day of her illness, Rachel notices that “her heat and discomfort had put a gulf between her world and the ordinary world which she could not bridge” (320). In the course of her illness, Rachel’s solitude and isolation further increases: “She was completely cut off and unable to communicate with the rest of the world, isolated alone with her body” (321). Rachel becomes more and more trapped in a language that does not allow outside reference. Rachel’s main occupation during her illness is interpreting the sights first triggered by Milton’s words that then appear to her in her delirious state.

The sights were all concerned in some plot, some adventure, some escape. The nature of what they were doing changed incessantly, although there was always a reason behind it, which she must endeavour to grasp. (331)

The fact that the sights are consequences of a poem which cannot not be attached to any reference and words that only reflect their own materiality show that the sign system in which Rachel is involved is detached from the “outside” world. Rachel’s activity of searching for meaning displays a complete absorption in a sign system. While the signified is endlessly delayed, Rachel is still fixed on catching it. This effort requires so much concentration that people who enter her room “distracted her attention,” making her worry that “she might miss the clue” (331). Rachel loses herself so much in her enclosed space that at some stage she is no longer able to differentiate it from the “real” world and “she was suddenly unable to keep [her aunt] Helen’s face distinct from the sights themselves” (331). For Rachel, the “real” world therefore dissolves into a textual one.

The sights Rachel sees in her delirium are a mix of images and expressions that occurred in earlier passages of the novel. This factor can be seen as a self-reflexive gesture of the text, as it refers to its preceding moments. Rachel’s hallucinations consist of a culmination of fragments from earlier text passages. Torn out of their original context, these fragments can be seen as empty words, which, instead of signifying only, stand in their pure function to refer. What they are referring to is not something in an outside world but rather their own occurrence within a text. By referring to their own nature as signifiers and by excluding any reference to the outside world, the words forming Rachel’s hallucinations perform the way Rachel’s illness itself is described. In examining the hallucinations themselves, Rachel’s first hallucination very strongly recalls a nightmare she has earlier in the novel. In her fever dream:

Rachel…found herself walking through a tunnel under the Thames, where there were little deformed women sitting in archways playing cards, while the bricks of which the wall was made ooze[d] with damp, which collected into drops and slid down the wall. (322)

The nightmare Rachel has earlier is not only very similar in its images, but some fragments of sentences are identically taken over from it:

She dreamt that she was walking down a long tunnel, which grew so narrow by degrees that she could touch the damp bricks on either side[,]…she found herself trapped in it,…alone with a little deformed man….The wall behind him ooze[d] with damp, which collected into drops and slid down. (72; my emphasis)

Both the nightmare and the hallucination are associated with death. During the nightmare, Rachel lies “[s]till and cold as death” (72). The hallucination is not only connected to death, as the fever finally leads to Rachel’s actual death, but it also refers to mortality in another aspect. In a later state of her delirium, Rachel again encounters the old woman, who she first imagined playing cards “in a tunnel under a river” (322). This time, Rachel sees the “old woman slicing a man’s head off with a knife” (329). This image does not only recall the little deformed women in the tunnel under the Thames and the woman playing cards, but also references an earlier scene of the novel where Rachel is watching a chicken’s head being chopped off. This scene where Rachel is painfully confronted with mortality recurs in the textual world of her illness and further associates it with death.

Following this thread, we arrive at one of the novel’s most important images, water. The women in the hallucination and the man in Rachel’s nightmare are in a tunnel under a river, and Rachel herself later continually claims to be at the bottom of the sea. In The Voyage Out, the sea seems to represent both source of death and a means to overcome it. When watching the sea, Rachel’s aunt Helen suddenly:

became acutely conscious of the little limbs, the thin veins, the delicate flesh of men and women, which breaks so easily and lets the life escape compared with these great trees and deep waters. (287)

The indestructible sea in its enormous mass and profundity exposes human life as fragile. In connection to the sea, Rachel also delights in the thought of losing control and being helplessly exposed to an external force bringing chaos: “To be flung into the sea, to be washed hither and thither, and driven about the roots of the world—the idea was incoherently delightful (290).”

The sea is therefore associated both with stability and chaos or death and life; it is an entity not subject to human mortality. The bottom of the sea is also a point of origin. While staring through the calm waters at its bottom, Rachel observes the following: “So it had been at the birth of the world and so it remained ever since” and she feels the “eternity of peace” (200-201). The image of the sea and its floor turns up in connection to Rachel repeatedly throughout the novel and becomes especially significant during her illness. Rachel’s headache is introduced by a metaphor describing the waves of the nearby shore: “the breaking of the waves sounded like the repeated sigh of some exhausted creature” (317). The wave image then again turns up in the passage Terence reads from Milton where Sabrina is “sitting / Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave” (318). When her illness reaches its climax, Rachel literally enters the metaphor which has been established throughout the text and brings it in connection with death:
she fell into a deep pool of sticky water, which eventually closed over her head….While all her tormentors thought she was dead, she was not dead, but curled up at the bottom of the sea. (331)

Rachel is located in a liminal space between life and death at that moment. At the height of her illness, she is on the rim of death and other people even think that she is dead. Yet the state described is death with consciousness and a return to an original inanimate state reminiscent of Sigmund Freud’s inorganic world, which is the aim of the death drive. Such a state is impossible in the real world, and it can only be approached in a purely textual space. We have to be aware that the sea-images are a complex network of connections and associations with death constructed by the text of the novel. The sea does not primarily stand for the natural inanimate world. In The Voyage Out, it rather takes on a very elaborate special meaning independent from its real-life reference and dissolves into a metaphor of textuality. Of course, the image of the bottom of the sea as a domain resting in itself, independent from humans, is not randomly chosen.

The impossibility of a condition such as Rachel’s textual death can be illustrated by the narration of Rachel’s death in the novel. The moment of Rachel’s death is not narrated from her own perspective; the focalization switches to Terence instead. In the process of dying, Rachel herself becomes inaccessible to both Terence and the readers. Yet her condition seems to be transferred to Terence for a short moment. While watching Rachel die, he is:

conscious of peace invading every corner of his soul….[T]hey seemed to be thinking together; he seemed to be Rachel as well as himself….[S]he had ceased to breathe. So much the better—this was death. It was nothing; it was to cease to breathe. It was happiness…..They had now what they had always wanted to have, the union which had been impossible while they lived. (343)

Terence perceives a feeling of wholeness and unity similar to Rachel’s state between life and death where the Milton text and her surroundings merge to textual space beyond humanity. For an instant, Terence’s and Rachel’s identities intermingle and Terence perceives Rachel’s death as if it were his own. At this moment, which is described both as bliss of peacefulness and as death, Terence experiences perfect unity and some kind of unmediated communication with Rachel, as they “seemed to be thinking together” (343). The “union which had been impossible while they lived” echoes a silent, direct communication which they never experienced in actual speech. Woolf associates full understanding with silence, as the mind is said to perceive “without words.” However, an immediate and full understanding through silence is only possible for a fleeting moment and is fatal at its core. The purely textual is not a state which can be sustained; it is the point where language touches its edge and human beings dissolve into nothingness. Terence, as the one who survives and keeps on speaking encounters this nothingness and relates to it without losing himself, which defines the dynamic of life.

Stefanie Heine
Zurich, Switzerland

Works Cited

THREE RESPONSES TO “WAVES”

REVIEW
SOME IMPRESSIONS OF “WAVES”
(DUKE THEATRE, NEW YORK, NOV 20, 2008)

Leaving aside for a moment the sophisticated video technology, the experience was something like observing a studio from where a radio play was being broadcast: sound effects made ingeniously (a cricket ball striking the willow, a bird startled from cover, children squealing in a bath, a rainy day, footsteps approaching down a long corridor), actors racing from mic to mic holding their scripts. (“Could one not get the waves to be heard all through? Or the farmyard noises? Some odd irrelevant noises,” wrote Woolf in 1929.) But although what first struck me was the rich aurality of the production, “Waves” is also an amazing visual experience. Continuously, new scenes form on the screen at the back of the stage, scenes framed by an actor holding a video camera who focuses on, say, Jinny in the Tube, Rhoda stretching her foot to touch the bedrail or failing to cross the puddle, Neville distracted in the restaurant as the door keeps on opening but Percival does not come…in short, the images that might form in a reader’s mind are projected as the narrative proceeds. (And is this what Woolf meant when she referred to marking the past as “scene-making”?) And only when one looks from that screen to the long table at the front of the stage where the “action” takes place is the ingenuity made clear: Jinny sits on a chair on the table with a piece of red stuff over her lap, a small powder compact open in her hand, and jiggles her legs as she might do involuntarily were she actually riding the Tube. I thought of Between the Acts, where Miss La Trobe knows that a tea-towel wrapped around the head will serve better than more expensive material to convey the impression of majesty, or silver foil will do fine service as a sword. (Now I’m feeling like Mr. Streetfield: “…with the limited means at her disposal, the talented lady showed us…”!). So, simply by holding up a rectangle of wallpaper against which another actor stands holding a glass, a populated room appears on the screen. The actors were able to create scene after scene from the lives of Jinny, Susan, Rhoda, Neville, Bernard, Louis, and Percival, pulling props from long metal shelves that ran along each side of the stage. A piece of perspex and a spray-bottle created the effect of a car windshield through which we could see Jinny on her way to a party. A small box of dirt strewn with stones, with a foot edging across its boundary then
This production is steeped in Woolf’s own thoughts on her “abstract, mystical eyeless book.”

