JIGSAW SUBJECTS: WOOLF'S SUBJECTIVITIES

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Theorists dispute: What is the definition of the term postmodernism? And, is the definition differentiable from the definition of modernism? Simply put, are modernism and postmodernism two different phenomena? Or, are they only two exchangeable words describing the same thing? I will claim that postmodernism and modernism are two definitive terms. Theorists define Virginia Woolf's texts, for example, as both postmodern and modern not because of postmodernism's elusive definition, but because of Woolf's construction of subjects. Because she was a woman, she, somehow, creates subjects differently in her texts than male modernists.

In To The Lighthouse, Woolf writes modern or fascist subjects: subjects with a unified voice. She also, however, writes postmodern or fragmented subjects who are not constructed by a single voice or consciousness, but alter subjectivities throughout the novel. Thus, by pointing out these particular subjects, Woolf's texts can be viewed as either postmodern or modern.

So, if postmodernism and modernism are two different categories, which one defines Woolf's texts? If Woolf's texts must be either postmodern or modern, if the stalemate must be resolved, another element besides her construction of subjects must be considered. By using Jacques Lacan's psychoanalytic theories, I will show how Woolf's subjectivities can be either fragmented or fascist, but also how certain elements of her structure have specifically postmodern attributes.

Through my analysis, I will show why Woolf's structures are more clearly defined under postmodernism and, thus, why a difference between postmodernism and modernism is necessary.

"TWO DREAMYUMS IN ONE DROMIUM:" JOYCE AND FREUD, DREAM AND TEXT

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In writing Finnegans Wake, James Joyce famously wanted to examine the world of dreams. Throughout the book, Joyce is constantly engaged in the conflation of dreams and texts. Dreams become texts to be read and interpreted just as texts become lived experiences in a dream world. I use this ongoing relationship between dream and textuality as a means for reading Joyce's magnum opus. Issues of language, interpretation, and narrative will be analyzed as parallel components of both dream and text. For this presentation I have excerpted a section from my Honors Thesis that focuses on the parallel approaches to the relationship between dream and text by Joyce and Sigmund Freud. I first analyze Joyce's interest in dream interpretation through Ulysses (1922) and onto Finnegans Wake (1939), suggesting that Joyce's interest in dreams is related to his broader interest in interpretation. I then juxtapose Joyce's approach with Freud's theories of dreams, especially some of the ideas suggested in his Interpretation of Dreams. By means of this approach, I ultimately point to some interesting affinities between the two writers in their use of dreams and texts.