

Early Twentieth-Century Fiction  
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Office hours: Monday 2 p.m., or by appointment

February 25, 2021. Faulkner (1).

# review

- ▶ Septimus: Woolf resists pathologization
  - ▶ his relation to the past and to others is distorted
  - ▶ but so is pretty much everyone else's
- ▶ connecting threads
  - ▶ shared objects of perception
  - ▶ shared thoughts
  - ▶ text-level sharing
- ▶ undecidable satire
  - ▶ beauty? fun?

# Faulkner

Q. Mr. Faulkner, why did Vardaman say “My mother is a fish”?

(Class conference at UVA, Session 14, May 6, 1957)

## comparative discussion

Consider the first few chapters of *As I Lay Dying*. Develop several specific connections between *Mrs. Dalloway* and this novel. Pay particular attention to:

- ▶ how we move from one chapter to the next
- ▶ how mental life is represented
- ▶ how it is difficult (if it is; or why not, if not)

consciousness?

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[Vardaman:] It is dark. I can hear wood, silence: I know them....It is as though the dark were resolving him out of his integrity, into an unrelated scattering of components—snuffings and stampings; smells of cooling flesh and ammoniac hair; an illusion of a co-ordinated whole of splotched hide and strong bones within which, detached and secret and familiar, an *is* different from my *is*. (56)

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## First person/third person

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[Darl:] "Why, Addie," pa says, "him and Darl went to make one more load. They thought there was time." (47)

short break

## ESP again

[Dewey Dell:] He said he knew without the words like he told me that ma is going to die without words, and I knew he knew because if he had said he knew with the words I would not have believed that he had been there and saw us. (27)

## Dewey Dell's dialect

The first time **me** and Lafe picked on down the row. Pa **dassent** sweat because he will catch his death from the sickness so everybody that comes to help us. And Jewel **dont** care about anything he is not kin to us in caring, not care-kin. (26)

# reading dialect

- ▶ languages have many **varieties**
  - ▶ they vary in lexicon, pronunciation, grammar
  - ▶ variation is often along lines of geographic and social division
  - ▶ dialects: associated with particular places/groups
- ▶ some varieties have prestige as **standards**  
(school, government, media)
- ▶ every variety has a grammar and is equally expressive
- ▶ some varieties are stigmatized as “broken,” “ignorant,” “dialect”
- ▶ **dialect writing** uses conventions to represent dialect speech, especially regional and minority speech

## idiolect

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13. It makes a neater job. (83)

## Faulkner's hand

[Tull:] And the next morning they found him [Vardaman?] in his shirt tail, laying asleep on the floor like a felled steer, and the top of the box bored clean full of holes and Cash's new auger broke off in the last one. Whey they taken the lid off they found that two of them had bored on into her face.

If it's a judgment, it aint right. Because the Lord's got more to do than that. Because the only burden Anse Bundren's ever had is himself....I think to myself he aint that less of a man or he couldn't a bore himself this long....

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next

- ▶ continue in Faulkner to 179
- ▶ commonplacing, group A:
  - ▶ choose a passage whose language is interesting
  - ▶ (“limits of vision” on the syllabus can be ignored)