

poor peasant. At the same time, this social prestige relates to a basic characteristic of Don Juan: his foreign nature. Don Juan, in effect, bursts into Aminta and Batricio's wedding as if he had fallen from the sky. The same might be said of his appearance to Tisbea, who rejects her local suitors but succumbs—like Aminta—to the mysterious outsider. With noblewomen, Don Juan prefers to maintain his anonymity by resorting to a disguise. The disguise does not fool Ana (it is interesting that the “trickster” only fails in his native city of Seville and when his rival is another Don Juan, Mota), but it succeeds with Isabela, who, curiously, only asks Don Juan who he is after she has been seduced. In short, women feel attracted to the stranger, to the enemy of social order or the alien.

Once Tirso had created the Don Juan myth, other Don Juans—among them Zorrilla's—benefited from the prestige of the name, a constant trait that they all inherited. The hero need only present himself as Don Juan, that is, pass for Don Juan. Thus, the character develops an awareness of the myth encoded in the name of Don Juan. The tension between the myth and the personage who incarnates it has been heightened since Zorrilla to the present. But Knowlton is right in comparing Zorrilla to Tirso and affirming that Zorrilla “could build on [Tirso's] foundation.” The “trickster of Seville” (or “trickster of Spain”) is, in effect, a title or a name that already signifies what will later be denoted simply by the first name, Don Juan. It is this name, more mythical than individual, that the character emphasizes at the end of the evolution traced in my article: he who has defined himself as “a man without a name” ultimately becomes a name without a man.

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Virginia Woolf and Leslie Stephen

To the Editor:

Katherine C. Hill (“Virginia Woolf and Leslie Stephen: History and Literary Revolution,” *PMLA*, 96 [1981], 351–62) states that the “main extant evidence we have that [Leslie] Stephen carried out his plan to educate Virginia [Woolf] in history” is the journal Hill refers to as the 1897 Diary (p. 353). It is therefore important to examine that diary carefully. The diary is indeed difficult to read, and it has taken me the better part of a year to decipher it; Mitchell A. Leaks and I are editing it and other early Woolf journals for publication sometime in 1983.

There is absolutely no evidence in the 1897 journal that Sir Leslie planned and carried out a course of instruction in history for Virginia Woolf. True, he gave her Lockhart's life of Scott for her birthday, she mentions him selecting books for her a few times, and he seems to have held two or more lessons in Livy for her and Vanessa Bell, her sister. But she also mentions selecting books for herself, and her other relations helped her choose books as well. She mentions Sir Leslie no more often than she does anyone else, and her infrequent mentions might be counted as evidence against his exclusive domination over her reading tastes. The fifty or so volumes that she read in that year were probably largely of her own choosing.

The story the diary tells is far different from the one Hill presents and far more complex. Instead of Sir Leslie elucidating the fine points of history with Virginia, the diary presents Sir Leslie carrying out the family doctor's orders that Woolf should be *deprived* of her lessons because they are too stimulating to her and might cause her to slip into insanity. A letter to her brother Thoby in Nigel Nicolson and Joanne Trautmann's edition of her letters could not be more explicit: “My Dear Dr Seton says I must not do *any* lessons this term. . . . Nevertheless, my beloved Macaulay . . . is most comforting . . .” (No. 6, 14 May 1897). Instead of tutoring her, Sir Leslie arranged for the purchase of gardening tools so that Woolf could spend a minimum of four hours a day working out-of-doors to facilitate her cure; she was responsible for scraping the dirt at the back of the house to make floral beds.

Aside from their early morning walks, Sir Leslie left Virginia to the care of her half-sister, Stella Duckworth, in 1897, and Woolf spent so much of her time in the company of Stella, accompanying her on her daily rounds of visiting family members and the workhouses of London, of buying innumerable necessities for the large household at Hyde Park Gate, that family members said it wasn't good for Stella to be with Virginia so much.

Sir Leslie, acting on Seton's advice, did not even allow Woolf to attend classes at King's College, London, early in that year, although she very much wanted to go. By autumn he had relented, largely because by that time Stella Duckworth was dead and there was no one to look after Virginia. She writes in October, again to Thoby, about attending history lectures and having to write essays on history. Her formal instruction in history in 1897 was therefore received at King's.

