

Trauma and Literature
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Lecture – 15
Woolf’s Mrs. Dalloway – Part 7

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“Evans!” he cried. There was no answer. A mouse had squeaked, or a curtain rustled. Those were the voices of the dead. The screen, the coalscuttle, the sideboard remained to him. Let him then face the screen, the coal-scuttle and the sideboard . . . but Rezia burst into the room chattering.

Some letter had come. Everybody’s plans were changed. Mrs. Filmer would not be able to go to Brighton after all. There was no time to let Mrs. Williams know, and really Rezia thought it very, very annoying, when she caught sight of the hat and thought . . . perhaps . . . she . . . might just make a little. . . . Her voice died out in contented melody.

“Ah, damn!” she cried (it was a joke of theirs, her swearing), the needle had

This is an NPTEL course entitled “Trauma and Literature” on “Mrs. Dalloway” by Virginia Woolf. We were looking at a section where Septimus Smith kills himself. We have seen how he suffers from trauma. He has come back from the war and he experiences PTSD, post-traumatic stress disorder.

But, then, the doctors do not know of this and they have no idea how to cure him. They subject him to different kinds of things which include confinement, cohesion and basic bullying of a certain kind. We can see how the bio-politics in “Mrs. Dalloway” is quite interesting that it qualifies as a very complex novel in a course like “Trauma and Literature”.

Septimus is still seeing Evans and we see how Evans’s character is important. We talked about the very interesting relationship between materiality and spectrality in this novel and Evans is a spectral presence.

He is there and he keeps coming back as some kind of a traumatic reputation, a spectral reputation. But at the same time he is very much a character in the novel despite not being physically present. He has been killed in the world we know that. He died in the world, but then his traumatic memory keeps coming up, keeps resurfacing in Septimus's brain and that corroborates and further accentuates his traumatic and paranoid condition; the condition of shock.

““Evans!” he cried. There was no answer. A mouse had squeaked or a curtain rustled. Those were the voices of the dead. The screen, the coalscuttle, the sideboard remained to him. Let him then face the scream, the coal-scuttle and a sideboard...but Rezia burst into the room chattering.” It can be seen how Septimus’s isolation begins to sort of consuming him in a way.

He is looking at a blank screen and projecting his fears, his fantasies, and hallucinations onto that screen. He can see Evans, but then the other noises around him and everything else seems invasive to him. The “normal world” around him seems very invasive to him. It is a sort of attacking him and he feels attacked all the time. The doctors seem to attack him, all the people around him seem to attack him.

He has a paranoid condition where he experiences hostility from everyone and he perceives that everyone presents as a hostile presence. His isolation becomes his companion and this is a classic case in trauma where one cannot connect to the world around yourself. The entire novel may be seen as a crisis and embodiment.

Embodiment is not only the very biological neural quality of behaving to a neural mechanism, but also embodiment is an extended phenomenon which helps one to connect to the environment around oneself. This constant loop between the inside and the outside, between the embedded quality and the extended quality is what makes embodiment a process, an activity.

It is not a static thing. It is an activity; a constant process of becoming, unbecoming and re-becoming. The quality of embodiment is interrupted in Septimus. We talk about how

Septimus is, he suffers some interrupted embodiment right. There is a disruption in his embodiment because the world he wants to connect to no longer exists. There is a dead world. He sees dead people.

He sees hallucinations and a world that is around him as a physical reality, but he cannot seem to connect to that. There is a constant disconnect that he is experiencing which makes it such a profoundly complex novel from the perspective of trauma studies. Rezia bursts into the room chattering. Rezia's presence is there. Rezia is a loving wife and it can be seen how Rezia's isolation is also very complex.

But that presence becomes intrusive for Septimus, it bothers him. "Some letter had come. Everyone's plans were changed. Mrs. Filmer would not be able to go to Brighton after all. There was no time to let Mrs. Williams know and Rezia thought it very annoying when she caught sight of the hat and thought perhaps she might take a little. Her voice died out in contented melody."

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"Ah, damn!" she cried (it was a joke of theirs, her swearing), the needle had broken. Hat, child, Brighton, needle. She built it up; first one thing, then another, she built it up, sewing.

She wanted him to say whether by moving the rose she had improved the hat. She sat on the end of the sofa.

They were perfectly happy now, she said, suddenly, putting the hat down. For she could say anything to him now. She could say whatever came into her head. That was almost the first thing she had felt about him, that night in the café when he had come in with his English friends. He had come in, rather shyly, looking round him, and his hat had fallen when he hung it up. That she could remember. She knew he was English, though not one of the large Englishmen her sister admired for he was always thin; but he had a

"Ah, damn! she cried (it was a joke of theirs, her swearing), the needle had broken. Hat, child, Brighton, needle. She built it up; first one thing, then another, she built it up sewing." She is sewing something and the breaking of the needle becomes a very symbolic thing because that sort of anticipates the break of Septimus in a way because sewing something is

constructing and creating something. She is building a hat presumably for Septimus with a needle.

But then suddenly the needle breaks and that becomes a symbolic break because that anticipates a final break, the final annihilation that comes with Septimus's suicide. "She wanted him to say whether by moving the rose she had improved the hat. She sat on the end of the sofa." It can be seen that like a normal person she trying to engage with the little things, making a heart, sewing something with a needle. These things, materials around her seem to make a lot of meaning; seem to make a meaningful existence.

