



The Hours

Michael Cunningham

[Download now](#)

[Read Online ➔](#)

The Hours

Michael Cunningham

The Hours Michael Cunningham

Una mañana de 1923, en un suburbio de Londres, Virginia Woolf se despierta con la idea que se convertirá en *La señora Dalloway*. En los años noventa, en Nueva York, Clarissa Vaughan compra flores para una fiesta en honor de Richard, un antiguo amigo enfermo de sida que ha recibido un importante premio literario. En 1949, Laura Brown, un ama de casa de Los Ángeles, prepara una tarta de cumpleaños para su marido con la ayuda de su hijo pequeño. Estas son las tres mujeres y los momentos de partida de *Las horas*, una emotiva novela que se adentra en el mundo de Virginia Woolf con extremada sensibilidad e inteligencia. Al igual que la protagonista de su obra, los personajes se debaten entre la soledad, la desesperanza y el amor por la belleza y la vida hasta unirse en un trascendente final.

The Hours Details

Date : Published October 2002 by Picador USA (first published 1998)

ISBN : 9780312305062

Author : Michael Cunningham

Format : Paperback 230 pages

Genre : Fiction, Historical, Historical Fiction, Contemporary

 [Download The Hours ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Hours ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online The Hours Michael Cunningham

From Reader Review The Hours for online ebook

Tea Jovanović says

Prevod je nažalost ispao najveća bruka NK, ali nisam imala uticaja na izbor prevodioca... Preporuka: ?itajte je isključivo u originalu dok se ne pojavi neki nov prevod na srpski... ili ?itajte hrvatski prevod

Fidan Lurin says

Tick, Mrs. Dalloway. Tock, Mrs. Woolf. Tick, Mrs. Brown. Tock, Mrs. Dalloway...again.

Reviewing The Hours I find myself stuck somewhere in between tick and tock. Reading a novel, poem, play, screenplay, it's often easy for me to lose touch with reality and completely absorb myself into the world of a story. I lose touch with myself. The sounds around me. The smells hovering under my nose. The world happening around me. Time elapses into nothingness.

The Hours, however, made me fully aware of my position in reality, the noises of the outside world, the stuffiness of the air, and the slowness of time. In brief, The Hours leaves me feeling strangely hollow and irked.

The book alternates between the stories of three women Tick: Mrs. Dalloway; Tock: Mrs. Woolf; and Tick: Mrs. Brown - all whom appear vaguely dissatisfied with their lives. It remains rather obscure and somewhat misleading, until the very end, as to how their narratives converge, apart from their longing and entertaining of the possibility of a life different and perhaps more meaningful than that which they find themselves trapped within.

Tick: Mrs. Dalloway.

Also known as Clarissa Vaughn, heroine of Virginia Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway. An exquisitely loyal friend, caretaker and avidly nostalgic observer of the writer and AIDS sufferer, Richard Brown.

Tock: Mrs. Woolf.

Despairing, yet romantically hopeful, Mrs. Woolf spends her ticks and tocks dreaming up stories and possible plot turns for the writing of her new novel. Residing in Richmond with her protective husband, Leonard, Mrs. Woolf longs for the fog, business and sweet transparency of London.

Tick: Mrs. Brown.

Dear Mrs. Brown. Beseeched in suburban Los Angeles with a loving husband, Dan and curiously observant son, Richie, Laura Brown hopes without knowing what she hopes for. She lives without knowing what she lives for. She escapes without knowing what she is escaping from.

Tick tock, tick tock go the hours.

One day; one utterly transformative and inescapable 24 hours of each of the women's lives is slowly narrated, beginning with life, and ending with the possibility of death as means of escape from a banal, yet disheartening existence. Mrs. Dalloway, Mrs. Woolf and Mrs. Brown all seem to lead banal, ordinary lives dealing with the daily hardships typical of the era in which they live, but are curiously described in a way that renders them different, yet also relatable. They have a home, health, and « happiness » yet find themselves unhappy and nostalgic for a feeling or situation that perhaps may not even exist.

