

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box ☒. If you change your mind, put a line through the box ☒ and then indicate your new question with a cross ☒.

Chosen question number: Question 1 ☐ Question 2 ☐ Question 3 ☐  
 Question 4 ☐ Question 5 ☐ Question 6 ☐  
 Question 7 ☐ Question 8 ☐ Question 9 ☐  
 Question 10 ☐ Question 11 ☐ Question 12 ☒

Please write the titles of your chosen texts below:

Text 1: "Wuthering Heights"  
 Text 2: "Mrs Dalloway"

One might argue that at the very core of representations of women in literature, lies ~~the~~ a conflict about love. Love itself is a paradigm: idealised, coveted, made intangible through its very abstract nature. In "Mrs Dalloway", Woolf shows us a woman living in a world devoid of authentic "love". Contrastingly, in "Wuthering Heights" (wh) Emily Bronte presents a love that is so passionate, so far-removed from an epoch bound by conformist dictates, that it unsettles the very fabric of "gentle" society.

In Bronte wrote "wh" in the Victorian period, setting it some 50 years prior in the Georgian period. Perhaps Bronte viewed her own age



as more progressive than the one she set the novel in, perhaps she wished to highlight the fact that by the end of the novel, as a new age dawns readers, perceptions of love are starting to change:

"Together they could face anything, would brave Satan and all his legions... they are afraid of nothing"

In his metatextual reference to the futile love of Catherine Lincon (senior) and Heathcliff earlier, Brontë subverts Heathcliff's assertion that "not God, nor Satan could have parted us". By revisiting his idea at the end, Brontë shows us that love has progressed and emancipated: young Catherine repudiates the fears which confined her mother's own happiness here. His negation of all the barriers to love is interesting - not least because in "Mrs Dalloway", a novel written some 75 years later, we still fail to see love in his transfigurative fashion.



Indeed, Clarissa Dalway's life is alarmingly similar to the loveless and sterile life of Catherine Earnshaw when she first arrives and moves to Thrushcross Grange, and Nelly Dean informs us that she becomes dormant at this point in the novel. This is echoed in the very representation of Clarissa Dalway and her views on love:

"She shut the door ... If all seemed useless - going on about being in love"

Here Woolf appears to deploy the symbolism of the "shut door" to mirror Clarissa's own feelings which are equally suppressed. One might argue that, just as Brontë shows that Catherine cannot hope for love to consume her because social dictates disallowed this, Clarissa also perceives "love" as a frivolity. In the aftermath of WWI, ~~marriage~~ it is arguable that a sceptical attitude was assumed by women, perhaps the educated middle classes more than most, who might have viewed themselves comfortable



and privileged, and couldn't ~~having~~ hope  
 that something as fleeting and ungrati-  
 fiable as love could contribute to her  
 happiness. His idea is emulated in  
 "WtH" where Catherine desires to be  
 "the richest lady in all the  
 neighborhood" highlighting, just as  
 Woolf does, that comfort and affluence  
 were more sought after by women  
 than love. Thus we see that women  
 in the 2 novels are willing to forego  
 an aspect of innermost happiness in  
 order to enjoy a life of comfort.

Of course, the iconic idea of love as a  
 Dionysian and ~~vicious~~ visceral force,  
 lingers over literature. Woolf demonstrates  
 the idea that Clarissa is aware that  
 her life is devoid of something more  
 profound through her recollections of  
 desire and the relationship with Sally  
 Sepm.

"That voice! It was Sally Sepm! Sally  
 Sepm! after all these years! She loomed  
 through a mist..."



Woolf juxtaposes Clarissa's acidity about the significance of Sally, conveyed here through the ~~on~~ related exclamations, with the nebulous "mist". Clarissa is unsettled by the emotions and thoughts that flood back with Sally's return. The stream-of-consciousness narrative here can capture the clear onrush of euphoria - uncharacteristic in his stoical character. Equally, when Heathcliff returns to "Wuthering Heights" a gentleman, Catherine is unable to conceal her passion: something is reignited within her:

"I shall think it all a dream tomorrow".

Bronte, like Woolf, captures this brief, transformative aspect of love through the jubilation of the protagonist. Essentially, this is ephemeral and the reader may wish this not to be so, but is fundamentally aware that even a Dionysian passion cannot supplant or overpower societal stigmas for



women in 1847 or indeed 1925. He idealised 21st ~~Century~~ Century notion of love overcoming all obstacles in spite of thwarted by factors too powerful to negate.

Indeed, rather than "love" being something that is spontaneous and all-consuming for women, it becomes contractual. Bronte alludes to the idea that Catherine and Edgar Linton's union would be inevitable by showing their similar statuses within society. In the narrow world of the novel, the juxtaposed houses come to embody this. Thus, when Catherine spends time at Thrushcross Grange, her conformity to social dictates is unsurprising:

"I should scarcely have known you - you look like a lady now".

Arguably, with the earthy, spirited aspects of his protagonist, all hopes of love and passion die <sup>demise of the</sup> too soon.

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also shows his loss of hope in "Mrs  
Dalloway"

"And Clarissa had cared for him  
(Peter) more than she had ever  
cared for Richard ..."

By 1925, marriage was less formally  
"arranged" than it had been in 1847.  
However, Woolf still highlights the  
fact that Clarissa's life was all  
about compromise and that only Sally,  
another female, can truly see  
his. The deployment of verbs in the  
past tense here ("cared") are  
interesting in conveying the idea that  
Clarissa's desires and wants are now  
in the past. Woolf's rather static and  
and inert narrative almost embodies  
the sterile, inert lives of women  
who simply ploughed on in loveless  
marriages in a world before they  
had even won the vote.

Thus we see that love itself becomes  
a dichotomy in literature. Whilst



its more idyllic aspects cannot be suppressed  
 entirely, submitting to these appears to  
 be more than the women of "Wh" and  
 "MD" are allowed. On a  
 note of caution it is worth mentioning  
 that unwanted and unrequited  
 love becomes one of the driving  
 forces in Heathcliff's revengeful marriage  
 to Isabella in "Wh" - a clear  
 illustration of how forceful and  
 consuming passion can be. Notwithstanding  
 this, in both Wh and MD love is  
 shown in terms of opportunism and  
 safe choices. It is powerful, and  
 emblematic and hopeful for the  
 future when Bronte allows the love  
 to win at the end of Wh. However  
 in MD there is no such reprieve.

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