But for Septimus these things are completely meaningless because he is constantly connected to his past, his traumatic past and his normal present has no meaning for him at all whatsoever. The constant disconnect they are suffering as a couple and we have this ironic sentence right after this where the narrator is saying. "They were perfectly happy now, she said, suddenly, putting the hat down." Suddenly she is trying to be happy. She is trying to find some happiness out of this entire condition.

"They had the sewing needle, etc. For she could say anything to him now. She could say whatever came into her head. That was almost the first thing she had felt about him, that night in the café." There is a back story now about where they first met presumably during the war. "The first night in that cafe where he had come in with his English friends. He had come in rather shyly looking round him and his hat had fallen when he hung it up and that she could remember."

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in the café when he had come in with his English friends. He had come in, rather shyly, looking round him, and his hat had fallen when he hung it up. That she could remember. She knew he was English, though not one of the large Englishmen her sister admired, for he was always thin; but he had a beautiful fresh colour; and with his big nose, his bright eyes, his way of sitting a little hunched made her think, she had often told him, of a young hawk, that first evening she saw him, when they were playing dominoes, and he had come in — of a young hawk; but with her he was always very gentle. She had never seen him wild or drunk, only suffering sometimes through this terrible war, but even so, when she came in, he would put it all away. Anything, anything in the whole world, any little bother with her work, anything that struck her to say she would tell him, and he understood at once. Her own family even were not the same. Being older than she was

“She knew that he was English though not one of the large Englishmen her sister admired, for he was always thin; but he had a beautiful fresh color and with his big nose, his bright eyes, his way of sitting a little hunched made her think she had often told him of a young hawk. The first evening she saw him when they were playing dominoes and he had come in of a young hawk. But with her he was always very gentle.”

It can be seen how Septimus's masculinity is interesting. He does not seem to correspond to this big, bulky masculinity which is normally associated with military men, but he seems to be rather a shy person, an inward-looking person, an introspective person and that becomes a problem. The doctors keep telling him that if he introspects too much, if he thinks about himself too much, then he becomes melancholic.

The thoughtlessness of military masculinity is completely in contrast to Septimus's introspective masculinity which makes him look different and raise eyes. There is a bunch of Englishmen coming in, presumably all military men, but Septimus stands out and raises perception because he is a shy inward-looking person who reminds of a hawk, not a big bulky man but a hawk, gently watching things, and observing things.

The gentle quality of Septimus is what attracted Rezia to him and which is what it becomes a problem for him subsequently because he is too gentle, too sensitive and sensitivity is a problem for the doctors. There is a collusion between military masculinity and medicine

while being sturdy, being robust is a big thing; it is a good thing and being sensitive is a bad thing.

It is almost a feminine thing to be sensitive. Sensitivity emasculates him according to the doctors over here. They constantly try to coarse Septimus into not being sensitive into being outward-looking, play cricket, and be a Boy Scout, etc. okay. He was always very gentle with her. She had never seen him wild or drunk, only suffering sometimes through this terrible war, but even so, when she came in, he would put it all away.

The wild drunkenness that is again normally associated with military masculinity was absent in Septimus, so, she had never seen him. This is an important passage because it gives us a back story about Septimus. It gives us a back story about how they met Septimus and Rezia and how they are connected and also tells us about the character of Septimus to certain other persons.

This is called focalization in literature and the entire description of Septimus is focalized through Rezia's eyes. Rezia is the focalized character through which we get to know Septimus's character, Septimus's personality, his embodiment, his behavior, etc. They all come to the form because of the way Rezia is perceiving him. It gives a sort of description of his masculinity in a certain sense okay.

“Anything, anything in the whole world, any little bother with her work, anything that struck her to say she would tell him and he understood at once.” The whole idea of understanding everything Rezia wanted to say means there is a lot of empathy between Septimus and Rezia because at a certain level both were outsiders right and they connected as outsiders.

Rezia comes to London as an Italian girl, so she feels like an outsider. Septimus comes back to England after the war and he cannot connect to the post-war civilian space, he is an outsider as well. The very inception of the relationship is through empathy through disconnect and that becomes ironic because at this point in time they seem to have a complete disconnect with each other because of Septimus's medical mental condition.

The mental health of Septimus, the traumatic condition of Septimus is what so undercuts his personality to an extent. Septimus and Rezia knew it is completely disappeared; but this is the back story from which we are told that Septimus and Rezia connect to each other in very empathic way. The empathy was a very crucial category in the relationship, it is so intensified the relationship. He understood her at once.

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and he had come in — of a young hawk; but with her he was always very gentle. She had never seen him wild or drunk, only suffering sometimes through this terrible war, but even so, when she came in, he would put it all away. Anything, anything in the whole world, any little bother with her work, anything that struck her to say she would tell him, and he understood at once. Her own family even were not the same. Being older than she was and being so clever — how serious he was, wanting her to read Shakespeare before she could even read a child's story in English! — being so much more experienced, he could help her. And she too could help him.

Her own family were not the same. “Being older than she was and being so clever-how serious he was, wanting her to read Shakespeare before she could even read a child's story in English! Being so much more experienced he could help her. And she too could help him.” They were both needy characters, they both required rescuing of assault. Rezia wanted to escape her family who did not understand her and Septimus wanted to escape his so military condition.