Time, the passing of time, the inevitability of time lies at the heart of the novel, as it is time, it's passing, and its prevalence that causes each of the narratives to ultimately converge in the book's final pages.

Although the plots and events of the stories prove to be difficult to piece together and disallow for a completely pleasurable « readerly » experience one CANNOT deny the beauty and artistic way in which each character, event, place is illustrated. Cunningham's language is brilliantly seductive and offers an evocative portrayal of life and how we, as readers, lovers, feelers - humans - experience time, the passing of time, and the inevitability of time.

In terms of plot, I would not recommend *The Hours* (who cares if it won the Pulitzer Prize or that it's Oprah's favorite book or that Meryl Streep doesn't shut up about it), but in terms of language, it's impossible not to utterly fall in love with Michael Cunningham's words:

We live our lives, do whatever we do, and then we sleep - it's as simple and ordinary as that. A few jump out of windows or drown themselves or take pills; more die by accident; and most of us, the vast majority, are slowly devoured by some disease or, if we're very fortunate, by time itself. There's just this for consolation: an hour here or there when our lives seem, against all odds and expectations, to burst open and give us everything we've ever imagined...

- and I'll leave you to ponder on that dear, dear babblers.

Yours Truly,
Delphine, the Babbler

AMEERA says

three stories complicated i feel like doesn't understand anything blow my mind but still was something beautiful about it

Aoibhínn says

I gave the novel one star simply because Goodreads wouldn't let me give it zero! The book is about three self-absorbed, whiny and spoiled women, all from different eras, complaining and whining about their lives, even though, they essentially have it all (wealth, love, family, friends, etc). The book is vile. The characters are repulsive and the plot is tiresome. I keep asking myself how on earth did this novel win a Pulitzer Prize? There's a huge red sticker on the front of the cover, of the novel, proudly advertising this fact -- it won the prize for fiction in 1999. Are the people that judge these things on crack?

Diane Wallace says

Good read! very intriguing..deals with three women that are intertwine and connected by different time period through a simple book....well written...(paperback!)

Brian says

“We want so much, don't we?”

“The Hours” is one of the best books I have read this year. It is astounding! I was drawn in from the first page; the writing is just beautiful prose.

The setup of the novel is that we drop into the lives of 3 women: Virginia Woolf while she is beginning to write her novel “Mrs. Dalloway” in 1923, Laura Brown, a housewife reading “Mrs. Dalloway” in LA in 1949, and Clarissa a woman who seems to be a real life Mrs. Dalloway in current NYC. Although this premise is intriguing it pales in comparison to what the author, Michael Cunningham, does with it.

Interesting side note, the ever-shifting point of view in this text is not limited to these three characters. We get into the heads of quite a few people in this book, and Cunningham does this at times when the novel needs that shift in perspective. It is a wonderful technical achievement.

In one early chapter, Cunningham writes about a mother’s resentment and uncontrollable love for her child, and it is insanely good. How does a writer capture that massive (and true) contradiction so well and in a manner that conveys to the reader the great human truth of that moment?

The closing pages of this novel are stellar writing (have I mentioned how well written this text is?). The writing in “The Hours” is the kind that makes you love the fact that you are a reader and get to experience it. This quick read is worth your time. It is literary fiction of the highest order, but also a story with great depth and human beauty to it. Really, when it is all said and done this text is a celebration of life, the good and ill, which the final pages of the novel make abundantly clear.

“Heaven only knows why we love it so.”

Sammy says

Okay, let's be honest, the only reason this book isn't getting a D is because the language was very beautiful... most of the time. It was beautiful when it wasn't beating me over the head with the whole, "Look how eloquently I can write and use big words and sound smart! Don't you feel smart just reading it? Oh, wait... you just feel stupid, huh?" Which, honestly, wasn't that much, but it was enough to annoy me.

The problem I had with the whole story was that I could not find sympathy in any of the characters. I was not drawn to them, I felt no bond with them at all. I didn't care about them in any way, and with any book you read you should at least care about your characters a little bit, right?

