Re-writing Woolf's works and life

Virginia's and today's London



Women and education

Male and female identity

Virginia Woolf: nostra compagna di vita e di viaggio

Corso lend Pisa 1 marzo 2022

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Social and political commitment

Virginia's London

'London thou art a jewel of jewels… music, talk, friendship, city views, books, publishing, something central & inexplicable, all this is now within my reach'.

Monday, May 26th
London is enchanting. I step out upon a tawny coloured magic carpet, it seems, and get carried into beauty without raising a finger. The nights are amazing, with all the white porticos and broad silent avenues. And people pop in and out, lightly, divertingly like rabbits; and I look down Southampon Row, wet as a seal's back or red and yellow with sunshine, and watch the omnibuses going and coming and hear the old crazy organs.

A Writer's Diary, 1953, p. 68



Southampton Row, Bloomsbury, WC1

The fascination of the London street is that no two people are ever alike; each seems bound on some private affair of his own.

A Room of One's Own, Chapter 6

The Docks of London

With the sea blowing its salt into our nostrils, nothing can be more stimulating than to watch the **ships coming up the Thames** – the **big ships and the little ships, the battered and the splendid, ships** from India, from Russia, from South America, ships from Austalia coming from silence and danger and loneliness past us, home to harbour. But once they drop anchor, once the cranes begin their dipping and their swinging, it seems as if all romance were over. If we turn and go past the anchored ship towards London, we see surely **the most dismal prospect in the world**. The banks of the river are lined wih **dingy, decrepit-looking warehouses**. They huddle on land that has become **flat and slimy mud**. The same air of **decrepitude** and of being run up provisionally stamps them all.

The London Scene, p. 6; p. 14



The West India Docks and the Millwall Dock on a map of the Isle of Dogs in 1899. Canary Wharf with Millwall Dock on the Isle of Dogs today.

The only thing, one comes to feel, that can change the routine of the docks is **a change in ourselves** […] It is we – our tastes, our fashion, our needs – that make the cranes dip and swing, that call the ships from the sea**. Our body is their master**. We demand shoes, furs, bags, stoves, oil, rice puddings, candles; and they are brought us. Trade watches anxiously to see **what new desires** are beginning to grow in us...

Oxford Street

Down in the docks one sees things in their crudity, their bulk, their enormity. Here in **Oxford Stret they have been refined and transformed**. The huge barrels of damp tobacco have ben rolled into innumerable net cigarettes laid in silver paper. The corpulent bales of wool have been spun into thin vests and soft stockings. The grease of sheep's thick wool has becom scented cream for delicate skins. **And those who buy and those who sell have suffered the same city change**. […]

Oxford Street, it goes without saying, **is not London's most distinguished thoroughfare**. Moralists have been known to point the finger of **scorn at those who buy there**, and they have the support of the dandies. Fashion has secret crannies of Hanover Square, round about Bond Street […] In Oxford Street there are **too many bargains**, **too many sales**, **too many goods** marked down to one and eleven three that only last week cost two and six. The buying and selling is **too blatant and raucous**. (pp. 19-20)





Great Men's Houses

London, happily, is becoming full of great men's houses, bought for the nation and preserved entire with the chairs they sat on and the cups they drank from, their umbrellas and their chests of drawers. And it is no frivolous curiosity that sends us to **Dickens's house** and **Johnson's house** and **Carlyle's house** and **Keats's house**…

Take the Carlyles, for instance. One hour spent in 5 Cheyne Row will tell us more about them and their lives than we can learn from all the biographies. […]





Every drop that the Carlyles used – and they were Scots, fanatical in their cleanliness – had to be pumped by hand from a well in the kitchen.

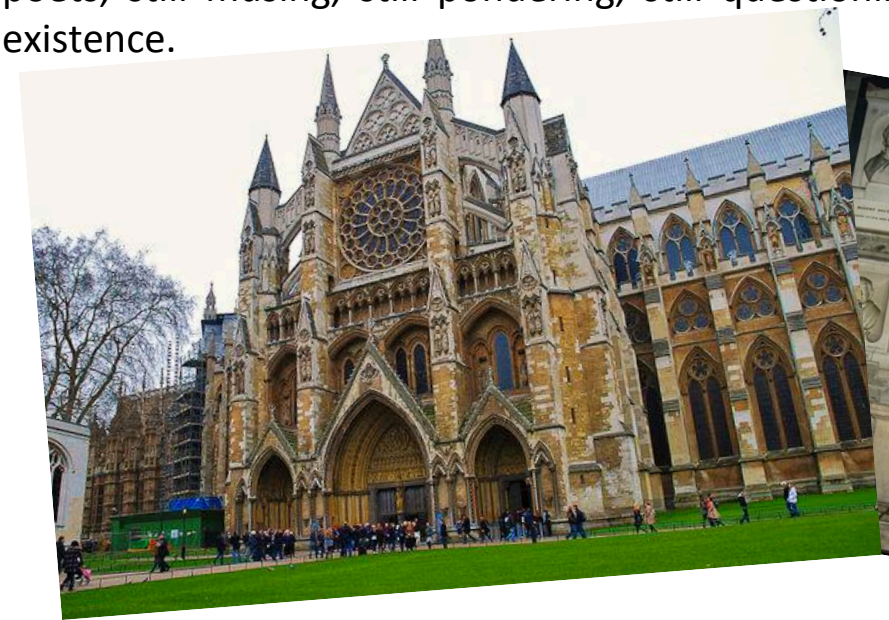
The high old house without water, without electric light, without gas fires, full of books and coal smoke and four-poster beds and mahogany cupboard...