They both connected to each other in interesting ways and again we can see how Septimus is encouraging Rezia to read Shakespeare and that is not something one should normally expect from a military officer reading Shakespeare. What you do expect normally is getting wild or getting drunk, but Septimus was never like that. He was reading poetry, he was reading Shakespeare.

The problem with the war poets like Sassoon, Owen etc. are that they carried on this romantic sensibility in the war and that made them very different from the kind of masculinity which is normally associated with the military. So, they were sensitive people and they wrote poetry.

Wilfred Owen, for example, wrote poetry about hallucination, about melancholia, guilt, about survivor's guilt, etc., which meant that the sensitivity of these men was completely anathema to the thoughtlessness of the war. We are looking at two kinds of masculinity; thoughtless masculinity and thoughtful masculinity. A thoughtlessness is something that is encouraged not just in military discourse but also by the medical practitioners.

People like Holmes and Bradshaw tell Septimus to think as little as possible because thinking would be a problem, introspection would be a problem because the moment one thinks the moment one realizes the futility of the war. The poetry around the First World War has a recurrent theme in those poems which is the idea of futility. Why are we fighting this war at all, why are we killing the enemy, who is the enemy?

“Strange Meeting” by Wilfred Owen or “Futility”, these are poems which talk about the very sort of abundant condition of human existence where people are just fighting each other without any reason they do not quite know. The moment they think about it, the moment they realize how purposeless the entire spectacle of war is and that becomes the problem for the military because one has to go and fight one's enemy, one has to kill the enemy without thinking about it.

The thoughtfulness of Septimus and the thoughtlessness of the war are sort of contrasted with each other in interesting ways. Rezia's perspective is helping the readers getting a backstory about Septimus.

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But this hat now. And then (it was getting late) Sir William Bradshaw.

She held her hands to her head, waiting for him to say did he like the hat or not, and as she sat there, waiting, looking down, he could feel her mind, like a bird, falling from branch to branch, and always alighting, quite rightly; he could follow her mind, as she sat there in one of those loose lax poses that came to her naturally and, if he should say anything, at once she smiled, like a bird alighting with all its claws firm upon the bough.

But he remembered Bradshaw said, "The people we are most fond of are not good for us when we are ill." Bradshaw said, he must be taught to rest. Bradshaw said they must be separated.

"But this hat now. And then (it was getting late) Sir William Bradshaw. As seen, the craft of Virginia Woolf in terms of how she is using a symbol of the hat to connect the past and the present because Rezia's first experience with Septimus was when they all came into this public space the social space. It he kept his hat somewhere in a hat stand and that hat had fallen and that has become a memory in Rezia's mind.

Septimus's fallen hat and the hat had fell from his head and in a certain sense he identified the fallen hat with Septimus and now she is sewing another hat for him which is incomplete and again the incompleteness of the hat is symbolic, it means this is incomplete recovery of Septimus. You will never get back to the original hat. The present hat will never get back to the original full hat.

The fullness of Septimus will never be recovered in a certain sense. And now we have another hat coming up Sir William Bradshaw. This is the final scene where the suicide of Septimus culminates the entire medical drama and the existential crisis in the novel. And then it was getting late, Sir William Bradshaw the doctor is marching up the stairs.

"She held her hands to her head, waiting for him to say did he like the hat or not and as she sat there, waiting, looking down, he could feel her mind like a bird falling from branch to branch and always alighting quite rightly. He could follow her mind as she sat there in one of

those loose lax poses that came to her naturally and if he should say anything, at once she smiled like a bird lighting with all its claws firm upon the bough.

As some of you know a major marker of 20th century fiction especially modernist literature what we qualify, what we consider as modernist literature is stream of consciousness and we can see how the thought processes are sort of described in graphic details. The metaphor for the bird is interesting. It is like how a bird flows from one branch to another branch in a very similar way the sense perceptions are flowing from one point to another point.

We have a free fluid perception mechanism at work which is described as a narrative category in this novel. So as you find I mean if you read almost all the major works in modernist literature in English the event that happens in those novels are in the head of the characters, the event is a consciousness. Consciousness becomes a character and event so the entire flow of consciousness, the fluidity of consciousness that also becomes something of the plot in those novels.

We can see how something is happening; something similar is happening here as well. When Rezia is sitting, Septimus looking at that is the entire event what we get to see from a very graphic description the thought processes of the characters flowing from one point to another point okay. But he remembered Bradshaw said. The Bradshaw had said this before. The people we are most fond of are not good for us when we are ill.

“Bradshaw said, he must be taught to rest. Bradshaw said they must be separated.” We can see how this coercive strategy of the doctors becomes brutal way. The doctors apparently think that people who love you should not be allowed to come to you during your recovery period, so they must be separated. Septimus and Rezia must be separated according to that medical principle that they practice at that point of time.

We can see how the medicine around Septimus; the medical culture around Septimus it is very anti-empathy, it is very anti-sentiment, very anti-emotion. It just looks a patient as an object, as an instrument that needs to be corrected that needs to be cured in a very hard-wired

kind of a way. There is no attention given to emotion, there is no attention given to empathy, and there is no attention given to care.

It is all about objectifying the patient as an instrument that needs repair, so especially a male instrument like Septimus as a military man who must be repaired, who must be made functional again. He has become dysfunctional, so you must make it functional again. The entire focus over here seems to be on functionality, seems to be on the self-repairing strategy rather than any healing strategy.