I remember watching the movie and not being very entertained by that either, so perhaps that clouded my judgement when I started reading this. But I don't really think so seeing as how I didn't really remember much of the movie, except the ending, which is what I will probably only remember about the novel when I look back on it.

Usually I'm one of those people that desperately wants you to read the books if you're going to see the movie, you know, get more involved. But, if I remember correctly, the book and the movie are pretty much the exact same thing. So if you want to save yourself some time, go watch the movie. That is if you're really all that interested in the story at all.

Lotte says

4.5/5 stars! Such a clever book.

Ahmad Sharabiani says

89. The Hours, Michael Cunningham

?????? - ????? ?????????? (??????) ????? ????? ?????? ? ????? ?????? ?????: ??? ????? ??? 2012 ??????
?????: ?????? ??????: ????? ?????????? ? ?????: ??? ?????? ?????? ?????? 1382? ?? 236 ?? ??? ??? ? ???
1383? ? ...?
?????: ?????? ??????: ????? ?????????? ? ?????: ?????? ?????? ?????? ?????? 1382? ?? 240 ??
????? ?? ???? ???? ?? ??? ?????????? ??? ????? «????????? ???» ?????? ? ??? ?????? ?? ?????? ???? ?????.
????? ?????? ?? ???? ?? ?????? ?????? ??? ?? ?????? ?????? ?????? ? ???? ??? ? ?? ??? ?????? ?????? ?????.
??????

Alice Poon says

Our lives are made up of years, of days, of hours. What happens around us on one particular day can make us take a blind, or even desperate, leap forward, or it can force us to look at life with patient gratitude. Each one of us would make different choices, according to our own personal system of values and beliefs, our sense of reasoning, our temperament and most importantly, our state of mind at the final hours of that particular day.

With lyrical prose, the author knits and weaves the events of one particular day in the lives of three women living in separate spaces and times. One of them is Virginia Woolf, who is recovering from her mental illness in a London suburb in 1923, while the other two are fictional variants of the leading character of her novel Mrs. Dalloway, one a modern-day bisexual (Clarissa Vaughan) living in New York in the late 90s and the other a bored suburban housewife (Laura Brown) living in post-WWII Los Angeles. The decision each of them makes at the end of their particular day has repercussions on their individual life.

I found this passage deeply touching:

“There’s just this for consolation: an hour here or there when our lives seem, against all odds and expectations, to burst open and give us everything we’ve ever imagined, though everyone but children (and perhaps even they) knows these hours will inevitably be followed by others, far darker and more difficult. Still we cherish the city, the morning; we hope, more than anything, for more.”

Saman Kashi says

??? ??? ?? ?????? ?????? ?????????? ?? ??? ?? ?????????? ?? ??? ?? ?????????? ?????? ?????? ?? ??? ?? ?????
????????? ? ?????? ?? ?? ??? ?????? ??? ?? ?????? ?????? ?? ??? ?? ?????? ?????? ??? ?? ?????? ?????? . ??? ?? ??? ?? ?????
????? ?????? ???: (??????) ?????? ? ?????? ?? ?????? ?? ?????? ?? ??? ?????? ?????????? ? ?????? ?? ?????? ??? ?? ?????? ???
????????? ? ?? ?????? ?? ?? ??? ?????? ?????? ?? ?? ?????? ?? ??? ?????? ?? ?????? ?? ?? ?????? ??? ? ?????? ?????? ??
?? ?????? (??????) ?????? ?? ?? ??? (??????) ??? (??????) ?????? ?????? ? ?????????? . ?? ??? ?? ??? ?? ?? ?? ??? ??
????? ?????????? ? ?? ?? ??? ?? ??? ?? ?????
?????????. ??? ?? ?????? ??? ?? ??? ?? ????? (??????). ????? 236

?? ??? ??? ???????? ??????? ??????? ??????? ??? ??? ??? ?????? ??? ?????? ??? ?????? ??? ???????
????????? ??? ??? ??? ??????????? ?? ????? ??? ??? ?? ?????: ?????? ??? (???????) ??????? ??? ?? ???
(???? ????) ?????? (???????) ??? ?????? ??????? ?? ??? ?? ??? ?????? ??? ?????? ?? ?? ??
????? ??? ??? ?????? ??????? ?? ?? ?????? ????????

