

## **Original Intro:**

Mrs. Dalloway is considered as a classic novel of the Modernist period in its form to capture the thoughts and memories of the characters in one day in postwar England. There are many changes which occur after the war- a change in the society has created a change in people's view of the society in general. There are those who wish to preserve the traditional and those who would like to see changes as spontaneous, where a disjoint in thinking occurs when one side fails to understand the other. Life after World War II has made an impact on the characters in the novel, especially the protagonist, Clarissa. All of them are trying to find out the purpose of their life; their biggest conflict lies in the fact that they are trying to remain faithful to their souls (desires) at the same time while meeting the demands of the modern society which oppresses their real selves through technology and Science. The war has brought a change to the society, and many of these characters struggle to communicate with the ever-changing post war England, which is the complete opposite of what they stand for. Their private selves remain with prewar England, when the idea of Nature, Art and Humanities take place. They try to balance the private and public self (the traditional and Modern society.) By presenting the external and internal perspectives of these characters, Woolf is showing us the contrast between the private and public sphere, as we saw how characters often have to deny how they really feel and conform to the rules of the society. The theme of communication (the public sphere) and privacy (private sphere) continues to reoccur throughout the novel as the characters struggle to find a balance between communication and privacy. The communication occurs when the characters are trying to communicate with their inner selves and channel this side to the world, as well as their communication towards other people in the society. The idea of life and death is also strongly linked to the idea of communication and privacy. Most of the characters are 'alive' in this novel but their loneliness, the struggle to find a place for themselves in the society makes them feel invisible, almost in a 'deathly' sense. As Clarissa expresses, " this body, with all its capacities, seemed nothing--nothing at all. She had the oddest sense of being herself invisible; unseen; unknown; there being no more marrying, no more having of children now, but only this astonishing and rather solemn progress with the rest of them." (14)

## **Revised Intro:**

Virginia Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway takes place in post-war England and is considered a classic novel of the Modernist period. It is a distinctive work in that it captures the thoughts and memories of its characters within the time frame of a single day. These thoughts and memories reveal the characters' struggle to negotiate a radically altered social order that emphasizes science and technology and trivializes the paramount value they had placed on nature and culture in their genteel pre-war lives. Through the eyes of the protagonist, Clarissa, and another major character, Septimus Smith, we see a generation trying to discover the purpose of their lives and seeking balance between their private, or traditional, and public, or modern, selves. By contrasting the inner dialogue of her characters and their communication with others, Woolf exposes the schism between their authentic selves and the public personae they are compelled to assume. This theme of public versus private communication is sustained throughout the novel to illustrate characters who must deny their true feelings in order to function according to the rules of a changed society. Woolf thus explores the conflicted emotional

landscape of characters who, even though they may appear to be well adjusted and happy, are actually afflicted by a deepening sense of alienation and displacement.