

Gender Roles, Love, Age and Memory in Virginia Woolf's Select Works

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Abstract

Virginia Woolf was an English writer. Virginia Woolf belongs to the group of modernist authors of the twentieth century. Modernist literature was produced in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Woolf employs the technique of 'Stream of Consciousness' for the purpose of narration in her works. This paper studies some of the author's critically acclaimed works.

Keywords: Virginia Woolf, To the Lighthouse, Mrs. Dalloway

I. INTRODUCTION

Virginia Woolf was an English writer. Virginia Woolf belongs to the group of modernist authors of the twentieth century. Modernist literature was produced in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Modernist writers tried to break free from traditional methods of writing poetry and prose, which lead to experimentation in styles. Virginia Woolf employs the technique of 'Stream of Consciousness' for the purpose of narration in her works. In the Stream of Consciousness technique, the author describes the thoughts and feelings of the characters in detail. Feminism seems to be a common theme in her works. Her famous novels are To the Lighthouse and Mrs. Dalloway. Both of these aforementioned novels are very critically acclaimed in English Literature.

II. TO THE LIGHT HOUSE

To the Lighthouse is a novel by Virginia wolf, published in 1927. The plot of the novel revolves around the Ramsay family. The members of the Ramsay family visit the Isle of Sky. The Isle of Sky is located in Scotland. The Ramsay family visit the Island several times between 1910 and 1920. To The Lighthouse is divided into three parts. The first part is titled "Part I: The Window," the second part is titled "Part II: Time Passes" and the third part is "Part III: In the Lighthouse." The summer home of the fictional Ramsay family is set in the Hebrides.

At the beginning of the novel, Mrs. Ramsay assures her son of visiting the Lighthouse the next day. The Ramsay family has a total of eight children, and have several friends and colleagues. One of their friends is Lily Briscoe, a young painter. She is discouraged by Charles Tansey, who claims that women can neither write nor paint. The second part of the novel is set at the end Of World War II. Mrs Ramsay passes away, and her husband struggles with her death. In the third part of the novel, some of the characters set sail for the lighthouse. The complexity of human relationships is an important theme in the novel. Gender roles, love, age and memory are other core themes.

III. MRS. DALLOWAY

Mrs. Dalloway is a novel by Virginia wolf, published in 1925. The titular protagonist is named Clarissa Dalloway, a fictional upper-class woman. The novel is set in England in the post-First World War days. The novel describes in detail the titular protagonist's preparations for a party. The party is to be hosted in the evening. Flashbacks are included in the novel. The story goes forwards and backwards in time. At the beginning of the novel, Clarissa Dalloway is portrayed travelling around London, in order to prepare for the ensuing party in the evening.

Clarissa starts reminiscing about her youth in the countryside. She also wonders regarding her choice of husband. She had married Richard Dalloway, a successful and reliable man, and had therefore rejected Peter Walsh, an enigmatic but demanding man. It is clear in the novel that Peter Walsh is still in love with Clarissa. Clarissa had also invited Peter Walsh for the party that evening. Septimus Warren Smith is a First World War veteran. He is suffering from PTSD (Post-traumatic stress disorder). He also suffers from frequent hallucinations. Septimus ultimately commits suicide. Clarissa feels that she can relate to him. Gender roles, love, age and memory are the core themes.

REFERENCES

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