????????? ??? ?? ??????? ?????????? ??? 1923

????? ??? ?? ?? ?????????? ??? 1949

? ?? ?????? ??????? ??? ?? ??????? ??? 1998

????? (???????) ?? ?? ?????? ??????? ??? ? ??????? ?????????? ?????????? ??? ??

The Hours

????? ?? ?????? ??? ??? (???????)????? ?? ?? ?? ?? ?? ?? ?? ?????? ?? ?? ??? ??? ?????? ?????? ?????
(???????) ?? ?? ?????? ?? ?? ??????? ? ??? ?????? ?? ?? ??? ?????? ?? ?? ??? ?????? ??? ????????

??? ?? ??? ??????? ??? (???????) ?? ??? (???????) ??? ?? ??? ?????? ?? ?? ?????? ?????? ?????
??? ?????? ??? ? ?????? ??? ? ??? ?????? ?? ?????? ??? ?????? ??? ?????? ?????: ??? ?????? ??? ?????? ???
? ??? ?????? ??? ? ??? ?? ?????? ??? ?????? ??? ?????? ??? ?????? ??? ?? ?? ??
? ?????????? ??? ?????? ??? ? ?????? ??? ?????? ??? ?????? ??? ?????? ??? ?????? ??? ?????? ??? ?????
????? ? ? ??? ?? ?????? ?????? ? ??? ?????? ?????? ?????????? ?????? ?? ?????????? ?????? ??? ?? ??? ??
????? ?????? ??? ?????? ??? ?????? ?? ?? ?????? ??? ?????? ??? ?????? ??? ?????? ??? ?????? ??? ????????

?????: ?? ?? ?? ??? ?? ??? ?????? ??????

?????: ??????

?????: ?????? ????. ??? ?? ??????? ????

?????: ??

????? ?????? ??????. ?? ??? ?????? ??????. ??????: ??? ?????? ??? ??? ?????? ??? ?? ?? ?????????? ?? ????????

????? ??????

??? ?? ?? ?? ?????? ? ?? ??? ?? ??? ?????? ??????? ? ??????

????? 210

Jeffrey Keeten says

"We throw our parties; we struggle to write books that do not change the world, despite our gifts and our unstinting efforts, our most extravagant hopes. We live our lives, do whatever we do, and then we sleep--it's as simple and ordinary as that. A few jump out of windows or drown themselves or take pills; more die by accident; and most of us, the vast majority, are slowly devoured by some disease or, if we're very fortunate, by time itself."

It's about the hours right? Those few precious hours over a lifetime when we feel we have a chance to do something special, to prove that we can do something that will forever immortalize us as someone exceptional.

It was Charlotte who pressed this book upon me. We were at a party conducted by a Mrs. Clarissa Galloway.

“I hear you are on a reading binge.” She’d leaned in close, as she had a tendency to do with me. Her lips mere millimeters away from my ear. It made me shiver somewhere in the core of me.

When I was between assignments, which was all too frequent, I would read book after book; usually I would be in the middle of at least three at any one time. I was getting about four hours of sleep a night which right now was making me a cheap drunk. One martini was going to be more than enough.

“*The Hours* by Michael Cunningham, didn’t they make a film out of it with Kidman?”

She nodded. She leaned in close again. I often wondered if she knew what she did to me. “The book won a Pulitzer Prize. Catherine told me you just finished reading *Mrs. Dalloway*. This is a terrific follow-up.”

The sisters.

