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## Modernist *Toilette*: Degas, Woolf, Lawrence

One of the least remarked contributions to the first, seismic issue of Wyndham Lewis's *BLAST* (June 1914) was 'Pastoral', a short poem by Ezra Pound which begins with an act of observation:

The young lady opposite  
Has such beautiful hands  
That I sit enchanted  
    While she combs her hair in décolleté.

The speaker goes on to explain that he feels no embarrassment at all in watching the performance so closely.

BUT God forbid that I should gain further acquaintance,  
For her laughter frightens even the street hawker  
And the alley cat dies of a migraine.<sup>1</sup>

The poem may well be unremarked because it is unremarkable: one of a series of squibs Pound and Eliot produced during this period, in which the speaker cruises or is cruised by (as if!) a beautiful young woman whose imminent display of vulgarity will absolve him of any obligation to approach her – while at the same time justifying expressions of contempt calculated to repair any damage the encounter may have done to his self-esteem.<sup>2</sup> Pound's upper-case 'BUT' indicates that there is no way back, in this particular pastoral scene, to the straightforward pleasure of looking. Some rather ropey jokes about street hawkers and alley cats will have to do instead.

And yet the idea of *toilette*, the action or process of washing and grooming, especially when it involved a woman, was evidently of sufficient interest to Eliot for him to want to incorporate two such scenes into *The Waste Land* (1922).<sup>3</sup> In 'A Game of Chess', an evening *toilette* is in progress: a woman seated at a dressing-table brushes her hair out into 'fiery points', before engaging an interlocutor we take to be her husband in desultory, tortured debate.<sup>4</sup> But that wasn't the half of it. In the summer of 1921, Eliot had written a 72-line pastiche of Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* which chronicles the morning *toilette* of a wealthy socialite called Fresca, who, aroused from a dream of 'pleasant' rape, takes breakfast in bed, attends to her correspondence, and then draws a 'steaming bath'.<sup>5</sup> The pastiche was to have served as an introduction to 'The Fire Sermon', until Pound struck it out.

*Toilette* clearly appealed, as a modern idea, and not just to experimental poets. It also held sway in Hollywood. Cecil B. De Mille's *Old Wives for New* (1918) was the first of a series of quasi-satirical social dramas to address the already fashionable topic of

the decline of bourgeois marriage as an institution. In these dramas, the new wife might or might not turn out to be the same as the old one: what mattered was that she should modernize or make herself over, primarily by the purchase of a new and more daring wardrobe, and the behaviour to go with it. De Mille understood make-over to involve a great deal of *toilette*: of preparation, at the beginning or the end of the day, for the performance of a new role. To be sure, husbands were also required to spruce themselves up a bit, which largely meant not dropping cigar-ash all over the place. But it was the wives who bore the burden of modernization. The good old wife has not only to make herself over in public, but also to develop in private the eye-wateringly modern habits of the bad new other woman who has for the time being got the good old husband under her spell. The bad new other woman has three modern things going for her: new synthetic perfumes, an ample supply of jazz records, and a complicated art deco machine for dispensing cigarettes. Eliot's bourgeois wife, seated at a dressing-table lavishly strewn with jewels, at least has a decent supply of synthetic perfumes. Jazz features in the conversation which ensues ('O O O O that Shakespeherian rag'), but it would seem to emanate from the hitherto silent husband, rather than from his not yet entirely made-over wife. Is he trying to tell her something? De Mille's Fresca-equivalent was the spoiled-brat daughter in *Male and Female* (1919). Aroused from *her* dream of pleasant rape, Lady Mary (Gloria Swanson) takes a bath first, and then, by way of an intertitle sporting a sanitized quotation from *The Rape of the Lock*, some breakfast, brought to her by a small but insurrectionary entourage. The purpose of *toilette*, in Jazz Age representations, was make-over. Make-over required the application of techniques of grooming whose modernity was crucial to the illusion made, the image in the mirror.

It would be an exaggeration to say that grooming was all the rage in literary London in the years immediately after the end of the First World War. But the topic does to have attracted a fair amount of interest in Modernism's feeder magazines. In a poem published in the Chicago magazine *Poetry*, Harold Monro, owner of the Poetry Bookshop in Bloomsbury, imagined a man stood at a window, as Pound had done in 'Pastoral', inspecting a house across the road where a ghostly presence 'will comb out her languid hair'.<sup>6</sup> The December 1919 issue of *Coterie*, which at that time included Eliot, Lewis, Richard Aldington, and Nina Hamnett on its Editorial Committee, had a particularly high *toilette*-count. Eliot's Harvard friend Conrad Aiken contributed a poem which reconstructs the last hours ('She sat by a mirror, braiding her golden hair ...') of a beautiful corpse laid out on a slab in the morgue.<sup>7</sup> Elsewhere in the same issue, a short story by Aldous Huxley begins with a description of another young woman in the process of combing her hair in *décolleté*. This one gets someone else to finish the job for her.

'Harder, harder!' cried Ninon, turning round to look at him over her shoulder. 'You'll never get the tangles out unless you comb harder.'

'But doesn't it hurt?' Coligny was horrified at the prospect of inflicting pain on his mistress.

‘Of course not, if you’re not clumsy.’<sup>8</sup>

The emphasis remains on *décolleté*, in this scene. Huxley, however, has outdone the poets in his detailed attention to process, or labour: to the aptitude and the sheer physical and emotional energy required to force a particular instrument through a particular material object.

In ‘Of Modern Poetry’ (1940), Wallace Stevens declared that the modern poem

must  
Be the finding of a satisfaction, and may  
Be of a man skating, a woman dancing, a woman  
Combing. The poem of the act of the mind.<sup>9</sup>

Female *toilette* might appear to have been summoned as no more than one interchangeable version of ordinary experience among several: a man skating, a woman dancing, a woman combing. But Stevens singles it out by doing explicitly what Huxley had done implicitly. He draws attention to process, to aptitude and energy. In ordinary usage, ‘to comb’ is a transitive verb; Stevens has rendered it intransitive, and thus an idea with a fascination all its own. He has further isolated that idea by enjambement. A woman’s combing stands out, as a topic for the modern poem, beyond a man’s skating or a woman’s dancing. Its isolation as an idea enables Stevens to complete his own treatise on modern poetry, as ‘combing’ finds an echo in ‘poem’. The combing somehow already *is* the act of the mind, as its (still) potential subject-matter.

