

Early Twentieth-Century Fiction  
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(Murray 019, Mondays 2:30–4:30)

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(36 Union St. 217, Wednesdays 12:00–2:00)

October 23, 2014. Hemingway, Woolf (1).

## review

- ▶ Hemingway, follower of Stein

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- ▶ parataxis

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- ▶ Hemingway, follower of Stein
- ▶ parataxis
- ▶ the secret of the prepositional phrase
- ▶ the mystery of blank affect

## “show don't tell”

For his mastery of the art of narrative, most recently demonstrated in *The Old Man and the Sea*, and for the influence that he has exerted on contemporary style.

(Swedish Academy, 1954)

It would be hard to overestimate the influence of Hemingway on postwar writers.

(Mark McGurl, *The Program Era* [2009])

## “be a man”

But just as importantly, as a poet of brooding masculinity, Hemingway came to represent the noble pathos of understatement. (McGurl)

“Be a man, my son,” said one priest. (*In Our Time*, chap. XV)

[Doc Adams] is a masculine character who does not let pain or feelings distract him from the task at hand. He is able to turn his emotions off and continue working. His son however, seems to be the only one who expresses concern for the woman giving birth and the pain she is going through. (sm027 on “Indian Camp”)

## sensitive man

His tongue was very sensitive. (140)

It had been a very fine experience. (140)

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He had been solidly hooked. Solid as a rock. He felt like a rock, too, before he started off. By God, he was a big one. By God, he was the biggest one I ever heard of. (151)



Ernest Hemingway, American Red Cross volunteer, recuperates from wounds at ARC Hospital, Milan, Italy, September 1918. [Nobelprize.org](http://Nobelprize.org).

## wounds

*Nick sat against the wall of the church where they had dragged him to be clear of machine-gun fire in the street. Both legs stuck out awkwardly. He had been hit in the spine. His face was sweaty and dirty. The sun shone on his face. The day was very hot. (63)*

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*As he smoked, his legs stretched out in front of him (135)*

# Stein and Hemingway redux

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“That’s what you are. That’s what you all are,” Miss Stein said. “All of you young people who served in the war. You are a lost generation....You have no respect for anything. You drink yourselves to death.”...

I thought of Miss Stein and Sherwood Anderson and egotism and mental laziness versus discipline and I thought who is calling who a lost generation?

(*A Movable Feast* [written 1957–60, published 1964])

## pulling the line taut

It had been a hard trip. He was very tired. That was done. He had made his camp. He was settled. Nothing could touch him. It was a good place to camp. (139)

He put on the reel and threaded the line through the guides. He had to hold it from hand to hand, as he threaded it, or it would slip back through its own weight. It was a heavy, double tapered fly line....

He tested the knot and the spring of the rod by pulling the line taut. It was a good feeling. (147)

## inside out

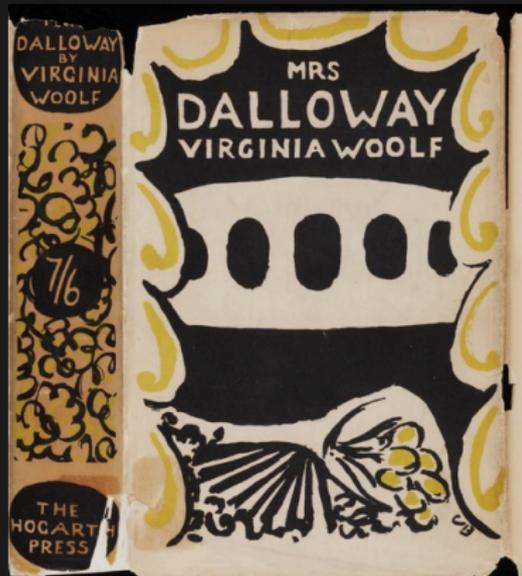
All the insides and the gills and tongue came out in one piece....All the insides clean and compact, coming out all together. (155)



Hemingway in Key West, 1928.

[Nobelprize.org](http://Nobelprize.org).

# Virginia Woolf (1882–1941)



What happens on the first page?

Dust jacket of *Mrs. Dalloway*, Hogarth Press 1st ed., 1925. Illustration by Vanessa Bell. Beinecke Library.

## reported discourse

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1. Mrs. Dalloway said she would buy the flowers herself.
2. For Lucy had her work cut out for her.
3. What a lark! What a plunge!
4. For so it had always seemed to her...

## reported discourse (2)

For Heaven only knows why one loves it so, how one sees it so, making it up, building it round one, tumbling it, creating it every moment afresh; but the veriest frumps, the most dejected of miseries sitting on doorsteps (drink their downfall) do the same; can't be dealt with, she felt positive, by Acts of Parliament for that very reason: they love life.

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## big and small

Let us record the atoms as they fall upon the mind in the order in which they fall, let us trace the pattern, however disconnected and incoherent in appearance, which each sight or incident scores upon the consciousness. Let us not take it for granted that life exists more fully in what is commonly thought big than in what is commonly thought small.

(Woolf, "Modern Fiction," 150)

### Discussion

"For it was the middle of June" (5). In this paragraph, what is big and what is small? What is significant about the distribution of attention?

## “transfer of confidence”

Exterior events have actually lost their hegemony, they serve to release and interpret inner events.

a transfer of confidence: the great exterior turning points and blows of fate are granted less importance

Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, trans. Willard R. Trask (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953), 538, 547

## “inner events”?

Examine for a moment an ordinary mind on an ordinary day. The mind receives a myriad impressions—trivial, fantastic, evanescent, or engraved with the sharpness of steel.

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The violent explosion which made Mrs. Dalloway jump and Miss Pym go to the window and apologise came from a motor car which had drawn to the side of the pavement precisely opposite Mulberry’s shop window....

The sun became extraordinarily hot because the motor car had stopped outside Mulberry’s shop window; old ladies on the tops of omnibuses spread their black parasols; here a green, here a red parasol opened with a little pop. Mrs. Dalloway, coming to the window with her arms full of sweet peas, looked out with her little pink face pursed in enquiry. Every one looked at the motor car. Septimus looked. Boys on bicycles sprang off. Traffic accumulated. (14–15)

## multipersonal

The essential characteristic of the technique represented by Virginia Woolf is that we are given not merely one person whose consciousness (that is, the impressions it receives) is rendered, but many persons, with frequent shifts from one to the other.

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### Discussion

How does the skywriting episode (20–29) frame individual perceptions? Compare several examples.

next

- ▶ Finish *Mrs. Dalloawy*
- ▶ commonplace and then *print out* your entry to bring to class and discuss