Publications: Tim Armstrong

Books


A study of ‘surgical’ modernism, focusing on moments in which modernist writers intervene in bodily processes, and on ideas of the ‘prosthetic’ text. Topics discussed include: Fletcherism, early gender-surgery, rejuvenation operations, bodily electrification and the electric chair, the coming of sound film, automatic writing, theories of ‘distraction’. Writers covered include: Henry James, Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, W. B. Yeats, Mina Loy, Gertrude Stein, Theodore Dreiser, Nathaniel West; psychologists Freud, B. F. Skinner, Hugo Münsterberg, June Downey and others.


A study of Hardy’s haunting, considered in terms of history, intertextuality, the psyche, and the biographical narratives which have come to be attached to him. It includes discussion of the phantasm of the ‘lost child’ which pervades his texts (reproduced in Lois Deacon’s claims in the 1960s that she had discovered Hardy’s ‘bastard’ child); the notion of self-haunting and of intertextual haunting (derived from the work of Abraham and Torok, and Derrida’s response to them); and of the ‘politics of the dead’, that is the status of the recollection of the dead in Hardy’s historiography, and the vision of history as phantasmagoria which he inherits from Burke and Carlyle. Topics covered under this heading include Hardy on the Titanic and his reaction to Zionism. A final chapter considers haunting, rhetoric and intertextuality in Hardy’s love poetry, looking at the ‘Poems of 1912-13’, Dante, and his relation to Victorian women poets.


This study situates literary modernism in a series of cultural and historical shifts in the period 1880-1945. It explores modernism’s struggle with a split temporality in which the old and the emerging new struggle, and in which, with the horror of the Great War, notions of a traumatic or ‘frozen’ time emerge. It considers such topics as market culture, audiences, and obscurity; the culture of science and technology; politics, economics, eugenics, and sexology; primitivism and race; new media like cinema and sound recording; gender and modernism; and the study of consciousness and the senses. Modernism is portrayed less as a movement in revolt from the modern world than as attempting to engage with that world – the cry of ‘reform!’ which characterizes much of post-enlightenment thought describes modernist writers’ engagement with politics or bodies as well as with inherited style.

A range of writers – from Pound, Eliot and Woolf to Mary Butts, Muriel Rukeyser and Sterling Brown – are considered, as are movements including Imagism, Surrealism and the Harlem Renaissance.


2012  **The Logic of Slavery: Debt, Technology and Pain in American Literature**

In American history and throughout the Western world, the subjugation perpetuated by slavery has created a unique “culture of slavery.” That culture exists as a metaphorical, artistic, and literary tradition attached to the enslaved – human beings whose lives are “owed” to another, who are used as instruments by another, and who must endure suffering in silence. This study explores the metaphorical legacy of slavery in American culture by investigating debt, technology, and pain in African-American literature and a range of other writings and artworks. The analysis reveals how notions of the slave as a debtor lie hidden in our accounts of the commodified self, and how writers like Nathaniel Hawthorne, Rebecca Harding Davis, Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. Du Bois, Ralph Ellison, and Toni Morrison grapple with the pervasive view that slaves are akin to machines. Finally, the book examines how conceptions of the slave as a container of suppressed pain are reflected in disciplines as diverse as art, sculpture, music, and psychology.

Awarded the 2013 Hugh Holman Prize of The Society for the Study of Southern Literature, ‘for the best book of literary scholarship or literary criticism in the field of Southern Literature published during a given calendar year’.

A Choice outstanding academic title for 2013.


**Edited collections and editions**

1993  **(ed.)** *Thomas Hardy: Selected Poems.*
Longmans Annotated Texts, 385pp.

This edition includes a 44 page critical introduction which aims at a reassessment of Hardy’s poetry, as well as extensive annotations, metrical notes, notes on further reading, bibliography and other material. It arranges poems as they were ordered in Hardy’s individual volumes, and prints the ‘Poems of 1912-13’ in their entirety.

Revised edition 2009

Edited with Matthew Campbell and Sue Vice.

Edited collection of interdisciplinary essays on the literature and culture of addiction, drug use, drinking, addictive reading, consumption, law, and other issues.


Edited collection of essays on issues in American culture relating to the representation and treatment of the body from c.1800 to the 1990s, on topics ranging from maritime tattoos and cannibalism to neurasthenia and modernism; from the dietary regime of Fletcherism to the hyper-masculine postmodern body.

2001  **(guest editor)** ‘Literature and Technology’
Special Issue of *Forum for Modern Language Studies, 37:2.*

Essays by James Annesley, Sara Danius, Garin D owd, Sam Halliday, Laura Marcus, Pamela Thurschwell, Barbara Will, Tim Armstrong, focusing on the issue of technology in and in relation to literature from telegraphy and typewriting in the late-Victorian period to the development of the internet and its prophets in the 1990s.

