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Circling the Self: the short story innovations of Katherine Mansfield and Virginia Woolf.

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On the 29 April 1920, Katherine Mansfield recorded the following passage in her journal: 'True to oneself! Which self? Which of my many - well really that's what it looks like coming to - hundreds of selves.'[1] These are the words of an undeniably Modernist mode of thought and perception. It was such an aesthetic that was central to the reassessment of the nature of the self and its representation in literature in the early twentieth century, and such an aesthetic that was at the heart of the fiction of Katherine Mansfield and Virginia Woolf. Both writers fundamentally reject the notion of a stable or fixed self-identity, and instead explore and problematise the notion of the multiple self, and its expression in literature. The short story is an apt form for such literary experimentation because of its own potential for fragmentation, disruption and multiplicity. As will be demonstrated in chapter four, the short story *cycle* was utilised by both Woolf and Mansfield to create a narrative that was simultaneously fragmented yet contiguous, various stories being linked by recurring characters or shared locational or temporal space. The short story's ability to exist as a small literary unit in itself, and yet as part of a larger whole, is reflective of the emerging Modernist conception of the self: necessarily socially and culturally labelled as a single unified 'self', yet inevitably composed of many various interrelated selves, which cumulatively form an ostensibly coherent self-identity. The necessity of this process is presented by Woolf and Mansfield as part of reaching maturity in the case of younger characters, or self-knowledge or peace in others.

The concept of various selves, of a self-identity that is multiple rather than singular, is investigated in Woolf's story 'Together and Apart' (1925) and Mansfield's 'Prelude' (1918). Woolf's text initially depicts the self as arising from a dichotomy of 'true' and 'false' selves, largely analogous to public and private spheres. This is highlighted when Miss Anning ruminates that she 'felt she had struck accidentally the true man, upon whom the false man was built,' later described as 'the secluded being, who sits in the darkness while his shallow agile companion does all the tumbling and beckoning, and keeps the show going.'[2] However, Woolf continues on to problematise this simple contrast between two kinds of selves; 'fibres of her were floated capriciously, this way and that, like the tentacles of a sea anemone, now thrilled, now snubbed.'[3] Such a description hints towards a perception of the self as altogether more various and loosely connected, as opposed to two solid states of true and false, or public and private.

Katherine Mansfield can be seen to push this interrogation of self-identity even further, concluding that self-identity is composed of many different parts. Sydney Janet

[1] Katherine Mansfield, *Journal of Katherine Mansfield,* ed. by J. Middleton Murry (London: Constable & Co. Ltd, 1954), April 1920, p.205.
[2] Virginia Woolf, 'Together and Apart' in *The Complete Shorter Fiction of Virginia Woolf*, ed. by Susan Dick (Orlando: Harcourt Books, 1989), pp.189-94.
[3] Ibid, p.191.

Kaplan argues that 'Mansfield's aesthetics are grounded in a precocious recognition of the self as many selves', a position that is clearly supported through Mansfield's story 'Prelude', where numerous characters encounter tensions between different aspects of the self. [4] In the closing scene of the text, Beryl composes a letter to a friend, which prompts self-reflection on the posturing and contrived nature of her written communication: 'it was her other self who had written that letter. It not only bored but quite disgusted her real self.'[5] Initially it seems that a binary is established here too, between the 'real self' and the 'other self', the former rejecting the social affectations of the latter: 'oh god, there she was, back again, playing the same old game. False – false as ever. False as when she'd written to Nan Pymm. False even when she was alone with herself, now.'[6] However, the difficulty of engaging with her 'true self' even in private demonstrates Mansfield's favouring of 'hundreds of selves', and rejection of a simple polarity between public and private identity. Indeed the majority of the characters in 'Prelude' encounter disunity between different aspects of themselves and others. Kezia, for example, moves from screaming in horror to genuine curiosity in seconds, the contrasting emotions revealing the different parts of her psychology that are in play at the same time: 'she never knew that men wore earrings. She was very much surprised.'[7] Both writers are therefore concerned with depicting self-identity as unfixed and self-contradictory, constantly in tension with its own different elements.

'Prelude' is careful to pay attention to the coping mechanisms that individuals develop in response to fragmented self-identity, and as such, Mansfield identifies role-playing as one of these key social strategies. As Kaplan puts it, Mansfield's 'emphasis on roles and role playing reflects her sense of self as a multiplicity, ever changing, dependent on the shifting focus of relationships.'[8] This interest in role-playing is a recurring element in 'Prelude', as Mansfield depicts characters of varying age and gender assuming roles in relation to particular social contexts, or at the prompting of interactions with other humans, whether knowingly or not. Stanley's purchase of gifts on his way home from work can be seen as a gesture chosen subconsciously to reassert his role as provider for the family. Linda, on the other hand, is self-aware in her struggle to adhere to the expectations placed on her as a mother and wife, roles she is reluctant to embrace: 'she had just not screamed at the top of her voice: "You are killing me […] I have had three great lumps of children already."'[9] Significantly, the most striking example of role-playing in the story is that of the children's tea party, where they literally role-play as adults, mothers and wives: '"Oh, good morning, Mrs Smith. I'm so glad to see you. Have you brought your children?" "Yes, I've brought both my twins. I have had another baby since I saw you last, but she came so suddenly that I haven't had time to make her any clothes, yet. So I left her... How is your husband?"'[10] Here Mansfield highlights the significance of this familiar childhood play, as the children are subconsciously aware that various social roles entail particular speech patterns and behavioural codes. This underlines the common process of learning to assume different roles during childhood development, thereby suggesting that roles and role-playing are a natural result of the multiple self-identity.