The sound of the sea is heard throughout, and whether we are hearing the thoughts of six separate people or six facets of one mind is (properly) not made clear. Yet the production swerves away from the novel’s pitiless impersonality, interpolating elements of “Sketch of the Past” in its text as if to anchor it in the biographical that Woolf was at such pains to avoid (“it must not be my childhood,” she wrote, for example). Parts of the interludes are read in a voice that mimics the only extant recording of Woolf’s own voice, plummy, and decidedly upper-crust. This suggestion that Woolf is a presence in the text struck a false note for me (“Who thinks it? And am I outside the thinker?”). And it ends on a sentimental note—Neville’s anguished face, agonized at Percival’s death—and denies Bernard his summing up altogether.

Yet “Waves” is an extraordinary interpretation of The Waves, capturing its aura and recalling Woolf’s description in “The Narrow Bridge of Art” that the novel of the future “will resemble poetry in this that it will give not only or mainly people’s relations to each other and their activities together, as the novel has hitherto done, but it will give the relation of the mind to general ideas and its soliloquy in solitude. For under the dominion of the novel we have scrutinized one part of the mind closely and left another unexplored. We have come to forget that a large and important part of life consists in our emotions toward such things as roses and nightingales, the dawn, the sunset, life, death, and fate; we forget that we spend much time sleeping, dreaming, thinking, reading, alone; we are not entirely occupied in personal relations; all our energies are not absorbed in making our livings.” “Waves” somehow, for me, displayed on stage the act, the mental process, of reading.

Mark Hussey
Pace University

REVIEW
A PERFORMANCE OF “WAVES”: A COMMENTARY

The New York City performance of “Waves” by The National Theatre of Great Britain, a work devised by Katie Mitchell and Company, is a tour-de-force but, then, so was the novel, The Waves, by Virginia Woolf, when it was first published in 1931. A New 42nd Street Project of the Lincoln Center, “Waves” ran through November at the Duke Theatre in Times Square to packed Woolfian audiences.

I went to the theatre with a New York friend, an independent filmmaker, Barbara Hammer, who later commented: “watching the coordination, the sound and visual effects, it was as if I were watching the creative process itself unfold.”

As I watched the performance, this is what occurred to me:

A novel like The Waves is written for the 21st century, though it was conceived in the early twentieth century. After pronouncing the novel a “masterpiece” ... “and the best of your books” Leonard Woolf told Virginia that “the first 100 pages were extremely difficult and [was] doubtful how far any common reader w[ould] follow” (WD: 168-69). At a time when the computer was still an unknown quantity, Woolf was already devising her own method of changing the structural shape of her novels in ways that anticipate multimedia and hypertext.

A subsequent technological revolution has enabled faster comprehension of different ways of looking at experience, of organizing, and documenting what individual creative processes suggest. Credit must be given to Mitchell and her actors who, simultaneously, enact and help to shape a particular multilevel concept while so brilliantly illuminating Woolf’s prescient vision by using video cameras, photographic tricks of the trade, and sound effects.

From the start of the performance, the audience is confronted with an underground hive of activity: eight actors melting in and out of a nearly dark stage, parts of which are lighted for creating a scene, while also assembling props and sound-making materials in preparation for recording a rehearsal enacted under a makeshift tent. A long, rectangular table, placed in front of a giant-size screen above, serves as a countertop on which other scenes are prepared even while the first one is recorded and projected above, thereby maintaining a steady stream of action. On each end of the table, disappearing behind the screen, is placed archival storage-like shelving that holds all the readymade props needed for each scene. Also, seen at each end of the table, are podiums, lighting equipment, cameras, and tripods. The stage is like a broadcasting studio, a do-it-yourself environment. Each rehearsal is translated into a new image projected above, a still photograph, say, or video, made for posterity while the networking system readies for the next scene.

On the left side of the screen, set back, there is a makeshift wardrobe of costume parts rapidly donned, as needed, and covering the basic work gear worn by each actor. The actor changes into his or her bit-of-a-costume (a sleeve, or a tie) in front of the audience, often while speaking lines. Make-up is applied at the same time, assisted by one of the actors who become, for the moment, wardrobe helpers.

The drill-like precision of each actor, the selection of each prop required, the simultaneous creation of the sound track, and the scene performed at the table is mind-boggling. I am reminded of Woolf’s intention for this novel, as she wrote in her diary on 30 December 1930:

What it wants is presumably unity….Suppose I could run all the scenes together more?—by rhythms chiefly. So as to avoid those cuts; so as to make the blood run like a torrent from end to end—I don’t want the waste that the breaks give; I want to avoid chapters; that indeed is my achievement, if any, here: a saturated unchopped completeness; changes of scene, of mind, of person, done without spilling a drop. (WD 160)

For sure, not so much as a drop is spilled in the performance. At first, the actors are not easily identified, except, perhaps, by Woolfians who already know by heart who says what. And, for that, also, one needs to be blessed with good hearing to be able to place a voice with its soliloquy, a deliberate ploy to enable the gradual emergence of the persona of each actor. From the novel we know them as Bernard, the wordsmith; Neville, the lovelorn intellectual and poet; Percival, loved by all, but self involved; Louis, the outsider; Rhoda, the activist; Susan, the earth-mother; and Jinny, her vanity explicit. All three women actors look vaguely like Virginia Woolf, until each acquires her own persona developed through her assigned soliloquy.

Familiar Woolfian symbolic expressions are frequently made during the performance. For instance, enacting the recurrent image of the match in novels, Bernard, in the performance, not the novel, puts a lighted match to the telegram he receives about Percival’s death, and it flutters down, still burning, into the wastepaper bin at his feet. (One hopes fervently that it doesn’t miss the bin). He goes on, unemotionally, signing his “letters” (as portrayed on the screen above), and the enlarged image changes into a black and white scene that fades to nothingness. In a staccato series of events, each friend receives a telegram, and the
audience is treated to visual, sound-byte-like responses reflecting the recipient's emotional reaction.

The match image occurs again when Virginia Woolf herself (referred to as "the lady writing," thus echoing the phrase from the novel) is spotted as another actor strikes a match to light her cigarette, held in a long holder. Somehow, as she reads from her book in her melodic upper-class voice, the moment solidifies—there is Virginia—amid the ‘busyness’ (or flux) of the company around her.

Then there is the incongruous scene of the banana (a somewhat controversially received image) that appears on the big screen. It is a compelling moment as Percival self-consciously munches on a banana with sidelong glances at Neville. Aware of Neville's long, intense gaze, Percival abruptly bites off the end. As the New York Times critic, Ben Brantley, has observed, the episode offers "a sexual joke that seems out of place.” Yet, is it? Throughout the novel, sexual activity is frequently alluded to in Woolf’s “poetic-abstract” style. For instance, when describing undergraduates at play, Neville does “say” (as a friend pointed out to me):

>Look how the willow shoots its fine sprays into the air! Look how through them a boat passes, filled with indolent, with unconscious, with powerful young men. They are listening to the gramophone; they are eating fruit out of paper bags. They are tossing the skins of bananas, which then sink eel-like, into the river. All they do is beautiful. (W 82)

Another sexual scene is enacted as Rhoda, seen sitting alone at a table in the Hampton Court restaurant, though united with friends, feels (as the audience sees) an unidentified, unattached male hand exploring her thigh under the table, a touch from which she rapidly, fearfully, takes flight. The encounter between Percival and Neville is longer lasting than the one involving Rhoda, which is over almost before it registers.

When it is time for an interlude, the big screen shows waves surging, thundering, and crashing against the rocks, then receding in readiness for the next interlude.

Once one is oriented to the complex management of the performance itself, special sound effects are heard introducing an orchestral-like background of studio-made rhythms. The actors sing, hum, and/or tap dance, or just tap their feet, tap, tap, tap. They shuffle through carefully strewn leaves, scattered pebbles, or stamp upon squishy cushions. There was the sound of a door opening and closing, suitcases being moved, or rocked. The sounds progressed to familiar sound-bytes of instruments, handmade, from the sound of a bow drawn across the rim of a jar, or a bowl filled with water. Then we hear the brief sound of an organ—promised early on in one of Woolf’s diary notes, it had survived the endless creative process of re-writing. The sounds echo the rhythm of the waves.

It is only after the intermission, the most melancholy part of the performance, that, perhaps, the sound seems undone, like canned music in a soap opera. Once again, the attention is jarred, as an incongruous note is struck at a time when, aesthetically, silence might have sufficed. Yet, however, this is entirely in accord with Woolf’s pattern-making, of creating a crescendo, a surge of sound, a howl, a bite, signaling the end of a drama that, in the experience of her reality, will begin all over again.

For Woolf, the sounds, the rhythms, the symbolic expression, the words, the repetitions, the patterns were all there, unifying forces making, simultaneously, a whole (to the sound of the pounding waves) out of the experience of life as she saw it. Yes, surely she would have been proud of the National Theatre’s performance of “Waves” and would have enjoyed it.

