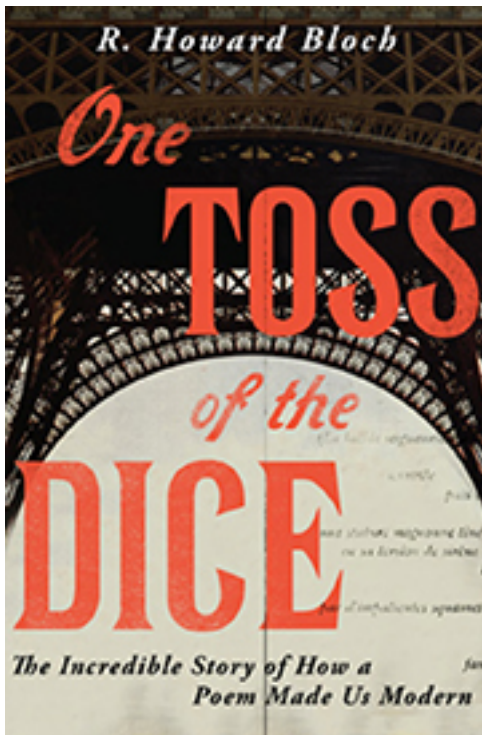


## One Toss of the Dice: The Incredible Story of How a Poem Made Us Modern



November 28, 2016

All are welcome to join us on December 7 in the Sterling Memorial Library lecture hall for the latest talk in the *Arts and Humanities Book Talk* series by Howard Bloch, Sterling Professor of French at Yale University. The talk will begin at 4:30 pm, but please join us from 4:00 pm for refreshments.

It was, improbably, the forerunner of our digital age: a French poem about a shipwreck published in 1897 that, with its mind-bending possibilities of being read up and down, backward and forward, even sideways, launched modernism. Stéphane Mallarmé's *One Toss of the Dice*, a daring, twenty-page epic of ruin and recovery, provided an epochal "tipping point," defining the spirit of the age and anticipating radical thinkers of the twentieth century, from Albert Einstein to T. S. Eliot. Celebrating its intrinsic influence on our culture, R. Howard Bloch decodes the poem still considered among the most enigmatic ever written.

In Bloch's portrait of Belle Époque Paris, Mallarmé stands as the spiritual giant of the era, gathering around him every Tuesday a luminous cast of characters including Émile Zola, Victor Hugo, Claude Monet, André Gide, Claude Debussy, Oscar Wilde, and even the future French prime minister Georges Clemenceau. A simple schoolteacher whose salons and prodigious literary talent won him the adoration of Paris's elite, Mallarmé achieved the reputation of France's greatest living poet. Over a century later, the allure of Mallarmé's linguistic feat continues to ignite the imaginations of the world's greatest thinkers. Featuring a new, authoritative translation of the French poem by J. D. McClatchy, *One Toss of the Dice* reveals how a literary masterpiece launched the modernist movement, contributed to the rise of pop art, influenced modern Web design, and shaped the perceptual world we now inhabit.

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### Source

URL: <https://web.library.yale.edu/news/2016/11/one-toss-dice-incredible-story-how-poem-made-us-modern>

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