



MEDICAL GAZE AND PSYCHOLOGY OF SEPTIMIUS WARREN SMITH IN VIRGINIA WOOLF'S MR. DALLOWAY

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ABSTRACT

Virginia Woolf turned away from the realistic fiction of Charles Dickens and Thomas Hardy and wanted to show how her characters' minds were going through a lot of trouble. She was hospitalized in 1977 because of her trauma and depression, with a "wearisome headache, jumping pulse, aching back, frets, and fidgets lying awake" (Woolf 125). "To give life and death and to criticize the social system; to show it at work, at its most intense," Woolf wrote in her diary (Virginia Woolf 2, 248). There are many scenes of death, disability, and mental harm in Mrs. Dalloway. As a classic work of modernist trauma literature, the book has been praised. Cathy Caruth says that trauma is a "wound of the mind" (Caruth 4) that is hard to understand. The events that cause trauma make themselves known to the mind by repeatedly asking for a witness who can hear the trauma story. This kind of re-externalization can change the way traumatic wounds and repeated calls are organized into a coherent story. Jonathan Judith Herman thinks that Woolf used the characters' pre-speech levels of consciousness to build a story and kept the fragmentation of consciousness (Herman 3). At the beginning of the book, Mrs. Dalloway is making plans for a dinner party she is throwing for her husband. In the first few pages of the book, two interesting things stand out: the party symbol and the part that Big Ben plays in making Mrs. Dalloway aware of time. The parties that Mrs. Dalloway throws are

normal events that represent how artificial and mechanical her life is. Septimus Smith is shown to have war neurosis, which is "the victim's faith in the assumptions he has held in the past about himself and the world" (DeMeester 650). This paper tries to look into the death of Septimus in more depth from the point of view of the conflict between rationalism and humanitarianism. While some critics have said that Septimus's death was caused by shell shock, this paper tries to argue that Bradshaw, who represents rationalism, forces Septimus to kill himself because he thinks that Septimus's lamentations about the loss of humanitarianism are signs of madness. This shows how rationalism goes against the humanitarian spirit. By showing how Septimus and Clarissa are spiritually connected and using Clarissa as the spell of her spirit, Virginia Woolf subtly shows how she and Septimus are spiritually connected as well. In order to send a message to people, Virginia Woolf uses the death of Septimus as a metaphor for how rationalism went against humanism in her time.

INTRODUCTION:

In her 1925 essay *Modern Fiction*, Virginia Woolf said, "For some reason, the modern practice of the art is better than the old" (Woolf 1). The essay by Woolf is a review of the writing of modern authors. In her important work, she tells modern writers to "have the courage to say that what interests them is no longer this but that" (4). The real interest lies in "the dark places of psychology" (Woolf 4), which is what Woolf encourages modern writers to do with their characters. Now that her novel is out, Virginia Woolf is the most famous author who has tried using the technique of "stream of consciousness." As Jonathan Shay says, "severe trauma explodes the cohesion of consciousness," which means that a trauma victim's consciousness is broken up. (Shay 188)

There is a lot of talk in this research paper about Septimus's mental illness because he is like Mrs. Dalloway in the book. As Judith Herman says, Woolf made a story out of the characters' "pre-speech level of consciousness and preserved the fragmentation of consciousness that occurs in the aftermath of trauma" (Herman 3). There is only one day in June 1923 in London where the story of Mrs. Dalloway takes place. As the book starts, Mrs. Dalloway is getting ready for a dinner party she is throwing for her husband. In the first few pages of the book, two interesting things stand out: the party symbol and the

part that Big Ben plays in making Mrs. Dalloway aware of time. The parties that Mrs. Dalloway throws are normal and represent how her life is artificial and mechanical.

Septimus Smith has war trauma, which means he has lost faith in the things he thought he knew about himself and the world (De Meester 650). At the end of the book, Mrs. Dalloway is at a party when she hears that Septimus has killed himself by jumping out of a window.

Mrs. Dalloway's mind and spirit are broken by this terrible event, and she starts to think that she should kill herself. Septimus takes on the role of Mrs. Dalloway's double, who is going through a lot of mental pain and is living a desperate life. Her husband, Mr. Richard, can not have children, and her friends Selly Seton and Peter Walsh are having a good time, but she is living with void. Septimus Warren and Clarissa Dalloway are two characters who have been pushed around and are suffering from mental trauma. It is clear that both are hurt by the social and political systems and are trying hard to find a peaceful place. Reviews and critics of Virginia Woolf's work had a range of responses when her book Mrs. Dalloway came out. "Mrs. Dalloway is an experiment with time and point of view," writes Bernard Blackstone in 1949.