**Margaret Gosden**  
**Artist and common reader**

**Works Cited**

—. The Waves. NY: Harcourt, 1959

**REVIEW**  
**THE “PLAY” AND THE “PLAYPOEM”: A RESPONSE TO “WAVES”**

I was fortunate enough to attend in December a performance of Kate Mitchell’s amazing theatrical piece “Waves” at the Duke Theatre. From the outset, one could see that the “play” harmonized with Woolf’s own ideas of non-representational art. The “play” was unconventional in its presentation, attempting in no way to immerse us in the story of the characters’ lives (“how can they praise my characters when I meant to have none”) such as we might expect from traditional dramatic forms, but rather used its own devices to actually convey the larger meanings of Woolf’s poetic text.

In all her novels, but especially in The Waves, Woolf worked to have her language call attention to itself—by sonorities, discontinuities, ambiguities, and rhythms—as the medium in which her texts were offered. So too did the theatrical contrivances of this performance call attention to themselves while successfully asking the viewer to use her faculties of story-making to grasp at the knowledge never clearly spoken or shown but which wove itself silently across the flurry of onstage activity. I think now of Woolf’s saying that “meaning lay just on the other side of language,” that her words could take the reader only so far, and the leap to meaning comes from her artful building of text, something like a diving board brings the diver into the swim, though the board itself does not touch the water. This profoundly materialistic approach to her writing, then, was echoed by the play’s foregrounding of its own theatrical medium, to bring the viewer to a deep understanding of Woolf’s “playpoem.” And for the viewer steeped in the codes of conventional drama, I would imagine the performance held equal challenge as Woolf’s novel does for the reader of representational narrative.

Since technology and theatrical device were crucial to the performance, I take a moment to note their workings and effect. To convey a scene in which Jinny drinks tea at a hotel (?) tearoom, the actor, clothed in black, donned the elbow-down sleeves of a ruffled Victorian blouse. She then moved to a small stagehand-arranged tableau: a napkin-posing-as-tablecloth, a teacup, teapot, silverware, with the video camera moved into position to focus on the setting. The audience sees all the maneuverings; no medium transparency here. Yet as soon as the microscene flashes on the large overhead screen we fill in the blanks and see Jinny drinking tea at a Victorian tearoom. As my own view danced between image on screen and the actual actor at table, I could feel my desire for narrative take over, as I tried to stay focused on the screen, where the comfort of ordinary story projected itself. And I believe it...
is this exposure of the conventions of one’s own way of looking at the world, at reading, that animates Woolf’s work. Though quite different in from Woolf’s novel, the theatrics of “Waves” created a perfect analogue to the structures and poetics of Woolf’s radically original novel.

Marilyn Slutzky Zucker
Stony Brook University

Virginia Woolf’s connection of the interior, claustrophobic space of Hyde Park Gate with the lives led by its inhabitants, and the contrasting liberation she and her siblings felt as they transported themselves into the brighter, freer spaces of Bloomsbury, confirms the relevance of books such as Emily Blair’s and James Kilroy’s. The relation between the domestic spaces of the nineteenth century British house and the fiction that depicted the families that dwelt within them fundamentally shaped the Victorian social world and significantly contributed to the emergence of the modern. As Woolf notes, “But it is the house that I would ask you to imagine for a moment for, though Hyde Park Gate seems now so distant from Bloomsbury, its shadow falls across it. 46 Gordon Square could never have meant what it did had not 22 Hyde Park Gate preceded it” (182). Blair’s study will be more directly pertinent for students, scholars, and common readers interested in rethinking Woolf’s complex uses of the nineteenth century domestic novel since Woolf’s work is the book’s primary focus, yet Kilroy’s exploration—which barely mentions Woolf or her work by name—is also useful, particularly his introductory chapter, both in situating the nineteenth century domestic novel within its complex ideological contexts and for its argument that such contexts shape the evolving structure of the novel. Both contribute interesting discussions to a richer understanding of the Victorian “Angel in the House”: both supply intriguing analyses that complicate how one approaches Woolf’s reading of her nineteenth century predecessors, male and female, as she developed her own innovative reading and writing strategies. In many ways, reading the two books together complements and expands what each tends to minimize or omit. Kilroy, a veteran critic of Irish literature, is professor emeritus at Tulane University; Blair, currently teaching English in the Humanities Division at Solano Community College in California, focuses on women writers in the Victorian and modern eras.

Blair’s provocative thesis, refined through presentation at various annual conferences on Woolf as she worked on the book (then a dissertation-in-progress at UC-Davis), takes Woolf to task for what she calls an “essential ambivalence about the relationship of women to domestic practices and to the ornaments that structure women’s lives” (2). Tracing Victorian domestic ideology to its “roots” in “early Evangelical protest forms and its popular representations of the art and science of domestic management,” Blair questions Woolf’s “selective ‘thinking back through her mothers’; inconsistencies that lead her to deride and exclude” writers such as Elizabeth Gaskell and Margaret Oliphant (7). In a fascinating reading of the relation between the Victorian house and the construction of Victorian subjectivity, Blair’s analysis brings together Woolf’s struggles with nineteenth century “conventions” represented by the “Angel in the House” and her dismissal of a particular kind of popular women’s literature in A Room of One’s Own. For Blair, Woolf’s Woman’s Canon” (3). Woolf’s virtual “blacklist” “eras and diminishes the debt Woolf owes to women writers who colluded with the male image of the ‘Angel in the House,’” Blair writes (18-19).

To help redress this grievance, Blair analyzes Woolf’s dismissive reviews of Oliphant and Gaskell’s novels through her own reading of a pair that appeared in 1866, Miss Marjoribanks and Wives and Daughters, novels she believes offer “rich examples of how to negotiate the feminine in fiction and valorize the unrecorded lives of obscure women through subversively elevating the domestic detail that Woolf elsewhere claims compromises the integrity of the lesser woman’s novels” (23). Juxtaposing these with readings of Mrs. Dalloway and To the Lighthouse, Blair “trace[s] unacknowledged lines of influence and complex interpenetrations that Woolf attempted to disavow” (6-7), suggesting that Woolf’s “modernist masterpieces” of the 1920s construct a version of domestic femininity that “resonates with the depictions of Gaskell and Oliphant as she simultaneously reinvents the novel and revises the marriage plot” through the figure of the social hostess. In the characters of Clarissa Dalloway and Mrs. Ramsay, Woolf “seeks to

REVIEWS:

VIRGINIA WOOLF AND THE NINETEENTH CENTURY
DOMESTIC NOVEL

THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY ENGLISH NOVEL: FAMILY IDEOLOGY AND NARRATIVE FORM

While I had lain in bed at the Dickinsons’ house in Welwyn thinking that the birds were singing Greek choruses and that King Edward was using the foulest possible language among Ozzie Dickinson’s azaleas, Vanessa had wound up Hyde Park Gate once and for all. She has sold; she had burnt; she had sorted; she had torn up. Sometimes I believe she had actually to get men with hammers to batter down—so wedged into each other had the walls and the cabinets become. But now all the rooms stood empty. Furniture vans had carted off all the different belongings. For not only had the furniture been dispersed. The family which had seemed equally wedged together had broken apart too. (“Old Bloomsbury” 184)
recapture the ontological value of the domestic as a fertilizing space for feminine creativity” and begins to “map out strategies for resistance to nineteenth-century definitions of feminine domesticity.” This in turn leads to the development of a “model of modern consciousness” (214).

Blair’s analysis supplies an intriguing way of thinking about women writers in the nineteenth century that positively complicates our understanding of “popular” and “highbrow” literature—even if she does not invoke these terms directly—and of Woolf’s efforts to redefine these concepts for her own fiction as well as a changing readership. For that very reason, I wanted to hear her wrestle with recent scholarship by, for example, Melba Cuddy-Keane, Jane Garrity, Beth Rigel Daugherty, Michael Tratner, and David Bradbury, that variously enable more complex readings of the sociological shifts taking place in British culture during these vital transitional decades. The book’s impact is diminished, in my view, because it does not seek an active role in discussing such shifting constructions of the public sphere, readership, and the role of the intellectual, issues with which the book is concerned but strangely does not foreground.

Kilroy comes at the question of family ideology in the nineteenth century novel from a completely different direction: an exploration of the role and subject of the father in the Victorian family, and of patriarchy as the organizing principle of the novel. His thesis claims:

Of ideologies that underlie discourse in England during the period extending from the French Revolution to the end of [sic] nineteenth century, none is explored in fiction as frequently as the reverence for the family as a prime social unit, a model of order and an essential instrument for educating the young. The “family plot” in which parental authority is either challenged or affirmed, and in which internal relations—particularly those of siblings—are interrogated, was built upon human concerns so primal as to serve as a template for the narrative plot. By the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries it had acquired a special relevance. (Kilroy 5)

Using Oliver Goldsmith’s The Vicar of Wakefield in his introductory chapter to set up the broad outlines of his study, i.e., to “reveal how ideology appears and functions in the novel, and, more important, how it affected the very structure of that literary form at a time when that structure was undergoing drastic change” (20), Kilroy then pairs eight novels, arranged into four chapters. Adopting a Bakhtinian framework, Kilroy reads “dialogically,” “polyphonically,” the pairs Mansfield Park–Lodore, Domby and Son–The Newcomes, The Mill on the Floss–The Daisy Chain, and The Master of Ballantrae–Ernest Pontifex, in which “questions about the survival and functions of the family are of such central concern as to be said to determine the narrative scope of the texts” (20). More specifically, Kilroy reads the nineteenth century British novel as a contested site both depicting the struggle to preserve the viability of the patriarchal family and reflecting its own struggle to remain viable as a literary form. He concludes: “although little actual change took place in family organization or function, there was a pronounced shift in ideologies, reflected in differing terms of the discourse that appears in and shapes the narrative. This shift in turn forced a reshaping of the form of the novel so severe that it occasioned fundamental questioning of the viability of the novel, setting in progress a self-reflexive tendency that characterizes fiction of the following century” (26-27).