Woolf and Mansfield's use of the short story form to reflect the nature of fragmented self-identity is further extended by their shared underlying argument that it is necessary to impose boundaries upon personal expression and identity. These limits enable individuals to

[4] Sydney Janet Kaplan, *Katherine Mansfield and the Origins of Modernist Fiction* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), p.169.
[5] Katherine Mansfield, 'Prelude' in *The Collected Stories of Katherine Mansfield,* ed. by Stephen Arkin (Ware: Wordsworth Editions Limited, 2006), pp.5-43 (p.41).
[6] Ibid, p.42.
[7] Mansfield, 'Prelude', p.33.
[8] Kaplan, p.37.
[9] Mansfield, 'Prelude', p.38-9.
[10] Ibid, p.28.

exist within conventional society without being ostracised. The process of constructing boundaries around the various component selves is depicted as an ongoing, lifelong process by both writers, reflective of the fact that new aspects of self-identity form in relation to experience and knowledge. In 'Prelude', the fact that Beryl openly identifies her self-constructed artifice is a kind of rite of passage in terms of personal understanding, in which she progresses towards the self-knowledge required to survive in the adult world. As Patrick Morrow argues, for Mansfield 'the creation of a mask - the consciously wrought presentation of a coherent yet artificial, self - was required in order for individuals to protect themselves from the constant danger of fragmentation.'[11] However, this process of delineation, whilst having a socially positive impact, is frequently also a negative experience in some ways. In Woolf's short story 'The New Dress' (1925), Mabel Waring has become a wife and a mother, having successfully navigated the paths of social development that the young characters of 'Prelude' are only just beginning to traverse. However, the boundaries and categorisation she has assumed in order to attain such social positions prove to limit or inhibit lived experience: 'when everything was arranged – music, weather, holidays, every reason for happiness was there – then nothing happened at all. One wasn't happy. It was flat, just flat, that was all.'[12] Woolf's character encounters the same tension as Mansfield's, struggling to comprehend and reconcile different aspects of self-identity, and thereby engages with 'one of Woolf's most important issues: the portrayal of the human mind not as rigid and fixed datum, but in its dynamic and contrasting nature.'[13]

Furthermore, Mansfield's story 'Bliss' (1918) can be read alongside 'The New Dress' to demonstrate the inevitability of this need to construct a coherent, isolated self-identity. Throughout all but the final stages of the story, protagonist Bertha Young struggles to navigate emotional and social experiences in a conventional manner. She repeatedly describes experiencing a feeling of 'absolute bliss' in reaction to the world around her. However, the force of emotion frequently threatens to overwhelm Bertha, challenging her ability to fulfil roles such as hostess and mother, for example when ' as though overcome, she flung down on a couch and pressed her hands to her eyes, "I'm too happy – too happy she murmured […] now she was so tired she could not drag herself upstairs to dress.'[14] The impact of lived experience or emotion is incompatible with social codes of behaviour, with the roles she must play, and threatens to overwhelm her individuality. Therefore Bertha must suppress her pure emotion, creating boundaries between herself and the world, that inevitable other from which she is separate. In the same way that Mabel Waring is frustrated by the 'flat' experiences that such boundaries consequently generate, Bertha, too, despairs at the limits of convention and propriety that prevent her from expressing herself freely: 'oh is there no way to express it without being 'drunk and disorderly'? How idiotic civilisation is! Why be given a body if you have to keep it shut up in a case, like a rare, rare fiddle?'[15] Thus, Mansfield and Woolf both posit a direct conflict between unrestricted creative and expressive freedom, and a socially defined individual self.

Nevertheless, both writers acknowledge the necessity of such limitations, depicting them as introspective rites of passage that grant greater emotional maturity and sensitivity. Self-expression is sacrificed, to an extent, in order to gain greater knowledge and perception of others. This can be seen in the way in which it is revealed that Bertha, with her malleable boundaries and overemphasised self-expression, had not previously perceived the true nature of the relationship between her husband and Pearl Fulton, preoccupied as she was with

[11] Patrick D. Morrow, *Katherine Mansfield's Fiction* (Bowling Green: Bowling Green State UP, 1993), p.12.
[12] Virginia Woolf, 'The New Dress' in Dick, 1989, pp.170-7 (p.176).
[13] Teresa Prudente, '"To slip easily from one thing to another": Experimentalism and Perception in Woolf's Short Stories', *Journal of the Short Story in English,* 50 (2008) pp.171-83 (p.174).
[14] Mansfield, 'Bliss' in Arkin, 2006, pp.69-80 (p.73).
[15] Ibid, p.69.

indulging in an almost spiritual form of emotional freedom. As Patricia Moran argues, 'the gradual emergence of boundaries [...] suggests the growing awareness of individuality and separateness in the characters,' which encapsulates the way in which Bertha's sense of communion with Pearl (and by extension, with the world) is replaced by clarity of perception.[16] The bounded, role-playing self is a moderated version of the unruly multitudinous self, one that sacrifices free expression for long-term sustainability.

For Mansfield and Woolf, therefore, the bounded and delineated self is something of a necessary evil, as an uncensored relationship with the world is sacrificed in order to surpass the shortcomings of self-identity's innately fragmented natural form. Any constructed approximation of a unified self experiences a somewhat reduced and muted existence within the context of the wider world, but is ultimately better suited to functioning in human society. Both writers reject traditional literary portrayals of human self-identity and strive in their short fiction to craft characters that provide an inherently truer depiction of the self; myriad, contradictory and shifting though it may be. Furthermore, in crafting short stories that draw on the Modernist configuration of self-identity, both Mansfield and Woolf can be seen to seek to re-conceptualise the very mode in which they were writing, the short story's flexibility providing the ideal literary space in which to recast not only human self-identity, but narrative structure itself. It is therefore to the fundamental bedrock of narrative technique that we next turn.

With the very nature of self-identity and its representation in literature being chalmenged by the Modernist aesthetic, it seems inevitable that fundimental aspects of literary convention fell prey to reformative scrutiny. In particular examples of Mansfield and Woolf's short fiction, the basic structure of narrative progression is adapted and made anew. For instance, stories such as 'At The Bay' (1922) or 'An Unwritten Novel' (1920) could be said to have very little happen in terms of typical plot. However, when considered within the larger context of both writers' innovative aims, it begins to become clear that such stories can be read as reflective of Woolf and Mansfield's attempts to remake traditional forms of plot advancement and find new ways of creating narrative progression. Indeed both writers' experimentation always sought to be reconcilable with the new visions of multifaceted self-identity their fiction presented. Narrative progression, then, is centred around what can be viewed as the 'movement of a mind' rather than traditional plot-based action. Once again, the form of the short story is particularly suited to both writers' literary experimentation, the limitations of length restricting the potential for lengthy exposition and instead encouraging the reader to speculate beyond the confines of the text, making connections with the external world and thereby assuming a mental state similar to that portrayed in the narration of the stories themselves.

