

The hours

Literature



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2- Cunningham's- The Hours. When exploring the meaning of Cunningham's The Hours, the makes a vivid characterization between notions of the past, the present and the future. This suggests that existence is not a linear space of time, or that essentially, time is consistent only for its ability to pass and to pass as by. Consequentially, there is no such thing as living in the present because the past is the equivalent of memory, whilst the future is but mere anticipation towards hope for what is to come. The novel explores life from two varying perspectives. On one hand it refers to a gloom perspective of the totality of our existence and on the other, the novel recognizes the inherent disposition of man's morality and optimism though it recognizes that this too will eventually lead to disappointment.

Despair and joy are frequently being brought forward as recurring themes in the novel. The above quote gives both a negative and positive perspective to the reader of human qualities. Consistent to the forlorn tone of the novel, the given quote lists contemplations of death, " A few jump out of windows or drown themselves or take pills; ... or if we're fortunate, by time itself" (Cunningham 1998, p225). Subsequently, the passage ends with a sense of possibility when Clarissa goes on to say " Still, we cherish the city, the morning; we hope, more than anything for more. Heaven only knows why we love it so" (Cunningham 1998, p225). This implicates a perspective to the depth of the novel and evidently gives meaning to its title, The Hours.

Cunningham reiterates that no one really lives in the present, are always haunted by the past and inevitably predisposed towards the future.

The characters in the novel are connected by fictive kinship but are bound as immensely by it all the same. They all relate to one another through time and space through similar struggles with depression, marriage, love, and

loss. Furthermore, their commonality lies in how these three women are all searching for meaning in their lives and contemplate ending their lives as a form of the ultimate escape. It incessantly revolved around that elusive quest for the deeper meaning of life beyond all its facades and superfluities. The reader experiences the hours lived through these characters, their individual stories shadowing one another in similar ways. What ties the story together of *The Hours* is the tragic life of Virginia Woolf and her art, followed by Clarissa Dalloway who witnessed her friend Richard's death and Laura Brown who feels trapped by her stereotypical role as a suburban. All these women are always looking for more in life and all of them contemplate suicide. This sense of wanting more, devalues their existence because of unfulfilled desires. It evokes the sense that human nature seems to dictate that we always should have more. The hours in life pass by and satisfaction is never truly accomplished.

Cunningham's *The Hours* is a novel that explores the hours of a person's ordinary day and projects from that into this marvellous trappings of human existence despite of (or perhaps because) of time. Even more importantly, it illustrates that no one is completely content with the person have come to be. These women wanted more and if contentment is equivalent to happiness then they have resolved that no one can truly be perpetually happy. The hours in each person's life pass while dwelling on what could have been, and anticipative of what is to come. *The Hours* characterises that people do not live each hour as it passes. The past is always present and haunting, while the question of what is yet to come exists in the mind of the individual and the possibility of something better is one's only hold to be able to go on. But deciding to end it all is a brave act all the same.

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