“The entire set of claims that had earlier constituted the ideology of the bourgeois family is, at the century’s end, abandoned,” Kilroy writes. Paternalism is “dismissed”; patriarchy virtually “denied” (183). By focusing on the vanishing role of the father in the Victorian novel, Kilroy’s study complements contemporary feminist work that seeks to elucidate the question of the feminine in the era.

Jeanette McVicker
SUNY Fredonia

Works Cited

REVIEW:
WOOLFIAN BOUNDARIES: SELECTED PAPERS FROM THE SIXTEENTH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON VIRGINIA WOOLF

The Virginia Woolf Conference is held every year in different locations—such as New York, London, St. Louis, and Portland. In 2006, the sixteenth was held in Birmingham, England, drawing an international cadre of scholars. Changing the location of the conference each year affects the participation. Many Woolfians return year after year, but new locations also make the conference available to those whom Woolf called “common readers,” people from the local areas who otherwise would perhaps never attend. Always, this on-going annual conference has been instrumental for Woolfians, establishing new and maintaining old friendships, encouraging innovative scholarship, recognizing life-long achievements, mourning the passing of those in the Woolf community—and publishing a Selected Papers.

The annual Selected Papers give an overview of conferences by gathering a range of papers on the conference themes, alongside a replication of the conference programs. The conference editors (usually the conference organizers) select from revised submitted conference papers. Ambitiously, editors of the yearly Selected Papers aim to take the pulse of Woolf studies through the lenses of their themes. These anthologies have produced scholarship with a wide-range of both topics and approaches, sometimes against the grain of scholarship produced concurrently within more formal publication forums.

The location of the sixteenth conference, Birmingham, helped bring in scholars from all over Europe, and the volume represents scholars from a number of nationalities, a tribute to the extended international gathering at this conference. Perhaps the essay most particularly British in focus is an illuminating essay on rooks, cataloguing the rooks in Woolf’s writing alongside a fascinating history of the rooks’ presence in the United Kingdom. And the collection includes a sub-concentration on connections to Birmingham itself. The two essays exploring Woolf’s links to the writer John Hampson, for example, represent the value of a Selected Papers, since this work on Hampson and Woolf has come about, it appears, precisely because the conference took place in Birmingham. Both these essays go beyond Hampson’s connection to Birmingham, and the essays will interest scholars working with the Hogarth Press, politics of the 1930s, and cinematic techniques.

The theme of the conference, boundaries, was widely conceived, so that the fuller conference included papers on queer, lesbian, and bisexual approaches to Woolf’s texts, prostitution, Deleuzian approaches, musical ones, national boundaries, and those of performance; these categories suggest only a smattering of the rich subject matter presented in the
four days. Of course, not all approaches could be represented in the volume. I am, then, intrigued to find a few of the essays summarizing the panels from which they came and, on their own, giving an individual’s overview of the conference as a whole. For instance, one of the essays on Woolf and the environment, of which four are included, gives a lovely overview of the two environment panels. That overview parallels and contextualizes in miniature the editors’ introduction. I wonder if that practice might be a good technique to encourage in published essays in future volumes.

A number of the chosen essays establish and illuminate lines in Woolf’s web of connections and influences, that metaphor so influential from Bonnie Kime Scott’s introduction to The Gender of Modernism. For example, essays examine Woolf’s connections with Nuri Mass, Edward Carpenter, Montaigne, D. H. Lawrence, and Andrew Marvell. And new readings about Woolf and bestiality, Woolf and the environment, Woolf and religion, Woolf and the biographer, and Woolf and photography make up the canvas of these Selected Papers. One of my favorites, which does not easily fit categories, is the essay on Woolf’s review of the caricaturist Kapp with its analysis of the politics of galleries.

I am bemused to find one essay included that does not appear to be in the actual conference, and two essays listed in the introduction as the final two when they are not—but from these sorts of discrepancies Woolf herself would take delight. And, while Woolf herself gives validation for “skipping” within the anthology (for, as she writes in a review of Pearsall Smith’s Treasure of English Prose, “no one reads an anthology through” [172]), still reading this anthology through has its charms. Doing so gives a sense of the breadth and scope of the conference, like a wind filling a sail of a ship to move it through the waves. From Ruth Gruber’s historical and moving plenary speech (ingeniously placed in the volume as a forward) to Melba Cuddy-Keane’s compelling lecture on Woolf’s dialogic beginnings (with her important coining of the concept “non-coercive ethical texts”), this anthology entertains, informs, persuades, and energizes.

Georgia Johnston
Saint Louis University

Works Cited

REVIEW:
THE VIRGINIA WOOLF WRITERS’ WORKSHOP: SEVEN LESSONS TO INSPIRE GREAT WRITING

DanellJones takes a simple yet imaginative premise for her 2007 book, The Virginia Woolf Writers’ Workshop—what if Virginia Woolf herself were to teach a writing class? For avid readers and teachers of Woolf’s work, the idea of taking the author as a teacher, model, and inspiration for one’s own writing is hardly a strange one. Woolf herself writes of the passionate reader’s desire to converse with the writers she loves. “Who would not spout the family teapot,” she asks in her 1939 essay, “Reviewing,” “in order to talk with Keats for an hour about poetry, or with Jane Austen about the art of fiction?” (140). Jones has taken Woolf’s own idea of sitting down to talk with the beloved author a step farther, and placed her behind a podium in the writing classroom. Using quotations from throughout Woolf’s letters, diaries, essays, and fiction, Jones weaves them into seven imagined classroom discussions focused on different aspects of the writer’s craft. Most ideally suited for use in the creative writing classroom, The Virginia Woolf Writers’ Workshop is easily excerpted for instruction in the literary classroom as well, but its richest resource for both settings may be found in the array of writing prompts and exercises that punctuate Woolf’s imagined writing lessons.

As an author who made a lifelong practice of being reflective about her craft, Woolf’s works of both fiction and non-fiction are filled with advice to the aspiring writer. Jones has culled Woolf’s works for these writerly insights and placed them within an imagined conversation with Woolf’s contemporary, imagined students. Jones chooses the topics for Woolf’s seven writing lessons based upon aspects of the writing life that recur throughout her work: “Practicing” emphasizes regular and habitual writing; “Working,” the importance of exercising one’s independence to write and write seriously; “Creating,” the cultivation of the creative impulse; “Walking,” the connection between the movements of the imagination and the body; “Reading,” the essayist’s art; “Publishing,” the often trying experience of becoming a public writer; “Doubting,” overcoming the hurdles of discouragement and self-doubt. In a last and expansive section called “Sparks,” Jones offers up even more of the writing prompts, exercises, and activities that have ended all previous chapters and organizes them by genre: fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. All of these chapters have applications and would yield fruitful discussions for the creative writing classroom, but “Reading” and the “Sparks” devoted to the essay are of particular interest for students and teachers of writing about literature. Focusing on Woolf’s essays and her life as an essayist, “Reading” reminds the writer to allow the writing of others to encourage and inspire one’s own writing. It also reminds the writer that the art of the essay is perhaps the most difficult and highly honed kind of writing. In developing and refining an idea, in crafting a response to the ideas of others, and attempting to infuse the whole with a simultaneous incisiveness and grace, the essay straddles precision and pleasure, polish and passion.

Too often when one teaches writing about literature, creativity is sacrificed in the name of mastering such elemental principles as structure, clarity, precision, and argument. Woolf’s writing about literature especially is a beautiful example of how writing about literature may be literature itself, and how we need not remove the creative impulse in order to create the literary scholar. Style, grace, wonder, wit, even (dare I say it?) whimsy may all still have a place in scholarly writing about literature, and creativity and criticism need not be mutually exclusive categories. Jones’s book is a thoughtful and imaginative reminder of how the writing we teach can also teach us how to write about it.

Erin D. Sells
Emory University

Works Cited
REVIEW:  
**GENDER IN MODERNISM: NEW GEOGRAPHIES, COMPLEX INTERSECTIONS**


Bonnie Kime Scott’s *Gender in Modernism: New Geographies, Complex Intersections*, follows a similarly named and similarly outstanding volume, *The Gender of Modernism: A Critical Anthology* (1990). Building on its predecessor’s powerful re-envisioning of modernism, each chapter of *Gender in Modernism* is compiled and introduced by an individual editor, giving the work a broad and faceted range of perspectives, insights and cross-references, with the selections providing both historical and contextual examples. The overlaps among the chapters integrate, strengthen, and deepen the implications of the material, building on Scott’s diagram of the web of modernist connections in the earlier volume, which itself reveals intricate associations among contemporaries that had not previously been mapped. In the sequel, Scott again offers a diagram, this one entitled “Intersections with the Gender Complex,” which consists of overlapping ovals that show the complexity of the intertwined elements discussed in the volume.

