

## Writing 109 DAY 1/12

lectures, readings & Screenings. All M.C. questions. 90 questions pr. course

~~Indo-European (first language?)~~

1/reads through course:

- innocence /purity vs. dark underbellies of America
- era of cars, T.V., advertising & psychoanalysis
- illness
- altered states (sometimes related to illness)
- Spanish concept of "duende" Imp or demonic character
- related to duende is the role of trickster; Hermes, for example in Greek Myth; Loki in Nordic Mythology; Prometheus stealing fire. etc.
- "They give birth astride of a grave, the light gleams an instant, then it's night once more." - Beckett
- microcosm and macrocosm. small humans and the large cosmos, natural laws vs. human laws.
- sleeping and being awake; rote behavior, learned, received behavior vs. awake behavior.
- religious origins; artistic intentions.

## SYLVIA PLATH

- A fundamental feature of Plath is that she moved from a poetry detached from her biography to a poetry inseparable from her personal story.
- Poets such as these became known as "confessional poets." They included W.D. Snodgrass, Anne Sexton & Robert Lowell.
- Beat poets also wrote out of their personal experiences, but not confessionally, on the whole. They wrote about their travels and adventures about relationships, but they did not write as if engage in self-analysis or psychotherapy.

- Significant this poetry from America at its peak, in the 1950's. Surface & underbelly of America.
- The "Dream of America". Democracy, progress, freedom & family.
- Civil rights and gender equality / atomiz weapons / out of control technology.
- Contradictory messages on sexuality in the 50's.
- Advertising and psychoanalysis in America, the drive to be "happy".
- Born in Massachusetts Oct. 27, 1932; died in London, Feb. 11, 1963. Father Otto Plath.
- Plath's father's death and its results on Plath. The central event on her life.
- Suicide attempts. Shock therapy & the Rosenbergs. Betrayal and victimhood.

→ What is confessional poetry? How did it come to be? "Heart's Needle" by Snodgrass. Lowell's Life Studies.

- Lowell... "removes the mask" in Life Studies for "his speaker is unequivocally himself and it is hard not to think of Life Studies as a series of personal confidences, rather shameful, that one is honor-bound not to reveal." (M.L. Rosenhall)

→ Ted Hughes enters. They are both charismatic people, obsessed with poetry, and connected at the level of mind and animal attraction.

• - When Plath visits her father's grave as part of her therapy, she "felt cheated." "My temptation to dig him up. To prove he existed and was dead."

- Anne Sexton's key role in confessional poetry, Her poetry fed by her sessions with the psychiatrist. Her insistence that she was writing as a woman of her time, expressing her immediate experiences.

- "But suicides have a special language. Like carpenters they want to know which tools, not why build."

( "Wanting to die" by Sexton )

- Plath's poetry a little more distant until her last poems when she released her long-suppressed rage & ~~visceral~~ visceral loss.

• - Is confessional poetry a valid poetry? Does Plath's poetry stand on its own without knowledge of her biography?

HW: Essay on murder?  
burger?

Writing Day 2/12

## Books by Plath

### Poems

The Colossus & other poems

Ariel (Posthumous)

Crossing the Water (P)

Winter Trees (P)

The Collected Poems (P)

### Prose

The Bell Jar

Letters Home (P)

Johnny Panic & the Bible of Dreams

The Journals of Sylvia Plath (P)

## Sylvia (The Movie)

Cast: Gwyneth Paltrow Sylvia  
Daniel Craig husband  
Blythe Danner Ariel Plath

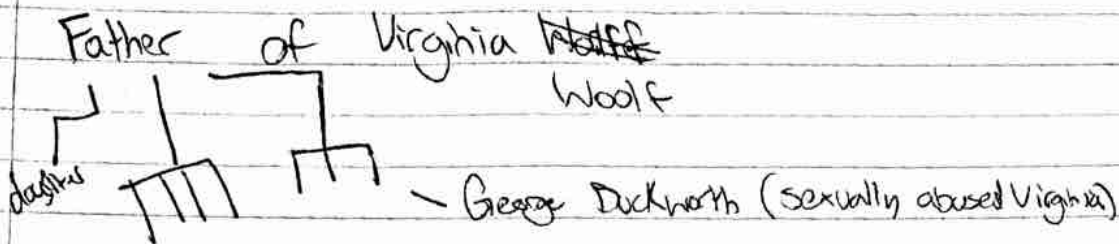
Director: Christine Jeffs

Consider: - Plath is very ambitious, organizes her ambitions. Doing the right things to get somewhere, working hard.