This essay has two aims. First, I shall argue that an attention to process or labour, recommended by Stevens for the modern poem, but equally if not more evident in modern prose fiction, was what put the Modernism into Modernist *toilette*. Some writers of the time conceived an affinity between such attention to process or labour and the emphasis on technique required by Modernism’s efficiency (or literary hygiene) programmes.<sup>10</sup> *BLAST*, after all, had undertaken to ‘BLESS the HAIRDRESSER’ for making ‘systematic mercenary war’ on Mother Nature; while one of the first things Katherine Mansfield did when she became assistant editor of *Rhythm*, in June 1912, was to introduce an advertisement for the salon run by her friend Ida Constance Baker, who specialized in ‘SCIENTIFIC HAIR-BRUSHING AND FACE TREATMENT’ (fig. 1).<sup>11</sup>

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Figure 1

Combing, however, can be a messy business, since it tends to displace waste-matter, rather than remove it altogether. The detritus extracted from a head of hair attaches itself to the instrument of extraction: *sale comme un peigne*, the French say. Modernist representations of the technique exercised in *toilette* derive from and comment upon a late-nineteenth-century concern with (or phobic captivation by) mess as contingency's signature.<sup>12</sup> The essay's second aim is to explore the political and aesthetic consequences of such an understanding of *toilette* as the exercise of aptitude and energy to uncertain – that is to say, by no means purgative – effect. In 'Pastoral', Pound opposes elite masculine abstraction to commonplace feminine mess-making in ways which have come to be regarded as characteristic of the High Modernism of the 'Men of 1914'. But there was another kind of experiment. Some writers and artists (male and female) made common cause, through the choice of *toilette* as topic, with a process which both creates identity and set a limit to its wishful transcendence of time and space, by accumulating waste-matter. My intention is to provoke enquiry into that kind of experiment by examining representations of female *toilette* by a trio of Modernists assembled, as I hope to show, not quite at random: Edgar Degas, Virginia Woolf, and D.H. Lawrence.

### ***Toilettes de Venus: Degas and Striation***

Stevens would probably not have felt so confident in his identification of a woman combing as a possible topic for the modern poem if images of *toilette de Venus* had not been for so long a mainstay of canonical Western art. In paintings by Titian, Rubens, Velasquez, and many others, the goddess, in varying degrees of *décolleté*, gazes into a mirror held by an amenable attendant, winged or unwinged. She designs and prepares her sexuality. And yet in the vast majority of these paintings the traditional *instruments* of design and preparation – the brush and comb, the perfume, the make-up – have been occluded. Venus studies the effect she will have on others, an effect whose causes we need not enquire into. How much help, after all, does a goddess need? So it was, as far as I can tell, with some notable exceptions, up until the middle of the nineteenth century. Even after the goddess had become an ordinary woman obliged to do without attendants – as in Jacques-Louis David's *Venetian at Her Toilette* (1860), or Auguste Toulmouche's *The Toilette* (1889), or Edouard Debat-Ponson's more bohemian *Gypsy at Her Toilette* (1896) – the emphasis remained on social and sexual persona: on the femininity thus got into shape, rather than on its shaping. The mirror was still the major prop: as instrument and emblem of a stage in the preparation of a persona between its manufacture in private and its first public appearance. The look in the mirror has already put causation (the preparatory *work*) behind it; and confidently anticipates effect.

It is true that work does sometimes enter the picture. Dante Gabriel Rossetti's *Lady Lilith*, of 1868, from one of his own poems, is one of the most unabashedly sensuous of all nineteenth-century representations of *toilette's* mirror-stage. In Talmudic legend, Lilith was Adam's first wife, a *femme fatale* who abandoned him when he denied her equality. Rossetti has given her full, rose-red lips, and long, thick, luxuriant hair whose sheer abundance is a sexual invitation.<sup>13</sup> Gazing into the mirror she holds in front of her, she prepares herself to be irresistible. As J.B. Bullen observes, Rossetti has translated the threat Lilith poses in the literary and mythological accounts into an 'act of self-contemplation' given an added frisson by the figure's contemporaneity. Rossetti's Lilith is a *femme fatale* of the sort it might just be possible (as if!) to encounter in the modern upper-class boudoir or bedroom.<sup>14</sup> In her right hand, she clasps a comb big enough to hitch to a tractor. But the activity which concerns Rossetti is not the work which has gone into the preparation of a social and sexual persona so much as the indolent pleasure taken in calculating its effect. 'And still she sits', as he put it in the poem from which the painting derives,

young while the earth is old  
And, subtly of herself contemplative.  
Draws men to watch the bright web she can weave

Till heart and body and life are in its hold.<sup>15</sup>

Lilith's separateness or self-enclosure, as she gets ready for seduction, is the source of her power. Nineteenth-century visual representations of *toilette* subordinate comb to mirror.

So, too, do the novels. In Chapter 15 of George Eliot's *Adam Bede* (1859), humble Hetty Sorrel tries to establish what she will need to look like if she is to secure the affections of the local squire, Captain Donnithorne. She possesses a 'small red-framed shilling looking-glass, without blotches'.

It was into this small glass that she chose to look first after seating herself. She looked into it, smiling, and turning her head on one side, for a minute, then laid it down and took out her brush and comb from an upper drawer. She was going to let down her hair, and make herself look like that picture of a lady in Miss Lydia Donnithorne's dressing-room. It was soon done, and the dark hyacinthine curves fell on her neck. It was not heavy, massive, merely rippling hair, but soft and silken, running at every opportunity into delicate rings. But she pushed it all backward, to look like the picture, and form a dark curtain, throwing into relief her round white neck. Then she put down her brush and comb, and looked at herself, folding her arms before her, still like the picture.

For Eliot, there is poignancy in this subtle self-contemplation, rather than excitement. Poor vulnerable Hetty Sorrel cannot boast the 'heavy, massive' armature of a Lilith. But what concerns Eliot, as it was to concern Rossetti, is above all the 'lovely image' sent back by the glass.<sup>16</sup> Brush and comb appear and disappear without attracting much attention in their own right.