The individual chapters within each part of the volume are intriguingly broad in scope. For example, Part I, *Modernist/Feminist Activism*, which sets the political stage, ranges from a chapter on suffrage struggles (“Suffrage and Spectacle” by Mary Chapman and Barbara Green) to sexual politics (“Manifestoes from the Sex War” by Janet Lyon), and then to a foray into a literary oublie (“Radical Moderns: American Women Poets on the Left” by Nancy Berke). In Part II, *Issues of Production and Reception*, the initial chapter is devoted to a justification of “Sentimental Modernism,” introduced by Suzanne Clark, who reconsiders the contributions of diverse women writers of the modernist period: Angelina Weld Grimké, Edna St. Vincent Millay, and Kay Boyle. The subsequent chapter by Ann Ardis is dedicated Beatrice Hastings’s numerous aliases as a contributor to *The New Age* and explores the nuances of a neglected voice. Aligning the roles of women in journalism (“Journalism Meets Modernism” by Patrick Collier) and in editing (“Women Editors and Modernist Sensibilities” by Jane E. Marek), the two chapters speak to each other eloquently with regard both to the obstacles and the opportunities women confronted. Introduced and meticulously annotated by Julia Briggs, the chapter devoted to Hope Mirrlees’ “Paris: A Poem” is a masterpiece of historical and cultural interpretation.

In Part III, *Diverse Identities and Geographies*, the introductions and selections focus on sexualities refracted in the mirrored halls of modernism. The offerings on lesbian and queer modernisms (“Lesbian Political History” by Gay Wachman and “Queer Conjunctions in Modernism” by Colleen Lamos respectively) enrich each other. Similarly, Pamela Caughie’s engagement with the nuances of passing—“Modernism, Gender, and Passing”—is particularly intriguing, combining such factors as blackface, Jewishness, the New Woman, lesbianism, transsexual surgeries, technologies, and travel. Tuzyline Jita Allen’s fascinating chapter, “Modernism, Gender and Africa,” connects painful yet crucially important European and African histories and amnesias, linking modernism to African cultures and “early modern women in Africa” to “global black intellectual culture” (436). The final chapter in the section, Sonita Sarker’s “Race, Nation, and Modernity: The Anti-colonial Consciousness of Modernism,” addresses complex issues of identity and exclusion, featuring selections from the work of Behramji Merwanji Malabari, Victoria Ocampo, Jean Rhys, Cornelia Sorabji, and Gertrude Stein to illustrate their “cartographies of political-cultural works” (472).

“War, Modernisms, and the Feminized ‘Other,’” by Claire M. Tylee, is the first chapter of *Part IV, War, Technology, and Traumas of Modernity*, and focuses on literary exclusion. Tylee’s introduction points out how “the middle-class male establishment…did not only subordinate women” but, based on class, colonization and raciality, also “placed in a ‘feminine position’” men from other social strata (520). Her selections specifically illustrate how these male writers use irony to retaliate against the dominant culture. In her introduction to “Modernism, Trauma, and Narrative Reformulation,” Suzette A. Henke argues persuasively that “[t]he modernist period is…virtually defined by historical trauma” (555) and offers, among other selections, her own transcription of a section from the holograph of Virginia Woolf’s “Prime Minister.” In “Modernism and Medicine,” Susan Squier delves into such biomedical complexities as sexology and eugenics, examining pamphlets and manifestoes as well as fictions. Bette London, in “Mediumship, Automatism, and Modernist Authorship,” suggests that, as mediums, women were able to access “important avenues for…professionalization and mental development” (626). One of the selections in this chapter is an excerpt from sittings with Mrs. Osborne Leonard described by Radclyffe Hall and Una Lady Troubridge.

Concluding on a hopeful note, *Gender in Modernism* ends with *Part V: Arts and Performances*. The initial chapter, “Gender and Collaboration in Modern Drama,” introduced by Katherine E. Kelly, emphasizes a generation of female playwrights who were able to escape from nineteenth-century constraints. Among the selected materials are excerpts from *How the Vote War Won* by Cicely Hamilton and Christopher St. John, which focuses on suffrage, and *Maculin* by Sophie Treadwell, a work investigating gender identity. Carol Shloss in “Modernism, Gender, and Dance” emphasizes the writings of Isadora Duncan, Margaret Morris, and André Levinson. In “The Gender of Modern/ist Painting,” Diane F. Gillespie notes that modernist women artists are still not adequately recognized. As a consequence, Gillespie has selected “the writings of six very different women artists” (her emphasis), including Vanessa Bell, in part because they “help to identify gender issues from different perspectives” and in part because what they wrote was intended “for a public forum” (767). The final chapter, “Cinéastes and Modernists: Writing on Film in 1920s London,” introduced by Leslie Kathleen Hankins, offers a rich and intriguing “montage of selections from books, pamphlets, little magazines, and highbrow fashion magazines” and “documents women’s participation in the cultural moment and their differing perspectives on film culture” (818).

As these shifting perspectives and genres suggest, *Gender in Modern* is exceptionally complex and evocative rather than narrowly defined. Offering numerous points of entry into the dazzling maze of modernism, the volume is an invaluable resource for scholars and students alike. The introductions to the individual chapters are strong scholarly essays in their own right while the primary source materials constitute an amazing archive that offers both a modicum of the familiar and a vast amount of the neglected or forgotten. In regard to teaching, the volume (which is surprisingly inexpensive compared to most large textbooks) is probably more appropriate for the graduate level, although it could be used in an advanced undergraduate course successfully. While it is certainly relevant for English studies, the text is also suitable for advanced interdisciplinary courses in gender and women’s studies. Certainly, Bonnie Kime Scott’s *Gender in Modernism: New Geographies, Complex Intersections* is a major achievement and will, like the classic *Gender of Modernism*, continue to shape modernist scholarship for years to come.

*Vasa Neverow  
Southern Connecticut State University*

Works Cited

connects Julian’s evolving attitude toward war with the “changing historical consciousness in England” (4), a strategy that helps her illuminate broader social changes as well as Bell himself. Refreshingly, Laurence does not make excuses for Bloomsbury, which paradoxically helped Julian find war appealing through benign neglect. Vanessa, for example, sent her beloved first son to a school that had a pervasive culture of bullying (10), which led to Julian’s lifelong discomfort in social situations, and his parents and relatives made no effort to help him find a profession (37), which left Julian at sea when poetry, journalism, and teaching failed to pan out as careers. In the end, Julian relished the physical activity work at the front demanded (38-9); according to letters from his companions, in war Julian found an outlet for talents and energy that peacetime might never have supplied. Although this pamphlet is marred by a thematic organization that muddles the chronology of Julian’s life, and distracting mechanical errors make one wish it had been subject to more vigorous proofreading, Laurence’s work will help readers understand why Vanessa Bell’s son willingly — and by his own lights, reasonably — went to war.

More anecdotal and documentary monographs are offered by S. P. Rosenbaum and John Lello. Rosenbaum’s Conversation with Julian Fry includes a 1976 interview with Roger Fry’s son (previously printed for a 1977 exhibition of Roger Fry’s artwork), Virginia Woolf’s 1937 diary entry about a visit with Julian, a letter Julian wrote Woolf about his father, and an anecdote used in Woolf’s Roger Fry. The interview is most notable for the unique view of Bloomsbury it offers. For example, Julian felt that Bloomsbury suffered from a degree of intolerance, particularly of the religious beliefs of others (14). As a young man, he was clearly impressed by Leonard Woolf, who “could bring experiences from a world they [the rest of Bloomsbury] knew nothing of to his daily life” (15) and who was, with Roger Fry, seen as “all around men” (19).

Readers interested in Virginia Woolf’s use of sources will find the letter from Julian in the Afterword particularly useful.

The Heritage Series rounds out its attention to the Fry family with John Lello’s Roger Fry, Apostle of Good Taste, and Venice, which is illustrated by Sandra Lello. This short piece tries to give an impression of the importance of Venice in Fry’s development as an art critic. As Lello observes, Venice was Fry’s “permanent base” for fourteen years (8), and Fry studied Venetian painting during this time (9), but the lifelong impact of Venice on Fry’s work is more often asserted than demonstrated here. Lello’s piece struggles when the author attempts to compensate for gaps in the record: the conclusion of Roger Fry provides voluminous detail about the hotels and houses Fry occupied in Venice, but this information does little to shed light on Fry himself (16-20). Despite these limitations, readers of the booklet will be rewarded by Sandra Lello’s lovely black and white illustrations of Venetian sights and locales, which are sure to send some Woolf scholars on their own pilgrimages to Venice.

