

**'One Hundred Years of the Stream of Consciousness:
Editors' Introduction**

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One Hundred Years of the Stream of Consciousness

Editors' Introduction

It has now been more than one hundred years since May Sinclair's famed review of Dorothy Richardson's *Pilgrimage* appeared in the modernist periodical *The Egoist* (April 1918). In the century following its initial publication, the review has attracted broad critical attention for likening Richardson's prose-style to a "stream of consciousness going on and on (p. 58)." It was the first acknowledged use of a literary term which was to become a defining aesthetic of modernist literary representations of the daily fluxes, nuances, thoughts and perceptions of the inner life. As a literary term, however, "stream of consciousness" was problematic from its first inception. Richardson herself responded less than enthusiastically, writing vehemently that the literary label Sinclair had chosen to apply to her work was a "more than lamentably ill-chosen metaphor" which was "still, in literary criticism, pursuing its foolish way" (1990, p. 433). Although Sinclair had also earlier acknowledged that the term was problematic—she wrote in her philosophical work *A Defence of Idealism* that "the unity of consciousness can certainly not be accounted for or explained on the simple theory of consciousness as a stream" (1917, p. 80)—Richardson's observation was to prove as enduring as it was accurate. The label has not only persisted in scholarly accounts of modernism; it has remained synonymous with modernist literature, and to this day continues to be a fertile if controversial area of critical debate.

Emerging in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-centuries, stream of consciousness narrative coincided with a cultural shift in beliefs about human subjectivity in an era which saw traditional, humanist notions of identity continually challenged by contemporary intellectual, scientific and popular discourses. As Anne Fernihough has noted, "when stream-of-consciousness writing and philosophy were emerging, the physical and cultural textures of life were changing at a bewildering rate" (p. 73). She suggests that the "increasing mechanization, organization and centralization at every level of society were contributing to a paranoid sense on the part of some intellectuals that private space was being surrendered to the public space of the masses". These intellectuals then turned to an examination of subjectivity—what Tamar Katz calls "the perceptual processes [...] of the impressionable subject" (p. 5)—as defence. Fernihough concludes that "stream of consciousness writing was just one facet of the complex cultural response to this sense of invasion and contamination." The modernist project of exploring and representing subjectivity, however, laid it open to charges of elitism, insularity and egotism. The fear of "contamination" was read by many as class anxiety.

As the essays in this issue amply demonstrate, a definitive definition of the elusive label “stream of consciousness” is as fraught with contradictions and complexities as it was a century earlier when the term was first conceptualized. Referred to contemporaneously as “psychological prose,” stream of consciousness narrative designates the shift from vivid external description to introspection in modernist depictions of subjective consciousness. In his essay “The metaphysics of Modernism,” Michael Bell notes that in an era of epochal epistemological change, early-twentieth century fiction saw a radical move away from representational verisimilitude. This shift, Bell goes on to observe, was accompanied by a “linguistic turn” in which, “rather than describing or reflecting the world, language was now seen to form it” (Bell, 1999, p. 16).

According to Bell, language thus became the pervasive cultural metaphor of the twentieth century, with the implication that “a view of language entails a view of the world, a usually implicit philosophy.” Moreover, the divided responses to the linguistic turn themselves necessitate an understanding of the broader philosophical context in which they emerged (p. 18). Seen in this context, Sinclair’s review of *Pilgrimage* takes on an important cultural significance, not simply for the coining of the term “stream of consciousness,” but also her observation that “criticism up till now has been content to think in *clichés*, missing the new trend of the philosophies of the twentieth century’ (p. 442). Later critics of the psychological novel also emphasised the connections between a narrative focus on subjectivity and contemporary theories of mind. Leon Edel characterises the “modern psychological novel” as reflecting “the deeper and more searching *inwardness* of our century,” which was in turn “reflected in the writings of William James and Henri Bergson and after them, in the experimental and clinical level, in the work of Sigmund Freud” (Edel, 1972, p. 28). Sinclair specifically and extensively engaged with each of these thinkers, whereas Richardson “groans” beneath accusations of “post-war Freudianity” and refuses to admit to having read William James, or, having read Bergson, to being influenced by him (1990, p. 431).

This emphasis on modern philosophy was one of the reasons why Richardson herself objected to the phrase “stream of consciousness.” In the essay “Novels” written for *Life and Letters*—one of many contexts in which Richardson takes issue with Sinclair’s label—she mentions that Sinclair borrowed the term “from the epistemologists” (p. 433). There seems to be a sense in which Richardson objects to such rational theorising of the nature of subjectivity. Conversely, both Sinclair and Richardson were concerned with understanding reality in

metaphysical, ontological terms which tended to privilege questions of being over those of knowledge.