The focus is not in healing, it is on repairing and that obviously means it is a very different kind of medical discourse at work. He must be thought to rest. The word “must” is important. There is a coercive quality about it. He must be taught to rest and according to that principle the people we are most fond of are not good for us when we are ill. We must be separated from the people we love when we are ill.

There is no acknowledgement at all, there is no emphasis at all on the idea of care. Caring is a bad thing, emotion is a bad thing, empathy is a bad thing according to this particular medical discourse. They are asked to rest, they are asked to separate from each other and Septimus must be taught to rest. So must, taught these words are the vocabulary of a coercive kind and Septimus is thinking about that.

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Bradshaw said they must be separated.

“Must,” “must,” why “must”? What power had Bradshaw over him? “What right has Bradshaw to say ‘must’ to me?” he demanded.

“It is because you talked of killing yourself,” said Rezia. (Mercifully, she could now say anything to Septimus.)

So he was in their power! Holmes and Bradshaw were on him! The brute with the red nostrils was snuffing into every secret place! “Must” it could say! Where were his papers? the things he had written?

She brought him his papers, the things he had written, things she had written for him. She tumbled them out on to the sofa. They looked at them together. Diagrams. designs. little men and women brandishing sticks for

“Must, must, why must? What power had Bradshaw over him? What right has Bradshaw to say must to me he demanded.” So this is a classic biopolitics art play where the political and the biological medical they sort of collude together and where we can see medicine becoming powerful, medicine becoming an instrument of power to which power controls its mechanism.

It is a very classic Michel Foucault kind of a condition where healing is less important, correcting is more important. We almost have an idea of a medical jail of a certain kind where isolation is imposed on patients, where separation is imposed on patients; you must be confined to a chamber in the same way as you are confined to a prison cell and you are not allowed to meet your loved ones, allowed to have exercise or empathy of any kind.

We are looking at a very interesting merging shall we say between the medical and the punitive of a certain kind. Someone has got a medical jail as mentioned, so he must be separated, he must be taught to rest, etc. The word “must” connotes power, connotes control, connotes cohesion of a certain kind and that is something Septimus is getting bothered by. It is because he talked of killing himself said Rezia mercifully she could now say anything to Septimus.

Because you thought of killing himself, the doctor is saying he must be separated from me and he must be confined to a particular chamber. He was in their power. Holmes and Bradshaw were on him. He looks at the entire territorial control of medicine. They are seizing him, they are controlling him. Holmes and Bradshaw on him. The brute with the red nostrils was snuffing into every secret place.

The brutality of the doctors something which comes to Septimus's mind, so rather than cure or healing or empathy the doctor symbolizes brutality to him. Doctor symbolizes lovelessness to him. “Must it could say. Where were his papers? The things he had written? So again he is looking for his diaries; looking for these passages he had written out of his mind, obvious melancholia, and he wants to rescue those but then of course according to Holmes and Bradshaw writing is a bad thing.”

“If you're writing out your mind that means again you more melancholic, you become more introspective and entire emphasis over here by the doctors is an anti-introspection, is an anti-melancholia, and is an anti-sensitivity.” Writing is a bad thing, he must be taught to rest, he must be exercising, he must be playing cricket. It is a very masculine kind of medical discourse where you need to have a fit body. Anyone who is not fit is considered to be a problem, considered to be an aberration to the system.

The system will send its instruments to cure you, not so much to cure you but to repair you. The instrumentality in medicine is very evident over here. He must be taught to rest, he must be corrected in a certain sense and Septimus of course is looking for his papers, his diary, places where he had written down his passages, his secret passages, his melancholy passages, etc. and he is thinking of recovering those before the doctors get them okay. So where were his papers, the things he had written?”

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She brought him his papers, the things he had written, things she had written for him. She tumbled them out on to the sofa. They looked at them together. Diagrams, designs, little men and women brandishing sticks for arms, with wings — were they? — on their backs; circles traced round shillings and sixpences — the suns and stars; zigzagging precipices with mountaineers ascending roped together, exactly like knives and forks; sea pieces with little faces laughing out of what might perhaps be waves: the map of the world. Burn them! he cried. Now for his writings; how the dead sing behind rhododendron bushes; odes to Time; conversations with Shakespeare; Evans, Evans, Evans — his messages from the dead; do not cut down trees; tell the Prime Minister. Universal love: the meaning of the world. Burn them! he cried.

“She brought him his papers, the things he had written, things she had written for him. She tumbled them out of the sofa. They looked at them together. Diagrams, designs little men and women brandishing sticks for arms, with wings, were they, on their backs; circles traced round shillings and sixpences, the suns and stars, zigzagging precipices with mountaineers ascending roped together, exactly like knives and forks, sea pieces with little faces laughing out of what might perhaps be waves, the map of the world. Burn them he cried. Now for his writings, now the dead sing behind the rhododendron bushes, odes to time, conversations

with Shakespeare, Evans, Evans, Evans. His messages from the dead, do not cut down trees, tell the prime minister. Universal love: the meaning of the world. Burn them he cried.”