- Note #1 problem of writers, "writers block", Plath often couldn't write, then wrote manically.
- Plath says she doesn't have a subject, we see that she moves toward a subject. (confessional)
- Core of her eventual subject is her father issues.

- Note Plath's relationship to Hughes in terms of their writing careers
- Note the ongoing use of water imagery throughout the film, note, especially, Hughes words when the tide is taking them out to sea. How does this scene speak to their lives.
- Note the use of flames as 2 scenes are juxtaposed.
- Note, when Alvarez says, he too, tried to commit suicide, Plath doesn't ask why, but how. (relate to Sexton)
- Note hands at small window twice, near the end. Also note Hughes face at a small window near the end.
- Note the colour of the blanket against the white snow, near the end. (on a stretcher)
- Note the frequent use of wind in the background of the soundtrack
- "What I'm trying to say is that you've clearly got your subject. It's you." (Ted Hughes)

## Writing Day 3/12



- Born Virginia Stephen in England in 1882, died in England in 1941.
- Importance of older sister Vanessa.
- Connections with Plath; both within a struggle for women's rights; both writers; both had mental difficulties; both committed suicide.
- 4 areas to look at:
  - a) Woolf's sexuality & that of her friends
  - b) Woolf's health issues; Physical & mental
  - c) Woolf & women's rights
  - d) Woolf's books/writing process.
- a) - Woolf's beauty was charismatic
  - Friends as primary social unit; various relationships/sexualities in her group.
  - Her husband, Leonard Woolf
- b) - Her mental problems were partly inherited, partly the result of early sexual abuse
  - Often had flu or cold, jumpy heart, headaches
  - Problems were often stress-related
  - Attacks included voices, got worse with age
- c) - Wrote directly about women's issues, especially in *Three Guineas* (On being Despised, Professions of Women) and *A Room of One's Own*.
  - A woman needs money & a room of her own to be a writer.
  - Great artists are androgynous; she said; Yet her writing, particularly as seen in *Mrs. Dalloway*, is different from male writing.

Bloomsbury Group: Virginia Woolf, Leonard Woolf, Vanessa Bell,  
Clive Bell, Duncan Grant, John Maynard Keynes,  
Lydia Lopokova, Lytton Strachey, T.S. Eliot,  
Ottoline Morrell, Phillip Morrell, Dora Carrington,  
Ralph Partridge, Roger Fry etc.

Other names: George Duckworth, Adrian Stephen, Vita Sackville-West

\* Stream of Consciousness - style of writing ↑ younger brother

d) - Mrs. Dalloway written from female P.O.V.; it deals with supposedly "small things", not war, politics, etc; she is saying that a woman's perception, her day to day life, is equal to any man's.

- E.M. Forster wrote of Woolf, "she has all the aesthetes' characteristics..." i.e. she wrote for the sake of art; her writing was about writing as much as about narrative or characters.

- Woolf wrote, "Do not dream of influencing other people, Think of things in themselves."

- A term often associated with Woolf was "Stream of consciousness"; this only partly touches on her style.

- Woolf didn't work at developing characters or narrative so much as write about ideas, as embodied in characters and events.

- Central to Woolf is her handling of time and her probing into her mind.

- There is, within her fiction, a tendency towards ~~myth~~ mysticism, but there are no easy, comfortable beliefs.

QUOTES: "If I could stay in bed another fortnight (there is no chance of that) I believe I should see the whole of The Waves... I believe these illnesses are in my case partly mystical. Something happens in my mind. It refuses to go on registering impressions. It shuts itself up. It becomes chrysalis. I lie quite torpid, often with acute physical pain - as last year; only discomfort this. Then suddenly, something springs." (Woolf)

"Her gift was for the pursuit of shadows, for the ghostly whispers of the mind..." (Quentin Bell)

"Praise and blame alike mean nothing....." (Woolf)

"... that 500 a year stands for the power to contemplate, that a lock on the door means the power to think for oneself..." (Woolf)

