

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-87785-5 - Modernism, Memory, and Desire: T. S. Eliot and Virginia Woolf  
Gabrielle McIntire

Frontmatter

[More information](#)MODERNISM, MEMORY, AND DESIRE:  
T. S. ELIOT AND VIRGINIA WOOLF

T. S. Eliot and Virginia Woolf were almost exact contemporaries, readers and critics of each other's work, and friends for over twenty years. Their writings, though, have never been paired in a book-length study. *Modernism, Memory, and Desire* proposes that some striking correspondences exist in Eliot and Woolf's poetic, fictional, critical, and autobiographical texts, particularly in their recurring turn to the language of the body, desire, and sensuality to render memory's processes. The book includes extensive archival research on some mostly unknown bawdy poetry by T. S. Eliot while offering new readings of major work by both writers, including *The Waste Land*, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," *Orlando*, and *To the Lighthouse*. McIntire juxtaposes Eliot and Woolf with several major modernist thinkers of memory, including Sigmund Freud, Friedrich Nietzsche, Henri Bergson, and Walter Benjamin, to offer compelling reconsiderations of the relation between textuality, remembrance, and the body in modernist literature.

GABRIELLE MCINTIRE is Assistant Professor of English at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-87785-5 - Modernism, Memory, and Desire: T. S. Eliot and Virginia Woolf

Gabrielle McIntire

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

MODERNISM, MEMORY, AND  
DESIRE: T. S. ELIOT AND  
VIRGINIA WOOLF

GABRIELLE MCINTIRE



CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-87785-5 - Modernism, Memory, and Desire: T. S. Eliot and Virginia Woolf

Gabrielle McIntire

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi

Cambridge University Press

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9780521877855](http://www.cambridge.org/9780521877855)

© Gabrielle McIntire 2008

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2008

Third printing 2009

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library**Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data*

McIntire, Gabrielle.

Modernism, memory, and desire: T. S. Eliot and Virginia Woolf / Gabrielle McIntire.

p. cm.

ISBN 978 0 521 87785 5 (hardback)

1. Eliot, T. S. (Thomas Stearns), 1888–1965 – Criticism and interpretation. 2. Woolf, Virginia, 1882–1941 – Criticism and interpretation. 3. Memory in literature. 4. Desire in literature. 5. Modernism (Literature) I. Title.

PS3509.L43Z7835 2007

821.912 – dc22

2007032985

ISBN 978-0-521-87785-5 hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, accurate or appropriate. Information regarding prices, travel timetables and other factual information given in this work are correct at the time of first printing but Cambridge University Press does not guarantee the accuracy of such information thereafter.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-87785-5 - Modernism, Memory, and Desire: T. S. Eliot and Virginia Woolf

Gabrielle McIntire

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

*For Mary Carolyn and Harley*

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-87785-5 - Modernism, Memory, and Desire: T. S. Eliot and Virginia Woolf

Gabrielle McIntire

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Contents*

<i>Illustration</i>	page viii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	ix
Introduction	I
1 An unexpected beginning: sex, race, and history in T. S. Eliot's Columbo and Bolo poems	10
2 Mixing memory and desire: rereading Eliot and the body of history	39
3 Eliot, eros, and desire: "Oh, do not ask, 'What is it?'"	75
4 T. S. Eliot: writing time and blasting memory	101
5 Virginia Woolf, (auto)biography, and the eros of memory: reading <i>Orlando</i>	119
6 Other kinds of autobiographies: sketching the past, forgetting Freud, and reaching the lighthouse	147
7 Remembering what has "almost already been forgotten": where memory touches history	180
Epilogue	209
<i>Notes</i>	214
<i>Index</i>	248

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-87785-5 - Modernism, Memory, and Desire: T. S. Eliot and Virginia Woolf

Gabrielle McIntire

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

## *Illustration*

T. S. Eliot, "VIVA BOLO!!" *The Letters of T. S. Eliot*,  
ed. Valerie Eliot (New York, Harcourt, 1988), vol. 1, 43.

17

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-87785-5 - Modernism, Memory, and Desire: T. S. Eliot and Virginia Woolf  
Gabrielle McIntire

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## *Acknowledgments*

Book making is a solitary project, but one supported at each instance of its private labor by a community whose presence is felt everywhere in its pages. In a sense, my ideal community sits perched around the generation of this book. I want to thank first of all the people who have been my teachers. They have given me a gift beyond what these words can acknowledge, and have made the task of thinking *joy*: Molly Hite, Jonathan Culler, Ellis Hanson, Eric Domville, Daniel Schwarz, Linda Hutcheon, and Hortense Spillers.

Six weeks spent at Cornell's School of Criticism and Theory in the summer of 2006 prepared me for the final revisions of the text by all at once sharpening, quickening, and intensifying my lenses for reading. I am especially indebted to Dominick LaCapra for being the condition of possibility for the session, Geoffrey Hartman for his inspirational words on Blake and poetry, Ella Shohat and Robert Stam for graciously allowing me to quote from one of their lectures, and Eric Santner for attuning me to a whole new way of seeing.

In Kingston I am deeply grateful to the students and colleagues in the Department of English who make it a delight every day to be in that environment of gentle intellectual reciprocity. I want to single out especially Pat Rae, Chris Fanning, Elizabeth Hanson, Chris Bongie, Maggie Berg, and George Logan. Just down the road, a number of colleagues at the University of Toronto have also made my return to Canada especially fine, including Paul Stevens, Lynn Magnusson, Michael Cobb, and Melba Cuddy-Keane.

Eduardo Cadava has given me the gift of his mentorship and friendship for many years, and I remain profoundly moved by his example. A number of other friends and family members, often in far-flung places, have also been a part of the life-breath of this project, helping along its writing in ways they may not even realize: Tibra Ali, Anna Parkinson, Fiona Griffiths, Greg Stork, Sarah Copland, Ewa Badowska,

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-87785-5 - Modernism, Memory, and Desire: T. S. Eliot and Virginia Woolf  
Gabrielle McIntire

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

x

*Acknowledgments*

Stephen Clarkson, Eoin Finn, Daniel Brayton, Heather Levy, Adam Moldenhauer, Alixe Buckerfield de la Roche, Arlene McDonald, David Markus, Yehudi Lindeman, Claire Boudet, Craig Walker, Donato Santeramo, John Sutton, Rahul Sapra, and Curtis Bashaw.

This book involved significant archival research, and I am obliged to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Principal's Advisory Fund at Queen's University for generous funding that supported the endeavor. Andrew Graham and John Jones facilitated a wonderfully productive stay at Balliol College, Oxford, and John Fraser, Elizabeth MacCallum, and Geraldine Sharpe made possible my time at Massey College in the Fall of 2006, where I completed the manuscript. The librarians at the British Library, the University of Sussex, Colindale Library, the University of Leeds, Cambridge University, Oxford University, Yale University, the Bibliothèque Nationale, and the Archives Nationales, were always patient and accommodating as I searched amidst their archives, and for this I am very appreciative. My thanks also go to Ray Ryan at Cambridge for seeing the worth of the project before it was fully elaborated, and to three anonymous readers for their thoughtful and rigorous engagements with the text. Nicole Bobbette and Tim Conley also gave very helpful criticism at various stages of the editing process. Cassandra Laity and Lawrence Rainey have kindly permitted me to include a version of chapter 1 that first appeared in *Modernism/Modernity*.

Finally, Eliot, Thomas, Matthias, Olivia, Anna, Harley, and Mary Carolyn, I thank you for sharing with me your love, your lives, and your openness to the work of memory and desire.