This becomes a very classic Freudian scene in a certain sense because he had drawn diagrams of his mind and as you can see if you study the diagrams knives and forks, sea pieces with precipices and people zigzagged together, suns and stars. It is a very paranoid kind of an architecture, an architecture of a mind, full of fear; mind which is scared, nervous, and neurotic and those diagrams manifest that fear very clearly.

But of course, with these kinds of doctors those are completely meaningless and then again his passages about Shakespeare, his writings on Shakespeare's, his writings on Evans, perhaps his love for Evans as we have discussed at some point earlier it is never really spelt out what kind of love that was, whether it was homoerotic, whether it was purely platonic.

We know it is deeply emotional but we do not quite know what exactly it was, so it is never spelt out. But these passages might contain some messages, might contain the secrets. He wants to burn them, he does not want these to come in the hands of Holmes and Bradshaw. It can be seen how medicine over here becomes an invasive instrument and it makes entire human subject completely agencyless.

It cuts down your agency, it cuts down your mechanism, it cuts down your mobility, it cuts down your freedom, you are not free to move, you confine to the room, you are not allowed to write and even the things you have written are seized from you. He wants to burn everything he had written, he wants to burn everything he had drawn and he is ordering, he is requesting Rezia to burn this and this becomes the dramatic scene.

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sing behind rhododendron bushes; odes to Lime; conversations with Shakespeare; Evans, Evans, Evans — his messages from the dead; do not cut down trees; tell the Prime Minister. Universal love: the meaning of the world. Burn them! he cried.

But Rezia laid her hands on them. Some were very beautiful, she thought. She would tie them up (for she had no envelope) with a piece of silk.

But Rezia laid her hands on them. Some were very beautiful she thought. She would tie them up for she had no envelope with a piece of silk. She would connect all the dots together. She would connect all the drawings together, all the passengers together with a piece of silk. The entire effort on the part of Rezia is to keep trying to connect, keep trying to integrate everything and that way she is trying to address Septimus's disintegration.

The symbolic things that she wants to connect all the letters together with a piece of silk and silk has a smooth fluid quality. The whole idea is to connect the dots in Septimus's mind, connects the disparate thought process in Septimus's mind and in the process trying to integrate and back again into holistic healthy self with a lot of care.

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Even if they took him, she said, she would go with him. They could not separate them against their wills, she said.

Shuffling the edges straight, she did up the papers, and tied the parcel almost without looking, sitting beside him, he thought, as if all her petals were about her. She was a flowering tree; and through her branches looked out the face of a lawgiver, who had reached a sanctuary where she feared no one; not Holmes; not Bradshaw; a miracle, a triumph, the last and greatest. Staggering he saw her mount the appalling staircase, laden with Holmes and Bradshaw, men who never weighed less than eleven stone six

“Even if they took him, she said she would go with him. They could not separate them against their wills, she said.” As seen how the medical and the legal are colluding together, so the medical forces are coming in and they are instructing, they are ordering them to be separated from each other and in the process they become; entire discourse becomes one of control and coercion rather than of empathy and care and love or affection.

“Shuffling the edges straight, she did up the papers, and tied the parcel almost without looking sitting beside him. He thought as if all the petals were about her. She was a flowering tree and through her branches looked out the face of a lawgiver who had reached a sanctuary where she feared no one; not Holmes, not Bradshaw, a miracle, a triumph, the last and greatest.”

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almost without looking, sitting beside him, he thought, as if all her petals were about her. She was a flowering tree; and through her branches looked out the face of a lawgiver, who had reached a sanctuary where she feared no one; not Holmes; not Bradshaw; a miracle, a triumph, the last and greatest. Staggering he saw her mount the appalling staircase, laden with Holmes and Bradshaw, men who never weighed less than eleven stone six, who sent their wives to Court, men who made ten thousand a year and talked of proportion; who different in their verdicts (for Holmes said one thing, Bradshaw another), yet judges they were; who mixed the vision and the sideboard; saw nothing clear, yet ruled, yet inflicted. “Must” they said. Over them she triumphed.

“There!” she said. The papers were tied up. No one should get at them. She

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It can be seen how it is a very male female quality over here which is operative. Holmes and Bradshaw big bulky men who are very wealthy, very sturdy, very robust who weigh a lot of,

they weighed eleven stone six, stone six that is the measurement in Britain back in those days, very heavy men, made a lot of money, send their wives to court, had fancy parties of the homes.

They talked about proportion all the time, they talked about measurement all the time. As seen, the entire medical gaze that is operated over here is a quantifying gaze, is a measuring gaze. It just wants to cut down the human subject into measurable object, something that can have a proportion, something that can have a measurement. There is no human agency, there is no human fluidity.

They always talk about proportions and ironic thing is that they differ in the verdicts, they differ in their diagnosis about Septimus. When Holmes say something else, Bradshaw say something else and yet they behave like judges. This is what I meant when I said that there is a very clear collusion between medicine and the panel court over here.

They are almost like judges giving out verdicts and judging for you, deciding for you, penalizing you if you do not carry out the verdict. “Yet judges they were. Yeah they did not see anything clear, they have no idea, no knowledge of what was really bothering Septimus and yet they ruled, they inflicted. Inflicted torture on Septimus. “Must” they said. Over them she triumphed.” She wants to beat them, she wants to triumph over them.

She wants to take care of Septimus and she is against Holmes and Bradshaw. It can be seen how Septimus and Rezia are sort of unifying in a very spiritual way at the end. But, ironically before Septimus’s suicide, they come together as husband and wife as true loving male and females coming together and resisting the march of the military medical men who are coming to take away Septimus, who are coming to see Septimus.