Celia Marshik
SUNY Stony Brook

---

1 For pricing, contact Cecil Woolf Publishers/1 Mornington Place/London NW1 7RP/England
Broaden her focus to the entire Strachey family was a wise one. Writing Ray Strachey fought for suffrage, professions for women, and the right to her daughters Pippa and Pernel, and her daughter-in-law the Strachey women (and some of the men) over the course of a century: reminding readers of the achievement, not previously reviewed in these pages; it is worth Barbara Caine's recent biography of the Strachey family is a notable work more idiosyncratic impressions of the ten children of Richard and Jane Strachey: the infamous Strachey voice, a shared addiction to crossword puzzles, and habits such as reading books at the dinner table.

Barbara Caine’s recent biography of the Strachey family is a notable achievement, not previously reviewed in these pages; it is worth reminding readers of the Miscellany of its value to Woolf studies. Caine’s original project was to have focused on the feminist activism of the Strachey women (and some of the men) over the course of a century: Jane Strachey, her daughters Pippa and Pernel, and her daughter-in-law Ray Strachey fought for suffrage, professions for women, and the right for women to receive Cambridge degrees. Caine’s ultimate decision to broaden her focus to the entire Strachey family was a wise one. Writing the collective biography of a single long-lived family as it negotiates the transition from the nineteenth to the twentieth centuries allows Caine to examine broad shifts in education, marriage, single life, feminism, and sexuality. Further, like the Pargiter family in Woolf’s The Years and sexuality. Further, like the Pargiter family in Woolf’s The Years, the Strachey children betrayed a conservatism that challenges simplistic notions of the modernity of their own values: Lytton’s frank sexuality and Pippa’s feminist activism are “modern” values that easily co-existed with a sense of imperial entitlement. Caine’s argument that the modernity of the younger Stracheys never fully breaks with the values and ideals of their parents is neatly balanced against her observation that the apparently conservative Strachey elders conceived of themselves as progressives in their own time: in their agnosticism, feminism, and dedication to science.

Caine’s subtle portrait of a complex family is the product of a decade of research and an eminent contribution to collective biography. Situating Strachey family values within a century of social change allows Caine to write a historical narrative not dissimilar from the one Woolf crafts in The Years and Three Guineas. Given the difficulty Woolf had structuring those two works, it is no surprise that Caine’s text suffers from the wealth of her material: chronological chapters (childhood, education, marriage / single life) precede thematic chapters (professions, feminism) and result in the repetition of certain anecdotes. Stylistically, Caine’s indulgence in the exclamation mark far exceeds her lifetime allotment. But these weaknesses do not detract from the overall achievement of the biography, which fixes the Strachey family as a prism through which to read a much broader social history.

Catherine W. Hollis
U. C. Berkeley Extension

Works Cited

Barbara Caine’s Stracheys are simultaneously an Anglo-Indian family with deep imperial roots and a feminist family on the frontlines of the suffrage movement. This complex intertwining of counter revolutionary and progressive values is an apparent Stracheyan paradox that Caine assiduously disentangles. Richard Strachey rose within the ranks of the Indian administration in the 1850s and 60s to become Secretary of Public Works with a focus on railways and irrigation; his lengthy absences from England gave Jane almost sole responsibility for making decisions regarding her children’s education and early life. Caine portrays Jane as an unconventional mother, deeply interested in her children’s intellectual development but unconcerned with more prosaic domestic cares. Jane Strachey’s interest in feminism developed early in her married years through her reading of John Stuart Mill, a passion that she passed on to her daughters by reading them On Liberty as children. Each of the daughters, to differing extents, identified with their mother’s feminism, as did some of the younger sons (James helped organize a fancy dress ball in 1910 in order to raise funds for the suffrage movement).

Although Jane Strachey fought for the rights of English women, she had no sense that these rights should extend to Indian women, or indeed that there might be a link between the feminist movement and the self government of British colonies. Their adherence to the values of the Raj extended to the second generation: Pippa, for example, who spent her life active in feminist causes and groups, gained self-confidence from a solo 1900 trip to India, a journey cushioned by imperial luxuries and Indian servitude. Lytton, despite his friendship with anti-imperialist Leonard Woolf, indulged throughout his life in orientalist erotic fantasies. In their maintenance of their father’s Victorian imperial values, the Strachey children betray a conservatism that challenges simplistic notions of the modernity of their own values: Lytton’s frank sexuality

In 1937, Virginia Woolf wrote to William Plomer, a Hogarth Press author (who had asked Woolf to write the introduction to an edition of Leslie Stephen’s English Literature and Society in the Eighteenth Century), that she and her husband Leonard planned “to visit an exhibition in Brighton…and travel some books,” by which she meant that they were delivering some Hogarth Press Books for sale there (L6: 172). The object of marginal interest for some years, Virginia Woolf’s roles as publisher and as bookseller are currently being afforded considerable attention in marketplace studies, just as Vanessa Bell’s book designs have long

1 See, for example, Kathryn Simpson’s Gifts, Markets and Economies of Desire in Virginia Woolf.
received critical attention for years in studies of Bloomsbury aesthetics. While the marketplace hats worn by Virginia Woolf may be seen to have a more central role in the earlier Grolier Club exhibition, “Virginia Woolf and the Hogarth Press,” chosen from William Beekman’s Collection of Woolf and Bloomsbury, it is the second, “The Perpetual Fight,” which offered the fuller array of artifacts (including photographs [one taken by Roger Fry of a nude Vanessa Bell from the Berg Collection (57)]; holograph manuscripts and autograph letters; and books, mostly first editions, both from the libraries of the Woolfs and those of their circle), having been assembled from a number of collections in addition to Beekman’s. Virginia Woolf herself would have found much to appreciate at the Grolier Club of New York and the recent exhibitions there in which she is central—perhaps the more because of its devotion to the book in general and its publication of two catalogues commemorating these exhibitions in particular.

Founded in 1884, two years after Virginia Stephen was born, as a club whose aim involved the appreciation of books “not only as vessels of knowledge, but also as physical objects,” Grolier’s is not as old as the Apostles or as exclusive as the Memoir Club, but membership is by nomination only and currently claims over 700 in the “fellowship of men and women devoted to books and graphic arts,” a commitment not unlike that of either the Omega Workshops or the Hogarth Press itself. Called by Elliot Cohen, who greets visitors as they enter, “one of the oldest collecting societies,” the Grolier Club of New York maintains a research library of more than 100,000 books and manuscripts on printing and related book arts (open to qualified researchers) and “programs that include public exhibitions as well as a long and distinguished series of publications.” Originally organized to encourage “literary study and the arts of the book,” and named after Jean Grolier (1479-1565) (“leading bibliophile of the Renaissance, patron of scholars and printers”), the club today (and since 1917) is housed in the stately neo-Georgian at 47 East 60th Street, and has held two exhibitions devoted to Virginia Woolf and Bloomsbury.

The first exhibition at the Grolier devoted to “Virginia Woolf and the Hogarth Press” (31 March–28 May 2004), remembered in the modest, soft-covered 5¼ x 8¼ inch catalogue, includes a frontispiece illustration of the first Hogarth Press publication: “TWO STORIES / written and / printed / by VIRGINIA WOOLF AND L. S. WOOLF,” with a boxed addition (“from the library of David Garnett”). With a flapped cover, decoratively designed with black and white, wavy lines extending to the back cover, the catalogue (“limited to 1500 copies”) includes illustrations of four cover designs and “dustwrappers” by Vanessa Bell. The preface on “Collecting Virginia Woolf and the Hogarth Press,” by Beekman, speaks to both the “book-maker’s art” and to the highlights of the collection (“Hogarth’s two leading authors, Virginia Woolf and Sigmund Freud, both of whom were associated with Hogarth due to marital, family, and social connections and, by themselves, are a serendipitous conjunction”), and its importance (“These books are also significant, if not as large as some.4 During the two-+ hours that my husband and I scrutinized the eleven cases (we were there when the club opened at 10:00 a.m.), six additional viewers arrived and similarly scrutinized case after case in the large room that housed the exhibition. This, the more comprehensively entitled exhibition, which closed on 22 November 2008, and which was drawn from a range of collections, included, in addition to items from the Beekman collection and a number of other private collections, objects of interest from collections housed at the Mortimer Rare Book Room at Smith College; the Harvard Theatre Collection of the Houghton Library; and the Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection at the NYPL, for example.

What “This Perpetual Fight” is about, and the catalogue in many ways informs, enhances, and, at times, redacts, is life and death; love, intimacy, and struggle; and “life” after death: how they all define and describe Woolf and “her intimate circle” of friends and rivals, colleagues and competitors, lovers and others. The title is based on an entry in Virginia Woolf’s diary, following the death of Roger Fry, on 19 September 1934:

I had a notion that I could describe the tremendous feeling at Roger’s funeral: but of course I can’t. I mean the universal feeling: how we all fought with our brains, loves and so on: and must be vanquished. A fear then came to me, of death. Of course I shall be there too before that gate, and slide in, and it frightens me. But why? I mean, I felt the vainness of this perpetual fight, with our brains and loving each other, against the other things; if Roger could die. (D: 244)


3 Both books included in this review are available from the Grolier Club and from the University Press of New England: <http://www.upne.com>.