This was a difficult year for Woolf precisely because she was the only family member who did not have a clear-cut role of her own. The messages that she received from her father were ambivalent and

mixed—be sick, get well, do this, don't do that—and she records with extraordinary clarity and insight how confused, enraged, and embattled she felt as a result. What he did not want her to be was independent; what he wanted her to be was his companion and an assistant “angel in the house” to Stella. In 1897, Sir Leslie alternately defined Woolf as weak any time that she wanted to be independent and grown-up (have lessons, go to school) and as strong any time that she was needed to shop or to chaperone Stella Duckworth and Jack Hills in the days before their marriage.

Contrary to the charming fiction of a doting father interested in his brilliant daughter's education that Katherine C. Hill erects (with some help from Sir Leslie himself), the 1897 journal portrays a father who did not provide his daughter with a continuing sense of her own worth or capacity. And this attitude seemed to have less to do with Woolf's actual state of physical well-being than with the myth the family had about her. No one as incapacitated as she supposedly was could have carried out the exhausting round of daily activities her diary describes.

We must understand that when Sir Leslie announced to his wife his plan to teach Woolf to be a historian, it was a self-serving, self-aggrandizing plan that he did not necessarily carry out. It defined him in the way that suited him—as a generous, doting, caring instructor to his difficult, brilliant, temperamental daughter—not in the way that he was—a selfish, loving, temperamental, difficult, hard-working, self-absorbed autocrat. If Virginia Woolf then took on herself the immense task of becoming a chip off the old block, he could have the pleasure and the reward of thinking that he had had everything to do with her achievement. Hill has been so seduced by Sir Leslie's idealization of himself that she overlooks the poignant and powerful story the 1897 journal really does contain. It is the single most important account we have that Virginia Woolf was *herself* largely responsible for doing the work, for creating the structure, for making the routine that would make her the historian of her father's fantasy. And she did so without anything but incidental help from him, without much formal instruction, acting against the family's definition of her as incipiently insane, as fragile and frail. The credit for this courageous act was chiefly hers; saying the act was her father's doing simply because her father thought it was his doing ignores the facts and, more importantly, diminishes and denies the struggle she engaged in to accomplish it.

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To the Editor:

Katherine C. Hill presents careful and convincing evidence of Stephen's influence on Woolf's criticism. But to view Stephen as personally supportive overstates the case; to view him as professionally liberating falsifies it. The sentiments in Sir Leslie's letter to Julia, quoted approvingly by Hill (p. 351), are the sort Woolf herself attacks in *Three Guineas*, *The Years*, and elsewhere, for the very reason that the father could *not* envisage his daughter as “Lord Chancellor.” Of course he saw writing as “a thing for ladies,” since, as Woolf later said in “Professions for Women,” “The family peace was not broken by the scratching of a pen. No demand was made upon the family purse” (*Collected Essays* [New York: Harcourt, 1967], II, 284). Surely we should not ignore Woolf's bitterness. Nor should we shut our eyes to the evidence of her refusal to be “like father, like daughter.” For example, even if Woolf could imagine what her father's pleasure would have been when she was offered the Clark lectureship at Cambridge (p. 351), the fact remains that she refused.

Hill tells us that, early and late, Woolf herself reflected her father's interest in history (p. 354). Whatever her “Common History” book was originally to have been, however, the essays Woolf actually wrote for the book, “Anon” and “The Reader,” demonstrate not a “lifelong love” of history and biography but rather a lifelong love of literature (see Brenda Silver's edition, in *Twentieth Century Literature*, 25 [1979], 356–441). Perhaps Hill's essay was written before the publication of these important documents. Hill also cites letters written in May 1905—with their heavy stress on the writing of history—as proof of Leslie Stephen's influence (p. 354). The manuscript diaries of this period do not support such an inference; rather they suggest that the supposed plan “to produce a real historical work this summer; for which I have solidly read and annotated 4 volumes of medieval English[,]” was a fiction calculated to win the recipient's praise. In fact, Woolf was reading hurriedly, and with few annotations, just enough history to serve as the basis for her “lectures” at Morley College. Here are some representative reactions: “Finished, Thank God, with judicious skipping Mrs. Gr[een]'s Town Life of 15 Cent . . .”; “I pick up a fact or two, not wholly dry”; “Green [*Conquest of England*] for some reason runs off my mind like water”; “I must now solidly drudge through the beginning of English history. . . .” (holograph notebook, Christmas 1904 to 31 May 1905; entries for 9 Jan., 21 March, 29 April, and 10 May 1905. For permission to quote from this