The final unison, the final love, the final connect, the final empathy in the novel occurs in this section where Septimus and Rezia come together and tries to resist in futility because the doctors win. Septimus kills himself, but then they are trying to resist the march of the doctors, the march of the medical dictatorship will come into control Septimus.

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“There!” she said. The papers were tied up. No one should get at them. She would put them away.

And, she said, nothing should separate them. She sat down beside him and called him by the name of that hawk or crow which being malicious and a great destroyer of crops was precisely like him. No one could separate them, she said.

Then she got up to go into the bedroom to pack their things, but hearing voices downstairs and thinking that Dr. Holmes had perhaps called, ran down to prevent him coming up.

Septimus could hear her talking to Holmes on the staircase.

““There!” she said. The papers were tied up. No one could get at them. She would put them away. And, she said nothing should separate them. She sat down beside him and called him by the name of that hawk or crow which being malicious and a great destroyer of crops was precisely like him. No one could separate them, she said.” We can see the bird metaphors are quite interesting. For some reason, Septimus keeps occurring and raises mind as a hawk as someone who destroys the crops.

It is a very interesting metaphor for someone she loves. At the same time that also becomes a metaphor for resilience, also becomes a metaphor for power, strength. He would inhibit as hawk who would see everything, penetrate everything with his gaze, with his vision and yet try to resist something which is trying to attack them in a certain sense. Then she got up to go into the bedroom to pack their things.

But hearing voices downstairs and thinking the Dr. Holmes had perhaps called, ran down to prevent him coming up. This is a very dramatic scene where Holmes is marching up the stairs and Septimus is in the bedroom upstairs and Rezia is trying to get down the staircase trying to prevent, intercept Holmes coming in and he is pushing her away and trying to go to Septimus and seize him. And then the very tragic suicide happens. Septimus could hear her talking to Holmes on the staircase.

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Septimus could hear her talking to Holmes on the staircase.

“My dear lady, I have come as a friend,” Holmes was saying.

“No. I will not allow you to see my husband,” she said.

He could see her, like a little hen, with her wings spread barring his passage.

But Holmes persevered.

“My dear lady, allow me . . .” Holmes said, putting her aside (Holmes was a powerfully built man).

“My dear lady, I have come as a friend, Holmes was saying.” There is a sinister quality in Holmes's voice, “I come here as a friend”. That kind of a voice has a very sinister, evil ring that means I am coming to see Septimus and that cool clinical sinister quality is what makes Septimus even more afraid of what he is saying. “No. I will not allow you to see my husband, she said.”

“He could see her like a little hen with her wings spread barring his passage. But Holmes persevered.” It is a classic male female battle going on over here and again we can see the animal, the bird metaphor is coming in. She is a powerless hen and this is where we can go back to the hawk metaphor and see how she had perceived Septimus with the hawk, the protective bird, the powerful, the resilient bird who is supposed to protect them because she is a hen and she cannot protect them physically speaking.

But then hawk is failing, the hawk has lost his vision, the hawk has lost his penetrative gaze and so both of them are now powerless against these forces which are coming up to seize them. “But Holmes persevered. My dear lady, allow me; Holmes said, putting her aside. (Holmes was a powerfully built man).” The masculinity of him is foreground the way as a powerful muscular man and he is pushing her aside and she is powerless as hen against that.

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Holmes was coming upstairs. Holmes would burst open the door. Holmes would say "In a funk, eh?" Holmes would get him. But no; not Holmes; not Bradshaw. Getting up rather unsteadily, hopping indeed from foot to foot, he considered Mrs. Filmer's nice clean bread knife with "Bread" carved on the handle. Ah, but one mustn't spoil that. The gas fire? But it was too late now. Holmes was coming. Razors he might have got, but Rezia, who always did that sort of thing, had packed them. There remained only the window, the large Bloomsbury-lodging house window, the tiresome, the troublesome, and rather melodramatic business of opening the window and throwing himself out. It was their idea of tragedy, not his or Rezia's (for she was with him). Holmes and Bradshaw like that sort of thing. (He sat on the

"Holmes was coming upstairs. Holmes would burst open the door. Holmes would say in a funk, eh?" Funk is a very delegatory slang word which means you are in a mad state, you are in insane state, in a funk it is a vulgar word, a vulgar British word which means you like this in a crazy disoriented state, in a funk. The very condescending, epitomizing, derogatory, insulting tone or that medical gaze is quite evident over here.

There is no care, no empathy, no healing mechanism at work but a curative instrument has come to cure you. To correct you, to repair you and sort of looking down upon you for being dysfunctional in a certain sense. Holmes would get him. But no, not Holmes, not Bradshaw. "Getting up rather unsteadily, hopping indeed from foot to foot, he considered Mrs. Filmer's nice clean bread knife with "Bread" carved craft on the handle."

But one must not spoil that. It is to look at the way in which his thought process is operating. He is thinking of killing himself. He first thinks of a knife and then he thinks of Mrs. Filmer's bread knife with Bread written on it but then it is a good knife he must not spoil that. This is a classic stream of consciousness at work. The consciousness is flowing from matter to matter from point to point and his thought processes are operating that way.