The nature of short stories featuring a narrative constructed by the 'movement of a mind' is employed by both writers. Woolf's story 'An Unwritten Novel' has at its heart the imaginative power of the human mind, reflecting D'Hoker's statement that 'in the short stories as in the essays the imagination is a key term in Woolf's aesthetics.'[17] In terms of action, the narrator sits on a train and imaginatively conjures a lonely life for the woman sitting opposite her, who eventually departs the train and belies her supposed solitude by meeting her son at the station. Practically all of the forward progression of the plot is based upon the motion provided by the narrator's imaginings, a strategy self-reflexively affirmed by the final jubilant paragraph, celebrating the sustaining powers of the imagination: 'Oh, how it

[16] Patricia Moran, *Word of Mouth: Body Language in Katherine Mansfield and Virginia Woolf* (London: UP of Virginia, 1996), p.10.
[17] Elke D'Hoker, 'The Role of Imagination in Virginia Woolf's Short Fiction', *Journal of the Short Story in English,* 50 (2008), 17-31 (p.18).

whirls and surges – floats me afresh! […] Wherever I go, mysterious figures, I see you, turning the corner, mothers and sons; you, you, you. I hasten, I follow.'[18] This reliance upon the 'movement of a mind' rather than actual plot-based events is a prime example of Woolf's attempt to redevelop her literary approach to depicting the human psyche at the very level of narrative technique.

Furthermore, the 'movement of a mind' narrative strategy is doubly subversive, as it gives literary voice to the kind of imaginative wanderings that are so common in human psychological lives, whilst at the same time inducing said psychological activities in the reader. This process of inducing a particular kind of psychological state is indivisibly tied to the story's brevity and lack of definitive closure. By removing solid factual plot-progression and instead promoting psychological propulsion, Woolf encourages the reader to imaginatively speculate beyond the confines of the text, assuming the role of the thinking narrator and expanding and developing the story. The traditional divisions between text and reader are transgressed, and Christine Reynier sums up this process beautifully by arguing that 'the reading contract is therefore redefined in a short story which is now not only open-ended but also open in the sense that it lets the reader enter the text and go on with the writing process.'[19] Reynier's comments lend a fascinating new dimension to the closing paragraph of the text, including the passage: 'the last look of them – he stepping from the kerb and she following him round the edge of the big building brims me with wonder – floods me anew. Mysterious figures! Mother and son. Who are you?'[20] The rhetorical question acts as an invitation to the reader to continue the imaginative gymnastics that structure the very text itself, and the narrative strategy of the 'movement of a mind' arguably decentralises narrative authority and extends the story beyond the limits of the printed page.

In contrast, Mansfield's story 'The Fly' (1922) serves as an example of Mansfield's different approach to this narrative strategy. There is a little more plot-based action; the anonymous boss of a company has a brief discussion with another man in his office until he is reminded of his dead son. His companion departs, and the Boss expects to be overcome by feelings of grief. Instead, however, he becomes engaged in the act of sadistically torturing a fly with his inkpot until it dies, and he falls to 'wondering what it was he had been thinking about before.'[21] Crucially, through the changes and development in the protagonist's psychological state, Mansfield's story is granted a far more layered complexity than the straightforward plot summary would suggest. The boss begins by revelling in his financial success and material wealth: 'he was proud of his room; he liked to have it admired, especially by old Woodifield. It gave him a feeling of deep, solid satisfaction to be planted there in the midst of it in full view.'[22] As the topic of his dead son is introduced by reference to a framed picture of him, there is a dramatic yet subtle shift in tone and mood; the boss becomes tense and on edge as the memories and emotions associated with his dead son enter his conscious mind. He then intends to engage in these feelings of grief; 'he wanted, he intended, he had arranged to weep,' feelings which his memories reveal are, to an extent, contrived - a component of the artifice he constructs around himself as suggested by his office furnishings: 'time, he had declared then, he had told everybody, could make no difference. Other men perhaps might recover, might live their loss down, but not he.'[23] Finally, he is distracted by the plight of the fly, experiencing a gamut of emotions ranging from admiration to cruelty.

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[18] Virginia Woolf, 'An Unwritten Novel' in Dick, 1989, pp.112-21 (p.121).
[19] Christine Reynier, 'The Short Story According to Woolf', *Journal of the Short Story in English,* 41 (2003) <http://jsse.revues.org/index307.html> [accessed 17 May 2010] (para. 10 of 21)
[20] Woolf, 'An Unwritten Novel' p.121.
[21] Katherine Mansfield, 'The Fly' in Arkin, 2006, pp.344-8 (p.348).
[22] Ibid, p.344.
[23] Ibid, p.346.

Through this method, Mansfield argues that emotional experience is the result of human psychology, which in turn can acknowledge or ignore the emotive triggers invested by individuals in the external world. It is therefore the failing of the Boss's psychological investment that blocks his grief, rather than an overexposure to the picture of his son. Or as Katherine Murphy Dickson puts it, 'the potentiality for arousing emotion possessed by an object depends entirely on the mind of the observer of the object, not at all on inherent qualities in the object.'[24] The story's conclusion emphasises the artifice of the boss's grief for his son, yet it is the spectrum of psychological and emotional states that the protagonist passes through that provides the story with its central progressive stimulus and literary impact. Mansfield subtly weaves this mobility of consciousness into the simple actions of the plot to generate a more nuanced narrative, one that demonstrates the self-mediated, contradictory nature of self-identity, and reflects the interplay of conscious action and subconscious thought in everyday life.

While it is clear that both writers employ the 'movement of a mind' narrative technique in a number of their short stories, there is a notable contrast in the ways in which they do this. Namely, Mansfield is concerned with movement through several different consciousnesses, whereas Woolf's narrative tends to structure itself around one locus of thought or imagination, 'tethering the narrative consciousness to a single point of oscillation.'[25] Such a single point of focus is evidenced through 'The Mark on the Wall' (1917), the story almost entirely consisting of a monologue meditating on the nature of life, self-identity, and various other random trains of thought, memory and association. Crucially, the meandering narrative contemplations are all prompted by the eponymous mark on the wall, a fact acknowledged by the text itself: 'how readily our thoughts swarm upon a new object, lifting it a little way, as ants carry a blade of straw so feverishly, and then leave it...'[26] The story's meandering structure simultaneously demonstrates and celebrates this narrative formed from a 'drifting and circling process where an object, an image, a word or a state of mind is associated with another and so on, in a chain-like fluid movement: the flux and flow of random thought and association.'[27] Indeed, Woolf's narrative directly asserts the desire to 'think quietly, calmly, spaciously, never to be interrupted […] to sink deeper and deeper, away from the surface, with its hard separate facts. To steady myself, let me catch hold of the first idea that passes,' a process which it utilises throughout the story, diverging off onto other trains of thought and memory, yet always returning to the central fixity of the mark on the wall. [28] Thus, Woolf's story can be seen as beginning to attempt to find a new and alternative mode of narrative progression, one which is better suited to representing the non-unified self which lies at the heart of all narrative fiction.