You couldn’t really be involved with one without being involved with the other. Catherine, my girlfriend, was writing a novel. It was brilliant in fact, but now was somewhat weighed down with its own brilliance. She was happy with the beginning and the ending, but the middle was not living up to the standards of the rest. Charlotte designed book covers for publishing companies. She had a gift for it, but frequently had to endure someone further up the chain asking for modifications, her masterpieces often becoming something more commercially appealing and soulless. When I was doing research on Virginia Woolf, before reading *Mrs. Dalloway*, I couldn’t help thinking of Catherine as Virginia and Charlotte as Vanessa.

“Vanessa laughs. Vanessa is firm of face, her skin a brilliant, scalded pink. Although she is three years older, she looks younger than Virginia, and both of them know it. If Virginia has the austere, parched beauty of a Giotto fresco, Vanessa is more like a figure sculpted in rosy marble by a skilled but minor artist of the late Baroque. She is distinctly earthly and even decorative figure, all billows and scrolls....”

As usual, I wasn’t really sure why I was at this party. I thought with remorse of the lost pages of reading the party had already cost me. I could see the books strategically scattered around the room of the flat. A book by each of my favorite reading places. This party was bad for me, and if it was not good for me, it had to be an absolute torture for Catherine.

I looked past Charlotte’s large, attentive eyes and could see that Catherine was pale. Her complexion was always pale, but there were various shades of pale that would tell me exactly what was going on with her. She closed her eyes and took too long to open them. I could tell it was time to go.

I leaned in and kissed Charlotte’s ear, raising the stakes, and then muttered in the sea shell of her ear that I was going to take Catherine home. Charlotte always smelled so good, but I was never able to quite identify the scent, something old, something new. Somehow it would be breaking the rules of the game to ask her. I walked over to Catherine and put my arm around her and kissed her on the side of her mouth. She looked at me with surprise. I could see the slender flutes of her nose flutter as she took me in. Could it be that she could sense her sister’s scent even among the mingling fragrances of flowers that filled Mrs. Galloway’s party?

She put her slender, fluted fingers on my shoulder. “I can feel one coming on.”

“I’m here to take you home.”

"She can feel the headache creeping up the back of her neck. She stiffens. No, it's the memory of the headache, it's her fear of the headache, both of them so vivid as to be at least briefly indistinguishable from the onset of the headache itself."

I went to see Robert the next day. I'd read most of *The Hours* last night. Charlotte had been right. It was the perfect followup to *Mrs. Dalloway*. Robert had been my friend almost my entire life or at least for the segment of my life that I still wished to claim. He'd had a good career on the stage, had mother issues of course, and had always been unapologetically gay. The young nurse from Hospice was taking a vial of blood from him when I arrived. There was something so intimate about blood letting. I averted my eyes as if I'd just caught her furtively giving him a hand job.

"I'm so weak. This is it, my friend." His voice, the voice that had boomed out to theaters full of people, had been reduced to a whisper.

I patted his hand. He weakly grasped it. I left my fingers there surrounded by the parchment of his hand. "You've rallied before." I'd meant to put exuberance into that sentence, but somehow it all went wrong. My voice cracked and tears sprang to my eyes.

"Oh, come on now. Tears now? You should have wept with joy when I looked like a young Marlon Brando. Not now, not over this decrepit body. If you were a true friend, you'd pick me up and hurl me out that window."

I thought of Septimus from *Mrs. Dalloway* and Richard from *The Hours*. It was almost too much.

"Don't say that." My voice was still shaking. I freed my hand from his grasp to wipe my eyes. When I put my hand back on the bed, his hand was gone.

"Do you think six floors would be enough to kill me? God, what a tragedy if it only breaks my bones, and leaves me somehow alive with fresh sources of pain. I was thinking about it the other day. I wouldn't want to fall on the concrete. I want to land on a car. I want to explode through the top like they show in the movies. You own a car, don't you? Couldn't you park it beneath my window?"

"You are hurting me, Robert."

He sighed. Closing those magnificent blue eyes that had mesmerized women and men in equal numbers, "That is the last thing that I want to do to you, my friend."