The voice of the house – and all houses have voices – is the voice of pumping and scrubbing, of coughing and groaning. (pp. 31 – 33)

Abbeys and Cathedrals

No contrast could be greater that that between St Paul's and Westminster Abbey. Far from being spacious and serene, The Abbey is narrow and pointed, worn, restless and animated […]

From every corner, from every wall, somebody leans or listens or bends forward as if about to speak.
Their hands nervously grasp their sceptres, their lips are compressed foor a moment's thought. These dead, if dead they are, have lived to the full. Their faces are worn, their noses high, their cheeks hollowed. [...]
The Abbey is full of Kings and Queens, Dukes and Princes... But it is full also of another and even more potent royalty. Here are the dead poets, still musing, still pondering, still questioning the meaning of existence.







…when suddenly we run against the enormous walls of St Paul's. Here it is again, looming over us, mountainous, immense, greyer, colder, quieter than before. [...]
Something of the splendour of St Paul's lies simply in its vast size, in its colourless serenity. (p. 45)

The House of Commons

Outside the House of Commons stand the **statues of great statemen**, black and sleek and shiny as sea lions that have just risen from the water […]

Certainly our own House of Commons from **inside is not the least noble or majestic or even dignified. It is as shiny and as ugly** as any other moderate-sized public hall [...]

It is an untidy, informal-looking assembly. People are always coming in and out incessantly. Men are whispering and gossiping and cracking jokes over each other's shoulders. The swing doors are perpetually swinging.





'But this is the House of Commons. **Here the destinies of the world are altered**. Here Gladstone fought, and Palmerston and Disraeli. It is by these men that we are governed. We obey their orders every day of the year […] Everybody has been well fed and given a good education doubtless. **But what with their chatter and laughter, their high spirits, and impatience and irreverence, they are not a whit more judicious, or more dignified, or more respectable-looking than any other assembly of citizens met to debate parish business or give prizes for fat oxen**. (pp. 55-58)

Portrait of a Londoner

Nobody can be said to know London who does not know **one true Cockney** – who cannot turn down a side street, away from the shops and the theatres, and knock at a private door in a street of private houses.

Private houses in London are apt to be much of a muchness. The door opens on a dark hall; from the dark hall rises a narrow staircase; off the landing opens a double drawing-room, and in this double drawing-room are two sofas on each side of a blazing fire, six armchairs, and three long windows giving upon the street.





Mrs Crowe always sat there in an armchair by the fire; it was there that she had her being; it was there she poured out tea.

The talk that Mrs Crowe liked and inspired was a glorified version of village gossip. The village was London, and the gossip was about London life. [...]

Thus to know London not merely as a gorgeous spectacle, a mart, a court, a hive of industry, but as a place where people meet and talk, laugh, marry, and die, paint, write and act, rule and legislate, **it was essential to know Mrs Crowe**.

But even London itself could not keep Mrs Crowe alive for ever. It is a fact that one day Mrs Crowe was not sitting in the armchair by the fire as the clock struck five... **Mrs Crowe is dead, and London – no, though London still exists, London will never be the same city again**. (pp. 67-74)

Following the steps of Virginia

Virtual tour of Virginia's houses in London
https://artsandculture.google.com/story/take-a-tour-of-virginia-woolf%E2%80%99s-life-in-london/1wXhSk5yw18Iiw?hl=en

A visit to Monk's House
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zfdQKN-jYC4

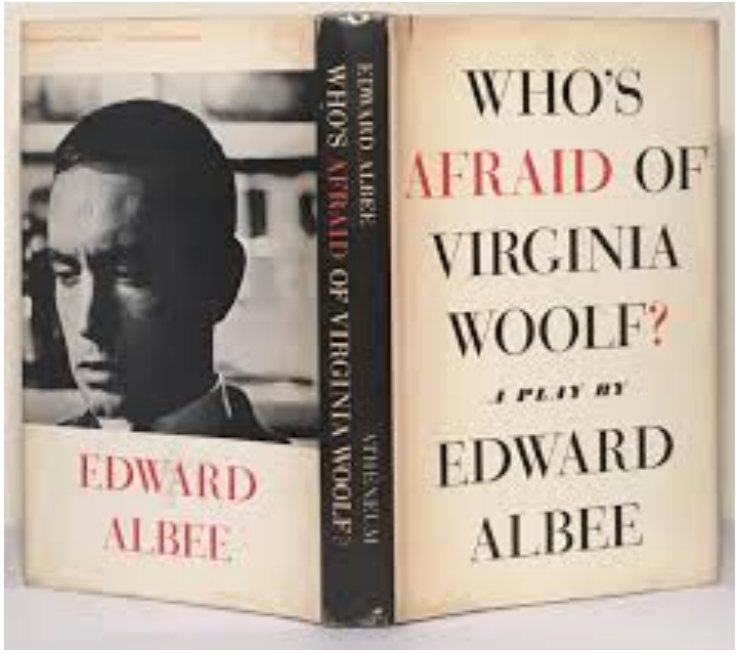
Digital mapping

- Identify significant moments in Woolf's novels
- Rebuild the scenes through Google Earth
- Use pictures, videos, texts (also recorded), film clips, etc.

https://earth.google.com/web/@51.5126083,-0.13782916,24.02994223a,6392.62096863d,30.00000115y,0h,0t,0r/data=MicKJQojCiExV2JSbUc3QXpOV01FeElhZFhvNE5ZTmRqZHB5NXVNM0E

Virginia in the collective imagination

Virginia Woolf is evoked because the title is a pun in the song *Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf*? that the two main characters, Martha and George, sing, thus reminding of Virginia's unrest and suicide, which are related to the failure of their marriage



1962



Drama film directed by Mike Nichols (1966)
Elisabeth Taylor and Richard Burton starring

Virginia – A Play by Edna O'Brien (1981)

O'Brien builds a "stream-of-consciousness play", following the **fluidity of Virginia's thoughts**: she inscribes **the theme of resurrection** in her play through the circular structure of Septimus's/Virginia's emergence from their death dreams, through **the motif of the waves**, through Bernard's/ Virginia's final monologue and through **the symbol of the eclipse**.