Mansfield, on the other hand, employs a slightly different approach in her revisions to classic narrative progression. In 'At the Bay', Mansfield presents a story told in one day, through several perspectives. Crucially, however, the text is 'not so much a narrative about events shared by several people, as one where several temperaments unfold in the slantings of perspective, in the tilting gradations of time.'[29] Mansfield herself commented: 'I feel no longer concerned with the same appearance of things. The people who lived or whom I wished to bring into my stories don't interest me anymore. The *plots* of my stories leave me perfectly cold.'[30] Thus, in a similar manner to 'The Fly', the internal psychological shifts of

[24] Katherine Murphy Dickson, *Katherine Mansfield's New Zealand Stories* (Oxford: University Press of America, 1998), p.35.
[25] Dominic Head, *The Modernist Short Story,* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992), p.108.
[26] Woolf, 'The Mark on the Wall', in Dick, 1989, pp. 83-9 (p. 83).
[27] Christine Reynier, *Virginia Woolf's Ethics of the Short Story* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009) p.43-4.
[28] Woolf, 'The Mark on the Wall', p.84-5
[29] Morrow, p.49.
[30] Katherine Mansfield, *The Journal of Katherine Mansfield*, January 1916, p.93.

the characters are paramount, with the physical actions of the plot serving chiefly to instigate such mental movement. Significantly, there is a duality of motion here, whereby narrative progression is achieved through the internal changes experienced by individual characters, as well as by cycling through the consciousnesses of several different individuals. For instance, sections 5 and 6 alone are focalized through the eyes of the single young woman Beryl, the married middle-aged Mrs Harry Kember, reluctant mother Linda and even an infant child fascinated by his own feet: 'he was serious again. Something pink, something soft waved in front of him. He made a grab at it and it immediately disappeared.'[31] Free indirect discourse is repeatedly used to internalise the narrative within these various characters, many of whom then experience active trains of thought which propel the narration until a new or returning character takes over.

By deftly moving between several characters' minds, each of which displays its own psychological changes, the story achieves a sense of momentum that also manages to support Mansfield's explorations of the nature of the self. Stanley, for example, struggles to reconcile his earlier mindset with the one established by the time of his journey home: 'I can't imagine how I can have done such a thing. My confounded temper, of course.'[32] The juxtaposition of several different psyches of varying age and gender allows Mansfield to establish a parallel between the sometimes oxymoronic juxtaposition of different aspects of self-identity within a single person. Cumulatively, therefore, the narrative technique in 'At the Bay' reflects Mansfield's radical new approach to presenting the self in fiction, rejecting the established modes of representation and striving towards something new.

Clearly, both Woolf and Mansfield felt that traditional modes of narrative progression lacked an organic cohesion with new formulations of destabilised human self-identity. In short stories such as 'An Unwritten Novel', 'The Fly', 'The Mark on the Wall' and 'At the Bay', the writers develop a new form of a narrative progression that relies upon psychological mobility rather than an event-based plot. As a result of this new narrative strategy, Woolf challenged the conventional separation of reader and text, whilst Mansfield interlaced varying narrative perspectives and explored the tensions between conscious action and unconscious thought. Most importantly, the resulting approach to narrative progression was unceasingly connected to the short story form, and both writers identified an essential quality in its makeup that provided them with the means to radicalise narrative fiction, and tie it more closely to lived human experience. In the short story form Mansfield and Woolf identify the potential to capture experiential moments in their most intense form and, as the next chapter discusses, believed that these moments of intensity enabled some deeper understanding or acceptance of the increasingly contradictory self. As Woolf described it, 'it is a token of some real thing behind appearances; and I make it real by putting it into words. It is only by putting it into words that I make it whole.'[33]

United by their rejection of the fixed self and traditional narrative structures, Woolf and Mansfield seem committed to finding new modes of writing the consciousness, and reflect lived human experience. To an extent, this is achieved through the previously described narration based around the 'movement of a mind', singular or plural as the case may be. However, it is in the Modernist short story's characteristic moment of epiphany that the most interesting collisions between form and writerly intention arise. The nature of these moments of insight or revelation are varied and multifarious, serving different purposes from text to text, yet consistently 'ordinary reality is transcended in these moments and the

[31] Katherine Mansfield, 'At the Bay' in Arkin, 2006, pp.165-96 (p.179).
[32] Ibid, p.192.
[33] Virginia Woolf, 'A Sketch of the Past' in *Moments of Being: Unpublished Autobiographical Writings*, ed. by Jeanne Schulkind (London: Sussex University Press, 1976) pp.64-137 (p.72).

moment achieves the perfection and timelessness of art.'[34] Woolf's own terminology ('moment of being') is perhaps a more appropriate label, allowing for a broader range of application than 'revelation', as the Joycean 'epiphany' would suggest. Woolf and Mansfield identify both the liberating possibilities and the disillusioning clarity that such moments can provide, and ultimately view their portrayal in literature as vital. The 'moment of being' emerges as one of the central literary devices at work in both writers' short stories, and is particularly suited to reinvigorating the role of the reader in relation to texts.

The moment of being as a narrative device is exemplified through Mansfield's story 'The Garden Party' (1922) and Woolf's 'Moments of Being: Slater's Pins Have No Points' (1926). In this guise, the 'moment of being' functions as a moment of clarity and insight, wherein the narrative focalizer – usually the central protagonist of the text – gains some greater understanding of the reality and truth of life, themselves, or others. Crucially, however, both writers acknowledge the insufficiency of language when it comes to depicting these transcendent moments, even as they celebrate them. In 'The Garden Party', Laura Sheridan encounters the body of a dead man and consequently comes to some deeper understanding about the significance and nature of life and death, free from the value judgements the of middle class ideology her upbringing has instilled her with: 'what did garden-parties and baskets and lace frocks matter to him? He was far from all those things. He was wonderful, beautiful.'[35] Yet, when prompted to convey her thoughts on the experience, Laura is inarticulate: '"Isn't life," she stammered, "isn't life -" But what life was she couldn't explain.'[36] Laura cannot express herself freely, because although she has transgressed the self-policing boundaries of middle class ideology in terms of perception, such ideology influences her use of language, and therefore defines the limits of her expression.

