



Virginia
Woolf
(1882-
1941),



HER LIFE

- English Writer Virginia Woolf became famous for her nonlinear prose style, especially noted in her novels *Mrs. Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse*.
- She was raised by free-thinking parents.
- Her nonlinear, free form prose style inspired her peers and earned her much praise.
- She was also known for her mood swings and bouts of deep depression.
- She committed suicide in 1941, at the age of 59.
- Woolf had three full siblings and four half-siblings; both of her parents had been married and widowed before marrying each other. The eight children lived under one roof at 22 Hyde Park Gate, Kensington.



- Woolf's parents were extremely well connected, both socially and artistically.
- Her father was a friend to William Thackeray and George Henry Lewes, as well as many other noted thinkers.
- For these reasons and more, Virginia Woolf was ideally situated to appreciate and experiment with the art of writing.
- she incorporated scenes from those early summers into her modernist novel, *To the Lighthouse* (1927).
- She had been traumatized at the age of six when her half-brothers sexually abuse her.



- Her mother suddenly died at the age of 49. The hormones of early adolescence and the undeniable reality of this huge loss spun Woolf into a nervous breakdown, only made worse when two years later, her half-sister Stella also died.
- Despite her misery, Woolf managed to take classes in German, Greek and Latin.
- Her study introduced her to a handful of radical feminists .
- In 1904, her father died. His passing was climatic; during this time she was institutionalized.
- Virginia Woolf's dance between literary expression and personal desolation would continue for the rest of her life.





NOVEL OF THE STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS

INTERIOR MONOLOGUE

STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS

- A term of psychology
- William James—Principles of psychology

Chaotic flow of impressions and sensations through the human
consciousness

- In literature:

A style of writing to express the flow of
a character's thoughts and feelings in words.

- An internal view of the character



THEORIES

Bergson' theory of Time

Time divided into

- Inner time
- Clock time (mechanical time)
- Some novelists lost confidence in the plot written in chronological order as a representative of reality.

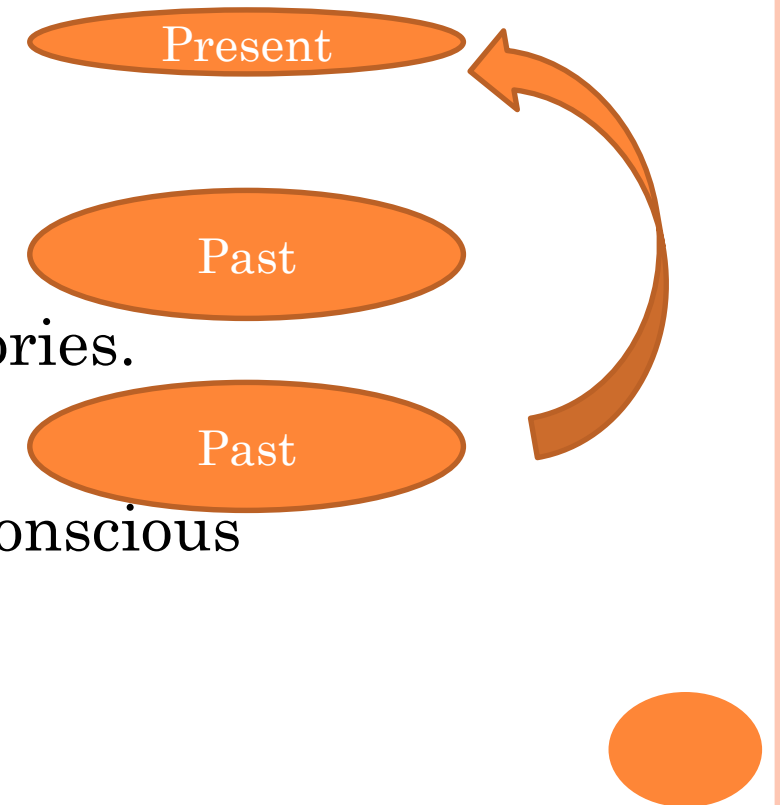


PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCHES (FREUD, ADLER, JUNG)

- Mind is composed of three levels:
- Conscious, Sub-conscious, Unconscious

But

- Present lives in the conscious.
- Past is sent to the lower levels
- But it rises to the upper level in the form of memories.
- Conscious is a very small part.
- Human actions are determined more by the sub-conscious and the unconscious