[*The Country*]

VIRGINIA:

And in me too the wave rises. It swells, it arches its back, it is death… Death is the enemy. [...]

My hair flying back like a young man's, like Percival's.

Against you I will fling myself unvanquished and unyielding ... oh, death.

LEONARD:

We did not find her body for two weeks. Some children found her washed up near Lewes. There were heavy stones in the pocket of her jacket; it was terrible, it was the most terrible thing.

VIRGINIA

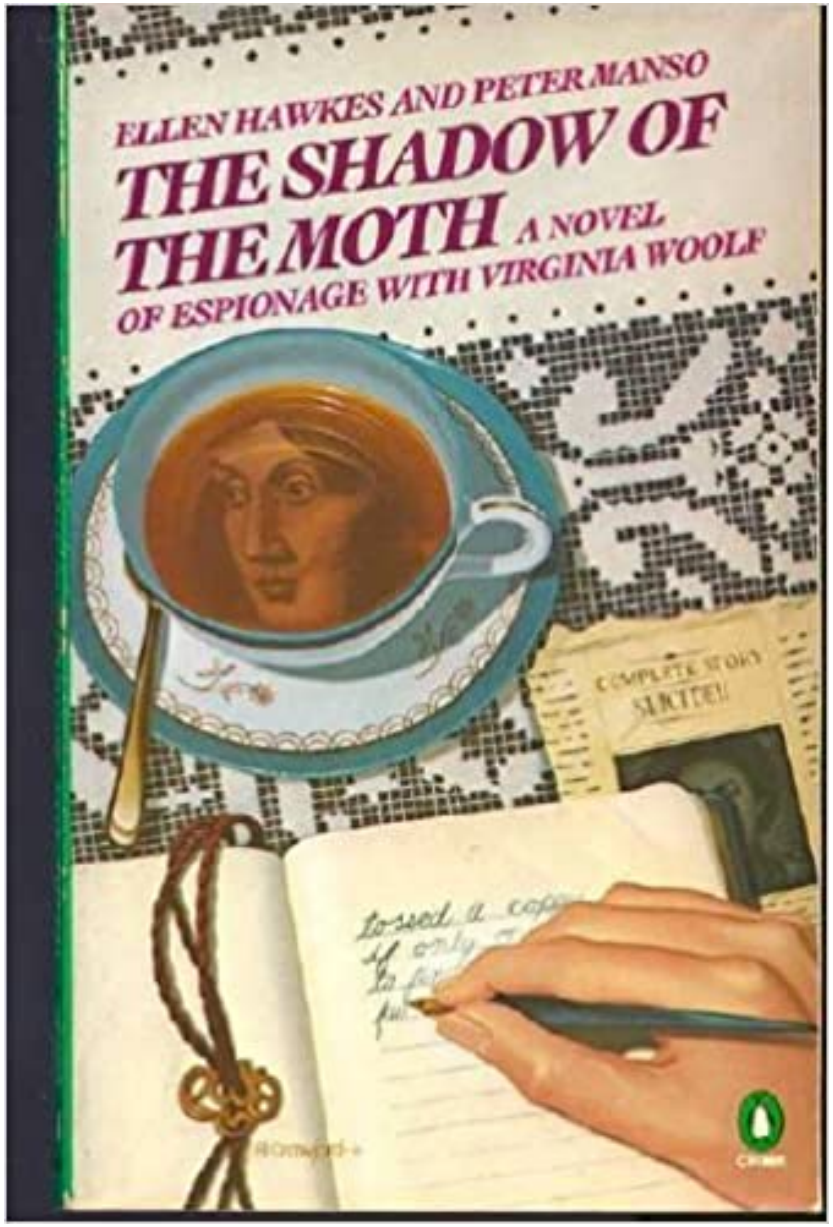
I leant over the edge of the boat and fell down. I went under the sea. I have been dead and yet am now alive again – it was awful, awful and as before waking.

[*Her voice gets quicker and quicker.*] The voices of the birds and the sound of the wheel chime and chatter, in a queer harmony, grow louder and louder and the sleeper feels himself drawing towards the shores of life, the sun growing hotter, cries sounding louder, something tremendous about to happen.



