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# The Bottle Imp

Issue 7, May 2010  
New Publications  
Criticism & Non-Fiction

## Approaches to Teaching Scott's Waverley Novels

eds. Evan Gottlieb and Ian Duncan  
*Modern Language Association, 2009*

"The contributors show teachers who are perhaps coming to Scott for the first time not simply how to teach Scott but also why they should."

Scott's Waverley novels, as his fiction is collectively known, are increasingly popular in the classroom, where they fit into courses that explore topics from Victorianism and nationalism to the rise of the publishing industry and the cult of the author. As the editors of this volume recognize, however, Scott's fictions present unusual challenges to instructors. Students need guidance, for instance, in navigating Scott's use of vernacular Scots and antique styles, sorting through his historical and geographical references, and distinguishing his multiple authorial personas. The essays in this volume are designed to help teachers negotiate these and other intriguing features of the Waverley novels.

## Scotland and the Fictions of Geography

by Penny Fielding  
*Cambridge University Press, 2009*

Focusing on the relationship between England and Scotland and the interaction between history and geography, Penny Fielding explores how Scottish literature in the Romantic period was shaped by the understanding of place and space. The book examines geography as a form of regional, national and global definition, addressing national surveys, local stories, place-names and travel writing, and argues that the case of Scotland complicates the identification of Romanticism with the local. Fielding considers Scotland as 'North Britain' in a period when the North of Europe was becoming a strong cultural and political identity, and explores ways in which Scotland was both formative and disruptive of British national consciousness. Con-

taining studies of Robert Burns, Walter Scott and James Hogg, as well as the lesser-known figures of Anne Grant and Margaret Chalmers, this study discusses an exceptionally broad range of historical, geographical, scientific, linguistic, antiquarian and political writing from throughout North Britain.

## The Kennedy and Boyd Anthology of Nineteenth Century Scottish Literature

selected and introduced by Caroline McCracken Flesher

*Kennedy and Boyd, 2010*

For nineteenth-century readers, the Scots and their books were everywhere, saturating British, imperial, and even American markets. Indeed, Scottish literature in Scots was widely enough read that through the period authors could sell a variety of dialects to an empire they themselves had educated. General readers will be able to enjoy the sudden changes of a burgeoning literature simply by tracking this book end to end. By recognizing the light framing of this anthology, they will also be guided toward a sense of the ongoing conceptual and literary struggles in a society that is challenged yet stimulated by conflicting forces. Students can develop an interest of their own, then use the book's structural hints to track it. Instructors can use the framework to connect easily to their own pedagogical focus in Scottish and other literatures.

## Robert Louis Stevenson in the Pacific: Travel, Empire and the Author's Profession

by Roslyn Jolly  
*Ashgate 2009*

Robert Louis Stevenson's departure from Europe in 1887 coincided with a vocational crisis prompted by his father's death. Impatient with his established identity as a writer, Stevenson was eager to explore different ways of writing, at the same time that living in the Pacific stimulated a range of latent intellectual and political interests. Roslyn Jolly examines the crucial period from 1887 to 1894, focusing on the self-transformation wrought in Stevenson's Pacific travel-writing and political texts. Jolly shows how Stevenson's desire to understand unfamiliar Polynesian and Micronesian cultures, and to record and intervene in the politics of Samoa, gave him opportunities to use his legal education, pursue his interest in historiography, and experiment with anthropology and journalism. Jolly's analysis of contemporary responses to Stevenson's writing, gleaned from an extensive collection of reviews, many of which are not readily available, provides fascinating in-

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sights into the interests, obsessions, and resistances of Victorian readers.

### **Scottish Modernism and its Contexts 1918-1959: Literature, National Identity and Cultural Exchange**

by Margery Palmer McCulloch  
*Edinburgh University Press 2009*

This innovative book proposes the expansion of the existing idea of an interwar Scottish Renaissance movement to include its international significance as a Scottish literary modernism interacting with the intellectual and artistic ideas of European modernism as well as responding to the challenges of the Scottish cultural and political context. Topics range from the revitalisation of the Scots vernacular as an avant-garde literary language in the 1920s and the interaction of literature and politics in the 1930s to the fictional re-imagining of the Highlands, the response of women writers to a changing modern world and the manifestations of a late modernism in the 1940s and 1950s. Writers featured include Hugh MacDiarmid, Lewis Grassie Gibbon, Neil M. Gunn, Edwin and Willa Muir, Catherine Carswell, Sydney Goodsir Smith and Sorley MacLean.