2008  **(guest editor)** ‘Nuclear Stories: Cold War Literatures’
Special Issue of *Cultural Politics, 4:3.*

Essays by Andrew Gibson, Adam Piette, John Phillips and Ryan Bishop, Stephen Morrison, Alex Houen, Daniel Cordle; introduction by myself.

**Articles and chapters in books**

* refereed journal
Articles


1996 Introduction to American Bodies (see above), pp.9-16.


Forthcoming:


Selected review articles and shorter pieces


1987 'Sea People, Land People,' Times Literary Supplement, 6 March. On Keri Hulme.


1990 Review article on Stevens, Meditation, and Literature, New England Quarterly, 63 (1990), 319-22.

1993 'Floating in History,' Times Literary Supplement, 4 June. Recent work on Wallace Stevens.


2015 'Technology' (1000 words) and 'Speed' (500) entries for Encyclopedia of Modernism, ed. Vassiliki Kolaroutoni (EUP).


Papers


104. 'Man into Woman and Anthropology: Translating Magic into Sexology', MSA Conference, Amsterdam, August 2017.

103. 'Cultic Mockery in Modernism,' BAMS Conference, Birmingham, 29 June-1 July 2017.


100. 'The Named and Unnamed dead', The Poetics of War: Remembering Conflict from Ancient Greece to the Great War 17-19 June 2015, UCL.
97. ‘The New Apocalypse and the Uncertainties of Modernism’, BAMS conference, 26-28 June 2014 [also convenor of panel on Rethinking Modernism in the 1930s].
94. ‘Beyond Gone with the Wind: Steve McQueen’s 12 Years a Slave.’ Birkbeck Arts Week Panel, Waterstones Bookshop, 20 May 2014.
92. ‘Katherine Mansfield and Time’, Riverside Book Circle, Sunbury on Thames, 17 April 2014.
90. ‘The Rest is Weather: The Last Two Pages of Beloved’, University of Colorado FIRST lecture, Boulder CO, July 2013.
89. Chingford Foundation School – Talks to A-level groups from this and another local school on The Great Gatsby and American Literature and on Cormac MacCarthy’s The Road, 3 May 2013.
88. ‘Canto 38 and Social Credit’, Ezra Pound Reading Group, Senate House, 8 Feb. 2013.
87. ‘Problems of Trauma Theory’, Critical Theory Reading Group, Senate House, 30 Jan 2013.
82. ‘Thomas Hardy’s Poetry’, City of London School Literary Festival, May 2011.
78. ‘Slavery and the Weather: Towards an Anti-Traumatics of History’, University of Exeter research seminar, 15 Nov. 2010.
70. ‘Slavery and Sculpture’, Sculpture and Literature in the Nineteenth Century Conference, Royal Holloway, 24-25 April 2009.
69. ‘Slavery and Sculpture’, Kate Fullbrook Memorial Lecture (endowed annual lecture), University of the West of England, Bristol, 26 Feb. 2009.
63. ‘The Rest is Weather’: Historical Pathology and the Limitations of Trauma’, plenary lecture, Pathologies Conference, University of Glamorgan 20-21 August, 2007.
40. ‘Classical and Modern Bodies and the Prosthetic Imaginary’. Opening plenary address at Homo Orthopedicus Conference, University of Antwerp, 6 Dec. 1999.
37. ‘Two Types of Shock in Modernity’, research seminar, King's College London, 18 March 1999.
30. ‘Sound Film, the Body, and Modernist Writers’, American Studies Seminar, University of Leeds, Dec. 1996.
29. ‘Goat-Glanding and Discursive Control in Early Sound Cinema and Modernist Literature’, University of Birmingham American Studies Seminar, 18 Nov. 1996.
28. ‘Modernist Bodily Reform and the Woman Writer: Mina Loy and Djuna Barnes,’ American Studies Seminar, University of Nottingham, 7 Nov. 1996.
26. ‘Remembering Backwards: The Titanic as Cultural Memory of the Nineteenth Century,’ Memory Conference, University of Sheffield, 16-18 March 1996.
9. ‘Electricity, the Commodity, and Desire,’ International Conference on Literature and Addiction, University of Sheffield, 4-7 April 1991.
8. ‘What’s in a name? The Titanic and the Culture of Disaster,’ Modern Studies Seminar, University of Sheffield, 30 January 1990.
7. ‘A Printer’s Mark: Whitman and the American Ending,’ American Studies Association/Canadian American Studies Association Annual Convention, Toronto, Canada, 2-5 November 1989. [Visit supported by USIS grant]