Dal film
"The Hours"

Virginia as a sleuth (1983)

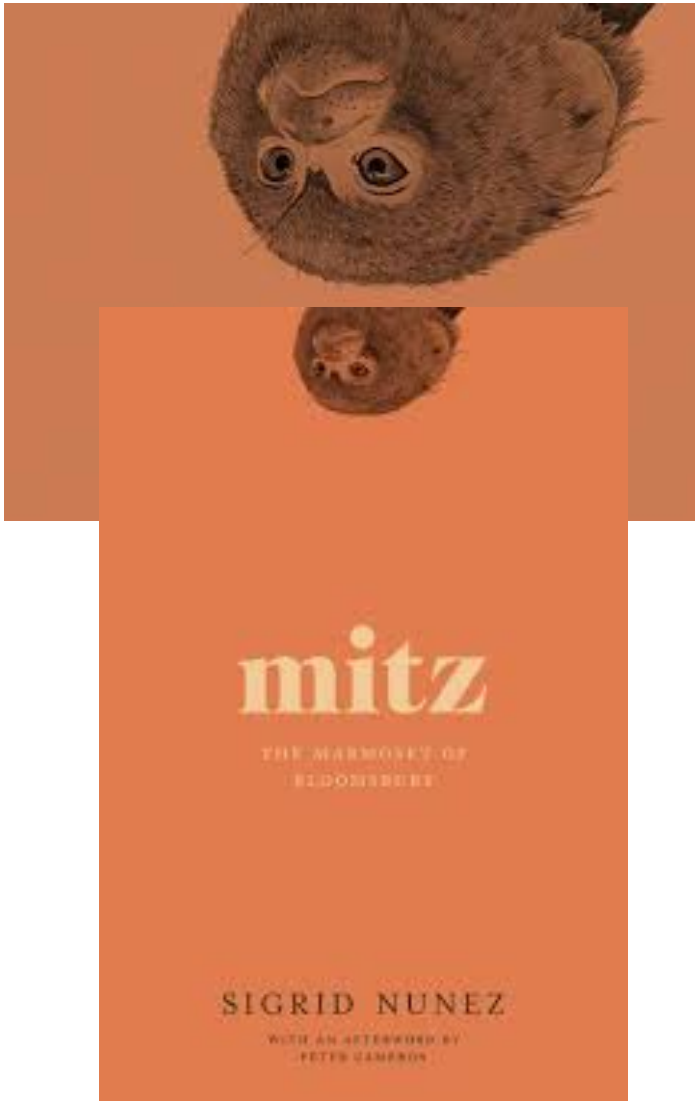


While investigating the so-called suicide of a Belgian woman, **noted writer Virginia Woolf uncovers a plot involving espionage and murder** that could determine the outcome of World War I.

The novel starts as **a murder mystery** and continues as **a spy novel**, as Scotland Yard, MI5 and Belgian Intelligence gradually become involved in the case. Hawkes and Manso imagined **a particular portrait of a feminist sleuth**, depicted in accordance with Woolf's feminist voice expressed in her pamphlets… The authors further **speculate about Woolf's death, hinted to be a disguised suicide**, a murder which was necessary for the benefit of a greater national cause.

The Shadow alters the formula of traditional male-centred detective fiction to offer an open feminist resolution.

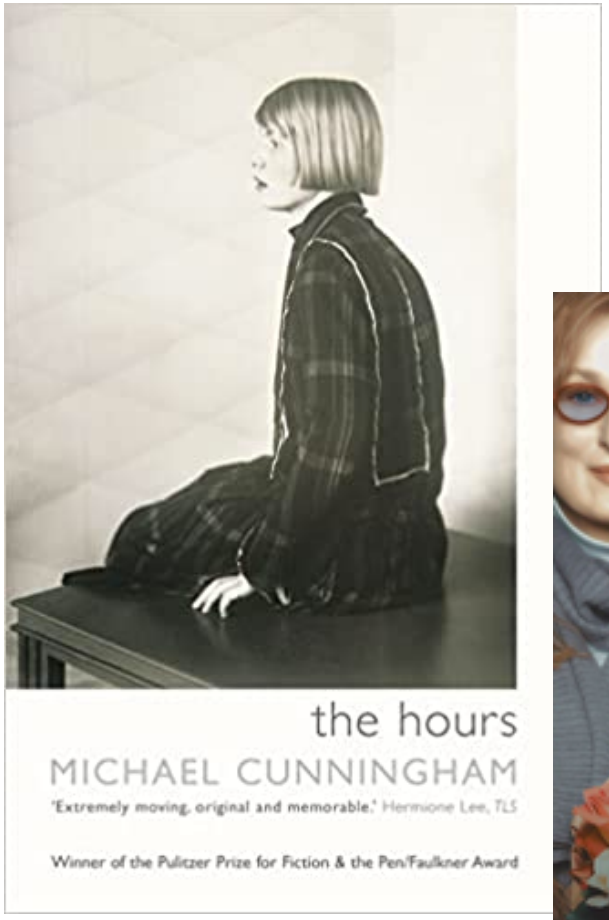
The Marmoset of Bloomsbury (1998)



In 1934, a "sickly pathetic marmoset" named Mitz came into the care of Leonard Woolf. After he nursed her back to health, she became a ubiquitous presence in Bloomsbury society. Moving with Leonard and Virginia Woolf between their homes in London and Sussex, she developed her own special relationship with each of them, as well as with their pet cocker spaniels and with various members of the Woolfs' circle, among them T. S. Eliot and Vita Sackville-West. Mitz also helped the Woolfs escape a close call with Nazis during a trip through Germany just before the outbreak of World War II.

Using letters, diaries, memoirs, and other archival documents, Nunez reconstructs Mitz's life against the background of Bloomsbury's twilight years.

