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"crackers," in the jargon—seems to have increased.

The Pittsburgh-based Computer Emergency Response Team—formed in 1988 after an Internet "worm" (a self-replicating program) clogged academic computer systems throughout the nation—received reports of about 130 intrusions in 1990, 800 in 1992, and 2,300 last year. According to a 1992 study, the number of intrusions in U.S. workplace computers more than doubled between 1989 and 1991, from 339,000 to 684,000. In 42 percent of the cases studied, the intruders altered or destroyed data or software, at a cost of \$82 million in 1989 and \$164 million in 1991.

In "the battle for safety and order in the digital realm," Roush says, law enforcement agencies and information security specialists have begun to turn to hackers and ex-hackers for help. At Bolling Air Force Base in Wash-

ington, D.C., for example, investigators asked a young hacker who had pleaded guilty to breaking into a Pentagon computer system to attack as many Air Force systems as he could. Within 15 seconds, he broke into the same Pentagon computer system he had penetrated before, and during the next three weeks, he got into more than 200 Air Force computer systems. The Air Force then tried to patch the holes in its computer security.

"Nervous about exposing themselves to roving data thieves, many corporations are refusing to join their local networks to the Internet," Roush reports, "while others are spending millions installing 'firewalls'—gatekeeping computers that filter out all but a few authorized forms of data exchange." Necessary though they may be, such security measures seem to dim one of the bright promises of the Internet: easy access to information.

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## ARTS & LETTERS

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### *Slumming with T. S. Eliot*

"T. S. Eliot and the Cultural Divide" by David Chinitz, in *PMLA* (Mar. 1995), Modern Language Association, 10 Astor Place, New York, N.Y. 10003-6981.

T. S. Eliot (1888-1965), one of the high priests of literary modernism, is often seen as the fastidious and austere hero of a struggle to defend high art from the masses. Although Eliot in later life was more inclined to assume that role, observes Chinitz, an English professor at Loyola University, in Chicago, he was attracted all his life to "low" culture and even argued during the 1920s that all valid art must be rooted in the popular.

The poet's biographers, Chinitz notes, have made it clear that he was a fan of comic strips, boxing, street slang, melodrama, vaudeville, sensational news stories (especially about murders), the music of Broadway and Tin Pan Alley, bawdy comedy, crossword puzzles,

and Marx Brothers movies. "One of Eliot's lasting enthusiasms," Chinitz writes, "was for detective fiction, from Arthur Conan Doyle to Georges Simenon and Raymond Chandler." In a 1927 essay, he deplored the gulf that had opened between "high" literature and "popular" fiction, warning "serious" writers that the craving for melodrama "is perennial and must be satisfied" and that dull literature is doomed. "Fine art," he argued in a 1923 review, "is the *refinement*, not the antithesis, of popular art."

Eliot, however, did have a "modernist antagonism toward the middle class," the author notes. In a 1922 essay, he complained that "the respectable mob, the decent middle-class mob," had taken over high culture and made it averse to "adventure and experiment." Eliot saw the arts of the lower class, especially the music hall, as an ally in the struggle against gentility. He wanted, Chinitz says, "to wrest art away from 'the respectable mob' to reunite it with 'the people.'"

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## Who Goes to the Movies?

Writing in the *New York Review of Books* (Mar. 23, 1995), Louis Menand, a professor of English at Queens College, City University of New York, contends that the movies are not as much of a mass medium as most people think.

*One of Hollywood's best-kept industrial secrets is that the movies are entertainment for educated people. . . . This was a finding that surprised the studios when, in the 1940s, they first undertook to analyze their audience: frequency of movie attendance increases with income and education. Even today, when people complain that they don't make movies for grown-ups anymore, the percentage of people who say they are "frequent moviegoers" is more than half again as great among people who have gone to college (31 percent) as it is among people who have only finished high school (19 percent). . . . Movie-going is a lot more expensive than television-watching, of course, and no doubt this helps to account for the difference. But the numbers make it clear that film is not truly a mass art form to anything like the degree that television and popular music are. Movies since the 1930s have been designed for the people who have the money and the leisure to afford them.*

After the 1920s, Eliot increasingly turned to drama, rather than poetry, "as a way of bridging the cultural divide." Still, in his poetry up through *The Hollow Men* (1925), Chinitz says, "popular culture was significant as both influence and subject." In the original version of his most famous poem, Eliot drew extensively on popular song, including the lyrics from a George M. Cohan show. Had fellow poet Ezra Pound not persuaded Eliot to delete most of the references to contemporary popular culture, *The Waste Land* (1922) would have looked

very different, Chinitz points out. And so, perhaps, would have the literary high culture of the decades that followed.

## A Critique of Pure Bile

"Céline: The Problem" by Renee Winegarten, in *The American Scholar* (Spring 1995), 1811 Q St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

Among the literati, French novelist Céline (1894–1961) is seen as a great writer ("a very great writer," according to Philip Roth). The claim, contends Winegarten, author of *Writers and Revolution* (1974), raises the question of what literary "greatness" really is.

Born Louis Ferdinand Destouches in the lower-class Paris suburb of Courbevoie, Céline adopted everyday working-class speech for his literary purposes. From his first and best novel, *Journey to the End of Night* (1932), Winegarten observes, he deliberately set out "to break the classical, rational mode of the French literary language, freely manipulating it and creating new words of his own, transforming the vulgar tongue into a powerful instrument of mocking challenge to convention and hypocrisy. This is the sphere in which his influence has been the most marked and enduring."

The major themes of Céline's works, Winegarten notes, are present in that first novel, in the wartime and African episodes of the "journey toward death" of his alter ego, Ferdinand Bardamu, and in his next novel, *Death on the Installment Plan* (1936), about a nightmarish childhood. "For Céline, the supreme truth is death, or more specifically, 'my own death.' Christianity, Catholicism, religion itself, together with optimistic illusions, such as progress and 'the American way of life' (to which would later be added Soviet 'utopia'), are smoke screens, futile attempts to conceal this bitter truth." Céline was also a vile anti-Semite, whose oeuvre includes "three notorious hate-filled anti-Semitic tomes": *Trifles for a Massacre* (1937), *School for Corpses* (1938), and *A Pretty Pickle* (1941). A staunch admirer of Adolph Hitler, Céline was unfazed by revelations after