"I suspect that Kassar's bodily infirmity is for him what 'melancholy' is for Kierkegaard. And as it was a kind of advantage for Kierkegaard always to have, instead of so many unforeseeable hindrances, only this one, immense, superman melancholy, before which he arranged himself in ever new battle formations, so Kassar too somehow prevails by virtue of the fact that all resistances coalesce for him in one hindrance: that procures for him concentration and assiduity." (Rilke)

- If by eternity is understood not endless temporal duration but in fact timelessness, then he lives eternally who lives in the present. (Wittgenstein)

- Not how the world is, is the mystical, but that it is. (Wittgenstein)

### Books by Wolfe (a cross-section)

Novels: Jacob's Room, Mrs. Dalloway, To the Lighthouse, Orlando, The Waves

Non-Fiction: The Common Reader, A room of one's own, On Being Ill, Three Guineas, The Death of the Moth and Other Essays

+ Short story collections and 3 biographies

# Writing Day 4/12

## Cast

Meryl Streep Clarissa (2002 old insane lesbian)  
Julianne Moore Laura Brown  
Nicole Kidman Virginia  
Ed Harris Richard Brown (Aids)  
Miranda Richardson Vanessa (Sister)  
John C. Reilly Dad of Psycho Mom (Don)  
Stephen Dillane Leonard (husband)  
Claire Danes Julia

## Screenplay

David Hare

## Music

Philip Glass

## Director

Stephen Daldry

This film is an adaptation of the novel, of the same title, by Michael Cunningham.

## Considerations:

- Double adaptation involved here.
- Film is first and foremost a visual medium.
- Note visual and aural language of film. Note how different stories in different time periods are connected.

- Leonard & Virginia communicate without words, using facial expressions & body language
- Rhythm of writer getting ready to work.
- Ritchie's (young boy) eyes yearning for his mother and her distance. Note other visual relationships.
- Note relationship of creative and domestic sphere.
- The many ways in which Laura Brown is seen as domestically incompetent.
- Note how emotions are covered up in 50's, note the masks at work, the compartmentalization of emotions.
- Note how Ray's drinking is revealed indirectly. This is a typical strength of film. Important to never seem expositional. Bring information in indirectly when possible.
- Note the different interpersonal behaviors, especially related to emotions, among the three eras.
- Lewis Waters does an indirect review of Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway. He's actually speaking of another book.
- Note Ritchie building house he built. Symbolism. Note the model house beside his dreaming head.
- Kisses show desperation
- Depth of Leonard & Virginia's relationship, especially in train station.

- Note Virginia says: "Mrs. Dalloway's destiny must be resolved." Then we see resolutions for Clarissa & Laura.

### Quotes:

- "There's a time to die, and it may be the bird's time."  
(Vanessa Bell)
- "That's what people do. They stay alive for each other."  
(Clarissa Vaughan)
- "The poet will die, the visionary."  
(Virginia Woolf)
- "It was death; ~~the~~ I chose life."  
(Laura Brown)

## Writing Day 5/12

- assonance is when vowels sound the same

### Truman Capote

- Creative nonfiction / New Journalism

- George Orwell's "Shooting an Elephant"  
Ernest Hemmingway's "Death in the afternoon"  
Tom Wolfe's "The Right Stuff"  
Frank McCourt's "Angela's Ashes"

- Gray Talese: "Frank Sinatra has a cold"

- "Though often reading like fiction, it is not fiction. It is, or should be, as reliable as the most reliable reportage although it seeks a larger truth than is possible through a mere compilation of verifiable facts, the use of direct quotations and the adherence to the rigid organizational style of the older form." (Talese)

- "larger truth" / ethical issue

- Capote helped revolutionize this genre; some say he began the New Journalism

- Truman Streckfus Persons born Sept. 30, 1924 in New Orleans, Louisiana. died Aug 25, 1984.

- Mom, Lillie Mae, later changed name to Nina, highly ambitious, social standing & easy money. (wanted easy life)

- Dad, Arch, very ambitious, was a hustler essentially.