The Hours (1998)



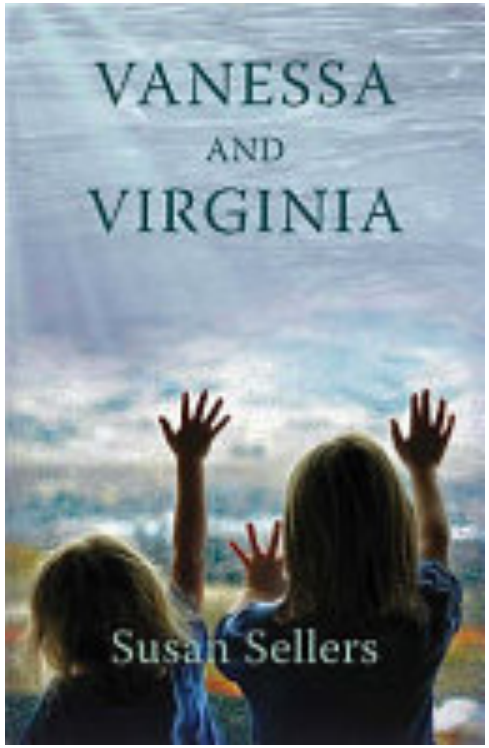


The Hours recasts the classic story of Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* in a startling new light, moving between England and America

Three women:

1. In 1920s London, **Virginia Woolf** is fighting against her rebellious spirit as she attempts to make a start on her new novel.
2. **A young wife and mother**, broiling in a suburb of 1940s Los Angeles, yearns to escape and read her precious copy of 'Mrs Dalloway'.
3. **Clarissa Vaughan** steps out of her smart Greenwich village apartment in 1990s New York to buy flowers for a party she is hosting for a dying friend.

The two sisters



Vanessa Bell **becomes the central subject**, rather than a side-character to her more famous sister, and the novel takes the form of **an epistle written by Bell to Woolf**, remembering and reflecting on their history of love and rivalry.

(2008)

"Who do you like best, Mother or Father?" Your question comes like a bolt out of the blue. I hold the jug of warm water suspended in midair and look at you. You are kneeling on the bathmat, shiny-skinned and rosy from the steam. The ends of your hair are wet and you have a towel draped round your shoulders. I am dazzled by the audacity of your question. Slowly I let the water from the jug pour into the bath.

"Mother." I lean back into the warmth.

You consider my answer, squeezing the damp from your hair.

"I prefer Father."

"Father?" I sit up quickly. "How can you possibly like Father best? He's always so difficult to please."

"At least he's not vague." You spin round and look at me directly. I sense that you are enjoying this discussion.

"But Mother is . . ." I search for my word. I think of the arch of her neck as she walks into a room, the way the atmosphere changes as she seats herself at table.

"Is what?" Your eyes are daring me now.

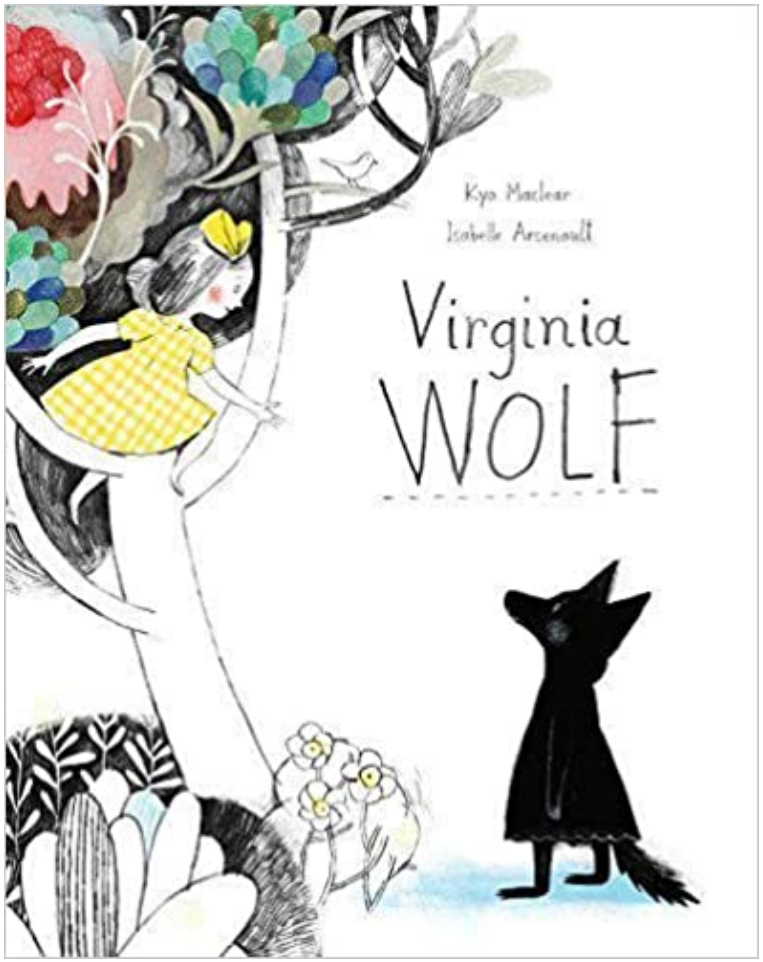
"Beautiful." I say the word quietly.

"What does that count for?" You do nothing to hide your contempt. "Mother doesn't know as much as Father, she doesn't read as much. At least when Father settles on something you know he isn't going to be called away."

I want to rally, hit back, protest how self-centered Father is. I want to declare Mother's goodness, proclaim her unstinting sense of duty, her ability to restore order when all is in disarray. Instead I stare in silence at the water. From the corner of my eye I can see that you are smiling.

The figures of Father and Mother

Virginia Wolf (2012)



Kyo Maclear (writer)
Isabelle Arsenault (illustrator)

Both the writer and the illustrator play on the **metaphor of the big, bad wolf**, which is a common trope in traditional children's tale as well **as a pun** on Woolf's name.