"The novel's subjective relation to its objective world," as Ralph Freeman wrote in 1963, "proposes that the substance of Mrs. Dalloway lies in the opposition of an external world of manners and an internal symbolic world" (Freeman 216). Both Clarissa Dalloway and Septimus Smith were hurt in war, and now they have to live a terrible life full of pain, danger, and chaos. Roger Poole says that Mrs. Dalloway is "the finest war novel that fought in World War I" (Poole 79). VA. Woolf wrote in her diary that Mrs. Dalloway is a "study of insanity and suicide" (Diary2; 207). In her writing from 1992, Janet Pierre calls trauma "a delayed response", and Sigmund Freud calls it "deferred action" (12). Freud says that a man is traumatized "exactly to be possessed by an image or an event" (5). Freud also says that a man is traumatized "exactly to be possessed by an image or an event" (5). Virginia Woolf's characters lose their minds when they see images of haunting memories of the past.

If someone goes through a traumatic event, it can destroy their basic beliefs about the world's safety, their own worth, and the purpose of everything in it (Herman 5). Virginia Woolf shows how terrible the world's problems are. They are both traumatized, which makes it hard for Mrs. Dalloway and Septimus to make up a name and build trusting relationships. Trauma is seen as a world away from disaster. In his 2009 book *Mourning, Modernism, Postmodernism*, Tammy Clewell says that Woolf is writing about

"ongoing mourning" (10). When it comes to traumatic events, James Burger (1997) says that "a traumatic analysis is both constructivist and empirical" (Burger 572).

Septimus Smith had seen his friend Evan get killed in a terrible way. Smith Warren Smith was about thirty years old, had a pale face and a beak-nose, wore brown shoes and a worn-out overcoat, and had hazy eyes that gave them that look of fear that makes strangers afraid too (20).

September should think "as little as possible" about himself, says Bradshaw. "Human nature is on him," he feels (98). Septimus does not feel good around Bradshaw. It makes Septimus feel bad to be around Bradshaw. Rezia feels alone because the doctors are not taking good care of him. Freud says that traumatic memories are what cause psychic disorders. Woolf writes, "He had become stranger and stranger." He said there was talk going on behind the bedroom walls...He also saw things. In the middle of a fern, he saw the head of an old woman. There are a lot of real and yellow ones out on the grass (50). Woolf painted a picture of Septimus's troubled mind:

He saw people outside, and they looked happy. He could feel things, but not taste them. The terrible fear hit him in the tea shop, where there were tables and chattering waiters. He could not feel anything. He knew how to read and think. In the book, Woolf has made Septimus's neurotic condition more dramatic.

Septimus was already in a bad mental state. In fact, Bradshaw is to blame for his tragedy. His mind falls apart when he finds Bradshaw in his room. He knows what will happen because he is going to mental asylum. Septimus's vision is blurred because he is going through a lot of inner turmoil. He screams, "There was a man outside." Evans, most likely, and that he picked the half-dead roses that Rezia said were in the field of Greece. September thinks about the color of the rose and gets lost in his own world of schizophrenia and paranoia. "The trees shook and waved".

The ghost of Evan keeps coming back to Septimus's mind: "He sang." Evans spoke up from behind a tree. Evans sang among the orchids while the dead leaves were in Thessaly. There, the dead and Evans himself waited until the war was over. Larissa and Septimus's consciousness is broken up as their thoughts jump from the past to the present. There is no character in Mrs. Dalloway who can plan the events or try to make the characters' thoughts fit together in a way that makes sense. The person who went through the traumatic event can not think of it in terms of time: "This was my life before...this is what happened...this is what I became." (Shay 191). Clarissa is a great example of repression and denial,

and she also has neurosis, just like Septimus. It seems like Septimus is scared when he looks at the car, like some terrible thing is almost on top of it and is about to catch fire (15).

Clarissa feels left out and lonely, and she has to live like a puppet under her husband Richard Dalloway's roof. People look up to Richard in politics, and Clarissa wastes her whole life trying to help Richard get elected.