- Capote abandoned by both parents at various times. Often left with very old aunts. His neighbor when there was Nelle ~~Harper~~ Lee,

Harper

- Loneliness and fear of abandonment.
- Harper Lee wrote "To Kill a Mockingbird," Still alive, in same town.
- Capote's homosexuality and its impacts
- Capote knew early he would be a writer.
- Had personal traits that helped him as a fictional writer and journalist.
- Lack of privacy issue
- He used actual people in his fiction early on.
- Theatre & film / Journalist Work
- His first great success: Breakfast at Tiffany's
- Holly Golightly. "You're afraid and you sweat like hell, but you don't know what you're afraid of." Free-floating anxiety.
- "Truman Capote I do not know well, but I like him. He is tart as a grand aunt, but in his way he is a ballsy little guy, and he is the most perfect writer of my generation, he writes the best sentences word for word, rhythm for rhythm, I would not have changed 2 words in "Breakfast at Tiffany's," which will become a small classic." (Mailer)
- Answered Prayers: "... more tears are shed over answered prayers than unanswered prayers." This aphorism obsessed Capote all his life. It was a version of something St. Teresa of Avila was supposed to have said.

- Nov. 16, 1959: N.Y. Times: "Wealthy farmer, 3 of family slain."

Communities of Holcombe & Garden City, Kansas.

- Detective Alvin Dewey.

- Capote and Harboor Lee research IN "Cold Blood"

- Perry Smith: Capote's shadow and vice versa.

- Perry Smith & Dick Hickock arrested Dec. 30, 1959.

- Murderers convicted, condemned to hang because of 'intention'. Some controversy around this.

- Ethical difficulties. "My concern is that the info you have collected is accurate, correct and not perverted by the reporter to his or her purpose for any ulterior motive." (Smith) "What is the purpose of this book?" (Smith)

- The book as Greek Tragedy

- "I suppose it sounds pretentious, but I feel an obligation to write it, even though the material leaves me increasingly limp & numb and, well, horrified - I have such awful dreams every night. I don't know now how I could ever have felt so callous and 'objective' as I did in the beginning." (Capote)

- Suspended animation, waiting for an outcome.

- "I am in a really appalling state of tension & anxiety. Perry & Dick have an appeal for a new trial pending in Federal Court; if they should get it I will have a complete nervous breakdown of some sort." (Capote)

Writing Day 6/12

Capote (2005)

Cast:

Phillip Seymour Hoffman capote  
Catherine Keener Mee Nelle Harper Lee  
Chris Cooper Alvin Dewey

Screenplay:

Den Fetherman

Director:

Bennett Miller

This film was based on the biography, of the same name, by Gerald Clarke.

Considerations:

- Film shot in Manitoba
- "Place" is established immediately, visually.
- Note that we are introduced to Capote as he regales an audience. We don't need words, Note the milieu, Manhattan in contrast to rural Kansas.
- Note William Shawn, editor, and note Harper Lee on the train.
- Capote has 94% memory recall

## Writing Day 5/12 Pt. 2

- Capote did a public reading of the book. One review said effect was like, "a fabulist of the old order, weaving a spell with voice and word, making one hear, see, feel, sense. What he shaped was a whole landscape and the fateful people in it." (Newsweek)

- The hanging. April 14, 1965.

- Ex of Capote's verbal vengeance:

Upset with Saul Maloff, who convinced the jury not to give Capote an award, he referred to Maloff's new novel by saying Frank Sinatra needed this novel because Sinatra suffered from a bad case of insomnia, and "this numbing little novel, an anthology of every cliché literary cliché... missed ~~the~~ ="

### Books by Capote

Other Voices, Other Rooms (novel)

A Tree of Night and Other Stories (Sh. Stories)

The Grass Harp (Novel & Play)

Beat the Devil (Screenplay)

House of Flowers (Broadway Musical)

The Muses are Heard (non-fiction)

Breakfast at Tiffany's (novel)

In Cold Blood (Creative non-fiction)

Music for Chameleons (Short work / Fiction / Non)

Answered Prayers (Posthumously published)

\* Test on Plath, Woolfe & Capote

\* especially Plath readings

## Writing Day 6/12 Pt. 2

- Note how observant, focused Capote is, watching behavior and language.
- Note how Capote doesn't fit into Kansas, Lee knows how to adapt.
- "It's the hardest, when someone has a notion of you and it's impossible to convince them otherwise." (Capote)
- Note how we learn about Capote's background indirectly, in numerous places.
- Note the creative process between Capote & Lee.
- Adaptation; in real life Capote & Lee were not invited to the Dewey's but to another couple's; Compression.
- Observe various visual clues to Capote's relationship to Perry.
- Note Capote's ongoing manipulation of Perry
- Note Capote's bribing of jail official
- "I can't finish the book until I know what happens." (Capote)
- "I was so ashamed." (Perry to Capote re: Mr. Clutter)
- "It's harrowing." (Capote waiting for execution)
- "At least for now you should try and pretend you're having a good time tonight." (Jack to Capote)
- "It's torture, what they're doing to me." (Capote to Lee)

- "It was a terrible experience, and I'll never get over it." (Capote about the hangings)

- Note the last shot: The writer holds his subject in his hands.