It is a distributed cognition along with the interiorized cognition is also distributed cognition, it is also being enacted with certain objects around him. Some questions arise in his mind like how would he kill himself or commit suicide, whether through a knife, or a gas light. He

finally decides and he zeroes in on the jumping thing. The gas fire, but it was too late now. Holmes was coming.

“Razors he might have got, but Rezia who always did that sort of thing had packed them because they were thinking of leaving together almost like two lovers running away and the brutal agents of a patriarchal society come in to separate them. It is almost become that kind of a scene over here. There remained only the window, the large Bloomsbury-lodging house window, that tiresome, the troublesome and rather melodramatic business of opening the window and throwing himself out.”

The only option left for him is to kill himself. He cannot cut his throat with a knife. He cannot do the gas fire. He can just jump from the window that is the only option left. The suicide of Septimus in certain sense is an escape from the forces of medicine the brutal forces or the medical machinery but also in a paradoxical sense it becomes the final and extreme enactment of agency that is the only agency has the refusal to get himself to give his body to the doctors who have come to repair him.

The resistance, refusal, rejection of the doctors that is enacted through this extreme instance of suicide. The suicide of Septimus is an extreme extension of agency and that becomes the final rejection of the entire medical machinery around him.

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HOW HOLMES WAS COMING. RAZORS HE MIGHT HAVE GOT, BUT REZIA, WHO ALWAYS did that sort of thing, had packed them. There remained only the window, the large Bloomsbury-lodging house window, the tiresome, the troublesome, and rather melodramatic business of opening the window and throwing himself out. It was their idea of tragedy, not his or Rezia's (for she was with him). Holmes and Bradshaw like that sort of thing. (He sat on the sill.) But he would wait till the very last moment. He did not want to die. Life was good. The sun hot. Only human beings — what did THEY want? Coming down the staircase opposite an old man stopped and stared at him. Holmes was at the door. “I'll give it you!” he cried, and flung himself vigorously, violently down on to Mrs. Filmer's area railings.

“The coward!” cried Dr. Holmes, bursting the door open. Rezia ran to the window. she saw: she understood. Dr. Holmes and Mrs. Filmer collided with

It was their idea of tragedy, not his or Rezia's for she was with him. We can see how it is a union between Rezia and Septimus over here and he is saying jumping from the window is tragic according to them, but according to me it is not the traumatic but then this only else I can do now. Holmes and Bradshaw like that sort of thing. He sat on the sill. But he would wait till the very last moment.

“He did not want to die. Life was good. The sun hot. Only human beings-what did they want? Coming down the staircase opposite an old man stopped and stared at him. Holmes was at the door. I will give it to you he cried and flung himself vigorously, violently down on to Mrs. Filmer's area railings.” It is a very tragic scene. He does not want to die.

He is sitting on the sill and he gets the final experience of life. The sun was hot. Life was good. Everything was beautiful. He does not want to die, but why are human beings pushing me to die. We can see how the entire scene becomes an extreme example of lack of human empathy. He tries to live, tries to love and he and Rezia as mentioned they finally come together as true man and woman, true husband and wife in the union, in the resistance against the doctors and medical machinery around him.

Septimus's suicide becomes an active triumph in a certain sense, a very extreme act of trying but then that is the only option he has left according to him and he waits the last second as he is still hoping that he would not have to jump. But then Holmes comes in the room and he jumps and he flings himself on the railings and it is almost like a crucifixion in a certain sense.

He crucifies himself. He jumps the railings and he is sort of stuck to the railings as some kind of a Christ figure in the end uh violently down to Mrs. Filmer's area railings. And as you can see Septimus was named to be a Jewish name we told in the beginning of the novel so that too has a Christ-like character throughout this narrative.

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was at the door. He gave it four or five kicks, and hung himself vigorously, violently down on to Mrs. Filmer's area railings.

"The coward!" cried Dr. Holmes, bursting the door open. Rezia ran to the window, she saw; she understood. Dr. Holmes and Mrs. Filmer collided with each other. Mrs. Filmer flapped her apron and made her hide her eyes in the bedroom. There was a great deal of running up and down stairs. Dr. Holmes came in — white as a sheet, shaking all over, with a glass in his hand. She must be brave and drink something, he said (What was it? Something sweet), for her husband was horribly mangled, would not recover consciousness, she must not see him, must be spared as much as possible, would have the inquest to go through, poor young woman. Who could have foretold it? A sudden impulse, no one was in the least to blame (he told Mrs. Filmer). And why the devil he did it, Dr. Holmes could not conceive.

““The coward!” cried Dr. Holmes, bursting the door open.” There is no note of tragedy in Dr. Holmes's voice. He is just administering Septimus for being a coward, for being unmanly and unmanliness of Septimus is sort of dramatized over here by Holmes. He is saying he is a coward, a spineless coward, not manly enough, who not face life, who cannot face the doctors, who cannot be cured or repaired, and he dies a dysfunctional man, so he is a coward.

As everything has a utility in this particular narrative and according to Holmes and Bradshaw every man must be a purposeful, every man must be functional, every man must have some kind of utility and when you cross the utility must be repaired and made functional again and Septimus's resistance through this kind of an instrument makes him a coward in Holmes's eye. Rezia ran to the window.