Mansfield is careful to convey the fact that the struggle between free self-expression and social convention is ongoing. By chance Laura has gained insight which will contribute to her personal development, yet the moment of being is but one key experience in her formative years, hinting at future ideological conflicts that Laura may encounter. As Dominic Head points out, 'the epiphany is compromised. It embodies a dawning awareness of the disparate elements of life and their random simultaneity and, consequently, a partial progression beyond rigid class distinctions.'[37] Indeed, these class distinctions are constantly tested by Laura throughout the story, and her continual sense of unease with class barriers reflects her willingness to reject social propriety in order to gain intellectual advancement: '"If someone had died there normally – and I can't understand how they keep alive in those poky little holes – we should still be having our party shouldn't we?" Laura had to say 'yes' to that, but she felt it was all wrong.'[38] Mansfield's 'moment of being', therefore, reflects the continuous struggle between the possibility of such moments of insight and the socially constructed inhibitors that threaten their intellectually and emotionally enriching potential.

In the same way that Laura is unable to fully express the insight that she has gained, Woolf's 'Moments of Being: Slater's Pins Have No Points' is built upon the crux of a revelation that cannot be fully conveyed through language. It becomes clear that, contrary to protagonist Fanny Wilmot's original beliefs, her piano teacher Julia Craye is homosexual: 'Julia kissed her. Julia possessed her. "Slater's pins have no points," Miss Craye said, laughing queerly and relaxing her arms, as Fanny Wilmot pinned the flower to her breast with trembling fingers.'[39] Significantly, Fanny's 'trembling fingers' and continued physical

[34] D'Hoker, p.23.
[35] Katherine Mansfield, 'The Garden Party' in Arkin, 2006, pp.197-210 (p.209).
[36] Ibid, p.210.
[37] Head, p.136.
[38] Mansfield, 'The Garden Party' p.205.
[39] Virginia Woolf, 'Moments of Being: Slater's Pins Have No Points' in Dick, 1989, pp.215-20 (p.220).

proximity to Miss Craye after her intimate act suggest that the revelation is twofold, allowing Fanny to discover the nature of her piano teacher's sexuality, but also arguably revealing her own latent homosexual feelings. In the same way that Mansfield denies Laura the descriptive power of language to convey her discovery, 'Woolf shows that identification with an other is a matter of being rather than one that can be achieved through language.'[40] Miss Craye's physical actions prompt an intuitive, unarticulated response in Fanny that is beyond words. Woolf, then, indicates that momentary points of insight and revelation are possible, but that they are not necessarily renderable in language as they are directly assimilated by the perceiving mind. Nevertheless, both 'The Garden Party' and 'Moments of Being' indicate the shared belief of Woolf and Mansfield that it is important to pursue the task of conveying the indescribable, and thereby come to some greater understanding of how such moments underpin our psychic lives.

While there is certainly a positive aspect to such enlightenment, the 'moment of being' can also reflect the disenchantment that can come with insight or knowledge. In 'The Lady in the Looking-Glass: A Reflection' (1929), Woolf takes a more metaphorical approach and uses a looking-glass as a device through which to establish a narrative drive and then reverse; a woman's reflection is observed in the glass, meditated on, and then revealed to be contrary to the narrator's postulations. Woolf employs the kind of conjectural internal monologue discussed in chapter two to propel the narrative, and the process of imaginative speculation is openly acknowledged by the the narrator: 'one must prize [Isabella] open with the first tool that came to hand – the imagination. One must fix one's mind upon her at that very moment. One must fasten her down there.'[41] As in Mansfield, the story reaches a pivotal moment at the ending that is simultaneously disillusioning and revelatory. Kaplan suggests that 'in that "one blazing moment" [Woolf] evokes epiphany, the movement of so many of her own stories to that moment of enlightenment, exposure, understanding - the instant when the walls come down.'[42] These walls are the barriers against negative forces that we construct throughout our everyday lives, and to let them down is a risk that Woolf sees as dangerous but necessary for a greater understanding of both the world and the self. Thus, when the story concludes with the realisation of Isabella's true nature and attributes, disappointment is palpable as the narrator exclaims: 'here was the woman herself. She stood naked in that pitiless light. And there was nothing. Isabella was perfectly empty.'[43] The 'moment of being' renders the narrator unfulfilled, as all the previous assumptions about Isabella's internal nature that were based upon external appearances are revealed to be false. Evidently, Woolf's story can be read as simultaneously exhorting the importance of searching for the true nature of things, and warning about the drawbacks that such new awareness can bring. Thus, 'moments of being' are not always pleasant, but are always valuable, teaching one about the nature of the external world and internal self-identity, as well as the relationship between the two.

Similarly, the 'moment of being' in Mansfield's 'Miss Brill' (1920) is an emblematic process of disillusionment, drawing on Mansfield's 'Symbolist belief that things should not be conveyed through descriptive analysis, but evoked through concrete images and symbols.'[44] The fur necklet and its box are as metaphorically charged as Woolf's looking-glass, involved as they are with the external appearances of dress and accessories. Miss Brill and her fur, Mansfield argues, stand for those that have become too engrossed in the facades of life at the expense of pursuing more fundamental truths beneath the surface of things.

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[40] Oliver Taylor, '"What's 'it'-What do you mean by 'it'?": Lost Readings and Getting Lost in "Kew Gardens"', *Journal of the Short Story in English,* 50 (2008), 121-35 (p.128).
[41] Virginia Woolf, 'The Lady in the Looking-Glass: A Reflection' in Dick, 1989, pp.221-5 (p.223).
[42] Kaplan, p.205.
[43] Woolf, 'The Lady in the Looking-Glass: A Reflection', p.225.
[44] Murphy Dickson, p.72.

Indeed, facade is a continual theme throughout the story, Miss Brill observing that 'they were all on the stage. They weren't only the audience, not only looking on; they were acting. Even she has a part and came every Sunday.'[45] Such an observation is reminiscent of the presence of roles and role-playing in stories like 'Prelude' and 'At The Bay' and initially seems to be the moment of insight for Miss Brill. However, Mansfield illustrates that her protagonist is misled; her analysis is too contrived and lacks the innate understanding that true 'moments of being' transmit: 'yes, we understand, we understand, she thought – though what they understood she didn't know.'[46] The actual moment of insight comes at the expense of Miss Brill's innocent naivety, the character overhearing cruelly spoken words by a seemingly charming couple: '"Because of that stupid old thing at the end there?" asked the boy. "Why does she come here at all - who wants her? Why doesn't she keep her silly old mug at home?" "It's her fu-ur which is so funny" giggled the girl.'[47] The words prompt a swift and fundamental reassessment of appearances in Miss Brill, both of others and of herself, and the fur necklet is symbolically put away in a box. Both stories ultimately demonstrate the importance of striving for a more perceptive scrutiny of the world, and the ability of literary fiction to reflect and encourage the kind of perceptive awareness that 'moments of being' engender in a text.