Clarissa wants to break free from her chains of slavery. She rejects her husband's control over her and acts in a way that shows a strong rebellious spirit. Herman Lee says, "Traumatized people suffer damage to the very structure of the self; they lose trust in themselves, in other people, and in the world around them and their beliefs about love, kindness, morality, and values; their identity is shattered." (Herman 26).

Clarissa is a symbol of Richard's repressed free individuality. She is pathetically controlling because Richard has power over her.

Septimus is very shell-shocked, and the war has changed him so much that he "does not feel the once familiar spaces of London that he had known before". Septimus feels out of place because he has post-traumatic stress disorder, and he is also shocked that doctors like Holmes and Bradshaw were not able to heal him from his trauma and save his life. Freud talks about "uncanny spaces," and Septimus feels the tension between the inside and outside worlds. Smith feels hopeless and thinks, "It must have been the fault of the world then; that he could not feel". He is fed up with how Dr Holmes treats him and says, "You brute!" to show his anger. "You jerk!" . Septimus is "numb" and has lost faith in people and the world that they live in. He has turned into a cruel and hopeless place where people do not have any kindness, faith, or charity beyond what makes them feel good in the present moment (Wolf 98).

Clarissa quit the world of party politics when Septimus killed himself. Septimus is a sad representation of the war-wounded soldiers who see death and destruction in World War 1. The stress that was put on the soldiers. The soldiers lost their minds, which caused "a crisis of masculinity and a trial of the Victorian masculine ideal" (Showalter 171).

Septimus is broken by the terrible things he sees in the war. When Septimus's state is broken, she says, "It was cowardly for a man to say he would kill himself, when her husband threatens to kill himself". Even Septimus' doctors say that his behaviour would give Rezia a "odd idea of English husbands," meaning that he should follow the role of manliness that society has set for him and that he has full

control over whether to do so (92). Septimus figures out that Holmes and Dr. Breadshaw "mixed the vision and the sideboard; saw nothing clear, yet ruled, yet inflicted" (Wolf 148). At the end of the book, Septimus kills himself because he believes he has committed a "appalling crime and had been condemned to death by human nature" (96). He kills himself, and "there remained only the window." That was their idea of tragedy, not his. (Wolf 149). He kills himself by jumping out of the window, which frees him from the horrible hallucinations and trauma. Woolf blames the upper class for "over a bloody debate in the name of an England that was passing away" through Septimus (Larsen 194). Septimus was in a lot of mental pain: "He did not want to die." Things were fine. It is hot outside. What did they want? Only people (226). September shows the disappointment and confusion that come from having been through a traumatic event after the war. When Septimus got back from the war, the world was different. Septimus used what he had learned as a soldier to understand things after the war. "Men must not cut trees," Septimus says to show his spirituality and faith in God. There is a God. Make the World Better.

No one kills out of hate. Tell people about it (Wolf 35). Septimus's faith in communication is interesting because he thinks it brings people together. "Communication is health; communication is happiness," he says (141). When Septimus talks about her trauma and the fact that she is going to die, Clarissa is really Septimus. As Herman says, "to study psychological trauma is to come face to face both with human vulnerability in the natural world and with the capacity for evil in human nature. "For making the party less fun, Mrs. Dalloway thinks Bradshaw was rude to talk about Septimus's suicide. She thinks about Septimus's suicide and admits, "Death was his attempt to communicate in an effort to deny the finality of his act" (Wolf 184).

In the end, Septimus is shown to be Mrs. Dalloway's twin who also wants to end her own life. In her writing, Virginia Woolf gives us new ways to think about trauma. This is how Peter acts: "like a Queen whose guards have fallen asleep and left her unprotected". It is clear to Peter what he is up against: Clarisse, Dalloway, and everyone else. He leaves Clarissa's house because he is upset. There are soldiers he meets whose faces look like the letters of a legend written around the base of a statue. The letters praise duty, gratitude, loyalty, and love of England. "Life had been laid under a pavement of monuments and wreaths and drugged into a stiff yet staring corpse by discipline," Peter thinks as he watches them go by. During the five years he was away. Woolf has looked at shell shock trauma from a more modern point of view. At the beginning of the book, Mrs. Dalloway is making plans for a dinner party she is throwing for her husband. In the first few pages of the book, there are two interesting things that stand

out: the party symbol and the role of Big Ben in making Mrs. Dalloway aware of time. Mrs. Dalloway's parties are just another part of her routine, which shows how artificial and mechanical her life is. "There was wide acceptance among English psychologists that insanity was a disorder of the mind resulting from a structural or functional lesion of the organs of the mind, that is, the brain," says Bogacz (Bogacz 230).