It is important to recognise here that “stream of consciousness” is being used in two senses. In its first application, as a way of describing subjectivity, it is primarily a theory of mind. In its second sense, increasingly in the twentieth-century, it is used as a way of describing a literary *technique*: the linguistic presentation of subjectivity. Melvin Friedman, writing in 1955, was already finding that these two categories were being conflated. He complains that “Critics have used ‘interior monologue’ and ‘stream of consciousness’ almost indiscriminately. Those writing in English generally prefer the latter; those writing in French invariably use the former.” Friedman further points out that the “use” of stream of consciousness “as an exact equivalent of ‘interior [or ‘inner’] monologue’” is inherently problematic (Friedman, 1955, pp. 1-2). He cites Robert Humphrey’s claim that “when critics identify the two terms they are confusing a ‘genre’—stream of consciousness—with a ‘technique’—interior monologue:”

there is no stream of consciousness technique; one would commit a serious error in critical terminology by speaking of it as such. “Stream of consciousness” designates a type of novel in the same way as “ode” or “sonnet” designates a type of poem; the ode and sonnet use certain poetic techniques which distinguish each from the other, but they are still of the same generic category. (p. 3)

This is perhaps the most useful distinction to be made, and it is one that many of the contributors to this issue do make. If we consider “stream of consciousness” to be a range of literary techniques with the same preoccupation—that of representing and privileging subjectivity—then all kinds of early twentieth-century novels can be considered in and through its terms. The critic must tread carefully with this, though, as Fernihough rightly points out:

We should [...] beware of homogenizing stream-of-consciousness writing, and of dehistoricizing it. In its earlier manifestations stream-of-consciousness “form” was the sign of the real (Bergson’s *durée*); more specifically, it was the sign of the individual’s reality, understood to be incommensurable with anyone else’s. (p. 79)

This special issue, then, is careful to consider each individual writer's engagement with "stream of consciousness" as genre, or preoccupation; as unique and idiosyncratic. In this, we wish to respect both Richardson and Sinclair's engagements with the term.

In her "Foreword" to *Pilgrimage* (1938), Richardson acknowledges the phrase "The Stream of Consciousness" as a formula "gladly welcomed by all who could persuade themselves of the possibility of comparing consciousness to a stream". It is a label, she implies, devoid of any essential meaning and merely meeting "the exigencies of literary criticism" (p. 430). She refers also to "Interior Monologue" and "Slow-motion Photography" as "successors" to the stream of consciousness phrase. These last, she says, have a "certain technical applicability" which stream of consciousness doesn't have, but are still defective. Instead, in this foreword, Richardson claims that her method, inasmuch as it can be called a method, was an attempt at "a feminine equivalent of the current masculine realism." She includes a quotation from Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* as "manifesto:" "In the novel, reflections and incidents should be featured; in drama, character and action". The kind of realism she aims at, then, is a realism of incident and reflection, or reflection on incidents. This realism is necessarily interior.

One of the first sustained critical analyses of twentieth century writing in terms of the "stream of consciousness" was by Shiv K. Kumar. While researching the psychological and philosophical implications of the phrase, he wrote to Richardson to ask about her method and to gauge how far she considered herself influenced by Bergson. Her reaction to the phrase was still critical, and she suggested a modification of the metaphor:

In deploring the comparison of consciousness with a stream and suggesting that fountain would be a more appropriate metaphor, I do not recognise the latter as a suitable label for the work appearing early in the century. This, I feel, was a natural development from the move away from "Romance" to "Realism" (the latter being a critical reaction to the former). It dealt directly with reality. Hence the absence of either "plot", "climax" or "conclusion". All the writers concerned would agree with Goethe that drama is for the stage. (Richardson, 1952)

Here Richardson returns, fourteen years after the "Foreword," to the very terms of her initial engagement with genre categorisation. She still does not think that consciousness can or should be compared to a stream, and she suggests that "fountain" is a more appropriate metaphor for consciousness itself. She is even more reluctant to let the phrase pass as a descriptor for the kinds of psychological fiction "appearing early in the century." The other writers that Kumar

includes in his book, she implies, would probably identify more as “realist” writers (albeit realism with modification) and would all agree that drama has no place in a novel. The novel’s principal focus should be reflection upon incident. Richardson is also emphatic that she was never aware of being influenced by Bergson or by anyone, although “no doubt Bergson influenced many minds.”