Bob Dylan Tenasse Williams

## Writing Day 7/12

### Biography -

- focus on transition between 1963 & 1966
- Robert Zimmerman born May 24, 1941 in Duluth, Minn.; later moved to Hibbing, Minn.
- Changed name at University of Minnesota, then headed to NYC
- Influence of Woody Guthrie, Dave Van Ronk
- The Times: Transitional period between 1950's & what became known as the 60's.
- Some names: JFK, Hitchcock, Paul Newman, To Kill a Mockingbird, McCarthy, Malcom X, Martin Luther King, Pope John XXIII, Castro, Guevara, etc...
- Dylan mythologizing of self

### Roll in Folk & Rock Music

- Two primary streams of music / literature outside of the mainstream; folk & beat.
- Dylan moves from folk to beat while retaining important elements of folk. Controversy.
- Dylan's writing moves from traditional folk ~~to~~ narrative, through protest songs, into the surreal
- Transformation: "... he not busy being born / Is busy dying..."

- Newport Folk Festival; July 25th, 1965 and repercussions.

- Improvisation ("first thought, best thought"),  
imagery, surrealism

## Dylan as Poet

- Levels of Poetry / Lorca et...

a) art as magic, with preconceived purpose and desired practical effect. Dylan's protest songs.

b) Poetry understood emotionally; imaginative poetry with preconceived purpose or desired practical effect; it expresses what an artist feels. Songs like "Subterranean homesick blues."

c) According to Lorca, this is "poetry of inspiration, with no necessary external referents and with an internal logic of its own." Songs/poems with an internal cohesiveness; they simply are. Such songs have a mysterious power that people sense but no philosopher can explain.

- Duende / Inspiration

- Voice

## Various Quotes:

"It's the music that the words are sung to that separates  
I write the song because I need something to sing. It's the  
difference between the words on paper and the song. The song  
disappears into the air, the paper stays. They have little in  
common. A great poet like Wallace Stevens doesn't necessarily  
make a great singer. But a great singer - always like Billie Holiday -  
makes a great poet." (Dylan)

"She had to rob herself of skill and security... it was a jet of blood worthy of her pain and her sincerity." (Lorca writing about a performance by La Nina de los Peñes)

"All arts are capable of Duende, but where it finds greatest range, naturally, is in music, dance and spoken poetry..." (Lorca)

"Very often intellect is poetry's enemy because it is given too much to imitation. Because it lifts the poem to a throne of sharp edges and makes him oblivious of the fact that he may suddenly be devoured by ants, or a great organic lobster may fall on his head." (Lorca)

~~"Duende involves a kind of ~~the~~ elevation where death is present in the form..." (Robert Bly)~~

"I am just a voice speaking, anytime I'm ~~singing~~ singing about people and if the songs are dreamed, it's like my voice is coming out of their dream." (Dylan)

## Songs

A hard rain's gonna fall  
Mr. Tambourine man  
It's all over now Baby Blue  
Maggy's Farm

## Albums

Bringing it all back home  
Highway 61 revisited  
Blonde on Blonde

# Writing Day 8/12

## Interviewees

Bob Dylan  
Allen Ginsberg  
Bob Newhart  
Suze Rotolo  
Joan Baez  
Maria Muldon  
Pete Seger

## Director:

Martin Scorsese

Film focuses on Dylan from 61-66, when he had his bike accident.

## Considerations:

- Note that beat poet Ginsberg appears throughout film
- Note controversy of folk vs. rock winds throughout film
- Note several interviews Dylan involved in, and strangeness in fan obsessions. Dylan didn't want to be a leader.
- "They were trying to make me an insider on some trip they were on, I don't think so." (Dylan)
- Note scene where Dylan first trapped in a car by fans, his face as he realizes he is imprisoned. He refuses to please fans, his unpleas to fame & praise.
- "...you know him, he's yours..."