THE SPIRITUAL DILEMMA OF SEPTIMUS, THE SYMBOL OF HUMANITARIANISM

It is clear that Septimus loves reading because he talks about "devouring Shakespeare, Darwin, The History of Civilization, and Bernard Shaw."(95) Virginia Woolf purposely draws attention to Septimus's "ability to read, say, Dante quite easily" when she adds up his book list.(97) The Renaissance was ruled by great writers like Shakespeare and Dante, whose works are known for having strong moral themes. Also, the play by Bernard Shaw has the mark of humanitarian thought on it. It is possible to figure out what Septimus was thinking by looking at how much he read those books. Woolf also says, "he went to France to save an England that was almost entirely made up of Shakespeare's plays." As a result, it is clear that Septimus is portrayed in the text as someone who stands up for kindness. In modern wars, like the Great War, where logic is very important, however, Septimus's ideas about helping others fall apart.

First, the idea that rationality is the best way to live is what led to the start of World War I.

Using Darwin's theory of evolution as a starting point, social Darwinism explains why classes should be stifled and why countries should fight for power. Second, using deadly weapons like machine guns, tanks, and gas, which are made possible by progress in science, changes the nature and scope of wars in a big way. Woolf did not show how cruel wars are directly. One example is a comment from a third person: "it was a miracle thinking of the war and thousands of poor chaps, with all their lives ahead of them, shoveled together, already half-forgotten." The phrase "poor chaps" perfectly describes how desperate people feel when they can not do anything about the meat-grinding war. When Septimus saw how cruel the war was, he was shocked because he really believed in volunteering.

He thought it was his worst crime because "he could not feel" when his friend Evans was killed in Italy just before the armistice. The phrase "could not feel" here refers to Septimus's lack of sadness over his friend's death, which is the picture of reason. On the battlefield, getting caught up in personal feelings can put you in danger. "The war had taught him" that reason must win over emotion in order to stay alive. Septimus, on the other hand, thinks that a person cannot be a human being if one cannot feel.

Evans passed in Italy, where the Renaissance started, which made it much more terrible. September was ironic on the first level since it violated the humanitarian ideal in that particular situation. Apart from that, Septimus, a British soldier, entered the war to protect the humanitarian attitude that Shakespeare intended for him. Quite ironic: he lost what he wanted to defend while yet winning the war.

Septimus's suffering, then, is clearly found in the fall of his spiritual pillar, the collapse of humanitarianism, not in shell shock. He said that crime and "the verdict of human nature on such a wretch was death." Indeed, "his crime should be interpreted as a moral one rather than a legal one." [6] [Septimus visited the ghost of Evans often in the book; he considered this as embarrassing reminder of his transgression of human nature. Septimus trudged with moral weight and to him, "the world itself was without meaning. "In such a world, "they hunt in packs." Their packs scour the desert and disappear screaming into the wilderness." Here, "desert" and "wilderness" could readily remind readers of Eliot's *The Waste Land*, in which the most extreme degree of absurdity and meaninglessness of life is exposed. Using the experience of Septimus, a single case, Virginia Woolf reflects the mental state of the British society in her time so as to question the over advocacy of reason and reemphasize human nature. Lisa Colletta notes, "Virginia Woolf thought that her reputation might well rest on her satiric sensibilities... and in most of her writing her satiric impulses are evident." [7]

III. THE STRANGLEHOLD OF RATIONALITY ON HUMAN NATURE REFLECTED IN THE DOCTOR-PATIENT RELATIONSHIP

Bradshaw is a doctor, more precisely a psychiatrist. The emergence of Freud's psychological study at the start of the 20th century signaled people's desire to conquer the uncharted territory with reason and science. This makes the identity of a psychiatrist itself evidence of the advocacy of reason. Septimus's visit to Dr. Holmes and Bradshaw and treatment process mirrors the unequal position between humanitarian spirit and reason. Under a doctor-patient relationship, the patient usually adopts the weak posture. The receiving cure of the patient reflects humanitarian spirit under the guidelines of reason.

