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The Blurring of Lines

Although Modernism did bring forth the ideas of individualism, Modernist philosophies failed. Yet what transpired was the transcends of art and theory. Lines between art and thought blurred, and things such as literature began to take shape into many forms of art, much like Virginia Woolf's book *The Waves*. The book itself is a complete obstruction of the normality of literature. Woolf makes a stance in straying away from the expectations of writing, as the book is complete without dialogue. Throughout the entirety of the book, the reader is swept into the interworkings of the six characters' minds. Never is the reader placed in the reality of the world but is always kept hidden in the subconscious. Despite their different lives, Woolf makes connections between the characters to reveal their commonalities in their journey of life. Ultimately, *The Waves* written by Virginia Woolf challenges the traditional form of literature and blurs the lines between art and writing through the telling of these six intertwined characters and the ways they deal with the realities of their world.

Woolf blurs the lines of art and literature through the symbolic way in which all six characters can be seen as one body. Although all characters might be facing different challenges and hardships, one commonality that they all share is that they are attempting to come to terms with life. More specifically, Bernard shows the reader how every individual regrets and is haunted by certain events in their lives, and attempts to make peace with it in the face of death. Robert O. Richardson wrote in a publication titled "Point of View in Virginia Woolf's The

Waves” that Woolf, “...depersonalizes the statement and objectifies the problems for the reader...” (Richardson 392). Essentially, Woolf stripped the writing from an individualistic stance and created a unity, one body, through the common fear of regret and loneliness. In a different article titled, “The Waves: A Fusion of Symbol, Style and Thought in Virginia Woolf” writer Dorothy Bevis wrote that Woolf writes her own kind of reality in the book, one that relies on the sensitivity of the human senses, sight, sound, and touch (Bevis 5). The incorporation of such details and goals in the book differentiates *The Waves* from traditional writings. The voice of one character blurs with another until all are connected, forming one being.

Evidently enough, Woolf is able to create her writing into its own form of art. Interpreting *The Waves* would best be described as analyzing a painting hanging in a museum. In the story, we see the growth of these characters through their inner monologue from childhood to adulthood. There is no real main protagonist but characters like Bernard are able to take the reader into those spaces of the metaphor of the waves. He is able to highlight the repeated motion of the waves, both their beauty and danger, the highs and lows, the repeated motion that is of course inevitable. Like Bernard, the other characters experience this as well in their ordinary lives, proving that they are differently alike. In *The Waves*, there is no individualism but only an interconnection that links one to the other, blurring the lines of life and art.

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