### **Muriel Spark: The Biography**

by Martin Stannard  
*Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2009*

Born in 1918 into a working-class Edinburgh family, Muriel Spark ended as the epitome of literary chic, one of the great writers of the twentieth century. It is a Cinderella story, the first thirty-nine years of which she presented in her autobiography, *Curriculum Vitae* (1992), politely blurring the intensity of her darker moments: her relations with her brother, mother, son, husband; a terrifying period of hallucinations and subsequent depression; and the disastrously misplaced love she had felt for two men she had wanted to marry, Howard Sergeant and Derek Stanford. After becoming a Roman Catholic in 1954, she began a novel, *The Comforters* (1957), and with *Memento Mori*, *The Ballad of Peckam Rye* and *The Bachelors* rose rapidly into the literary stratosphere. *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* (1961), with its adaptation into a successful stage-play and film, marked her full translation into international celebrity. In 1992 Spark invited Martin Stannard to write her biography, offering interviews and full access to her papers. The result is a compelling portrait of an extraordinary life.

### **Literature and the Scottish Reformation**

eds. Crawford Gibben and  
David George Mullan  
*Ashgate, 2009*

This collection launches a full-scale reconsideration of the series of relationships between literature and reformation in early modern Scotland. Previous scholarship in this area has tended to dismiss the literary value of the writing of the period – largely as a reaction to its regular theological interests. Instead the essays in this volume reinforce recent work that challenges the received scholarly consensus by taking these interests seriously. This volume argues for the importance of this religiously orientated writing, through the adoption of a series of interdisciplinary approaches. Arranged chronologically, the collection concentrates on major authors and texts while engaging with a number of contemporary critical issues and so highlighting, for example, writing by women in the period. It addresses the concerns of historians and theologians who have routinely accepted the established reading of this period of literary history in Scotland and offers a radically new interpretation of the complex relationships between literature and religious reform in early modern Scotland.

### **Scottish Literature**

by Gerard Carruthers  
*Edinburgh University Press, 2009*

The book considers the rise of Scottish Studies, the development of a national literature, and issues of cultural nationalism. Beginning in the medieval period during a time of nation building, the book goes on to focus on the 'Scots revival' of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries before moving on to discuss the literary renaissance of the twentieth century. Debates concerning Celticism and Gaelic take place alongside discussion of key Scottish writers such as William Dunbar, Robert Burns, Walter Scott, Thomas Carlyle, Margaret Oliphant, Hugh MacDiarmid, Alasdair Gray, Janice Galloway and Liz Lochhead. The book also considers émigré writers to Scotland; Scottish literature in relation to England, the United States and Ireland; and postcolonialism and other theories that shed fresh light on the current status and future of Scottish literature.

## **Beyond Identity: New Horizons in Modern Scottish Poetry**

by Atila Dosà

*Rodopi, 2009*

In *Beyond Identity*, thirteen of Scotland's best known poets reflect upon the theoretical, practical and political considerations involved in the act of writing. They furnish a unique guide to contemporary Scottish poetry, discussing a range of issues that include nationhood, education, language, religion, landscape, translation and identity. John Burnside, Robert Crawford, Douglas Dunn, Kathleen Jamie, Edwin Morgan, Kenneth White and others, together with such noted experimentalists as Frank Kuppner, Tom Leonard and Richard Price, explore questions about the relationship between social, economic and ecological realities and their poetic transformation. These interviews are set within the altered political context that followed from the re-establishment of a Scottish Parliament in 1999 and the potential of a renewed engagement with wider European culture.

## **George Mackay Brown and the Philosophy of Community**

by Timothy C. Baker

*Edinburgh University Press, 2009*

*George Mackay Brown and the Philosophy of Community* offers a bold reinterpretation of the works of a seminal Scottish author and suggests new possibilities for the study of national literatures. Drawing on philosophy, sociology, politics, and religion as well as modern trends in literary theory, this book not only argues for Brown's continued importance, but also details a new model of the relationship between literature and community. Timothy C. Baker demonstrates that a community-based discussion of literature enriches any consideration of literary depictions of modern identity.



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