Woolf purposefully uses the juxtaposition in physical feature between Septimus and Dr. Holmes in the book to suggest the fall of humanitarian spirit and the ascent of reason. Unlike Septimus, who was weak and skeletal, Dr. Holmes was "large, fresh-colored and handsome." (# 100) Apart from the perspective, Woolf also employs the contrast in the inner-worlds to accentuate the confrontation between humanitarianism and rationalism, which crystallizes in the opposite attitudes toward reading between

Septimus and Bradshaw. To Bradshaw, "the fellow Septimus made a distasteful impression." (104) "There was a grudge, deeply buried, against cultivated people who came into his room and intimated that doctors... are not educated men. William had never had time for reading." 104–105 Bradshaw points out here that Septimus and him stand out from each other mostly in their book reading. Bradshaw is a psychiatrist, a field of work requiring a lot of reading and books here refer not to ones in common sense but rather to ones with humanitarian attitude. Thus, Septimus and Bradshaw's conflict really reveals the confrontation between human nature and reason.

Bradshaw thus spared no effort to mark Septimus with insanity. For Septimus, "he could see the first moment they entered the room...it was a case of complete breakdown." "Sir William said he never spoke of "madness"; he called it not having a sense of proportion."(Ibid%) Still, the issue is whether Septimus actually loses it. Septimus's having illusions (Evans's ghost) in the novella explains why he is charged with madness. Evans's ghost is the manifestation of Septimus's pricked conscience, as is examined here. More importantly, as Septimus asked "as for the visions, the faces, the voices of the dead [Evans], where are they?" he could see the real from the illusive and the live from the dead.. Given this, labeling Septimus as insane is arbitrary and reflects Bradshaw's stigmatization of Septimus.

Examining Septimus's symptoms, Bradshaw proposed the cure as "going into a home... where we will teach you to rest." Here "home" refers to one asylum in the countryside where mental patients are compulsively segregated, disciplined, and watched under treatment's name. Bradshaw argued that "worshipping proportion, Sir William not only prospered himself but made England prosper, secluded her lunatics, forbade childbirth, penalized despair, made it impossible for the unfit to propagate their views." Such a cruel plan justified itself.

According to Michael Foucault, reason emphasizes on order and norm, which upholds the rule of society while madness, as the opposite of rationality, may readily lead to social discontent. Locking madness inside the Panopticon, where it will always receive the discipline and gaze of reason, is therefore the best way to punish it. As Foucault says, "here reason reigned in the pure state, in a triumphant arranged for it in advance over a frenzied unreason. Mania was thus split from that imagined freedom; it had been imprisoned, bound to Reason, to the rules of morality and to their monotonous nights in the fortress of confinement." [8] Regarding Septimus's treatment, it is clear that reason corresponds with power to stifle human nature.

Given this threat, Septimus sees Dr. Holmes and Bradshaw as monsters. For him, "He [Septimus] was in their power! He was under Holmes and Bradshaw! Snuffing into every secret location, the brute sporting red nostrils was Holmes's unannounced visit marks the last straw breaking a camel's back. Septimus has no option except to commit suicide when faced with their methodical suppression. Dramatic is that Peter said, "it was one of the triumphs of civilization," when the ambulance called to save Septimus passed him. Woolf deliberately juxtaposes the death of Septimus and Peter's comment, so opening new means of interpreting Peter's comment: that is, the death of Septimus is one of the triumphs of civilization. Peter's original intention was to praise "the efficiency, the organization, and the communal spirit of London". First of all, the ambulance owes its existence to the evolution of science/rationality; second, the ambulance belongs in the medical sphere, where science/rationality is emphasized. Here civilization means rationality. Given this, Woolf clearly uses Peter's remark to highlight the actual cause of Septimus's death—the stranglehold of human nature resulting from too strong advocacy of reason.

VIRGINIA WOOLF'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS RATIONALITY

Clarissa and Septimus have a quite interesting relationship. The two in the novella never directly interact from start to finish. But Woolf's clever design allows critical readers to read between the lines and discover the spiritual conformity between the two. They have in common, for instance, the concept of suicide. Septimus once declared, "I [would] kill myself." Regarding Clarissa, the thought of death periodically tormented her as well. "Did it matter that she must inevitably completely All this must go on without her; did she resent it " forty-nine Besides, Septimus felt "he was falling," troubled by his pricked conscience.