Clearly, corresponding patterns between the two writers' works continue to emerge in their short stories. But what is it about this specific form that lends itself so successfully to the creative aims of Woolf and Mansfield? To an extent, it is the very shortness of the short stories that enables them to create a particular impression or elicit a certain response from the reader. In reference to Woolf and 'moments of being', Teresa Prudente has argued that the length constraints of the short story 'allows her to escape the duration inherent in the novel and to fully convey the essence of these moments by leaving behind "the fabric of things."'[48] This is certainly true for the introspective imaginative mode found in texts such as 'An Unwritten Novel' and 'The Lady in the Looking-Glass', but the point may be extended to include Mansfield as well. The brevity of both writers' texts allows for an intensification of dramatic tension, unhindered as they are by lengthy plot exposition and character development. Instead, the emphasis in short stories is placed upon the moment of dramatic tension, the 'moment of being' in the case of Woolf and Mansfield.

Furthermore, typical 'moments of being' are placed at the end of each story in order to provide narrative climax, the impact of which is exacerbated by the lack of subsequent narrative exposition. Rather than forming a new interpretation of Isabella's 'empty' life, or anticipating how Miss Brill will spend her Sundays in future, Mansfield and Woolf emphasise the moment of internal change and therefore focus on the development of the self. The two writers thereby suggest that internal and cerebral narratives demand internal and cerebral action and climax, rather than external and physical focuses. Thus, if the two writers' 'faith in the power of artistic imagination to reveal the truth of (a) life, even if only momentarily, is a characteristically modernist belief,' then their innovative use of 'moments of being' is a characteristically modernist strategy. [49] As the moment of revelation prompts a reassessment of the past in the characters, so the reader is prompted to re-read the story, and re-evaluate the text in light of the new information they have gained. This is reflected by Reynier's interpretation of the moment of being's function in the text: 'the reader is granted a moment of understanding and a moment of being, in other words aesthetic emotion, coinciding with the characters' own emotion.'[50] In the same way that the 'movement of a

[45] Katherine Mansfield, 'Miss Brill' in Arkin, 2006, pp.268-72 (p.270).
[46] Ibid, p.271.
[47] Mansfield, 'Miss Brill', p.271.
[48] Prudente, p.173.
[49] D'Hoker, p.29.
[50] Reynier, p. 21.

mind' narrative strategy was shown in chapter two to encourage the reader to engage with 'An Unwritten Novel' even after reaching the end of the story, so the epiphanic moment in Woolf and Mansfield's short fiction operates. Both writers' short stories are intellectually demanding texts in the way that they do not provide simple closure. The reader is encouraged to consider and self-reflect beyond the confines of the stories, as the ambiguity surrounding the narrative crisis point foregoes neat explanation and creates a circular relationship between reader and text. Once again, a cyclical process emerges in relation to the writing of Mansfield and Woolf, and it is fitting therefore, to turn finally towards the short story cycle, and the cyclical relationship between short story and novel.

As we enter the final chapter of this study, it seems appropriate to acknowledge that a number of structural and stylistic similarities within the short stories of Woolf and Mansfield have been identified so far. It is vital, however, to also consider the relationship between stories, including the potential for continuity and connections between several. This structural exoskeleton manifests itself as the short story cycle, a form within which both writers experimented. The notion of the short story cycle is somewhat vague and open to appropriation for different critical applications, a fact reflected by the looseness of the terminology – often phrases such as 'sequence' or 'composite' have been substituted to refer to the same general idea. It is evidently necessary, therefore, to define and delineate the precise meaning and implications of bringing this term to bear upon some of the specific short fiction works of Katherine Mansfield and Virginia Woolf. The short story cycle differs from a standard short story collection by way of its innate interconnectedness, and the implicit dialogue between its composite stories. Whereas a short story collection may be unified thematically, such as the notorious paralysis that is frequently attributed to James Joyce's 1914 collection *Dubliners*, the individual stories of a cycle are a great deal more concerned with the direct connections that develop between each particular story-unit.

Following the completion of *Mrs Dalloway,* Woolf produced at least eight short stories set during a party thrown by the eponymous character, frequently referred to collectively as *Mrs Dalloway's Party.* The stories in question are 'The New Dress', 'Happiness', 'Ancestors', 'The Introduction', 'Together and Apart', 'The Man Who Loved His Kind', 'A Simple Melody' and 'A Summing Up', and were most likely all written in 1925. Woolf did not collect these stories into a single publication during her lifetime, yet there are a number of compelling reasons to consider this group of stories as interconnected and inherently related. Mrs Dalloway and her evening party provides the main backbone from which the stories take root, develop and begin to form the cyclical structure in question. Indeed, it is the self-renewing, relational nature of these texts that mean they can be cumulatively regarded as examples of the short story cycle.

There is, for example, a constant interlacing of perspectives in Woolf's Mrs Dalloway's party stories, but crucially the characters and their points of view occupy different stories. Such is the case when, in 'A Simple Melody' Mr Carslake observes 'Stuart Elton himself – Mr Carslake saw him standing alone lifting a paper knife up in his hands and looking at it in a very strange way.'[51] Mr Carslake's point of view provides an external, alternative perspective to Stuart Elton's actions, which in 'Happiness' are described through a far more dramatic narrative voice: 'getting restive and anxious and without thinking about Mrs Sutton he left her instantly and walked across the room and picked up a paper knife.'[52] It is not essential to have read 'Happiness' for this detail in 'A Simple Melody' to make sense, however having knowledge of both enhances the reading experience on a structural level. It is established that even though Mr Carslake of 'A Simple Melody' occupies an independent

[51] Virginia Woolf, 'A Simple Melody' in Dick, 1989, pp.201-7 (p.202).
[52] Virginia Woolf, 'Happiness' in Dick, 1989, pp.178-80 (p.180).

textual space to Stuart Elton, the men are simultaneously present in the same fictional room at the same party. Similarly, in 'Ancestors' there is arguably evidence for an allusion to Mabel Waring of 'The New Dress' and her striking yellow attire: 'What a lovely frock! said Jack Renshaw […] she looked at Jack Renshaw and the girl whose clothes he admired.'[53] In the same way, Mabel Waring notes several talkative characters by the fireplace, who may well be the same group that Lily Everit is introduced to in 'The Introduction', and Prickett Ellis of 'The Man Who Loved His Kind' is seen sulking by Mr Carslake.