Kumar’s book, *Bergson and the Stream of Consciousness Novel*, appeared a decade later. In it, he is careful to acknowledge Richardson’s claim that she was not consciously influenced by Bergson, but still claims for her writing a Bergsonian “resemblance:”

The process of literary creation, individual and mysterious as it always is, can seldom be discussed in terms of “direct influence.” Nevertheless, it sometimes does help to discover certain recognizable threads in a literary mosaic with a view to understanding more successfully the basic intention of a writer. (pp. 36-7)

Kumar’s reading of Richardson in Bergsonian terms, then, is that her writing, in its attempt to foreground reflection upon incident as realism, is “a deliberate effort to render in a literary medium a new realization of experience as a process of dynamic renewal” (p. 2). He claims Richardson as the first writer to use this “new medium” of the stream of consciousness to present characters in terms of Bergsonian flux. She presents “personality as a process and not a state” (p. 41).

Kumar also considers Virginia Woolf and James Joyce in his study, and he labels them both, unproblematically, as stream of consciousness writers. He claims that Woolf has gone further than Richardson in the development of stream of consciousness as technique, because she presents “a consistent and comprehensive treatment of time” (p. 68). He describes the common stream in all her novels as “*la durée* versus the mathematical instant, becoming versus being, intuition versus intellect” (p. 93). It is James Joyce, though, that Kumar claims achieved a “perfection of the stream of consciousness,” precisely because his work is closest to a Bergsonian flux. In Kumar’s view, “the development of James Joyce as an artist can be understood in terms of his increasing awareness of the free creative evolution of personality unimpeded by any utilitarian interests” (pp. 107-8). For Kumar, the closer a modernist writer gets towards a philosophical, and specifically Bergsonian, representation of time and consciousness, the more successful the “stream of consciousness” method.

May Sinclair, too, made a distinction between “stream of consciousness” as philosophy of mind and its application to literature. In her early article for *The Egoist* she emphasised that the effect of Richardson’s fiction, in keeping close to Miriam’s “stream of consciousness,” is a matter of “getting closer to reality.” She doesn’t specifically say that “stream of consciousness” is a literary method, but rather that the method Richardson has adopted (although “she would probably deny that she has written with any deliberate method at all”) is one of avoidance: “she must not tell a story or handle a situation or set a scene; she must avoid drama as she avoids narration” (Sinclair, 1918, p. 58). In this, Sinclair is closer to Richardson’s diagnosis than most critics have allowed for. In the 1918 article, too, Sinclair says that it is *criticism* that needs to adapt if it is to keep pace with the adoption of new philosophical ideas in literary fiction.

The phrase “stream of consciousness” itself is often assumed to come from William James’s *Principles of Psychology*, in which he places emphasis on the progressive unity of thought: “It is nothing jointed; it flows. A ‘river’ or a ‘stream’ are the metaphors by which it is most naturally described. *In talking of it hereafter let us call it the stream of thought, of consciousness, or of subjective life*” (James, 1890, p. 239). Both Melvin Friedman (1955, p. 2) and Diane Filby Gillespie (1978, p. 134) have specifically linked Sinclair’s use of the stream of consciousness to this observation by James; with the caveat, in Gillespie’s case, that Sinclair’s having “borrowed the metaphor from a philosopher whose views she fundamentally disagreed with is . . . curious” (1978, pp. 135). According to Suzanne Raitt, however: “there is no particular reason to assume that *The Principles of Psychology* was, in fact, the source of the phrase in Sinclair’s Richardson review.” Sinclair was reading widely in psychology and biology, “including Herbert Spencer, Samuel Butler, William McDougall, Théodore Robot, and Henry Maudsley, as well as William James” (Raitt 2000, pp. 218-9). Many of these texts, Raitt points out, used the phrase “stream of consciousness” as “a matter of course” (p. 219). Indeed, Sinclair had further come across it in Evelyn Underhill’s 1911 bestseller, *Mysticism*, which she read even before it was published:

The phrase, then, far from alluding specifically to William James, invokes a range of scientific and popular contexts, none of which are concerned primarily with the nature of perception, but all of which consider at length the question of the limits of individuality. (p. 219)

It was through her engagement with discourses such as these that Sinclair, like Richardson, questioned the ultimate value of the stream of consciousness label. Her 1917 philosophical

volume *A Defence of Idealism*, published a year before the review of *Pilgrimage*, was already considering the limitations of “stream of consciousness” as a metaphor, and goes as far as to state that: “the fact of the unity of consciousness can certainly not be accounted for or explained on the simple theory of consciousness as a stream or streams, or as any sequence or even conglomeration of merely ‘associated’ states” (p. 91). In the chapter of this book entitled “Ultimate Questions of Psychology,” Sinclair sets out some of the tenets of the causality of psychic processes as explored by key adherents of philosophical Monism and parallelism—principally McDougall, Wundt and Fechner—which lead her to conclude only that there is an underlying unity of consciousness, and that its basis is metaphysical (pp. 120-1).