Comparably, Clarissa once said, "What a plunge!" The "plunge" here not only fits the picture of a Septimus falling from the window but also conforms to his means of committing suicide. Septimus also found "the world itself [was] without meaning". and likewise, Clarissa considered she was "obscured in her own life, let drop every day in corruption, lies, [and] chatter." Still, realizing the spiritual link between Septimus and Clarissa is only a halved project. It is known that Woolf acts as Clarissa's prototype during book composition. Vereen M. Bell and Vereen Bell even claim that "own Clarissa Dalloway and you own Virginia Woolf." [9] Woolf intends at the identification with Septimus, or as Michael North puts it, "the occult sympathy of Smith and Dalloway," by presenting Clarissa as a woman with knowledge and homosexual inclination, which is the same with Woolf herself, and stressing the spiritual connection between Clarissa and Septimus, as is mentioned above. ten [10] Moreover,

Clarissa's reading of Septimus's death emphasizes the significance of his image-projection to question Woolf's time's over-advocacy.

The book hints indirectly about Clarissa's homosexual inclination. Clarissa had a strong impression when she was young since her girl friend Sally kissed her. They respectively entered marriage with a male spouse in spite of this kiss. According to the book, Clarissa "lived alone in a small room with a narrow bed". The narrow bed and small room strongly suggest repression. Her bed would be narrower and thinner as well. She had read in Baron Marbot's *Memoirs* and the candle was half burned down." (Ibid.) Then, when Clarissa remembered her relationship with Sally, flowers steal front stage. "Sally left and picked hollyhocks, dahlias, all kinds of flowers never seen together." Given the same perspective, candles are frequently used to symbolize the penis in western literature; hence, the half-burnt candle can be interpreted as the implication of the spoiled sexual life. On the other hand, flowers are often used as the metaphor of the vagina; the juxtaposition of flowers, like the friction of female sexual organs, may refer to female homosexual activities. Woolf implies Clarissa's suppressed homosexual desire by using the image of candles and flowers, which reflects the narrow bed. Actually, both heterosexuality and homosexuality are rather common in ancient Greek and Roman periods. "Homosexuality was approved in ancient Greek society, in law as much as in religion. It was celebrated in literature and carried out in rites. [2011]

Though the repression of homosexuality occasionally existed ever since, it did not become systemized until the advent of reason, which demanded order and norm. "Foucault revealed that homogeneity always existed in the past and that such a fact resulted from ideology... Homosexuality was labeled on a single person in the past and considered as a secluded behavior. On the other hand, homosexuality has defined a group of people and a packet of actions ever since 1870. [12] Clarissa thus decided in the novella to marry Dalloway, to a more extent in order to "use heterosexual marriage to cover her homosexuality." [13] As Pam Morris emphasizes, "there are forces represented in the text that are hostile to disorder and heterogeneity, forces that are intent upon imposing systems of discipline and conformability on any unregulated form of life."

[14] This makes sex, an otherwise natural human right, reluctantly coupled with power and under observation. This makes the repression of sex the repression of human nature, which Woolf is dedicated

to oppose in this book. At this point, also, the spiritual link between Septimus and Clarissa, further, Septimus and Woolf, is released.

CONCLUSION

Woolf's book's critique of rationality is not a whole one but rather a counteraction against the too strong advocacy of rationalism. The author exposes the degree of the repression of humanitarianism by reason using Septimus's death. Actually, one should consider Woolf's criticism's source in the perspective of history. When Auguste Comte proposed positivism in the first half of the 19th century, the advocacy of reason attained the height. On the other hand, the study of humanitarianism was attacked with rejection and detestation because of its strong metaphysical, subjective, and unverifiable character; later, this resulted in the theme of alienation in modernism. Woolf's critique of rationality is the further expansion of the alienation theme and also a useful contemplation on modernity "during the peak of literary modernism."

One thing has to be underlined: this paper approaches the death of Septimus from the confrontation between humanitarianism and rationalism, a viewpoint hardly touched before and so may challenge some readers' preexisting understanding of the novella. In order to support such a challenge, the author of this paper would like to quote Jonathan Culler, "meaning is contextbound, but context is boundless." [16] This essay thus marks an attempt to re-contextualize the death of Septimus in the hope of a fresh interpretation. This means that literature with constantly opened paths of approach and appreciation will flourish over time and always give readers meaning and comfort.

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