In accounting for this constant intertwining of separate short stories, it is worth paying attention to Mary Rohrberger's thoughts on short story theory when she says, 'the short story veers toward what Joseph Frank calls "spatial form," a set of narrative techniques and processes of aesthetic perception that works to impede linearity. Various signs, referents, and connections are embedded in the text, […] to which readers respond with a sense of spatial form.'[54] As has been demonstrated, there are certainly referents and connections embedded in the various stories focused on Mrs Dalloway's party that correspond to each other, tethering the individual sub-structures of each story to a larger overall structure, and creating a spatial form that comprehends each story as an singular unit yet never in total isolation. This is because the stories of the cycle may be read in any order and yet still retain their fundamental spatial form. Unless only one or two stories are read, the overall links between each story assert each text's place within the larger cycle. Thus the short story cycle becomes a bi-layered form, one which consists of constituent stories with their own specific manifestation of the short story form, as well as a larger overall cyclical form that arises from the spatial configuration of the stories in relation to each other.

Moreover, as is suggested by Frank's spatial form and the very label 'short story *cycle*', this spatial configuration is cyclical. To demonstrate we can return to 'A Simple Melody' and 'Happiness'. The specificity of Stuart Elton's action in picking up the knife and Mr Carslake's observing it indicates that the narratives of each respective story are happening at more or less the same time. The stories therefore resist a straightforward linear organisation and instead occupy the same temporal space. This denial of linear temporality in terms of the progression from story to story undermines a linear reading process; as new connections and links are established between stories the reader circles back to previous texts in order to comprehend these references. The reader is obliged to align the stories temporally and spatially in their mind, irrespective of the order in which they may have been read. Nena Skrbic helpfully comments that 'the cycle is an effective way of seeking out a 'sense of similarity' through the links and patterns established across the sequence. This entails the reader reading vertically as well as horizontally in sequence.'[55] The idea of reading vertically is particularly valuable in light of previous discussion of the short story cycle's spatial form, stories in the cycle engaging in a relational external structure that shifts and modifies itself in response to each new encounter the reader has with a story in the cycle. By reading its relational connections of character and temporarily 'vertically', 'A Simple Melody' can be seen to epitomise the very cyclicality of the short story cycle, directing the reader to double back and reconsider previous texts from a new perspective. This arguably encourages a rereading of individual stories both in relation to themselves and the other stories in the overarching cycle. It is apparent, therefore, that the short story cycle has the potential to be cyclical on both levels of its dichotomous form, and the Mrs Dalloway's party stories perfectly encapsulate this structure.

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[53] Virginia Woolf, 'Ancestors' in Dick, 1989, pp.181-3 (p.182-3).
[54] Mary Rohrberger, 'Origins, Development, Substance and Design of the Short Story' in *The Art of Brevity: Excursions in Short Fiction Theory and Analysis,* ed. by Hans. H. Skei, Jakob Lothe and Per Winther (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2004), pp.1-13 (p.6).
[55] Nena Skrbic, *Wild Outbursts of Freedom: Reading Virginia Woolf's Short Fiction* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2004), p.147.

In the introduction to his 1974 collection of Katherine Mansfield's New Zealand stories, Ian Gordon claimed that his process of selection and organisation in the volume created 'a cohesion that Katherine might herself have imposed had she lived to organise the final arrangement of her work. Her mind was working in that direction.'[56] Whilst Gordon's editorial process is arguably too generous in its marriage of works written years apart and with wildly differing characters, he is certainly right to claim that Mansfield sought to develop her New Zealand short stories into at least one novel. In a journal entry from September 1921 she wrote: 'I ought to finish my book of *stories first* and then, when it's gone, really get down to my novel, *Karori*.'[57] Mansfield's long illness and early death in January 1923 meant that she was unable to ever achieve her artistic aim of writing a complete novel. Nevertheless, by examining the connections and responsiveness between several of Mansfield's texts, it is possible to re-imagine the stories featuring the Burnell family in terms of the short story cycle, and position this within a speculative trajectory of Mansfield's career. The contributing stories in question are 'Prelude', 'At the Bay' and 'The Doll's House' (1921).

Sandra Lee Kleppe lists the following requisites in relation to the short story composite: 'separate individual story titles, a repetition of characters and setting, a structure consisting of kernel or core stories and a balance between the closural strategies of the individual stories and the openness of the volume as a whole.'[58] Given the lack of critical consensus surrounding various definitions of interrelated short story groupings, Kleppe's terminology can be applied to the short story cycle. The specificity of the fictional New Zealand space that Mansfield crafts in the Burnell stories serves a world-building purpose, allowing the cycle to present recurring characters moving through an increasingly familiar space. In 'Prelude', the family move into a sizeable new house, which is 'long and low built, with a pillared veranda and a balcony all the way around.'[59] Once the story is brought into configuration with the other two in the cycle, the recurrence of specific location descriptions serves to provide a sense of continuity between texts: 'light shone in the windows of the bungalow. Two square patches of gold fell upon the pinks and the peaked marigolds. Florrie, the cat, came out onto the veranda, and sat on the top step'[60] Moreover, Joseph Frank's idea of "spatial form" can once again be seen to be at work here, as it is by considering the individual stories within the context of their larger cycle that such world-building elements gain increased resonance. Furthermore, the external framework of the cycle allows the reader to orient the story temporally. For instance by considering the various friendship groups of the children in 'The Doll's House' in relation to their transitory lifestyle in 'Prelude', it is possible to establish that 'The Doll's House' occurs after 'Prelude' in the overall chronology of the cycle.