The proposition I want to advance here is that Stevens's emphasis on the activity of combing reflects an awareness of a new approach to *toilette* taken by the modern painting as well as the modern poem (and the modern novel). If you start to look closely at a range of Impressionist and post-Impressionist pictures of *toilette*, from Mary Cassatt's *The Toilette* (1891) through Pablo Picasso's *The Toilette* (1906), Pierre-Auguste Renoir's *Woman Combing Her Hair*, and Pierre Bonnard's *The Toilette* (both 1908) to George Grosz's *Toilette* (1927), you notice an increasing reluctance to reveal to the viewer what the subject sees in the mirror. These women do not appear to be subtly of themselves contemplative in quite the same way as Rossetti's Lilith. As mirror and mirror-image become harder to grasp, so the brush or comb with which the woman works emerges into prominence. Already, in 1877, in *Before the Mirror*, Edouard Manet had displaced the mirror from its accustomed position in 'pictorial thematizations of the feminine', as Carol Armstrong notes. Point of view and an abbreviated style of notation combine to curtail the image it yields. 'And so what is given to the gaze in *Before the Mirror*,' Armstrong continues, 'is

given entirely in the form of suggestive but insufficient glimpses, and mediated prominently through self-announcing facture.’ *Before the Mirror* may well have been a response to Berthe Morisot’s *Young Woman at Her Toilette*, painted some time between 1875 and 1880, and one of a series of works depicting women at the mirror which suggest a meditation on her own acts of ‘self-preparation’ rather than on the ‘thematics of the courtesan’. Indeed, the facture of *Before the Mirror* could be understood as a reference to a style of brush-work associated with Morisot’s work since the mid-1870s: a feminine style itself thought to have revived the eighteenth-century French Rococo of Boucher and Fragonard.<sup>17</sup>

Manet’s choice of subject-matter, in *Before the Mirror*, has produced and been produced by both a change of individual style, in relation to his hitherto characteristic manner, and a new consciousness of the gendering of style in general, in Paris in the 1870s. Such conjunctions had happened before, of course. In Giovanni Bellini’s *Young Woman at Her Toilette* (1515), a young woman looks into a small handheld mirror in order to arrange her headdress, while a larger mirror on the wall behind her reflects the scene.<sup>18</sup> Beside her, on the window-ledge, is a vase containing ceruse, a cosmetic made out of white lead; the sponge she has used to apply the cosmetic to her face and body rests in the vase’s neck. Bellini has identified a woman’s artful painting of her face and body with the art of painting itself. The vase, placed on the threshold between the scene’s interior and exterior spaces, stands for the painter’s palette: it contains the substance (white lead used as a pigment) which enables art to mirror nature. The elevation of *colore* over *disegno* in Venetian painting of the period was often discussed in terms of gender: Michelangelo, for example, condemned Titian’s colouring as effeminate. Bellini could be said to have feminized his art (his control over nature) by identifying its medium with cosmetics and its methods with the application of make-up: the crystal vase itself symbolizes the female body. This is not feminism: the headdress the woman arranges is a *reticella* indicating her status as a married woman. She paints herself cosmetically as an act of obedience to her husband: for Bellini, to paint her painting herself is to acknowledge and celebrate that proper subordination.

François Boucher’s *Madame de Pompadour at Her Toilette* (1758) shows Madame de Pompadour, Louis XV’s favourite, and a power at his court, though by this time no longer his mistress, seated before a dressing-table strewn with the accoutrements of the *toilette*. She looks out at us: one hand holds an open box of rouge, the other a cosmetic brush laden with colour which she is about to apply to her cheeks. ‘Tonality of white and pink dominate the composition,’ as Melissa Hyde notes: ‘the delicate pallor of her alabaster skin and the rosiness of her cheeks and lips are variously echoed in her gown and mantle, the cameo, table, and powder-puff.’ Boucher, like Bellini, has understood the artful application of make-up as a form of art-making. The debates about the relative importance of colour and design which had raged in sixteenth-century Italy were still raging in eighteenth-century France. Boucher, in fact, may have gone considerably further than Bellini in identifying the



(implicitly male) art of portraiture with the (implicitly female) arts of the toilette. In some areas of the canvas Boucher's oil paint imitates Pompadour's cosmetic paint with an odd exactness: for example, in the pinkish dusting of colour on the brush, and on her cheeks. Where exactly does make-up stop and depiction start? Who, Hyde asks, has 'painted' Pompadour's lips? The painting posits an impossibly close vantage-point for the spectator: we see as if situated on the table-top itself. Could the image presented be understood as Pompadour's image seen in a mirror? Hyde describes the painting as a 'pseudo self-portrait'. Boucher's representation of Pompadour as left-handed marks a significant departure both from the norms of eighteenth-century painting and from his own previous depictions of her: but it would be consistent with self-portraiture. Boucher has gone beyond Bellini in imagining that the subject of his portrait has painted herself twice over: cosmetically, and then, by means of a long look in the mirror, as virtual self-portraiture. Hyde's conclusion is that the painting deconstructs 'the categories of woman as object and male painter as subject, by conflating the positions of the two.'<sup>19</sup>

It may be that the popularity of the *toilette* as topic enabled some painters, male and female, to continue to conflate those positions. *Madame de Pompadour at Her Toilette* has been seen as an 'appropriate pictorial precedent' for Georges Seurat's *Young Woman Powdering Herself* (1890). Of course, the choice of *toilette* as topic did not in itself ensure a conflation of painter and painted. The difference between *Madame de Pompadour* and *Young Woman Powdering Herself* is that, while both paintings depict kept women, Boucher's model was the rich and powerful companion of a king, who stares boldly out at the viewer, while Seurat's was his clandestine working-class lover, Madeleine Knobloch, who keeps her eyes down. *Madame de Pompadour* is about to powder her face, Knobloch her breasts. For Seurat, the woman depicted is 'all breast'.<sup>20</sup>

The *toilette* scene could easily become a mammary sub-genre. In 1880, Manet had exhibited *Before the Mirror* in a one-man show in the galleries of La Vie Moderne along with, among other things, an 1878 pastel, *Woman Fixing Her Garter*, the subject of which leans forward to secure a clasp at her knee in such a way that her breasts spill out over the rim of her bodice. The securing of garters had served as bounty for the (male) spectator at least since Boucher's *Toilette* of 1742, and would continue to do so in a variety of visual media including photography, posters, and cartoons: a fact of which the punters in the bar of Ormond Hotel in Dublin, in the 'Sirens' episode of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, are forcibly reminded when Miss Douce, after much 'bending, suspending, with wilful eyes', sets free 'sudden in rebound her nipped elastic garter smackwarm against her smackable a woman's warmhosed thigh'.<sup>21</sup> Clearly, such displays of breast and thigh merely reinforce the category of 'woman as object'. It took an emphatic feminism to counteract them. Julia, in H.D.'s semi-autobiographical *Bid Me to Live* (1960), finds in the wholly palpable step-by-step articulations of morning *toilette* – 'fastening the garter-belt and tightening the stocking-web into the rubber-lined garter-catches, four' – a definiteness otherwise

lacking in her life after her husband Rafe has returned to the front line.<sup>22</sup> I still want to maintain, none the less, that the representation of female *toilette* could and did encourage in some male painters and writers to interest themselves in, and even to imitate, the humdrum technical activities of washing and grooming.