What is less transparent is the form that such a unity might take; an elusiveness of definition which Sinclair illustrates using a number of conflicting examples. Most striking is the juxtaposition between Wundt’s observation that “every causal change is the last link in a series of changes having their starting-point in the vast physical universe outside the body”, as opposed to what William James would have called psychic processes which show a “thickness” of their own: “[t]hey not only follow on, but stick together, and stick together in such a way that the whole has a different *quality* from its parts” (1917, p. 97). What is evident, however, is that the metaphor of “consciousness as a stream” is viewed with ambivalence even at this stage of Sinclair’s thinking. As she goes on to suggest, “It is obvious that a stream of consciousness, even with central whirlpools in it of psychical dispositions, cannot have periods or even moments of unconsciousness without ceasing to exist” (p. 92).

As even this brief summary has shown, both Sinclair’s and Richardson’s ultimate mistrust of the stream of consciousness metaphor arises from its philosophical complexity, as well as the shift in representations of subjective reality in the period in which they were writing. The numerous narrative styles which make up this newly-formed conceptualization of the psychological novel were also a topic of controversy in the critical reviews and private writings of various modernist contemporaries, who objected both to the triviality and the interiority of these styles and their implications. Katherine Mansfield and Virginia Woolf, who tended to work with free indirect discourse and sensory impression respectively, were amongst these. In Sinclair’s 1918 review of Richardson’s novels she had asserted that “Nothing happens, and yet everything that really matters is happening; you are held breathless with the anticipation of its happening” (Sinclair, 1918, p. 59). Katherine Mansfield’s 1919 review of *The Tunnel*, the fourth instalment of Richardson’s *Pilgrimage* novel sequence, observes in similar language that the book “is composed

of bits, fragments, flashing glimpses, half scenes and whole scenes, all of them quite distinct and separate, and all of them of equal importance” (p. 4). Her conclusions about the overall effectiveness of this style as an art form are, however, markedly different from Sinclair’s:

There is Miss Richardson, holding out her mind, as it were, and there is Life hurling objects into it as fast as she can throw. And at the appointed time Miss Richardson dives into its recesses and reproduces a certain number of these treasures – a pair of button boots, a night in Spring, some cycling knickers, some large, round biscuits – as many as she can pack into a book, in fact. But the pace kills. (p. 4)

Virginia Woolf was similarly ambivalent, and like Mansfield objected to interiority in the stream of consciousness narrative style itself as opposed merely to the complexities of definition behind the literary label. In a diary entry made in 1920, she wrote strongly against the “damned egotistical self, which ruins Joyce and Richardson to my mind” (p. 14). The modernist move toward subjective interiority and its perceived egotism likewise irritated D. H. Lawrence, who complained that “through thousands and thousands of pages Mr Joyce and Miss Richardson tear themselves to pieces, strip their smallest emotions to the finest threads . . . It really is childish, after a certain age, to be absorbedly self-conscious” (p. 152).

Conversely, for both Richardson and Sinclair the definitional problem of stream of consciousness is that as a phrase to describe the movements of thought it does not account for the complexity of a multi-layered consciousness, and when applied to literature it doesn’t then describe what techniques are being used to represent that complexity. Richardson maintained that her methods tended towards a sense of experiential realism, and Sinclair agreed. This distinction is markedly ambiguous, however, even in critical essays by each writer in which both—despite their reservations about the term stream of consciousness—adopted the metaphor of “plunging in” to designate that experiential realism. For Sinclair, writing in her 1919 review, Dorothy Richardson was the “first novelist who has plunged in . . . so neatly and quietly that even admirers of her performance might remain unaware of what it is precisely that she has done. She has disappeared while they are still waiting for the splash” (Sinclair, 1918, p. 443). Here, Sinclair situates experientiality within the domain of the author. In Richardson’s 1939 essay “Adventure for Readers,” however, she uses the “plunging in” metaphor to do the opposite. As its title suggests, the essay—a review of Joyce’s novel *Finnegans Wake*—designates the reading as opposed to the writing experience:

Let us take the author at his word. Really release consciousness from literary preoccupations and prejudices, from the self-imposed task of searching for superficial sequences in stretches of statement regarded horizontally, or of seeing these upright and regarding them pictorially, and plunge, provisionally, here and there; *enter* the text and look innocently about. (p. 428)

In Richardson's own articulation of her literary method, as explicated in her short 1923 essay "About Punctuation," she further focuses upon the experience of the reader. She suggests that "in the slow, attentive reading demanded by unpunctuated texts, the faculty of hearing has it chance, is enhanced until the text *speaks* itself" (p. 990). This text can almost be read as a manifesto for the linguistic turn in modernist studies. In terms of technique, however, this textual focus can manifest as long, winding sentences in a Jamesian style—as per Richardson's *homage* to James in *The Trap* ("The deep attention demanded by this new way of statement was in itself a self-indulgence", *III*, p. 409)—or elliptical expression, broken-up sentences and fragments of thought. This style is evident from the earliest volume of *Pilgrimage: Pointed Roofs*, in which Richardson's protagonist Miriam Henderson sets out on her journey to become a governess in Germany. In an introspective, highly stylised passage, Miriam contemplates some of the linguistic pitfalls she anticipates confronting in her new role, revealing a deep suspicion of language itself as a communicative medium:

It was a fool's errand.... To undertake to go to the German school and teach ... to be going there ... with nothing to give. [...] How was English taught? How did you begin? English grammar ... in German? Her heart beat in her throat. She had never thought of that . . . the rules of English grammar? Parsing and analysis . . . Anglo-Saxon prefixes and suffixes . . . gerundal infinitive . . . It was too late to look anything up [. . .] She must do that for her German girls. Read English to them and make them happy. . . . But first there must be verbs [. . .] They would laugh at her. . . . She began to repeat the English alphabet. . . . She doubted whether, faced with a class, she could reach the end without a mistake. . . . She reached Z and went on to the parts of speech. (*I*, p. 29)

This passage is illustrative, not only of the turning inward from objective to subjective representation which characterises literary modernism, but also of the increasing importance of language as a prominent twentieth-century metaphor. As a literary method, this invariably amounts to a paradoxical reading experience. On the one hand, the perspective Richardson's readers are invited to share comprises a restricted worldview, as observed by Sinclair in her *Egoist* review in which she states that "[o]f the persons who move through Miriam's world you

know nothing but what Miriam knows” (Sinclair, p. 58). On the other hand, however, the reader’s insight into Miriam’s expanding consciousness; her increasing richness of experience and changing attitudes and beliefs throughout thirteen dense volumes, enables an identification Sinclair notes “with this life, which is Miriam’s stream of consciousness.” According to Sinclair, the result is that “Miss Richardson produces her effect of being the first, of getting closer to reality than any of our novelists who are trying so desperately to get close” (Sinclair, p. 58).

Kumar’s 1962 monograph claimed that the success of “stream of consciousness” depends on its close alliance to durational flux, and didn’t distinguish between Richardson, Woolf, and Joyce in terms of literary technique. There is clearly a popular sense, though, that “stream of consciousness” must be first person, associational, and unmediated. In other words, only elements of Richardson, Woolf and Joyce fit the brief. Rose Macaulay’s *Crewe Train* presents the stream of consciousness as first person and associational in order to lampoon the “technique” for its lack of realism. Arnold Gresham, middle-class author and lover to Denham, tries to narrate his protagonist’s thought in just this way, and it does not come off. The resulting prose is lampooned by Macaulay and hesitantly critiqued by Denham, who is a self-professed novice of novel-reading:

“A woodpecker, that’s a woodpecker, because the woodpecker would peck her, why did the lobster blush, because it saw the salad dressing, no, because the table had cedar legs; can’t remember the questions, only the answers. Answers, Tit-Bits, Pink’un, John Bull, other island, Shaw, getting married, why get married, ring, wedding dress, Mendelssohn, bridesmaids, babies, is marriage worth while? Love, dove, shove, glove, oh my love I love you so much it hurts, yes, marriage is worth while, oh yes, oh yes: oyez all round the town ...”

There were several pages of this.

“I suppose,” said Denham doubtfully, “Jane did think like that. I suppose she was a little queer in the head.”