Whereas Woolf's cycle relied upon numerous stories set within a condensed locational and temporal situation to craft links and patterns, the Burnell cycle achieves the same effect through fewer stories, each individual unit's longer length allowing for an extended timeframe and character development. When in 'The Doll's House' the narrator comments that 'Isabel was bossy, but she was always right, and Lottie and Kezia knew too well the powers that went with being eldest,'[61] other stories' depictions of the power relations involved in such sibling politics align themselves alongside the text. One particularly relevant

[56] Ian A. Gordon, (ed.), *Undiscovered Country: The New Zealand Stories of Katherine Mansfield* (Bristol: Longman, 1974) p.xiv.
[57] Mansfield, *Journal of Katherine Mansfield*, September 1921, p.262.
[58] Sandra Lee Kleppe, 'Faulkner, Welty and the Short Story Composite' in *The Art of Brevity*, pp. 172-80 (p.173).
[59] Mansfield, 'Prelude', p.10.
[60] Mansfield, 'At the Bay', p.192.
[61] Mansfield, 'The Doll's House', in Arkin, 2006, pp.319-25 (p.320).

passage can be found in 'Prelude': '"Where are you going to, Kezia?" asked Isabel, who longed to find some light and menial duty that Kezia might perform and so be roped in under her government.'[62] Thus, though Woolf and Mansfield's execution differs the overall effect is the same, and the connections between the Burnell stories encourage the vertical mode of reading that is central to the short story cycle. The continual reassertion of links between various stories in terms of location and characters generates a web-like structure of texts, in which rereading and reassessment can augment the present story, wherever in the cycle one may be. This implicit dialogue between the Burnell stories therefore shows that it undoubtedly bears the characteristics of the short story cycle.

The implications of the short story cycle for Mansfield's aesthetic legacy are particularly interesting. As mentioned, she intended to write a longer piece of fiction, a New Zealand based novel probably centred around the Burnell family. The novel was never written and, as Ann McLaughlin describes it, 'because of Mansfield's early death at thirty-four, which left her work suspended and her artistic vision incomplete, there has been speculation as to what her vision was and how it might have matured.'[63] By reconsidering groups of texts such as the Burnell stories as story cycles, it is possible to arrive at a reasonable approximation of what a novel by Mansfield may have looked like. Indeed, when the Burnell stories are considered within the framework of the short story cycle, their internal relations are granted a solid architecture and the texts collectively emerge as a more stable coherent whole. It is possible to detect many novelistic traits, including temporal progression, character development and a strong sense of place. Thus, although Mansfield would doubtless have approached the process of writing a novel as more than just joining up several of her existing short stories, the organic cohesion that the short story cycle exerts produces an undeniably idiosyncratic literary voice. Reading the Burnell cycle, the gap between short story and novel is narrowed, the interconnected reading process providing a greater sense of unified totality and singular focus than any of Mansfield's published collections.

Indeed, the claims for this progressive alliance between short story and novel seems doubly compelling when the intersection between Woolf's novels and stories is considered. To an extent it is possible to argue that Woolf managed to achieve what Mansfield could not live long enough to do; craft a novel directly out of the strengths and achievements of short stories. It is striking that Woolf's maturity as a writer emerged after the creation of *Jacob's Room* in 1922, a novel that she noted in her diary as springing directly from three of her short stories: 'but conceive mark on the wall, K[ew]. G[ardens]. & unwritten novel taking hands & dancing in unity. [...] Indeed, I think from the ease with which I'm developing the unwritten novel there must be a path for me there.'[64] The novel's scarcity of plot and external setting clearly owes itself to the literary techniques developed in the stories Woolf cites, the nature of which was discussed in chapter two.

In the same way, *Mrs Dalloway* (1925) developed out of two short stories, 'Mrs Dalloway in Bond Street' (1922) and 'The Prime Minister' (1922). Unfortunately, the length constraints of the present study means that it is not possible to engage in a full scale of analytical comparison of the relationship between these two short stories and the finished novel. Nevertheless, the direct relationship between short stories and the novel is fully acknowledged by Woolf, as a diary entry records: 'Mrs Dalloway has branched into a book.'[65] This fluid-like interface between short story and novel is noted by Reynier, who argues that Woolf 'physically weaves her short stories into her novels and essays, thus

[62] Mansfield, 'Prelude', p.17.
[63] Ann L. McLaughlin, '"The Same Job": The Shared Writing Aims of Katherine Mansfield and Virginia Woolf', *Modern Fiction Studies*, 24 (1978), 369-82 (p.370).
[64] Virginia Woolf, *The Diary of Virginia Woolf: Vol. II: 1920 – 1924*, ed. by Anne Olivier Bell (London: The Hogarth Press, 1978), 26th January 1920, p.14.
[65] Ibid, Sat 14 Oct 1922, p.207.

refusing all distinction between so-called major and minor genres, and situating them in a new space where circulation prevails, an open space.'[66] Given the two writers' similarities in aesthetic vision and literary technique as demonstrated throughout this study, it seems no great leap to argue that Reynier's analysis of Woolf could well have been true of Mansfield, had she lived to write a novel. Such an argument is all the more fruitful given Reynier's 'circulation' phrasing; the cyclical, self-sustaining nature of the relationship between several of Mansfield's connected stories has been explored in this chapter.

On the 10 November, 1919, Katherine Mansfield wrote to John Middleton Murry: 'our whole strength depends upon our facing things. I mean facing them without any reservations or restraints. […] We've got to stand by our opinions & risk falling by them.'[67] Few other statements are as pertinent in light of the radical literary experimentation attempted by Mansfield and Woolf in the field of short fiction. Faced with a literary heritage that seemed increasingly inadequate at capturing the nature of human consciousness in the face of twentieth century modernity, both women placed their aesthetic mission at the heart of their professional lives. That mission was undeniably Modernist, aiming to 'make it new', whether 'it' referred to narrative technique, the representation of conscious thought, or the depiction of intense lived experience. Following on from the innovations of Anton Chekhov, Mansfield and Woolf further developed the short story form and their own literary techniques, crafting a narrative mode that privileged the progressive workings of human thought, and challenging traditional configurations of reader and writer. Mansfield and Woolf therefore emerge as absolutely fundamental to the development of high Modernism, as well as in the genre of short fiction. Indeed it is the particularly cyclical interconnectedness of groups of short stories that is their most overlooked and unacknowledged literary innovation. By re-envisioning the limits and boundaries between stories, and positioning individual texts in non-linear, cyclical relation to each other, the short story cycle according to Mansfield and Woolf can be seen as the missing link between short fiction and the novel. It is surely in the short story cycle, and in the interlinking of their literary innovations that the future of the study of their unique intellectual relationship lies. After all, Virginia Woolf herself observed: 'I feel a common certain understanding between us – a queer sense of being "like."'[68]

[66] Christine Reynier, Virginia Woolf's Ethics of the Short Story, p.15.
[67] Katherine Mansfield, *The Collected Letters of Katherine Mansfield, Vol. III: 1919 – 1920*, ed. by Vincent O'Sullivan and Margaret Scott (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 10 November 1919, p. 82-3.
[68] Virginia Woolf, *The Diary of Virginia Woolf, Vol. II: 1920 – 1924*, 31 May 1920, p.44.

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