When I got back to the flat, they must not have heard me. Catherine was leaning over Charlotte. **"Virginia leaned forward and kisses Vanessa on the mouth. It is an innocent kiss, innocent enough, but just now,...it feels like the most delicious and forbidden of pleasures. Vanessa returns the kiss."** I wanted to wrap my arms around both of them and nudge them across the room to the bed. I wondered if Leonard Woolf had ever had such desires? They might have willingly went, but then what? By trying to hold them closer, I'd only lose them both.

I cleared my throat and hung up my jacket. When I turned around, they were both looking at me with clear, intelligent eyes. Two sisters, so different, but so much alike as to be indistinguishable when standing in the same space.

It was hard not to think about the big stone. **"She selects one roughly the size and shape of a pig's skull.**

The one that took her down to the depths of the river. The one that would not let her escape the embrace of the water even if her natural desire for self-preservation had kicked in. The stone was too real to be denied.

Catherine had read *Mrs. Dalloway* and was now reading *The Hours*. She had needed a break from her own writing anyway. Reading sometimes gave her a fresh source of inspiration. I wasn't sure about her reading either book, but both together could enhance her already acute suicidal tendencies. I'd seen her more than once raking a butter knife across her wrists as if testing how it would feel. I'd had the gas oven taken out and replaced it with an electric one.

I read her diary.

She wasn't particularly careful with it. She left it out all the time, rarely tucking it back under the mattress on our bed. I don't know if she trusted me not to read it or she, being a writer, always wanted an audience for her writing. **"Everything she sees feels as if it's pinned to the day the way etherized butterflies are pinned to the board."** She was obviously feeling trapped. Like Leonard Woolf decided to do with Virginia, I arranged to take Catherine to the country for a month. She was being overstimulated in the city.

Robert threw himself out the window.

He asked the nurse to open the window to give him some air. The stubborn bastard crawled across the floor, pulled himself up the wall, and threw himself out the window. Though he would have preferred a Rolls Royce, he landed on a Mercedes.

Six floors, as it turned out, was enough.

Two days after we reached the country Catherine disappeared. As I walked the river, along with every other able body in the county, I kept thinking about a stone the size of a pig's skull.

If you wish to see more of my most recent book and movie reviews, visit <http://www.jeffreykeeten.com>
I also have a Facebook blogger page at: <https://www.facebook.com/JeffreyKeeten>

Richard Derus says

Book Circle Reads 20

Rating: 4.75* of five

The Publisher Says: In *The Hours*, Michael Cunningham, who is recognized as "one of our very best writers" (Richard Eder, *Los Angeles Times*), draw inventively on the life and work of Virginia Woolf to tell the story of a group of contemporary characters who are struggling with the conflicting claims of love and inheritance, hope and despair.

The novel opens with an evocation of Woolf's last days before her suicide in 1941, and moves to the stories of two modern American women who are trying to make rewarding lives for themselves in spite of the demands of friends, lovers, and family.

Clarissa Vaughan is a book editor who lives in present-day Greenwich Village; when we meet her, she is buying flowers to display at a party for her friend Richard, and ailing poet who has just won a major literary prize. Laura Brown is a housewife in postwar California who is bringing up her only son and looking for her true life outside of her stifling marriage.

With rare ease and assurance, Cunningham makes the two women's lives converge with Virginia Woolf's in an unexpected and heartbreakng way during the party for Richard. As the novel jump-cuts through the twentieth century, every line resonates with Cunningham's clear, strong, surprising lyrical contemporary voice.

Passionate, profound and deeply moving, *The Hours* is Michael Cunningham's most remarkable achievement to date.