The ‘Suite of female nudes bathing, washing, drying, wiping themselves, combing their hair or having their hair combed’ which Edgar Degas submitted to the eighth and final Impressionist exhibition in Paris in 1886 became the bench-mark for modern representations of *toilette*. By the end of the 1880s, two subjects had begun to absorb Degas’s energies almost to the exclusion of everything else: ballet, and the female nude. Between 1885 and the early years of the twentieth century, he produced around 250 pastels and oil paintings of the female nude, as well as charcoal studies, prints, sculptures in wax and clay, and photographs. He returned again and again, as Richard Kendall puts it, ‘to the same set of visual challenges: a distracted bather drying her neck, a head of chestnut hair against pale flesh, a nude reaching for a comb or towel.’ Kendall has argued in exhaustive and illuminating detail that the work Degas did from 1890 onwards in a variety of media constitutes a profound shift of emphasis from documentary to expressive ambition, from ‘spectacle’ to ‘neutrality’. Setting and personnel, so full of (salacious) narrative implication in the images he made of the female nude from the mid-1870s to the mid-1880s, more or less dissolve away. Massively at the centre of the later images is a woman’s routine self-absorption into the physical activities of *toilette*: a self-absorption as massive when there is someone else in attendance, to comb hair, or deliver a towel, or a cup of tea, as when there is not. In these images, a ‘jigsaw of colour’ tightens around the central figure, Kendall observes, locking her into its design. Her isolation is less theatrical than it had been, ‘more directly expressed in the pastes and patterns of the work of art itself’. The ‘physical stuff’ of which the picture is made ‘both defines and embodies’ its essence: the idea of a figure in ‘viable movement’, its actions locating it in self-absorption into humdrum routine. Kendall suggests that the shift of emphasis thus exemplified may have had something to do with the ‘tempering influence’ of artists like Mary Cassatt and Berthe Morisot, who was close to Degas personally and professionally in the years before her death in 1895. Degas, Kendall adds provocatively, ‘represented *himself*’ in the late nudes. His ‘attentive rituals’ mirrored the activities of the models who posed for him as women engaged in *toilette*. ‘Even the prosaic acts of drawing and posing, of stretching to make a mark with the “feminine” medium of pastel or reaching for a towel, modeling wax or grasping a sponge, have their irresistible analogies, merging the functions of portrayer and portrayed.’<sup>23</sup>

The suite of nudes submitted to the Impressionist exhibition of 1886 did not in fact include any images of women ‘combing their hair or having their hair combed’. Degas amply made up for the omission. From around 1890 onwards, the motif inspired a profusion of brilliant drawings, pastels, oil paintings, lithographs, and wax sculptures. The women undergoing *coiffure* appear from a variety of angles and

distances. Some are decorously clothed, some not. Almost all are ‘solemnly engaged’ in a *toilette* which seems to provoke in them various feelings ranging from indolence to near-desperation.<sup>24</sup>

As they loom massively in (or out of) the image, so too does the detail of the activity of *toilette*: the force in play, the instrument (brush or comb) through which it has been transmitted, the whole conversion of physical-emotional cause into physical-emotional effect. If there is a mirror, in these images, it exists as no more than an implied presence beyond the frame. Luxuriant though the hair on display often is, it has been disabled as bounty for the viewer by the sheer prominence of the instrument in the process of passing through it. That instrument in each instance declares the fact of labour, of nature’s dependence upon culture. On one side of it stands crude raw material; on the other, the finished product. Degas’s radicalism lay in his understanding of female *toilette* as a technical activity which, however commonplace, involved effort and skill. That emphasis on technique neutralised spectacle. If there is make-over here, it is not discernibly for anyone else’s immediate benefit.

In Degas’s representations of *coiffure*, the comb (or brush) rules, in more than one sense. It dominates, and it straightens. On one side, an unholy tangle; on the other, alignment. In pastels like *Woman Combing Her Hair* (1890-2), the contrast drawn between the stretch of hair above the comb and the stretch below it could not be clearer. Areas of neat striation visible immediately above and below the hand pinioning the stretch of hair already combed insist on the difference made by technique, by the application of effort and skill. These areas consist, of course, of the marks made by Degas with brush or stick. We might ask of them the question we asked of Pompadour’s lips. Whose work is it? Once again, attention to the technical activity of *toilette* has altered the technical activity of art itself. In another pastel, *Woman at Her Toilette* (1889) (fig. 2), the striations produced by combing find a visual rhyme in the striations the painter himself has produced in order to represent the rucking of a garment, or a hair-brush’s array of bristles. In Kendall’s terms, both pastels are transitional: as much documentary as expressive in style. *Woman at Her Toilette*, in particular, while stripped of narrative implication, none the less sets the scene carefully. We see a young woman seated in an armchair in front of a dressing-table on which various familiar items predictably stand. It is the rhymed striations, above all, which impose upon the scene set in documentary fashion the ‘pastes and patterns of the work of art itself’, and so merge the functions of portrayer and portrayed. The woman striates with a comb, the artist with a brush, crayon, or stick. It is the close resemblance between these activities which provides the basis for Degas’s feminized experimentation. The recognition that technique constitutes without wholly defining the illusion which is our bodily self-image (in these cases, a woman’s bodily self-image) has produced or been produced by the recognition that technique constitutes without wholly defining the illusion which is the work of art. The attention Degas devoted to *coiffure* from the late-1880s onwards would in itself justify

Stevens's sense that a woman combing was a fit subject for the modern poem – or painting, or sketch, or indeed novel.