Freud; OR PERTAINING TO VIRGINIA WOOLF AND THE HOGARTH PRESS (47-52), and including an “autograph letter from Virginia Woolf to Bunny [David Garnett], dated Sept. 9th 1920. 1 p.”; and VIRGINIA WOOLF: Images (43-54), and including “DECORATIVE SKETCH by Vanessa Bell/Sketch of decorative motif in watercolor, n.d.” The last listing in the catalogue, “6. MAP OF THE HOGARTH PRESS by Richard Kennedy…” (54) also turned up in “The Perpetual Fight,” as well as on the title page for Part V in its catalogue: “Books as Objects: The Hogarth Press and Beyond”(67). (Thankfully, this MAP has a place in both the subsequent exhibition and, as noted, in the catalogue; however, and for good reason, “ADVERTISING FLYER, William Plomer, Novels, Stories, Poems n.d. [1932], 4pp.” and its description in the first exhibition catalogue (50) does not.)

This first exhibition I know only through the catalogue: the second, most fortunately, I saw for myself on 15 November, and can now remember through its more expansive and beautifully bound, 8½ x 11 inch, hard-covered catalogue, This Perpetual Fight: Love and Loss in Virginia Woolf’s Intimate Circle (2008). The catalogue includes 48 illustrations (32 color), and on the title page acknowledges “contributions by Deirdre Blair, Rachel Cohen, Ruth Gruber, Mark Hussey, Peter Stansky, Andrew Solomon, & Elizabeth Hardy Winthrop,” each of whom wrote an essay introducing a section of the catalogue representing a part of the exhibition proper, except for Gruber, whose essay ends the catalogue.

Curators Sarah Funke (who wrote four of the eleven essays) and William Beekman (who wrote one), with assistance from Karen Kukil (who was one of the curators of the Plath/Hughes exhibition, and the organizer of the 13th Annual Virginia Woolf Conference) and Mark Hussey (one of the foremost Woolf scholars in the world and the organizer of the 1st Virginia Woolf Conference), among others, assembled, described, and arranged more than two hundred artifacts, in a thoughtful exhibition designed to satisfy both members of the Woolf community and those outside it, with its attention to detail, organization, and flow.

According to Cohen, there had been a “good turnout” since the exhibition was opened to the public on 16 September 2008, though not as large as some.

4 Cohen explained that a timely review of the Sylvia Plath/Ted Hughes Exhibit in the New York Times may well have led to its greater popularity. See Michael Frank’s article on the exhibition in works cited.
Most centrally an exhibition of manuscripts (including letters, handwritten invoices, etc.) and books (including autographed gift books, first editions, etc.), it is (rather surprisingly) the “perpetual fight” rather than the “universal feeling” that names it, even though as the introductory note to the catalogue explains, it is the “universal feeling” that “was an express or implied theme in much of Virginia Woolf’s fiction and non-fiction, and one that resonates with the story of her own life” (7). Perhaps the active “fight” was considered more effective as an exhibition title (than the passive “feeling”), as the exhibition followed the chronology of Woolf’s life (beginning with “Ginia Stephen/Her youth and family” extending to the last case, “The Group At and After Her Death”). Including items rarely (or never before) seen publicly—and certainly not together in one venue—the exhibition inspired as it informed, and offered a fascinating look at evocative artifacts. In telling its story of the life of Virginia Woolf, the exhibition left one breathless, both with artifacts in view—and those waiting in the next showcase. Divided into eleven cases, each enclosing artifacts organized so as to educate, enlighten, and remind, displaying well appointed (and brief) labels for each artifact, typically including minimal information/provenance: identification (e.g., in Case 1: Item #1. Leslie Stephen “Manuscript essay”: “American Humour/Dec 1865/ private collection/corrected holograph manuscript,” and copies of three volumes of Hardy’s Wessex novels, each signed “V. Stephen” on the front endpaper). The catalogue expands these and provides a fuller explanation: of “Leslie Stephen’s first piece for Cornwall magazine” (17) and background on Woolf and Hardy. There is not much that is new to Woolf scholars, but what there is, nevertheless, is choice: welcome reminders of the context sometimes lacking in exhibitions of this kind.

Balancing attention to the book as object and Woolf herself inspired the curators to represent the many hats worn by Virginia Woolf and still remain true to her own creative life and the tension created by “the perpetual fight.” Each of the cases was accompanied by a brief description (usually a couple of paragraphs), which in the catalogue is expanded and augmented by multi-page essays by the contributors (an eclectic group including academics, common readers, professional writers, and collectors), all of which are uniformly readable and observable (the one by Ruth Gruber, “Virginia Woolf: Her Courage to Write as a Woman” [143-147], is a reflection on her Virginia Woolf: The Will to Create as a Woman [1935, 2005], though the latter is not included in the Notes [149-150] to the catalogue or the even more modest Bibliography [151-152]). Notwithstanding occasional omissions, the illustrations recall the originals (many in color), and the extended provenance, sometimes several pages in length, is welcome, but what is of most interest to me (and, I expect, to readers of the Miscellany, especially those who missed seeing the exhibition) is the artifacts themselves, the photographs, the manuscripts, the letters, and the autographs and first editions, beginning with the enlarged passport and photo of Virginia Woolf, signed and issued on 22 March 1923, on the frontpiece (2). There are, of course, the iconic photos of the Stephens and the dust jacket photo of “The Dreadnought Hoax” (#19/p31), which are a pleasure to see outside the reproductions in books or on video (even if they are encased in glass) and there are also numerous autograph letters, page proofs, and items of interest, like Virginia Stephen’s “Autograph engagement announcement, to Lytton Strachey,” from June 6, 1912, from the Mortimer Rare Book Room, Smith College (#27/pp43-44). The fourth part, “The Visual Arts in Bloomsbury,” beginning with Vanessa Bell’s iconic “Study for The Memoir Club” and Rachel Cohen’s “The Arrival of Post-Expressionism in Bloomsbury” (pp52-56), offers a range of exhibition items including, some real finds: Virginia Woolf’s Forewords to Vanessa Bell’s Recent Paintings (1930) and her Catalogue of Recent Paintings (1934) (#25/pp60-61); Duncan Grant’s unique “Postcard Sketches” (#43/pp61) [these were expertly exhibited-using a mirror to reflect each sketch on the front and back of the postcard]; and a “series of letters in which Slade artist Carrington and Frances Marshall negotiate for the time and affection of Ralph Partridge” (#46/pp63-65), excerpts from which are quoted in the accompanying description.

The range, uniqueness, and interest of the artifacts continues through the aforementioned “Books as Objects: The Hogarth Press and Beyond” (67-82) with its color reproductions of “Three copies of the first edition of the Woolfs” first publication, a joint booklet including “Three Jews” by Leonard and ‘The Mark on the Wall’ by Virginia” (#48/pp72-73); immediately followed by Virginia Woolf’s “Wood Is a Pleasant Thing to Think About...From The Mark on the Wall,” being an “[e]xtract from the final paragraph of her revised version of [the] story” but with an illustration by Vanessa Bell, which was, rather mysteriously, published by “The Chelsea Book Club,” ca. 1921. Clearly the centerpiece of the exhibition, this book-centered section focuses on the Hogarth Press and Virginia Woolf as publisher, also includes a color reproduction of a “handwritten invoice to Lytton Strachey” from the Hogarth Press, 11 November 1924 (#50/pp74) and one of the first forty subscriber copies of the first edition of Jacob’s Room (out of the 1200 copies printed) “issued to Oliver Strachey Esq.” and “therefore signed by the Author: ‘Virginia Woolf/Oct 1922’” (#54/pp77). The brief “Vla. Her Literature: Mrs. Dalloway,” with the 1925 jacket designed by Vanessa Bell (83), according to my notes excludes a few objects, including the David Garnett review of Jacob’s Room, which were placed in the corresponding case in the exhibition proper. The brief “Vla. Her Literature: To the Lighthouse,” with the 1927 jacket designed by Bell (91), includes only three items, though none is without interest, each part introduced with an essay by Sarah Funke.

The last cases in the exhibition and the last parts of the catalogue may be the most memorable to me, both because of the special significance of the artifacts, and because of the remarkable essays and descriptions accompanying them. Part VII: “Her Essays and the Group’s Fame,” is introduced by a reproduction of the 12 April 137 Time Magazine cover of Virginia Woolf (and Deirdre Bair’s “The Chronicler and the Artist” [96-98]) and includes Hogarth Press editions of Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown (#70/p100) and “Three typed letters signed to Helen McAfee, Yale Review” (#75/pp102-103). This precedes Part VIII: “Her Feminism: Orlando, A Room of One’s Own, and Three Guineas,” with the iconic photo of Vita Sackville-West as Orlando (1928) on the first page (105) and Mark Hussey’s “The Fall of a Flower” (106-108), introducing highlights of the exhibition, including manuscript pages and photos of first editions. The last two sections are a fitting and immensely interesting end to the exhibit. Part IX: “The Next Generation: Virginia’s Nephews Julian and Quentin Bell,” begins with a photograph of the three of them in Charleston (1931), from the Harvard Theatre Collection (121) as well as an introductory essay, “ ‘Bubbling and boiling and frizzling’: Virginia and the Next Generation” by Peter Stansky (122-124), and includes “Virginia Woolf’s Autograph and typed letters signed to Julian Bell, 1927-1936” (#89/pp128-130): 24 letters and 16 postcards (no illustrations included in the catalogue). Part X: “The Group at and after
How to Join

The International Virginia Woolf Society
<http://www.utoronto.ca/IVWS>

To join the International Virginia Woolf Society, or to update your membership, please use one of the following options:

To purchase or update a membership manually:
Download the Membership Form (.pdf file—Adobe Acrobat required), from the IVWS website, fill it out, and send it in to the address provided with your dues.