“If you’ll think it over,” said Arnold, rather vexed, “you’ll discover it’s the way we all think.” (Macaulay, 2018 [1926], p. 128)

Denham disapproves principally of the list of rhyming words, saying that she doesn’t see why anyone would think like that ““unless they’re trying to write a poem,”” and Arnold sticks to his story, which is that his representation of thought is precisely what thought is in real life: ““if one tries to follow the maze of one’s thoughts, one finds they’re astonishingly incoherent.”” ““But not

like that” Denham insists (p. 129). The problem here lies perhaps in the overtly associational thinking of the character. Arnold’s rendering of “incoherent” thought relies on the representation of the joining links between one thought and the next, ostensibly random thought.

Rose Macaulay clearly did not think of herself as a stream of consciousness writer. Probably, if asked, she could have provided a similar list of stream of consciousness writers to the kinds of names produced today to such a query: Dorothy Richardson, May Sinclair, Marcel Proust, James Joyce (perhaps only in Molly’s monologue and *Finnegans Wake*), Virginia Woolf (in some texts and in flashes), Katherine Mansfield (also in flashes, and with reservations), and Ford Madox Ford. As we have established, however, all these authors used different literary techniques to represent consciousness, and all of them used more than one. If, however, we view “stream of consciousness” as an umbrella term for a collection of literary styles, and as a descriptor of a modernist preoccupation with consciousness more generally, other names spring to mind. Even Lawrence, who professed to hate the “self-conscious” inward turn, can be seen to experiment with just that. The authors discussed in this issue, then, are not always the ones we usually associate with stream of consciousness.

In the first article in this collection Scott McCracken gives us an alternative reading of Richardson’s representation of consciousness as one of “experience;” not merely an egotistic focus on interiority, but as an exploration of the nexus at which the internal encounters the external, and then is changed: “Consciousness in the novel is social, not only inside, but also outside, not just subjective, but intersubjective”. In Leslie de Bont’s article, this thread is taken up and discussed in terms of language. The “infantile streams of consciousness” of Sinclair’s Mary Olivier are shown, through encounters with the world and with sources of learning, to become complex as they move towards language. This is a journey towards linguistic maturity, in de Bont’s reading, and the fact of development accounts for the myriad of styles and complex strategies of technique in Sinclair’s fiction. Christine Battersby, in the third article, also views stream of consciousness in terms of development, but this time in relation to Simone de Beauvoir’s 1940s novel (and its 1938 draft), *She Came to Stay*. In this novel, streams of consciousness are used as linguistic sites of experimentation, and as ways of engaging with the same mysticism and “pre-individual reality” as Sinclair. These first three articles engage explicitly with the philosophy of each writer, and with the complex subject positions stream of consciousness writing makes explicit.

The next two articles take the philosophical discussion and move it towards a bodily, or non-cerebral arena. Luke Thurston, in his discussion of Wyndham Lewis's short stories, also engages with this idea of the conscious "I" and its preconscious state, and extends the concept to include, as in McCracken's piece, an analysis of sociality and intersubjectivity. Thurston uses Joyce as a foil to explain Lewis's interest in the "toxic, primitive otherness suppressed by the 'characterless, subtle, protean social self' of modernity". In Donna Cox's article, too, the boundaries between the primitive and libidinous and the social or cerebral become important to a consideration of modernist representations of consciousness, this time in D.H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. In Cox's reading: "As an antidote to the paralysis of the modern novel then, Lawrence emphasises physicality through textuality so that the simulacrum of lived experience is embedded in a bodily composition of the written."

The final two articles in this special issue use the concept of the "stream of consciousness" to think about politics, agency, and social relations. In Helen Tyson's article, "Catching Butterflies," Marion Milner's experiments with stream of consciousness are radical gestures, both towards "freedom from the patriarchal tyranny of the realist novel" and as a means of emphasising individual agency as against the rise of fascist group identity. We return, as is fitting, to Dorothy Richardson's *Pilgrimage* for the final article, where Adam Guy proposes an alternative method for reading stream of consciousness fiction. When we read *Pilgrimage* through the lens of "care," Guy posits, we see that the details thrown up in Miriam's consciousness are "relational and situated rather than isolated or arbitrary". They are not, in other words, just the "fragments" of "equal importance" that Mansfield claimed.

Criticism on the "stream of consciousness" has, since the phrase was first coined, engaged with precisely this dynamic; consciousness has been read as alternatively fragmentary and insular, or reactionary and "relational". The special issue to follow brings together the most recent scholarship, which brings these intricacies to light and explores their dialogues and connections.

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