My Review: Three women mirror the facets of the life of Clarissa Dalloway, heroine of the novel *Mrs. Dalloway* by Virginia Woolf. One life is Mrs. Woolf herself, shown in the depths of despair as she convalesces from one of her crippling bouts with depression in the suburban aridity of Richmond while pining for life in London's Bloomsbury, writing her novel of the exquisite nature of the quotidian. Another is the life of Mrs. Laura Brown, dying a million deaths every day in suburban Los Angeles, raising a son and pregnant again by a good man she doesn't love, as she reads *Mrs. Dalloway* and ponders escape. Lastly the life of Clarissa Vaughn, whose long unrequited love for Richard Brown, her gay poet/novelist friend, has led her to care for him tenderly in his final years as an AIDS patient. He long ago nicknamed her "Mrs. Dalloway," both for her first name and for her exquisitely self-abnegating strength.

Over the course of one day in the life of each woman, everything she knows and feels about her life is sharply refocused; it is made clear to each that, to escape the trap she is in, she must accept change or die in the trap. The ending of the book brings all three strands to their inevitable conclusions, with surprising overlaps.

I first read this when it came out in 1998. I fell in love instantly, as I had with *Mrs. Dalloway* at a slightly earlier date. I loved the imaginative structure of interwoven lives, commenting on each other and riffing off the events in each world, echoing some facet in every case the events in the iconic novel *Mrs. Dalloway*.

I can't give it five stars because, in the end, I wondered a bit if the clever-clever hadn't gotten in the way of the emotional core of the book, which I saw as the gritty determination of the women to live on their own terms and in their own lives not dependent on convention. In making the book conform to this ideal, I felt that some plot strands weren't honestly dealt with but rather forced into a shape required by the author's plans.

That cavil aside, the book is beautifully written and wonderfully interestingly conceived. I'd recommend it heartily, and suggest reading it in conjunction with the movie.

minervasowl says

I'm a little ashamed to admit that I read this book because Oprah told me to.

Actually Oprah, Meryl Streep, Julianne Moore and Nicole Kidman told me to.

It must have been a Thursday or Friday afternoon because those were the days off the last time I had a job for which I worked weekends.

The episode with these three ladies was a little unconventional for Oprah. Rather than conducting an interview from her usual studio, she met them for tea in a fancy hotel. And it didn't seem like an interview as four women sitting down to tea and talking about their lives and careers and this movie which three of them had just done together.

I'm not a big Oprah devotee, so I am quite sure that I have not seen enough episodes to warrant making such a statement, but it was one of her best episodes. These weren't huge Hollywood movie stars. Well, of course they were, but that is not how they were portrayed. They were women with families and careers and lives. There was no sensationalism. There was no gossip. There was no scandal or controversy. It was just tea.

Afterwards, I got picked up my keys and immediately drove to the bookstore and purchased a copy of *The Hours* by Michael Cunningham. I hadn't seen the movie. I still haven't seen the movie. I have no interest in the movie. But the book is positively sublime.

The way that the author braids together the threads of the lives of his three characters is subtle and deft. Maybe everyone else saw the conclusion coming, but I did not. When I reached it, however, it didn't deliver a shock or a surprise but a feeling that everything connected exactly as it should.

Michael says

A quick piece of postmodern kitsch, *The Hours* juxtaposes what amount to be three fairly conventional plots against each other, hastily tying them all together in the final chapter. The first plot focuses on Clarissa Vaughan, a book editor planning a party in honor of her friend Richard's receiving a prestigious literary award; the second on Laura Brown, a housewife dissatisfied with the limitations of her life; the third on Woolf herself, a writer struggling to begin her latest book. The novel lacks the insight and subtlety of its source material, *Mrs. Dalloway*, and Cunningham's clichéd portrayal of Woolf as defined by mental instability is careless at best, exploitative at worst. It introduces the common reader to Woolf's work, though, and it rewrites one of her most famous novels in ways that are interesting, if not especially profound.

Julie says

I can only hope, after reading this novel, that I will have the pleasure someday of meeting the author, Michael Cunningham. This is what I'd like to say to him: Here, in this novel, you have honored the craft of writing. Here is the place where talent, intelligence and imagination have collided. Here you have proven that you do not need to lower the bar to meet the mainstream and you have, instead, challenged all of us to raise it higher.