- "An artist has got to be careful never to really arrive at a place he thinks has at. Gotta realize you're constantly in a state of becoming." (Dylan)
- "...Gotta put your bodies upon the gears, levers, wheels, apparatus, got to make it stop." (Mario Savio)
- "In those days artistic success was not dollar driven, those were simpler times, if you had something to say is the way ppl were rated." (Bob Neuwirth)
- "What struck me is that he was at one or he became identical with his breath. He had become a column of breathe.... He had found a way in public to be almost like a shaman, with all his intelligence & consciousness focused on his breath." (Ginsberg)  
(had duende)
- Note "Subterranean Homesick Blues"; early music video? Rap?
- Note Bruce Langhorne discussing Bring it all Back Home sessions  
Note, the improvisation.
- "That's what he's good at, getting used to the way things are. He understands that time changes everything." (D.A. Pennebaker)
- Folk Rock; The Byrds; etc...
- Breakthrough of "Like a Rolling Stone", again improvisational element.
- Newport
- "No, I'll be busy tonight." (Dylan)
- "Get me a new Bob Dylan." (Dylan)

## The Band

Richard Manuel  
- Piano

Garth Hudson  
- Organ

Robbie Robertson  
- Guitar

Rick Danko  
- Bass

Levon Helm  
- Drums

Writing Day 9/12 ... or maybe 11 now

## Pablo Neruda

- Pablo Neruda stands with Yeats, Lorca, Tagore, Akhmatova, Auden etc... in world literature
- in Spanish speaking world he stands with Lorca & Vallejo.
- Brilliant poet and political activist who sometimes let his poetry be vehicle for his political convictions.

## Bio

- Born 'Ricardo Eliécer Neftalí Reyes Basoalto' on July 12th, 1904 in Parral, Chile.
- mother, Rosa, died shortly after his birth.
- father, Jose, had already had an illegitimate son with a woman with Trinidad before he married Rosa. After Rosa died, he married Trinidad. Later he fathered another illegitimate child, Laura, a favorite of Neruda's.
- Neruda loved nature early; paid attention to detail.
- first love: "~~Nature made me feel~~ That whole confused first ~~love~~, love, or something like that, is shattering, painful, full of commotion or torment, and impregnated with ~~the idea~~ of all the traces of a penetrating aroma of convent lilac."
- Boys' Lyceum in Temuco where he read a lot and had insatiable curiosity for little things.
- he wrote early, his father disgusted by this.

- "Nature made me feel inebriated. I must have been about 10 yrs old, but I was already a poet, . . . I was stunned by the perfection of the insects." (Neruda)
- "When I woke up, I put out a startled hand and found only a warm hallow, a warm absense." (Neruda)
- early poetic influences; Beaudelaire, Rimbaud, Mallarmé, Apollinaire, Ruben Dario.
- he began fighting for social justice; "Under the pretext of exterminating bandits, the colonizers dispossessed the inhabitants of their land, and Indians were killed as if they were rabbits. After independence, after 1810, the Chileans devoted themselves to killing Indians, with the same enthusiasm as the Spanish Invaders." (Neruda)
- wrote a lot of poetry, keeping it separate from his prose writing on politics at this point; some of his themes emerged at this time, love, solitude, rain & bells.
- when dad burned his poetry, changed names to Pablo Neruda; after Jan Neruda, Czech writer.
- with downturn of Chilean economy, many strikes and union activity, Neruda very involved. Angry at exploitation and capitalist abuse. He hated the bourgeoisie and identified with the restless, dissatisfied people, artists & criminals.
- 1921, he moved to Santiago, a city of fast growth, political upheaval and worker riots. Spent a lot of time in cafes and bars engaged in political and literary discussion.

- his father cut off his funds, but Trinidad surreptitiously kept sending him money.
- first book crepuscular
- ex "Curve of the belly, hidden  
and open like a fruit or  
a sound."
- or, "I like the love of sailors,  
who kiss and go their own way."
- poetry as aphrodisiac.
- 2nd book, probably most famous, 'Twenty love songs and a song of  
despair.'
- three more books in 1926, a new poetry.
- ex: "I feel the contented Baker's joy and then dawn breaks weak and  
vivid-colored with the sound of a bell ~~and~~ with the smell of  
distance."
- consular posting in Rangoon, Burma.
- "... But what is there to do? We have to submit to life and struggle  
with it with the belief that no one else will look after us."  
(Nevada)
- Josie Bliss
- Maryka Antonietta Hageraar VogeIsund, 1930