You may also purchase or update your membership or make a donation to the IVWS using PayPal online at the IVWS website

Regular membership:
a 12-month membership ($20)
a 5-year membership ($95)

Student or not full-time employed membership:
a 12-month membership ($10)
a 5-year membership ($47)

Members of the Society receive a free subscription to the Virginia Woolf Miscellany, the Woolf Society Newsletter, an annual Bibliography of Woolf Scholarship, and an annual updated list of members. Those members who have e-mail addresses are also included in a distribution list that provides early notification of special events, electronic balloting, and electronic versions of the newsletters. In addition, members receive early notification of the Annual Woolf Conferences, as well as information about other events and publications of interest to readers of Woolf.

Karen Levenback
Takoma Park, Maryland

Works Cited
Cohen, Elliot. Personal interview. 15 November 2008.
The IVWS dinner at the MLA in San Francisco, 2009

For Woolfians, one of the high points of the 2008 MLA conference, held in San Francisco, was the lovely dinner at Eileen Barrett and Elissa Dennis’s home, sponsored by the International Virginia Woolf Society. On Sunday, December 28th, about halfway through the conference, Bonnie Kime Scott guided us to our escape from the madding crowd: we fled the hotel-heavy Union Square neighborhood via BART (the Bay Area subway) and carpooled to Eileen and Elissa’s residential Oakland neighborhood. Amidst the chaos and anonymity of the conference, their home afforded calm and familiarity.

The hungry and sociable group mingled in four bountiful rooms on the house’s main floor. The tables were decked with grilled vegetables, olives, hummus and Baba Ghannoush, fruit and cheese, pita wraps, brownies, baklava, and local wine. About thirty people attended, among them Madelyn Detloff, Thaine Stearns, Evelyn Haller, Peter Stansky, Ruth Saxton, and Wyatt Bonikowski. Wyatt had given a conference talk the previous day on communication in Mrs. Dalloway. Some of Ruth’s students at the nearby Mills College also attended, as well as some of Eileen and Elissa’s friends, who helped to drive the out-of-towners to and from BART.

A few hours into the gathering, Bonnie toasted Eileen and Elissa, thanking them for welcoming us—and on the day after they had returned from vacationing in Costa Rica, at that! And Madelyn and Thaine honored Bonnie’s work as IVWS President by presenting her with a decorative martini glass and a coconut-lemon cake. We all appreciated the second gift.

After the party, the conference-goers enjoyed the return trip together, and then we disappeared back into our hotels.

Emily Kopley
Stanford University

Bonnie Kime Scott, Outgoing President, IVWS, 2006-2008 & Georgia Johnson, Incoming President, IVWS, 2009-2011
From Bonnie Kime Scott:
Society Column Part I: Outgoing thoughts as President

Being President of this Society is all about enabling the news and events that bring together the diverse array of those who find it challenging, enriching, and enjoyable to examine the work of Virginia Woolf. In the three years that I have had the pleasure of leading this effort, we have convened at three MLA conventions, visiting Philadelphia, Chicago, and San Francisco. As an Affiliated Organization, the IVWS has offered two panels at each convention and found fellowship in lively and intimate parties each year in private homes. The MLA planners know now to give us good sized rooms, and we tend to pack them. Anyone who has found their way to the parties, whether on foot in Philadelphia, where we had a lovely town house worthy of Bloomsbury on loan from Annette and Mort Levitt; via a van typically driven by a supportive spouse or graduate student, as was the case in Chicago, where Pamela Caughie’s festively decorated home rose out of the slushy roads, and her mother added to the catering; or at this year’s party, which started with an adventure on BART, its destination a bright and beautiful Craftsman House in Oakland, where Eileen Barrett and her partner Elissa Dennis were our hosts. In all cases graduate students both lend a helping hand, and enter a network that promises lasting scholarly connections. Since there were no reports of food poisoning in Philadelphia, I can now admit to catering the event out of our rental car’s trunk, which my spouse, Tom, carefully kept in the shade to assure that refrigerator-level temperatures were maintained.

The summer Woolf conferences, like the Miscellany, are not official responsibilities of the Society, but we make our contributions to both. Vara Neverow and her visiting editors have brought the Miscellany to new heights in these years, and have continued J. J. Wilson’s tradition of providing us space for the Society Column and our announcements. The conferences give us a chance for a business meeting, where we collect lots of good ideas for the work of the Society. Having a contest for a IVWS logo is one of the more interesting outcomes of recent meetings (the balloting process will be announced in the upcoming IVWS newsletter). At annual conventions in Birmingham, UK; Oxford, Ohio; and Denver, Colorado, I’ve suddenly found that it is great fun to be a toastmaster, particularly when there is so much to celebrate, given the good work of the organizers in each case. Not only have these events added new direction and depth to Woolf Studies, but they have increased our international collaborations and maintained a high standard of scholarship and fellowship. For that sort of outreach, the Members at Large are essential. We’ve also had good discussion over issues of permissions with the Society of Authors, and found ways to discuss new challenges regarding intellectual property issues, and the nuts and bolts of using and publishing from archives.

What terrific fellow-officers I’ve had, with Thaine Stearns moving us toward the modern age of PayPal dues submissions and online membership lists, and Madelyn turning out Newsletters that have both visual and informative appeal, and online availability. Similarly, Celia Marshik has tracked down all manner of Woolfian publications, conveniently dispensing the list electronically as well. The Post Office is apoplectic over our savings. We have a renewed slate of officers, with a few words about the content of the two panels just sponsored by the Society at MLA. It was delightful to hear many capable new voices rising in Woolf Studies. Brenda Helt proposed a panel with one of the most unusual titles we have had in recent years, “Troping the Light Fantastic: Woolf’s Use of Desire and Pleasure,” and this elicited a fine variety of papers. In “‘The Power to Cut and Wound and Excite’: Feeling and Communication after War in Mrs. Dalloway,” Wyatt Bonikowski studied the rapture experienced in approaching “death at the heart of aesthetic form.” He used “On Not Knowing Greek” and “A Sketch of the Past,” as well as the hole at the center of the novel into which Septimus leaps. Sam Sein introduced us to “The Concentrated Camp of Between the Acts,” working from Susan Sontag’s definition of camp and finding sources of camp in Miss La Trobe, “a diva without an audience,” the queering of the heterosexuality of Giles and Isa through animal and cavevan comparisons, and indeed the queering of nature itself. Bret Keeling attuned us to listening to Rachel’s piano performances as a “surrogate for social transformation of the audience” in “Music, Musicality and Intimacy: Performing the Immaterial in Virginia Woolf’s The Voyage Out.”

Jamie McDaniel chaired the second panel, “Orlando’s ‘House Was no Longer Hers Entirely’: Property in Virginia Woolf.” His own paper, “I’m Dead, Sir!: The Writings of C. P. Sanger and the Influence if Intestacy Law in Orlando’s Biography” illuminated us on the distinctions between reality (where women, married or unchaste, were greatly disadvantaged) and personal property, where writing could come in—a powerful shift that suited Orlando’s shift in sex, and Woolf’s narrative. In a paper titled “Floating Real Estate, Modern(st) Time, and Chronotopics in Mrs. Dalloway,” Janet Larson focused upon the post-war shift in concepts of space and time, as “the war lifted the country house off its moorings,” and encouraged a discontinuous sense of history, or “floating property on mental time.” Alison Booth, in “Virginia Woolf, Great Men’s Houses, and the Haunted Literary Properties” took us, alongside Woolf and her essay “Great Men’s Houses,” and Wilfrid Blunt’s Cheyne Walk to Carlyle’s residence, where she participated in the kind of materialist study that has recently gained ground in Woolf Studies. Respondent Alexander Blain worked from the papers to concepts of property reconfigured as trespass, and to questions of time and scale in Woolf.

Now to our new President, Georgia Johnston:
Society Column Part II: Incoming thoughts as President

As I write these paragraphs, a new year has begun. Happy New Year, 2009! I’m thrilled to take on the office of Woolf Society President this year, and I look forward to working with Madelyn Detloff, Celia Marshik, and Thaine Sterns, Annemarie Bantzinger, Kristin Czarnecki, Anne Ryan Hanafin, and Alice Lowe. I’m extremely aware of the historical nature of this role, with Carolyn Heilbrun as the first president (in 1977), then Mitchell Leaska, Brenda Silver, Susan Squier, Lucio Ruotolo, J. J. Wilson, Karen Levenback, Melba Cuddy-Keane, Christine Froula, Vara Neverow, and, most recently, Bonnie Kime Scott. Extraordinary shoes to fill!

I see myself and our other officers as, in part, organizing conduits for new readers and new members of the Society. I urge everyone, whether common reader, teacher, student, to encourage membership in the Virginia Woolf society. The annual fee is small (still $20 for regular yearly membership, with a five-year membership available for $95—and just $10 a year or $47 for five years for those who are students, retired or part-time employed). The rewards for membership are large, among...