**Figure 2**

### **Combing (in) Words**

Degas died in 1917: he went on producing work that was seen and admired by contemporary artists until at least 1912. ‘In no other country outside France did Degas’s art have such a direct and turbulent effect as that which it produced in England,’ Kendall observes, ‘and in few other contexts did the transition between his early and late phases create such confusion.’ Among British artists influenced by Degas, he lists Philip Wilson Steer, William Rothenstein, Laura Knight, John Copley, David Bomberg, Duncan Grant, and Vanessa Bell, whose *The Tub* (1917) ‘brings an awareness of Cubism and the innovations of Matisse to one of Degas’s most

distinctive themes, defusing the intimacy of his pastels in broad expanses of colour.<sup>25</sup> His staunchest and most authoritative champion was Walter Sickert, who reworked his motifs inventively in English idiom: the music hall stood in for the café-concert, Camden Town for Montmartre, and so on. One of the least noticed of these reworkings is a sketch entitled ‘The Comb’, which appeared in *The New Age* in January 1912, and certainly does not lack for striation (fig. 2). Sickert, too, has sacrificed the intimacy of Degas’s images of *coiffure* (in part by reinstating the mirror). But he did at least manage to sow his own share of confusion. Writing in *The New Age* in June 1912, Huntly Carter complained about Sickert’s preference for titles likely to ‘make the fastidious squirm’. “‘Slops”, “Wash and Brush-up”, “The Chest of Drawers”, “The Sofa”, “The Comb”, try the patience of the poetical, whose taste does not allow them to go travelling all over the house from bedroom to washhouse in search of art emotions and inspiration.’ Even more scary, in Carter’s view, was the ‘method of treatment’ Sickert had wilfully adopted in these drawings. ‘There is no strength or distinctness in them. The lines have shriveled up, the subjects have lost their distinct shapes.’<sup>26</sup> Style, it appears, has once again been inflected by choice of motif.

Sickert wrote extensively about art in the London periodicals from the 1880s through to the 1930s, peppering his commentary with sage hints dropped by the master (‘Monsieur Degas said to me in 1885 a thing I have never forgotten ...’).<sup>27</sup> When the *Burlington Magazine* published Sickert’s obituary of Degas in November 1917, it supplied black-and-white reproductions of an early oil painting, *Portrait of a Lady Seated before a Window Overlooking the Tuileries Garden* (1871), and a late pastel, *Woman at Her Toilette* (c. 1896-9), currently in the Tate Gallery in London (fig. 3).<sup>28</sup> The latter exemplifies the ‘bonding of image and technique’ Kendall has so persuasively defined in the depictions of *coiffure*. ‘Here pastel is used both to describe and unify, its cascades of yellow, blue, and ginger flowing across the disparate components of the scene and conjuring up rhythms and incident, dignity for the maid and agitation for her mistress.’<sup>29</sup>

The most cascade-like of these cascades is that constituted by the mistress’s long chestnut hair, through which she propels a comb, while turning her head in the opposite direction to glimpse the cup of tea held out to her by the maid. The effect of cascade in fact depends on the striation produced by the combing’s fierce downward movement, as the liquid mass of hair tumbles from the plateau of her shoulders and arms – a rock-formation held monumentally in place by upright wedges of gingery blue whose vertical thrust has been reinforced by that of the enormous vase on the dressing-table, and extending up along the maid’s right arm and shoulder – to meet the junction of wall and floor. That striation wrought in and by the picture’s ‘physical stuff’ is Degas’s gesture of comprehension of the ‘viable movement’ a person is to be known by, unremarkable yet hard to mistake. He might be William Carlos Williams at the Passaic River Falls, wondering what to do with his poem:



**Figure 3**

I must  
find my meaning and lay it, white,  
beside the sliding water: myself –  
comb out the language – or succumb

- whatever the complexion.<sup>30</sup>

There was much to be learned from cascades.

*Woman at Her Toilette* was shown (as *La Toilette*) at an exhibition in the Burlington Fine Arts Club between November 1917 and March 1918. In May 1918, when a large collection of work by Degas went on sale in Paris, Roger Fry acted as an advisor to C.J. Holmes, then Director of the National Gallery, who was planning some modest acquisitions on behalf of the Gallery of Modern Art (now the Tate). Fry told Holmes that he regarded the picture shown at the Burlington – *Woman at Her Toilette* – as the ‘greatest type of Degas’.<sup>31</sup> Before writing to Holmes, Fry got in touch with Maynard

Keynes, who in March 1917 had bought a Cézanne still life owned by Degas. In April 1918, Virginia Woolf went with Roger Fry to Keynes's house in Gordon Square to see the picture. Her sister, Vanessa Bell, was also present. 'Nessa left the room and re-appeared with a small parcel about the size of a large slab of chocolate. On one side are painted six green apples by Cézanne. Roger very nearly lost his senses.'<sup>32</sup> This was a period of intense debate in Bloomsbury about the visual arts. Degas does not seem to have caused as much excitement as Cézanne, but there is no reason to think that he was ignored. After all, Woolf thought of Sickert as her 'ideal painter'.<sup>33</sup> By March 1918, she had written over 100,000 words of her second novel, *Night and Day*, which she was to finish before the end of the year. A week after Fry had nearly lost his senses over Cézanne, she told Vanessa she had been writing about her all morning, and had 'made her wear a blue dress'.<sup>34</sup> Vanessa was the model for Katharine Hilbery, in *Night and Day*. As far as I know, Woolf never saw *Woman at Her Toilette*, in which there is a great deal of blue, but no blue dress. But Degas's accomplishments in that and other representations of a woman combing none the less seem to me to offer a way to think about what Woolf was trying to accomplish in a scene in the novel in which a blue dress features prominently.

In 'A Sketch of the Past', Virginia Woolf described *Night and Day* as one of only two of her novels (the other being *The Years*) to address 'non-being': that is, everyday activities performed more or less automatically, like washing, or cooking dinner, or repairing the broken vacuum cleaner.<sup>35</sup> In Chapter 26, 22-year-old Cassandra Otway has just arrived in London to stay with her cousin Katharine Hilbery, whom she greatly admires, in Cheyne Walk, in Chelsea. We're told, bluntly, perhaps rather too bluntly, that where Katharine is simple, solid, and direct, Cassandra is complex, vague, and evasive. 'In short, they represented very well the manly and the womanly sides of the feminine nature.' Katharine's glamour crystallizes as Cassandra watches her dress for dinner.