THE NOVEL OF STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS

THE NOVEL OF SUBJECTIVITY

Characteristics

- **Decay of plot** —often incoherent and shapeless
- **Decay of character**—outside time and space (not only the past of the character, possibilities of his nature in future)
--death of traditional hero and the villain
(No man is a hero to a psychoanalyst.)
- **Treatment of time**—action moves backwards and forward
- **Interior monologue** and dialogue
- Very little external **action**
- **Subject matter**—consciousness of one or more characters
Plot, character, action and thought –drowned in the stream of conscious



PREVIOUS METHODS OF CHARACTERIZATION

○ Direct Narration & Dramatic Method

1. Through the description of the narrator
physical appearance, habits manners

2. Through what the character himself says and does.

3. Through what other characters say about him.



Main characteristics:

- Recording multifarious thoughts and feelings
- Exploring external and internal forces that influence individual's psychology
- Disregard of the narrative sequence
- Absence of the logical argument
- Disassociated leaps in syntax and punctuation
- Prose difficult to follow



WOOLF'S CONTRIBUTION

- **Form and discipline** to the chaotic psychological novel
- Close confrontation of clock time and inner time
- Transition from:
 - Present—**past**
 - One consciousness – **another consciousness**
- controlled by **emotional** or **associational** links
 - Compromise between
- Need for **clarity of Form**-----demand for **the stream of consciousness**



INTERIOR MONOLOGUE

- Interior Monologue—verbal expression of psychic phenomenon
- A literary technique that presents the thoughts and feelings of a character as they occur at the pre-speech level.
- Immediate—free from introductory expressions like “ he said, she remembered, etc.
- Free from formal structures and logical and chronological order.
- Character stays fixed in space—consciousness moves freely



PLOT

- Highly autobiographical
- Childhood recollections of holidays in Cornwall—
isle in the Hebrides
- Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay, their relationship—
Virginia's parents
- Premature death of Mrs. Ramsay—Virginia's
mother
- Andrew's death—death of Virginia's own brother
- Memories of the past—transformed into
symbolical and universal values.



A photograph of a lighthouse on a rocky island in the ocean. The lighthouse is white with a red band and a black top. The sky is overcast and grey. The water is a muted blue-grey. The foreground shows dark rocks and some greenery.

TO THE LIGHT HOUSE

No Conventional Plot

Series of experiences, memories, emotions,
and feeling

Explained by symbols

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THREE PARTS

1. **The Window**
an afternoon & evening in a summer home
2. **Time passes**
about ten years
3. **The Lighthouse**
one day



THE WINDOW

Before the start of World War I.
Mr. Ramsay and Mrs. Ramsay & their
eight children

in their summer home in the Hebrides.

They can see a large lighthouse across the bay.
James Ramsay, 8, wants desperately to go to the
lighthouse.

Mrs. Ramsay: They will if the weather is fine.

Mr. Ramsay: The weather looks to be foul.



THE WINDOW

Host a number of guests,

- Charles Tansley—a philosopher
- Lily Briscoe—a young painter begins a portrait of Mrs. Ramsay
- William Bankes—a botanist and a widower
- Augustus Carmichael—a poet
- Paul Rayley—a friend
- Minta Doyle—a friend



At first, Mrs. Ramsay wants Lily to marry William Banks, but Lily resolves to remain single.

Then, Mrs. Ramsay does manage another match between Paul Rayley and Minta Doyle.

THE WINDOW

The afternoon

- Paul proposes to Minta,
- Lily begins her painting,
- Mrs. Ramsay soothes the resentful James,
- Mr. Ramsay frets over his shortcomings as a philosopher, periodically turning to Mrs. Ramsay for comfort.



THE WINDOW


The Dinner Party

The Ramsays invite these guests to have dinner with them.

- Paul and Minta are late returning.
- Two of the young Ramsays are late returning.
- Lily bristles at Tansley's comment "women can neither paint nor write."
- Augustus Carmichael, asks for a second plate of soup and it's the reason why Mr. Ramsay reacts rudely in the dinner party.