The tale explores **the sisters' privileged relationship**, particularly Vanessa's sisterly love, support and devotion.
The characters of Vanessa and Virginia are two small, creative girls: one makes up imaginary worlds and stories with colours and pictures, the other with words. The two sisters are represented as **diametrically opposed**, not only in their arts but also in their outlooks on life, which are reflected in the **colours of their dresses and moods**: **blue for Virginia and yellow for Vanessa.**
The two girls have **opposite personalities**: Virginia has a grouchy, unsociable and critical temperament, while Vanessa is a kind, caring and cheerful little girl.

The tale starts with little Virginia who wakes up one morning feeling 'wolfish', that is to say, depressed and irritated…

Virginia Woolf in Manhattan (2014)

VIRGINIA
Suddenly there's time again; & I'm in it.

Plenty of time.
(Is there? – or just a bright gap in the night of unknowing?)

I spent … *seven, eight decades* … in the dark – a normal lifetime.
And now I am here – am I? Back on the blade of the here & now.

Will I leave any mark when I write? Will this new world read me?

Its unending light, which they all take for granted, cuts orange slats in the blinds of my room at night. Past two, three, four in the morning, the light streams on, and my head strains away like a land-locked sea lion.

I used to live, long ago, in a low quiet house, which had darkness at night & smelled of the garden, lilacs & roses, cut grass, cheroots … Leonard. June nights: him safe in the house nearby. Bats & owls, my brain racing, sometimes, but often calm – knowing I was home. One doesn't notice how sweet … (Who was it that said 'Observe perpetually'?)

Somehow I slipped a century. Stones in my pockets weighted me down – I sank, bursting – Then nothing. So many years in the dark. It seems I was not forgotten.

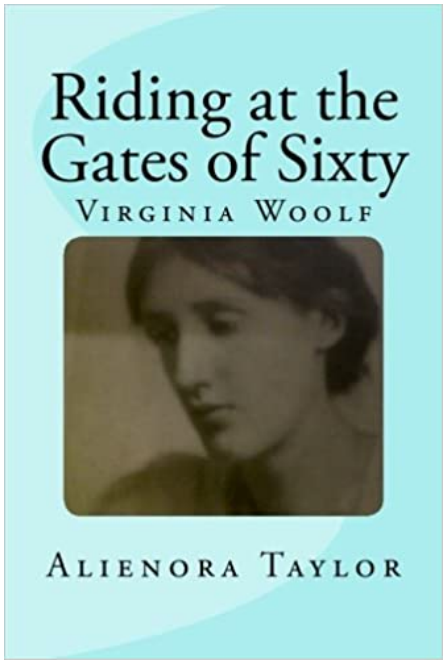
Someone longed for me, here in New York where I never went – someone hungered, and hauled me back up, protesting, yanked me through hedges & gates of dreams, and untidy, sleepy, stunned, I was suddenly half-awake in Manhattan, Virginia Woolf in Manhattan, and it is – can it be, really? – the twenty-first century. You see, I wanted –



"I have been dragged through time, summoned like a book requisitioned from a distant library," says Virginia Woolf, "resurrected" by modern-day author, Angela Lamb, working on Woolf manuscripts in the New York Public Library's Berg collection.

The novel asks **what Virginia would make of contemporary literature, the book trade, love, sex and digital addictions**? Are we freer than in Woolf's day? By showing Woolf's joy in seizing life, Gee challenges the cliché that great female artists are self-destructive, and engagingly shows **Woolf's ideas on equality, feminism and bisexuality are as vibrant and important as ever**.

Riding at the Gates of Sixty (2015)



Part One: Leonard's voice

My tremor is pronounced; the fingers undulate separately to music I cannot hear. It is late, six in the evening, and my wife has not returned from walking. Her familiar stick no longer rests against mine; I sense her absence in the entirety of the house (p. 7)

The telephone rings. I cannot move […]
'They've found her, Mr Woolf; some children just found her this evening' (p. 21).

Part Two and Three: Virginia's voice

24th January 1941
Tomorrow I reach fifty-nine. I feel this should be a solemn reflection: riding at the gate of sixty. […]
We are here at Rodmell for the weekend; stolen spring days enchant. Walking over the meadows today, the light was hard and sharp as a smashed glass (p. 26).

Part Four: Vanessa's Voice

We are [my sister and I] as close as it is possible for two widely different sisters to be, and I love her dearly. I sense my world would be a far sadder, and more constrained one, without her.

Virginia Woolf's Women

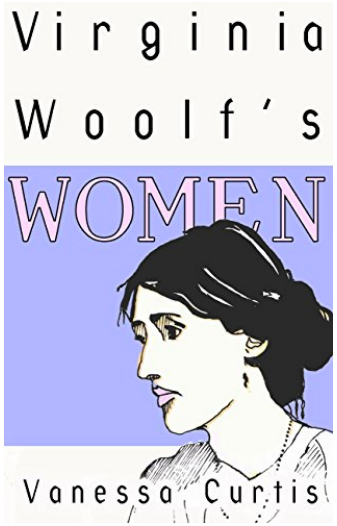
Stella
returned broken and dying from her honeymoon: such death left Virginia with an extremely negative view of heterosexuality

Vanessa
the person whom Virginia loved and needed most. But next to Nessa Virginia always felt awkward: too tall, too thin, somehow not a 'real' woman

Violet Dickinson
an acquaintance of Stella's, offered Virginia emotional support through her early breakdowns, but was dumped by Virginia when newer, younger friends came on to the scene

Julia
beautiful, perfect tea-table manners, wrote amusing stories for children

'If one could be friendly with women, what a pleasure – the relationship so secret and private compared with relations to men'.
A Writer's Diary
(1924)



2002

Ottoline Morrell
Virginia was attracted by her opulence, unusual looks, aristocratic background and beautiful homes, but treated her with arrogance and superficiality

Vita Sackville-West
was obsessed with Virginia's mental fragility, her beauty and her prolific output of fiction

Ethel Smyth
a composer and writer, was the last woman to make a sizeable impact on Virginia's life.