The face in the looking-glass was serious and intent, apparently occupied with other things besides the straightness of the parting which, however, was being driven as straight as a Roman road through the dark hair. Cassandra was impressed again by Katharine's maturity; and, as she enveloped herself in the blue dress which filled almost the whole of the long looking-glass with blue light and made it the frame of a picture, holding not only the slightly moving effigy of the beautiful woman, but shapes and colors of objects reflected from the background, Cassandra thought that no sight had ever been quite so romantic.<sup>36</sup>

What seems to interest Woolf in this scene is the split between Cassandra's romantic vision of Katharine and the feat of engineering Katharine accomplishes with brush and comb as she drives a parting straight as a Roman road through her hair, while apparently occupied with other things. The earlier blunt distinction in terms of manliness and womanliness has been restated as a difference between kinds of

attention, or kinds of engagement with self and world. The clumsiness of the phrasing in the sentence which describes Katharine's labours with the comb ('occupied with other things besides the *straightness* of the parting, which, however, was being driven as *straight* ...') intensifies an emphasis on Katharine's concentration: the parting, or rather its exact accomplishment through technique, has become an end in itself. The writer, we might think, has in this instance not found it easy to comb her thought syntactically: *her* technique is also at issue. The next sentence, by contrast, fills smoothly up with Cassandra's admiration, itself immediately comprehensible as aesthetic response: the blue dress's blue light converts the mirror into a picture. In Woolf, as in Degas, an apprehension of *toilette* as work requiring solemn engagement has provoked a small technical disturbance, a change of approach. That apprehension makes all the difference between the *toilette* scenes in *Adam Bede* and *Night and Day*. Hetty Sorrel performs both roles: she is Katharine Hilbery, working intently with comb and brush, *and* Cassandra Otway, gazing in rapture at the beauty thus produced. Roman roads do not feature in her plans for those 'dark hyacinthine curves'. What Eliot had brought together in imagining Hetty through her awareness of a picture (that is, the work done by way of self-preparation, and an understanding of the effect it will have on others), Woolf prises apart. That change of emphasis offers one way to think about a certain kind of Modernism.

### **Broken Combs, and a Handbreadth of Mirror**

Reviewing the 1886 Impressionist exhibition, J.-K. Huysmans had noted that Degas's bathers 'must stoop in order to mask their bodily waste by grooming themselves'.<sup>37</sup> The *toilette* scene could be understood as drawing attention to the very residues of matter which the activity itself was designed if not to eradicate, then at least to remove temporarily, or to disguise. Hence, perhaps, Huntly Carter's feeling that Sickert should not have chosen titles such as 'Wash and Brush-up' or 'The Comb'. Hence, perhaps, the bitter misogyny animating Eliot's Fresca fragment (or, indeed, De Mille's). Although neither Degas nor Sickert depicted the instrument of *toilette* as in itself an object of disgust, others did. Huysmans, for example, worked the phrase 'saleté de peigne' (a comb's filthiness) into his novel *Les Soeurs Vatard* (1879) in order to describe how a working-class woman lets herself go when she has no lovers to prepare for.<sup>38</sup> It is the consequences of *toilette*, rather than boredom or remorse, which brings to an end the otherwise revivifying affair enjoyed by the protagonist of *En ménage* (1881), who cannot get over his discovery in the bathroom of a comb full of hair and, in a heap of dirty linen, a face-cloth greasy with cold-cream.<sup>39</sup> The encumbered bathroom does not necessarily amount to evidence of sluttishness, or moral failure, on the woman's part. The comb and face-cloth are after all only doing their job, which is to move dirt from one place to another. Rather, the protagonist's phobic response has produced a new knowledge: of the facts of life, of the necessary disillusionment which awaits at the far end of each necessary illusion. In Naturalist



fiction, the broken, clogged comb constitutes the threshold which illusion (desire) must cross if it is to transcend disillusionment (phobia), however briefly.<sup>40</sup>

One British writer greatly preoccupied by the mutual implication of phobia and desire was D.H. Lawrence. In Lawrence's neo-Naturalist Edwardian divorce-drama *The Trespasser* (1912), Siegmund, about to break the 'bonds' of marriage by embarking on an affair, returns home to the accustomed domestic debris, which he surveys with 'disgust' from the vantage-point of his armchair. Leaning back, he feels something in the way: a small teddy-bear, and 'half of a strong white comb'. 'This was the summary of his domestic life: a broken, coarse comb, a child crying because her hair was tugged, a wife who had let the hair go till now, when she had got into a temper to see the job through.'<sup>41</sup> The problem (the reason why Lawrence did not write any more novels like this one) lies in the allegory. The broken comb has ceased to be a fact of life: the moment at which phobia permits us to understand desire as what it is, a necessary illusion. Instead, it tells a story: the story of someone else's failure. Siegfried blames his disillusionment on the wife who had let their child's hair go till now, and then got into a temper. Phobia would have told him that a broken comb, like Virginia Woolf's broken vacuum-cleaner (another dirt-magnet), is just a piece of equipment awaiting repair.

Lawrence's other divorce-drama, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, written and rewritten in the period between October 1926 and February 1928, published in 1928, makes intelligent use of the idea of a woman combing to mediate extreme desire's encounter with extreme phobia. Like Siegfried, Connie Chatterley and Mellors are prone to allegorise. Speaking as one, they blame the world's brokenness on someone, or something, else. They regard modernization as a collective moral failure. The greatest threat to their necessary illusion – the intense sexual fulfillment they experience together – is the intensity of the hatred they feel for modern bourgeois life. The novel is at its most profound, I would argue, when it asks whether they will ever take responsibility for the bitterness of their own disillusionment.

In order to answer this question, Lawrence had to modernize himself. Like Degas and Woolf, he revised the *toilette de Venus* tradition, not isolating comb from mirror, as Degas did, but setting these elements in a new relation to each other, as Woolf did. It wasn't easy. The second version of the novel, which he probably began to write in December 1926, incorporates a new scene in which Connie Chatterley, having for the first time spent the night in the gamekeeper's cottage, washes herself in an 'ugly basin' in the bedroom, and wonders about his wife, Bertha Coutts. 'And as she combed her hair with the little black comb he had laid on the bare dressing-table, she thought how many times the swivel mirror had reflected the face of the other woman.' There is something a bit complacent about this, in its scrupulous attention to detail. Lawrence's exclusive emphasis on what Connie sees (or imagines seeing) in the mirror represents her to us in thoroughly traditional terms. She is a little bit

jealous, and still prone to allegory, blaming what has happened to Parkin (as he is in this version) on Bertha's violence and 'coarse egoism'.<sup>42</sup>

When Lawrence re-wrote this scene in the novel's third and final version, he stripped out the detail, as Degas had stripped out the documentary context from his earlier representations of *toilette*, relying instead on the expressive capacities of dialogue. The morning after their first night together in the cottage, Connie gets out of bed to find nothing at all in the bare little room except a chest of drawers and a bookshelf.