PLOT

- Mrs. Ramsay leaves her guests in the dining room,
- The couple sits quietly together.
 - Mr. Ramsay's characteristic insecurities interrupt their peace.
 - He wants his wife to tell him that she loves him.
 - She concedes to his point that the weather will be too rough for the trip.
 - Mr. Ramsay is assured that his wife loves him.
 - Night falls.
- 

TIME PASSES

- The children grow up
- War breaks out
- Mrs. Ramsay dies suddenly one night
- The eldest son, Andrew is killed in battle
- Their daughter Prue dies giving birth to a baby, after only one year of marriage



TIME PASSES

- The house falls into a state of decay for ten years until the family comes back.
- The housekeeper tries to set the house in order before Lily Briscoe arrives.



THE LIGHTHOUSE

- The most important character—Memory
- **Mr. Ramsay** decides to go to the lighthouse with his two children, **James and Cam**
- This experience is a moment of connection for them
- **Lily** succeeds in finishing her painting



CHARACTER ANALYSIS



- **Mrs. Ramsay**—a dutiful, loving wife and mother
a kind, generous hostess, kind and tolerant to her
guests even if they do not appreciate her politeness
a woman that fits in traditional gender role.
- **Mr. Ramsay** – an outstanding metaphysical
philosopher
hot-tempered, selfish, and rude, a little self-centered,
always in need for sympathy, attention and support
from others. (especially from Mrs. Ramsay)



TWO KINDS OF TRUTH



Mr. Ramsay – Mrs. Ramsay

Two different approaches towards

Factual Truth— Movement towards Truth

- Extension of his scientific knowledge based on science—may shatter hopes and make people unhappy.
- Extension of her sympathy based on intuition—will take care no hopes are shattered, no one becomes unhappy.

Yes of course if it is fine tomorrow

Mr. Ramsay: “It won’t be fine.”

Mrs. Ramsay: “But it may be fine—I expect it will be fine.’



TWO KINDS OF TRUTH



For James

Yes of course if it fine tomorrow.

Mr. Ramsay: “It won’t be fine.”

Mrs. Ramsay: “But it may be fine—I expect it will be fine.’

For Mr. Ramsay

Mrs. Ramsay: “It won’ be fine.’



THEMES

The Transience of Life and Work

Mr. Ramsay and Mrs. Ramsay take completely different approaches to life:

1. He relies on his intellect,
while
2. She depends on her emotions.

But they

- share the knowledge that the world around them is transient—that nothing lasts forever.



THEME

Art as a Means of Preservation

- (1) In the face of an existence that is inherently without order or meaning,
Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay employ different strategies for making their lives significant.
- 1. Mr. Ramsay devotes himself to his progression through the course of human thought,
while
- 2. Mrs. Ramsay cultivates memorable experiences from social interactions



SYMBOLISM

- The artistic method of revealing ideas or truths through the use of symbols (images and objects)
- Ordinary images and objects when repeated acquire a symbolic significance and represent abstract ideas and feelings.
- Using symbols allows authors to express themselves indirectly on delicate or controversial matters
- Its alternation of light and darkness—contradictory aspects of life



THE SEA

- The sea with its waves—to be heard throughout—
eternal flux of time and life
- Constantly changing its character
 1. soothing and consoling like cradle song
 2. ghostly roll of drum beating a warning of death
 3. a fountain of bright water—vitality in human



STORMS

- Symbolize agitated thought and emotions.
- inner Demons which torment our mind and our subconscious
- *Rocks Reefs and Shallow waters:*
- Final dangers and miseries which seem to accompany the end of any turbulent voyage



THE LIGHTHOUSE

- It stands alone and tall in both light and darkness and it, along with its beacon, is a focal point which symbolizes strength, guidance and safe harbour; it is spiritual hermit guiding all those who are travelling by sea.
- Mrs. Ramsay stands as a guiding star and harbours emotional safety to family/ guests visiting the summer house. She is the spiritual bridge between other characters in the novel.



THE LIGHTHOUSE

- Metaphorically as the element of water represents the emotions, the lighthouse is a symbol for the spiritual strength and emotional guidance available to us during the times when we feel we are being helplessly tossed in a sea of inner turmoil.
- Mrs. Ramsay stands strong like the lighthouse amidst emotionally shattered beings: viz., Mr. Ramsay, James, Lily, Carmichael, etc.