- meets Lorca who says of Neruda, "closer to death than to philosophy, closer to pain than to intelligence, closer to blood than to ink." He also adds that Neruda, "Lacks the 2 elements that so many false poets have lived: Hatred and irony."
- Maryka (Maruca) ill during pregnancy, delivers daughter with hydrocephalus.
- Delia del Corral, 20 years older than Neruda, and a militant communist.
- Residence on earth, and other poems, 1933/35
- Canto General, a historical and political work.
- 1953 Stalin Peace Prize.
- Octavio Paz writes of Neruda/Stalinism: "No doubt they began in good faith, but insensibly, commitment by commitment, they saw themselves being tangled in a net of lies, falsehoods, deceits, and perjuries, until they lost their souls."
- Senator in Chile; forced into hiding, and then exile.
- in Mexico, meets Matilde Urrutia. With her on the island of Capri in 1952. (*Il postho*)
- Elementary Odes published 1954. Many more books follow, to end of Neruda's life.
- Allende wins election; Neruda is ambassador to France.
- Nobel Prize in 1971
- Pinochet takes over in a military coup.

- Neruda dies as coup is happening, 1973.

- as soldiers check ~~the~~ his house he says, "Look around - there's only one thing of danger to you here - poetry."

## Books by Neruda

Crepuscular

Twenty love songs and a song of despair

Residence on earth, and other poems

Canto General

One hundred love sonnets

Elementary odes

Toward the Splendid City (Noble lecture)

Memoirs

## Writing Day 9/11 (I think) (Pt. 2)

- Thomas Lanier Williams born on March 26, 1911 in Columbus, Mississippi.  
Parents: Corneilus and Edwina. Sister: Rose Brother: Walter
- The south in those days: "Morner is morality."
- Williams and illness.
- Williams and mobility.
- Rose and her mental instability.
- New Orleans
- "The road to excess leads to the palace of wisdom." (William Blake)  
A dionysian approach.
- Hypochondria
- The guilty secret / The hidden wound
- The Glass Menagerie
- A Streetcar Named Desire
- Williams and revision
- 1945-1960; a dozen plays; his peak period
- The Night of the Iguana
- The influence of Rilke; the spiritual element in Iguana.
- Shannon / Hannah / Nonno in Iguana

## Quotes

- "The road to excess leads to the palace of wisdom.. for we never know what is enough until we know what is more than enough." (William Blake)
- "The Glass Menagerie is one stroke lifted lyricism to its highest level in our theatre's history... In him the American theatre found, perhaps for the first time, an eloquence and an amplitude of feeling. And driving on this newly discovered lyrical line was a kind of emotional heroism; he wanted not approve or disapprove but to touch the germ of life and to celebrate it with verbal beauty." (A. Miller)
- "All work is autobiographical if its serious. Everything a writer produces is his inner history, transposed into another time. I am more personal in my writing than other people." (Williams)
- "It's human valor that moves me ~~me~~ (Williams)  
The dominant theme in most of my writing, most magnificent thing in all human nature, is valor & endurance."
- "... he was more eager to get away from where he was than to get to another place..." (Paul Bowles)
- "If I can be said to have a home, it is in New Orleans, which has provided me with more material than any other part of the country." (Williams)
- "I create imaginary worlds in which I can retreat from the real world because I've never made any kind of adjustment to the real world." (Williams)
- "... an incomplete sentence..." God

- "In a play, time is arrested in the sense of being confined. By a sort of legerdemain, events are made to remain events, rather than being reduced so quickly to mere occurrences. The audience can sit back in a comfortable ~~seat~~ ~~dusk~~ to watch a world which is flooded with light and in which emotion and action have a dimension and dignity that they would likewise have in real existence, if only the shattering intrusion of time could be locked out." (Williams)

## Works by Williams (selected)

### Plays

The Glass Menagerie 1945

A Streetcar Named Desire 1947

Summer & Smoke 1948

The Rose Tattoo 1951

Cat on a Hot Tin Roof 1955

Suddenly last summer 1958

Sweet Bird of Youth 1959

The Night of the Iguana 1961

The Milk Train Doesn't Stop Here Anymore 1962

SPIRIT  
OF  
TRUTH

Writing Day 10/14

The Night of the Iguana (1964)

Cast:

Richard Burton  
Ava Gardner  
Debra Kerr  
Sue Lyon

Director:

John Huston

Film was shot on location in Puerto Vallarta and Mismaloya, Mexico. It was an ~~adaptation~~ adaptation of Tennessee Williams' play of the same name. In spite of considerable ...