She came downstairs, down the steep, narrow wooden stairs. Still she would be content with this little house – if only it were in a world of its own.

He was washed and fresh, and the fire was burning.

'Will you eat anything?' he said.

'No! Only lend me a comb.'

She followed him into the scullery, and combed her hair before the handbreadth of mirror by the back door. Then she was ready to go.

She stood in the little front garden, looking at the dewy flowers, the grey bed of pinks in bud already.

'I would like to have all the rest of the world disappear,' she said, 'and live with you here.'

'It won't disappear,' he said.<sup>43</sup>

What is new in the revised version is Connie's explicit awareness both of the power of illusion and of its vulnerability. She would like to live in the little house, 'if only it were in a world of its own', which it clearly isn't. *Toilette* is the rite of passage which re-absorbs her back into the 'rest of the world' and its manifold imperfections. In representing it, Lawrence has beautifully re-adjusted the customary proportion of comb to mirror. To comb your hair while inspecting yourself fully in a mirror is to create an illusion. To comb your hair before a *handbreadth* of mirror, on the other hand, a mirror so small that you cannot see in it as much of yourself as you need to see, is to reckon with both illusion and disillusionment: to know that you will never be seen exactly as you might wish to be seen. Connie has left her inner Venus behind her in the bedroom. For Lawrence's second major revision relocates her *toilette* to the scullery. Combing her hair in the scullery, in a handbreadth of mirror, she must acknowledge that the 'rest of the world' starts inside the little house, inside arcadia. The mirror's insufficiency has stopped her from expecting too much of sexual tenderness. It permits repair-work, but not performance, not illusion. As far as we can tell, Mellors remains oblivious, or indifferent, to what she has done with her hair. Where his response might have been, Lawrence instead proposes her admiration of the flowers in the little front garden: a bit more arcadia, held most firmly as it is about to be relinquished. His third major revision is to foreground the ensuing brief conversation about the likelihood (or not) of the rest of the world's imminent disappearance. The fact that dialogue now concludes the scene, and with it the whole overwrought episode, is as expressive as anything the two lovers find to say to each

other. For dialogue is a way not to resolve the tension between necessary illusion and necessary disillusionment built into all meaningful experience. The attention Lawrence pays to Connie's exercise of aptitude and energy to uncertain (by no means wholly purgative) effect has wonderfully complicated his understanding of the nature and scope of redemption.

To a writer like Marcel Proust, whose interest lay above all in the power of illusion, the mirror continued to count for more than the comb. One of the ways in which Odette tortures Swann, in *Du côté de chez Swann* (1913), is by detaining him while she prepares to go out.

As her *toilette* progressed, every movement she made brought Swann nearer to the moment when he would have to part from her, when she would fly off with irresistible zest; and when at length she was ready, and, peering into her mirror for the last time with eyes tense and bright with anxiety to look well, added a touch of lipstick, fixed a stray lock of hair over her brow, and called for her cloak of sky-blue silk with golden tassels, Swann looked so wretched that she would be unable to restrain a gesture of impatience ...

The painting Swann would like to travel to The Hague to see, if he could bear to leave Odette on her own in Paris, is Vermeer's classic *toilette* scene, *Diana and Her Companions* (c. 1653-6).<sup>44</sup> Odette, in short, has something in common with Rossetti's Lilith. The Modernism in Modernist *toilette* wasn't just a matter of brush and comb. Full make-over driven by an 'anxiety to look well' still needed looking into.

I hope none the less that I have done enough to show that the topic of a woman combing did serve those writers and painters well who sought by a concentration on the comb – on its capacity both to engineer identity and to set a limit (in breaking, in becoming clogged with dirt) – to acknowledge disillusionment's equal necessity. The task I cannot undertake here is to set the Modernism I have so far described in relation to other Modernisms which, if the orthodox account still holds, require reader rather than writer to 'comb out the language', in Williams's phrase. That *toilette* features in *Ulysses*, not surprisingly, might provide some encouragement to undertake it. A *Bath of the Nymph* given away with the Easter number of *Photo Bits* hangs over the bed in Eccles Street. The sketch Bloom thinks he might manage would involve jotting down what Molly says while dressing. Molly's interior monologue at the very end of the day includes the recollection of *toilette*:

... though his nose is not so big after I took off all my things with the blinds down after my hours dressing and perfuming and combing it like iron or some kind of thick crowbar standing all the time ...<sup>45</sup>

Derek Attridge has pointed out that our experience of reading a text printed as 'Penelope' has been printed is 'one of working to recover its lost signs – punctuation

marks and upper-case letters – in order to make sense of it.<sup>46</sup> What, for example, does ‘it’ refer to in the passage I have quoted? It could be that we ‘comb out’ Molly’s monologue by inferring a syntax: interpretation, in short, as *toilette*.

## DAVID TROTTER

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1. *BLAST I*, facsimile edition (Santa Barbara: Black Sparrow Press, 1981), p.50.
  2. Eliot’s contributions to the genre include ‘Paysage Triste’ and ‘In the Department Store’: *Inventions of the March Hare: Poems 1909-1917*, ed. by Christopher Ricks (London: Faber and Faber, 1996), pp.52, 56. Pound’s include ‘The Garden’, ‘The Encounter’, and ‘The Tea Shop’: *Collected Shorter Poems* (London: Faber and Faber, 1952), pp.93, 120, 127. Kasia Boddy named the ‘as if’ poem, and my thinking about it has been shaped by conversations with her. For a brief further discussion, see my ‘Ezra Pound: Saved by the Ant’s Fore-Foot’, *London Review of Books*, 7 July 2005, pp.21-3.
  3. For reasons of economy, this essay will concern itself with female *toilette* only. Male *toilette* was a topic of great, though not *as* great, interest during the period. Although the notion of *toilette* includes the process of dressing as well as that of washing and grooming, it is attention to the latter which could be said to distinguish Modernist literature from what went before. Danielle Dupuis has shown how crucial attention to the former was to Balzac’s project, for example: ‘La Poésie de la toilette féminine chez Balzac’, *L’Année Balzacienne*, 5 (1985), 173-95; ‘Toilette féminine et réalisme balzacienne’, *L’Année Balzacienne*, 7 (1986), 115-38; ‘Toilette féminine et structure romanesque’, *L’Année Balzacienne*, 10 (1989), 289-99. As Dupuis points out, Balzac was strikingly reticent, by contrast, on the subject of washing and grooming: ‘Poésie’, p.188.
  4. *The Annotated Waste Land*, ed. by Lawrence Rainey (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), pp.59-60.
  5. *The Waste Land: A Facsimile and Transcript of the Original Drafts*, ed. by Valerie Eliot (London: Faber and Faber, 1971), p.23.
  6. ‘Introspection’, *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*, 15.6, 1919-1920, pp.298-9 (p. 299).
  7. ‘Sudden Death’, *Coterie*, 3, December 1919, pp.55-7 (p. 56).
  8. ‘Imaginary Conversation’, *ibid.*, pp.42-9 (p. 43).
  9. Wallace Stevens, ‘Of Modern Poetry’, in *The Collected Poems of Wallace Stevens* (London: Faber and Faber, 1955), pp.239-40 (p. 240).
  10. On these programmes, see Suzanne Raitt, ‘The Rhetoric of Efficiency in Early Modernism’, *Modernism/Modernity*, 13.1 (2006), 89-106.
  11. *BLAST I*, 25; *Rhythm*, 7, August 1912, iv.
  12. David Trotter, *Cooking with Mud: The Idea of Mess in Nineteenth-Century Art and Fiction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).
  13. The significance of hair in nineteenth-century literature has received a good deal of attention. See, for example, Taylor Hagood, ‘Hair, Feet, Body, and Connectedness in *Song of Myself*’, *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review*, 21.1 (2003), 25-34; Carol Rifelj, ‘The Language of Hair in the Nineteenth-Century Novel’, *Nineteenth-Century French Studies*, 32. 1&2 (2003-04), 83-96; and Galia Ofek, ‘Sensational