She saw, she understood. As a very crucial line she understood, so she completely understands why Septimus killed himself and this final understanding becomes the final union of Rezia and Septimus. She understands him and finally someone understands him. So the understanding comes to him posthumously. He dies Rezia understands exactly why he did that particular act only after his death.

According to Holmes he has no cleave, he just sinks this is an act of cowardice. Dr. Holmes and Mrs. Filmer collided with each other. “Mrs. Filmer flapped her apron and made a hide her eyes in the bedroom. There was a great deal of running up and down stairs. Dr. Holmes

came in, white as a sheet, shaking all over, with a glass in his hand. She must be brave and drink something he said. What was it? “

Something sweet, for her husband was horribly mangled, would not recover consciousness, she must not see him, must be spared as much as possible, and would have the inquest to go through, poor young woman. Who could have foretold it? A sudden impulse, no one was in the least to blame he told Mrs. Filmer. And why the devil he did it, Dr. Holmes could not conceive.

Holmes comes in shaking, he is nervous, he thinks Rezia is very nervous as well. He thinks Rezia razer must not see it because it is too brutal scene for a woman because Rezia is a very soft woman. He gives her something to drink.

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It seemed to her as she drank the sweet stuff that she was opening long windows, stepping out into some garden. But where? The clock was striking — one, two, three: how sensible the sound was; compared with all this thumping and whispering; like Septimus himself. She was falling asleep. But the clock went on striking, four, five, six and Mrs. Filmer waving her apron (they wouldn't bring the body in here, would they?) seemed part of that garden; or a flag. She had once seen a flag slowly rippling out from a mast

“It seemed to her as she drank the sweet stuff that she was opening long windows, stepping out into some garden. But where? The clock was striking one, two, and three. How sensible the sound was, compared with all this thumping and whispering, like Septimus himself. She was falling asleep. But the clock went on striking four, five, six and Mrs. Filmer waving her apron they would not bring the body in here, would they? Seemed part of that garden or a flag. She had once seen a flag slowly rippling out from a mast.”

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when she stayed with her aunt at Venice. Men killed in battle were thus saluted, and Septimus had been through the War. Of her memories, most were happy.

She put on her hat, and ran through cornfields — where could it have been?

“When she stayed with her aunt in Venice. Men killed in battle were thus saluted, and Septimus had been through the War. Of her memories, most were happy.” As we can see that Rezia's final thoughts as she sort of moves into sleep or happy thoughts, happy memories and this is a beautiful line where she says awful memories most were happy.

The end of Septimus comes to her as a very romantic and they are stepping into a garden and some kind of a union metaphor at work, some kind of idyllic landscape that she is moving into, she is walking into and then she is thinking of an aunt in Venice. Men can battle with this saluted and Septimus had been through the war. In some sense, she is saluting Septimus.

Septimus gets a posthumous recognition, a posthumous salute, a posthumous acknowledgement of being the soldier of her memories most were happy. As we can see, this is the final isolation in Rezia. She becomes lonely, she becomes completely disconnected and everyone becomes patronizing to herself, but her final consciousness, her final thoughts are happy thoughts as she sort of moves into sleep.

We come to the end of “Mrs. Dalloway” and then, there is a social party at the end, lots of people come, the Portuguese ambassador, the imperial officers, Peter Walsh, the Impaler person comes there and this empire scene where all the big socialites in London are hobnobbing together, but we can see how superficial that scene is. The entire drama of socializing is a very superficial fragile drama.

Septimus's fragility is a real condition of London, Septimus's vulnerability is a real traumatic condition of London which everyone is trying to hide and conceal in the different ways. The entire social party, the entire social mechanism of coming together and getting together becomes a compulsive and almost sort of paranoid attempt to look happy, look normal, look normative but the real London is a traumatized London.

It is a very heavily bombed London and every memory is a memory of the war and Septimus's death corroborates a human tragedy where there is no empathy, the medical gaze does not understand the human condition. As we have a complete incompatibility between the medical case and the human condition and the human emotion of trauma, the human emotion of loss and tragedy and sadness.

The medical gaze cannot quantify that at all. The entire novel becomes an existential crisis, a crisis an embodiment but also how the crisis is accentuated in a certain sense with the lack of empathy from the medical gaze. The medicine, the medical culture on that time was completely incompatible, was completely unprepared to treat this trauma of the First World War and it was not equipped, it did not have the vocabulary.

It did not have the training and this was also a time in medical history where Freud became very important in London, psychoanalysis became very important in London because that kind of treatment a pillow of emphasis to dreams with subconscious to storytelling. Septimus's stories written on the piece of paper will be very important that would be seen as some kind of a diagnosis to a cycling analyst.

Some kind of a projection of the fear and that would be used as a cure method rather than this coercive confinement and coercive separation that Holmes and Bradshaw subject them to. The final bit of the novel is Peter Walsh meeting Clarissa Dalloway in a very superficial party where all the big socialites come, but then it is a very ironic because we see the real human tragedy underneath all that.

Everything else just becomes a cover-up in London in a post-war metropolis where people are trying to look social and trying to look connected where actually everyone is disconnected

from everyone else, there is complete isolation and alienation and Septimus's tragedy is an extreme example, extreme spectacular example of that alienation in this very tragic traumatic world.

This is the end of "Mrs. Dalloway". As per the purpose of this course, we just read certain selected sections from the perspective of medical history, cognitive theory, trauma theory, etc.