LILY'S PAINTING

- Woman's struggle in patriarchal society
- Fight against gender convention— “Women can't paint or write.”
- Desire to express (repressed) critique of Mrs. Ramsay's essence (as an ideal wife and mother) in the painting
- Expression of her vision based on balance and synthesis:
‘How to bring together disparate things in harmony’
This novel—both a critique and a tribute to the enduring powers of Mrs. Ramsay



RAMSAY'S SUMMER HOUSE

- Physical condition of the house—psychological condition of the characters
- During the dinner party—displays Mrs. Ramsay's notions of shabbiness and her inability to preserve beauty
- Time Passes—ravages of war and destruction and the passage of time reflected in the condition of the house rather than in the emotional state or observable aging of the characters.
- Expedition—gaze the house from the boat



MRS. RAMSAY'S KNITTING

- Her effort to unite people
- Either in matrimony
- Or in friendship



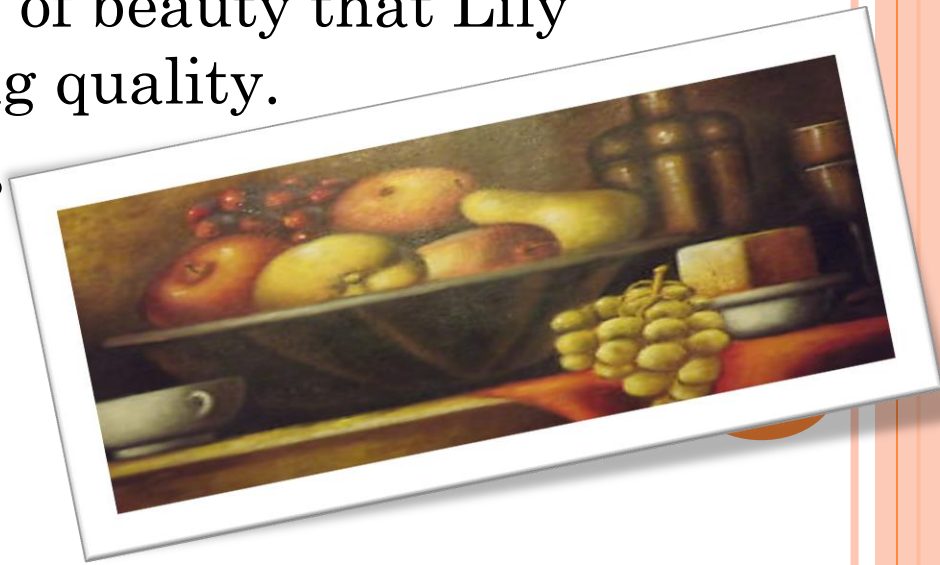
THE BOAR'S SKULL

- The presence of skull—disturbing element that death is always at hand, even during life's most blissful moments
- Reminds of grave-digging scene from Hamlet.
- Transient nature of art and life
- Mr. Ramsay's covering it represents her desire to preserve life, or that of Mr. Ramsay & Lily to be immortal through work/art.
- Mrs. Ramsay's covering it with her shawl represents her understanding nature and enduring power to suffer for others



ROSE'S ARRANGEMENT OF THE GRAPES AND PEARS

- Rose arranges a fruit basket for her mother's dinner party that serves to draw the partygoers out of their private suffering and unite them.
- Although Augustus Carmichael and Mrs. Ramsey appreciate the arrangement differently-he rips a bloom from it; she refuses to disturb it-the pair is brought harmoniously, if briefly, together.
- The basket testifies both to the “frozen” quality of beauty that Lily describes and to beauty's seductive and soothing quality.
- The absence of fruit basket in 3rd part, signifies the transitory nature of beauty, art and truth.



- Stream of Consciousness is a literary style in which the author follows visual, auditory, associative impressions and expresses them using "interior monologue" of characters either as a writing technique or as a writing style that mingles thoughts and impressions in an illogical order, and violates grammar norms.
- The phrase "stream of consciousness" was first used in 1890 by **William James** in "**Principles of Psychology**".
- In literature it records character's feelings and thoughts through stream of consciousness in attempt to capture all the external and internal forces that influence their psychology at a single moment. Any logical or sequential approach is disregarded.
- The first example of this style is considered to be a novel by Edouard Dujardin "Les Lauriers sont Coupes" (We'll to the Woods No More), but the technique itself was pioneered by Dorothy Richardson in Pilgrimage (1915-35) and by James Joyce in Ulysses (1922), and further developed by Virginia Woolf in Mrs Dalloway (1925) and William Faulkner in The Sound and the Fury (1928).