- hair: gender, genre, and fetishism in the sensational decade', in *Victorian Sensations: Essays on a Scandalous Genre*, ed. by Kimberly Harrison and Richard Fantina (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2006), pp.102-14.
14. J.B. Bullen, *The Pre-Raphaelite Body: Fear and Desire in Painting, Poetry, and Criticism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), p.136.
15. 'Body's Beauty', no. 78 in *The House of Life: A Sonnet Sequence*, in *Collected Writings of Dante Gabriel Rossetti: Collected Works*, ed. by Jan Marsh (London: J.M. Dent, 1999), pp.275-325 (p.314).
16. George Eliot, *Adam Bede*, ed. by Stephen Gill (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1980), p.149.
17. 'Facturing Femininity: Manet's *Before the Mirror*', *October*, 74 (1995), 74-104 (79, 89-90).
18. My discussion of this painting relies heavily on Patricia Phillippy, *Painting Women: Cosmetics, Canvases, and Early Modern Culture* (2006), pp.165-71.
19. 'The "Makeup" of the Marquise: Boucher's Portrait of Pompadour at Her Toilette', *Art Bulletin*, 82.3 (2000), 453-75 (pp. 453, 464, 468).
20. Tamar Garb, *Bodies of Modernity: Figure and Flesh in Fin-de-Siècle France* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1998), pp.131-6.
21. James Joyce, *Ulysses*, ed. by Jeri Johnson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p.256.
22. H.D., *Bid Me to Live* (London: Virago, 1984), p.40.
23. Richard Kendall, *Degas: Beyond Impressionism* (London: National Gallery Publications Limited, 1996), pp.143-9, 155-7.
24. *Ibid.*, pp.218.
25. *Ibid.*, pp.166-8.
26. 'A Discipline of Distortions', *New Age*, 11.6, 6 June 1912, 138-9, p. 139.
27. 'Mesopotamia-Cézanne', *New Age*, 5 March 1914, reprinted in *Walter Sickert: The Complete Writings on Art*, ed. by Anna Gruetznner Robins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp.338-42 (p.342).
28. *Burlington Magazine*, 31, 1917, pp.183-91.
29. *Degas: Beyond Impressionism*, pp.218-19.
30. William Carlos Williams, *Paterson* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1983), p.145.
31. Letter of May 1918, reprinted by Denys Sutton, 'The Degas Sales and England', *Burlington Magazine*, 131, 1989, 266-72, p. 271. Sutton gives a full account of the intricate and ultimately frustrating negotiations which ensued. For Degas merely to have posed his models in a studio, Fry was later to point out, 'would have prevented that immediate contact with life which was essential to him. So he arranged a bathroom where they could live the life of the toilet before his eyes. This limitation of his field had the happiest results.' 'Degas', in Roger Eliot Fry, *Characteristics of French Art* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1932), pp.130-8 (p. 136).
32. Letter of 15 April to Nicholas Bagenal, *The Letters of Virginia Woolf*, ed. by Nigel Nicolson, 6 vols., (London: Hogarth Press, 1975-80), 2, p.230.
33. Letter of 16 February 1919 to Vanessa Bell, *The Letters of Virginia Woolf*, 2, p.331. Woolf's most substantial essay on the visual arts took the form of *Walter Sickert: A Conversation* (London: Hogarth Press, 1934).
34. Letter of 22 April 1918 to Vanessa Bell, *The Letters of Virginia Woolf*, 2, p.230.
35. Virginia Woolf, 'A Sketch of the Past', in *Moments of Being: Unpublished Autobiographical Writings*, ed. by Jeanne Schulkind (London: Triad/Granada, 1978), pp.71-159 (pp. 81-2).
36. Virginia Woolf, *Night and Day*, ed. by Suzanne Raitt (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp.359-60, 362-3.
37. J.-K. Huysmans, *Certains* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1925), p.25.
38. J.-K. Huysmans, *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. by Lucien Descaves (Paris: G. Crès, 1928-34), 3, p.53.
39. *Ibid.*, 4, p.211.
40. I develop this argument more fully in 'Naturalism's Phobic Picturesque', *Critical Quarterly*, 51 (2009), 33-58.
41. D.H. Lawrence, *The Trespasser*, ed. by Elizabeth Mansfield (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p.51.

42. D.H. Lawrence, *The First and Second Lady Chatterley Novels*, ed. by Dieter Mehl and Christa Jansohn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p.444.
43. D.H. Lawrence, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, ed. Michael Squires (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p.213.
44. Marcel Proust, *Remembrance of Things Past*, trans. by C.K. Scott Moncrieff and Terence Martin, 3 volumes (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1983), 1, pp.343, 384-5.
45. Joyce, *Ulysses*, pp.62, 67, 694.
46. Derek Attridge, 'Molly's Flow: the Writing of "Penelope" and the Question of Women's Language', in *Joyce Effects: On Language, Theory, and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp.93-116 (p. 99).