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Curatorial statement on criticism and reviews of TTL

Reading through critics' reviews on Woolf online, many seem to agree that *To The Lighthouse* is yet another fulfilled work Woolf has sent out to the world. Following her previous popular works, *Mrs. Dalloway* and *Jacob's Room*, critics could only wonder what Virginia Woolf had up next. Critics believe Woolf to be one of a kind, an original experimenter of technique in novel-writing. *To The Lighthouse* carries on what is described as a dark light and bright shadow, found in all of Woolf's work.¹ Some argue that Woolf's art lacks the aesthetics in her past novels,² and is intensely more personal to where she abandons her method of narration.³ Critics agree that the pattern continues in, *To the Lighthouse* with the soaring question, "What is the meaning of life?," but are unable to grasp whether or not Woolf reaches the answer in her art.⁴ Many agree this novel also carries on the theme of time, but constructs it as broken. Using art as a device, critics believe that usage of Lily Briscoe's painting is a center revenue to be carried on.

Discussing the structure of the novel, most find that Woolf's novel has no direct plot, but there carries a reason and plan. Making this intensely more personal, Woolf implements all of herself within all of her characters. From a critics perspective, one finds that Woolf's novel presents a narrative where nothing happens, and at the same time everything happens.⁵ However, she does this by portraying each of the characters outside the realm of the narrative, rather than

¹ Information provided by The Spectator found on Woolf Online: Reviews of *To the Lighthouse*

² Information provided by The Spectator found on Woolf Online: Reviews of *To the Lighthouse*

³ Information provided by The Criterion found on Woolf Online: Reviews of *To the Lighthouse*

⁴ Information provided by Woolf Online: Reviews of *To the Lighthouse*

⁵ Information provided by The Spectator found on Woolf Online: Reviews of *To the Lighthouse*

in the center of it. Presenting her characters in detail and reflection, she experiments with technique in her work. Trying to acquire her personal vision on capturing the essence of life, readers cannot help but latch onto the symbolism of the unconscious that is found within Woolf's inanimate objects, and in nature. "The Saturday Review" argues that Woolf creates a world in which there is no reassurance of insignificant things and too greater of importance on them. The critic argues against the symbolic lighthouse and insufficient title (believing it should have been named *Mrs. Ramsay*).⁶ In contrast, plenty of critics argue this is what the novel is trying to do in order to accomplish its goal - understanding the abstract of life and all it comes with.

⁶ Information provided by The Saturday Review found on Woolf Online: Reviews of *To the Lighthouse*

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