Dora Carrington
loving, bisexual, often insecure and depressed or tortured by her art and her life; their friendship never developed further

Katherine Mansfield
smelt like a 'civet cat', but Virginia was fascinated by the bisexual, enigmatic and terminally ill Katherine

By studying Virginia's correspondence with these women, diverse aspects have come to light:

- her insecurity, sense of repression and aversion to physical passion (Julia, Stella);
- her capacity for strong, enduring and all-consuming love (Violet, Vanessa, Vita);
- her fervent, angry beliefs in equality for women (Ethel);
- her capacity to demonstrate fascination with repulsion, cruelty and snobbery (Katherine, Ottoline);
- her ability to empathize (Carrington).

As a friend Virginia brought happiness, stimulation and humour into the lives of all those who knew her intimately

Three Guineas (1938)

The question Woolf discusses in *Three Guineas* is **how women can prevent war** when they are excluded from education, the professions, and the public sphere. The title *Three Guineas* derives from Woolf pondering whether she should support **three causes** with a guinea donation – these being: **a society to stop war**, **a campaign** to support the rebuilding of a women's college, and **an organization** to promote women's employment in the professions.

One

"Here are three reasons which lead your sex to fight; **war is a profession**; a source of happiness and excitement; and it is also an **outlet for manly qualities**, without which men would deteriorate"



Two

"Take this guinea then and use it, not to burn the house down, but to make its windows blaze. And let the daughters of uneducated women dance round the new house, the poor house … and let them sing: "**We have done with war! We have done with tyranny**!" And their mothers will laugh from their graves, "It was for this that we suffered obloquy and contempt!"



Three

"Take this one guinea then and use it to assert the 'rights of all – all men and women – to the respect in their persons of **the great principles of Justice and Equality and Liberty**'. Put this penny candle in the window of your new society, and may we live to see the day when in the blaze of our common freedom the **worst tyrant and dictator shall be burned to ashes**"



As a woman, I have no country. As a woman I want no country. As a woman my country is the whole world



Three Guineas (First edition, p. 197)

The war

Saturday, August 31st 1940

Now we are in the war: England is being attacked. I got this feeling for the first time completely yesterday. The feeling of pressure, danger, horror. The feeling is that a battle is going on – fierce battle.



Wednesday, September 11th

Churchill has just spoken. A clear, measured, robust, speech. Says the invasion is being prepared […]
Another raid last night on London. Time bomb struck the Palace... Mecklenburgh Square evacuated... Our windows are broken [...]

A plane shot down before our eyes just before tea: over the racecourse; a scuffle; a swerve; then a plunge; and a burst of thick black smoke.

The Writer's Diary, p. 327-29

THE ANGEL IN THE HOUSE

And while I was writing this review, I discovered that if I were going to review books I should need to do battle with **a certain phantom**. And the phantom was a woman, and when I came to know her better I called her after the heroine of a famous poem, *Angel in the House*. It was she who used to come between me and my paper when I was writing reviews. It was **she** who bothered me and wasted my time and so tormented me that **at last I killed her**.

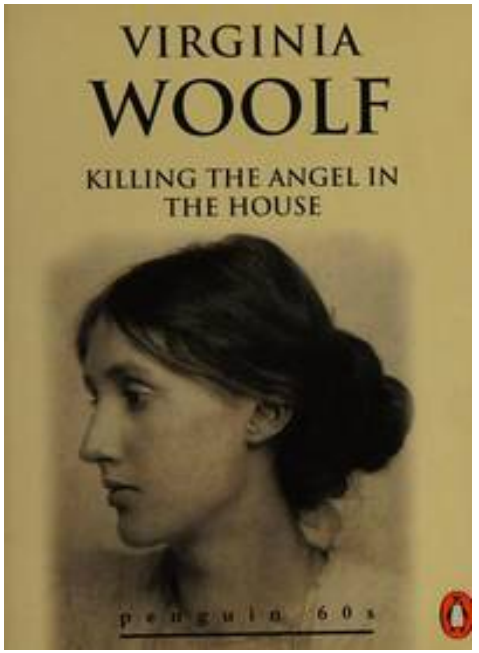


She was **intensely sympathetic**. She was **immensely charming**. She was **utterly unselfish**. She excelled in the **difficult arts of family life**. She **sacrificed herself** daily. If there was chicken, she took the leg; if there was a draught she sat in it - in short she was so constituted that she **never had a mind or a wish of her own**, but preferred to sympathize always with the minds and wishes of others. Above all - I need not say it - she was **pure**. Her **purity was supposed to be her chief beauty** - her blushes, her great grace. In those days - the last of Queen Victoria - every house had its Angel. […]

Professions for Women (an abbreviated version of the speech Virginia Woolf delivered before a branch of the National Society for Women's Service on January 21, 1931).
Published posthumously in *The Death of the Moth and Other Essays*.

What is a woman?