Considerations:

Note that there are many resonant lines which speak not only to plot but to themes within the movie. Bits of dialogue relate to each other throughout the movie.

Note the sign right at the start of the movie. "Spirit of truth." The sign introduces us to the protagonist both in name and position.

"He that has no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down and without walls." (Shannon quoting from proverbs)

The whole church beginning is not in the play. It provides visual background information about Shannon that can only be revealed through dialogue in the play.

Shannon's <sup>sermon</sup> ~~sermon~~ establishes his own inner struggle.

"Oh you beast you beast you beast" (Fellowes)

Note use of Iguana as symbol, and the idea of "The end of the rope".

"Miss Jelkes, we live on two levels, the fantastical level and the <sup>realistic</sup> ~~real~~ level are the 2 levels upon which we live. But which is the real one really?" (Sharon)

"I've got to break the chain." (Sharon)

- Note the extended metaphor of the ~~crucifixion~~ ~~crucifixion~~ crucifixion.

"I respect anybody whos had to fight and howl for his decency."  
(~~Sharon~~) (Jelkes to Sharon)

Note old man composing his poem as a kind of accompaniment to the poem of the main story.

Pay especially close attention to the nighttime hammock scene between Sharon & Hannah. The core of Williams' philosophy is here, his admiration for valor, his valuing for the small victories of misfits and those down and out

"Nothing human disgusts me unless it's unkind or violent." (Hannah)

Note Williams' interests in finding human value, love, dignity in 'low' situations.

"... endurance is something spooks and blue devils respect, and they respect all the tricks paralytic people use to outwit and outlast their pain." (Hannah)

"We are operating on the realistic level when we are doing the things that have to be done." (Hannah)

# Writing Day 11/11

## Cast:

Phillippe Noiret  
Massimo Troisi  
Mara Grazia Cucinotta

## Director:

Michel Radford

This film is set in 1952 when Neruda was in exile from Chile, for political reasons, and lived on the island of Capri in the villa owned by the Italian historian Edwin Cerio.

## Considerations:

- Opening establishes poverty (no fish) and a wish to leave by Mario. Some relatives have already left. America is the land of opportunity to them.
- Neruda is brought into the film through Newsreel.
- Note that Mario leans forward in interest when he hears that Neruda's poetry draws women. This is foreshadowing in terms of the film's plot. It also points towards further references to that aspect of Neruda's life and poetry.
- We get 2 sides of Neruda very quickly in Newsreel. As well as in talks between Mario and boss in post office, & in Mario's interest that most of Neruda's mail is from women.
- Neruda holding onion. He wrote an ode on it. Interested in common things.

- First poem Mario reads in Cafe is "Walking Around."
- Note the beginning of ongoing discussion between Mario & Neruda about metaphors. Neruda says, "You're standing as stiff as a post." Mario replies with a quote from Neruda poem, "Nailed like a spear."
- Note the book Mario has been reading is 'Elementary Odes'. This is a book he can relate to easily; odes to common things, the earth.
- Note Neruda's response when Mario asked him why he wrote, "the smell of barber shops make me sad."
- "When you explain it, poetry becomes banal!" (Neruda)
- Note Mario's reason for wanting to be a poet.
- Note Neruda's answer to Mario when he asks how one can become a poet.
- Note the scene when Mario is trying to write a poem; his father slurps from a cooking pot, Mario (facial expression), shows he'd like to talk about poem, or about writing poetry, but he can't with his father.
- We see Neruda's innate political activism in a discussion about the water problem on the island.
- "The whole world is the metaphor for something else." (Mario)
- Mario has poems all around him; he needs to be attentive and open.

- 2 famous poets wrote poems to women named Beatrice; Dante & d'Annunzio.
- Note Neruda's explanation as to why he began writing political poems.
- Note that Beatrice's Aunt thinks words are dangerous, especially in love. Connect this with Neruda's hero as he was dying, to the soldiers searching his house.
- Note critical appearance to Esball in the film. What several corrections does it have?