But to continue my story. **The Angel was dead; what then remained**? You may say that what remained was a simple and common object - **a young woman in a bedroom with an inkpot**. In other words, now that she had rid herself of falsehood, that young woman had only to be herself. Ah, but what is "herself"? I mean, **what is a woman**? I assure you, I do not know. I do not believe that you know. I do not believe that anybody can know until she has expressed herself in all the arts and professions open to human skill. […]



These then were two very genuine experiences of my own. These were two of the adventures of my professional life. The first - **killing the Angel in the House** - I think I solved. She died. But the second, **telling the truth about my own experiences as a body**, **I do not think I solved**. I doubt that any woman has solved it yet.

Phantoms and obstacles

Even when the path is nominally open - when there is nothing to prevent a woman from being a doctor, a lawyer, a civil servant - there are **many phantoms and obstacles**, as I believe, **looming in her way**.

Those aims cannot be taken for granted; they must be **perpetually questioned and examined**.

The room has to be furnished





You have won rooms of your own in the house hitherto exclusively owned by men. You are able, though not without great labour and effort, to pay the rent. You are earning your five hundred pounds a year. But this freedom is only a beginning - **the room is your own, but it is still bare**. **It has to be furnished; it has to be decorated; it has to be shared**. How are you going to furnish it, how are you going to decorate it? With whom are you going to share it, and upon what terms?

Shakespeare's sister

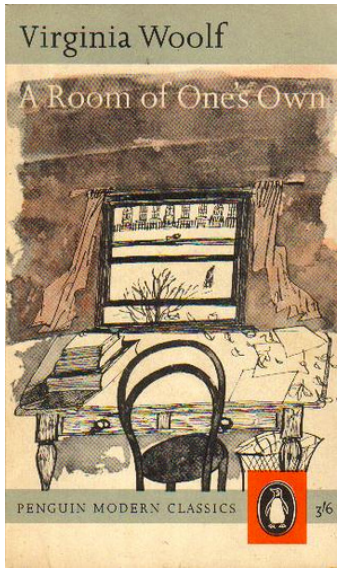
…it would have been impossible, completely and entirely, for any woman to have written the plays of Shakespeare in the age of Shakespeare. Let me imagine, since facts are so hard to come by, what would have happened had Shakespeare had a **wonderfully gifted sister**, **called Judith**, let us say. Shakespeare went, very probably to a grammar school [...] Meanwhile his extraordinary gifted sister, let us suppose, **remained at home**. She was as adventurous, as imaginative, as agog to see the world as he was. But **she was not sent to school**. [...]

No education

Before she was out of her teens she **was betrothed to the son of a neighbouring woolstapler**... she cried out that **marriage was hateful to her**, and for that she was severely beaten by her father... She found herself wih **child by the actor-manager and killed herself** one winter's night.

Marriage and child

Death



For women difficulties were infinitely more formidable. In the first place, **to have a room of her own, let alone a quiet room or a sound-proof room**, was out of question, unless her parents were exceptionally rich or very noble.

A Room of One's Own, *Chapter 3* (pp. 94-108)

Women's creative force and diversity

Women have sat indoors all these millions of years, so that by this time the very walls are permeated by **their creative force**, which has, indeed, so overcharged the capacity of bricks and mortar that it must need harness itself to pens and brushes and business and politics.

It would be a thousand pities **if women wrote like men, or lived like men, or looked like men**, for if two sexes are quite inadequate, considering the vastness and variety of the world, how should we manage with one only? **Ought not education to bring out and fortify the differences rather than the similarities**? For we have **too much likeness as it is**, and if an explorer should come back and bring word of other sexes looking through the branches of other trees at other skies, nothing would be of greater service to humanity.

A Room of One's Own, p. 180



Gender oriented literature

In literature the male-female relationship (and besides this, when the two sexes are not so clearly defined, androgyny, male and female homosexuality) has been wonderfully expressed in *Orlando*, the story of a young nobleman who lives through four centuries and many disguises, becomes a woman and then a mother.



He – for there could be no doubt of his sex, though the fashion of the time did something to disguise it – was in the act of slicing at the head of a Moor which swung from the rafters. *Orlando*, p. 3

Orlando's face… the red of the cheeks was covered with peach down...The lips themselves were short and slightly drawn back over teeth of an exquisite and almond whiteness... The hair was dark, the ears small, and fitted closely to the head. *Orlando*, p. 4

Male and female identity

From *Orlando* to…

The discovery of the self

- Margaret Atwood, *The Female Body* and *Alien Territory* (Good Bones, 1992)
- Jamaica Kincaid, *Girl* (*At the Bottom of the River, 1*983)

Sexual identification

- Virginia's letter to Leonard (May 1st, 1912): " I feel no physical attraction for you"
- Marguerite Radclyffe Hall, *The Well of Loneliness* (1928)
- William S. Burroughs, *Queer* (1985)

The battle of the sexes

- Dorothy Parker, *The Sexes* (1927)
- Angela Carter, *The Bloody Chamber* (1979)

Female and male language

- Deborah Tannen, *That's not What I Meant* (1986). *You Just Don't Understand (*1990)

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The Cambridge Companion to Virginia Woolf (ed. by Roe, S. and Sellers, S.), CUP, Cambridge.

Virginia's own description of Julia Stephen's exhausted demise back in 1895:

A tired swimmer in the waves of times

I throw my hands up: let the surface close.



Thanks

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… it a constant idea of mine; that behind the cotton wool is hidden a pattern; that we - I mean all human beings - are connected with this; that the whole world is a work of art; that we are parts of the work of art. *Hamlet* or a Beethoven quartet is the truth about this vast mass that we call the world. But there is no Shakespeare, there is no Beethoven; certainly and emphatically there is no God; we are the words, we are the music; we are the thing itself.

A Sketch of the Past in Moments of Being (p. 72)