This is an exceptional read, a Pulitzer well-deserved. A must-read for anyone who has the heart, the brain, the nerve.

Vanessa says

I'm not entirely sure why I liked this novel as much as I did - plot-wise it's quite hard to sum up any more than what is already given in the blurb.

Cunningham portrays a day in the life in three very different but very connected women: Clarissa Vaughan, a middle-aged woman living in New York in the 1990s; Laura Brown, a young house-wife in 1940s Los Angeles; and Virginia Woolf herself in 1920s London, or thereabouts. Virginia Woolf has just begun writing *Mrs Dalloway*, Laura Brown is trying to find time in between her household-duties to read *Mrs Dalloway*, and Clarissa is nick-named *Mrs Dalloway* by a close friend and ex-lover who is dying of AIDS.

Cunningham manages to write from a woman's perspective incredibly well, and the fact that he managed to juggle three very different women in three very different situations as beautifully and honestly as he did is to be commended. The novel explores various themes including loneliness, the role of women in society and particularly in relation to men, and of course the ever-present thought (and sometimes lure) of the grave.

I read *Mrs Dalloway* a couple of years ago, and although I wasn't a big fan of the stream of consciousness style of this classic, I liked how the writing was at times mirrored in this book, particularly in parts of Clarissa Vaughan's narrative. The beginning of her day very much mirrored Clarissa Dalloway's morning, and I appreciated the link between the two texts there. In terms of my favourite perspective, I have to give it to Laura Brown - I felt her frustration at her housewife-life and the role she had to play with her needy son and husband. Her thought process was suffocating at times, and I really felt for her, even if at times her thoughts could be somewhat selfish. As for Virginia Woolf, although of course her storyline was fictionalised, I still felt like I was getting in the real author's head at times, and I loved the insight into her relationship with her sister Vanessa (which was researched I believe through their letters and diaries).

I'd recommend this to everyone, whether you're a fan of *Mrs Dalloway* or not. It's a quick easy read, but quite poignant in its own way.

Michael Finocchiaro says

I hesitated between 3 and 4 stars for this book. It was beautifully written and has a somewhat unexpected (and yet unsurprising) ending. The references to Virginia Woolf are omnipresent as she also comes to life under Cunningham's pen along with Mrs Brown and "Mrs Dalloway". Yes, it did relight a flame in me to read the primary Woolf works (Orlando, Mrs Dalloway, To The Lighthouse, The Waves) and reminded me of the one I did read (A Room of One's Own), but still, something about it felt a little superficial. Was it the length (just 220 pages) and the relative ease with which I read it (less than 2 hours)? Or perhaps the heavily laden sentences that perhaps dipped low towards being pretentious? No, I have never seen the movie. And, yes, perhaps I should. But as a standalone novel, I have a hard time understanding why this one was chosen for the Pulitzer in 1997. Not having read either of the runner-ups (Cloudsplitter by Russel Banks about abolitionist John Brown or The Poisonwood Bible by Barbara Kingsolver about the Belgian colonisation of the Congo), both were far longer and of considerably more depth in terms of historical scope from what I can tell. And yet, the Pulitzer committee settled on this short novel (nearly a novella). Well, I am not sure that I would have been in agreement and perhaps need to read the other two finalists to base a more consistent opinion. Regardless, I was not blown away by The Hours, but perhaps will read Flesh and Blood by this author as suggested by another reviewer here on GR.

Vitor Martins says

É engraçado porque "As Horas" é uma história que eu sempre ouvi as pessoas comentando sobre (principalmente por causa do filme) e, ainda assim, eu não tinha a MENOR IDEIA do que ia encontrar quando comecei a ler.

Pra começar, eu não sabia que esse livro é GAY E SAPATÃO ALL OVER IT e quando as coisas iam acontecendo eu ficava tão envolvido que mesmo com a escrita um pouco densa e os parágrafos imensos, não dá vontade de parar de ler.

A narrativa desse livro é muito mais focada no fluxo de pensamento do que em situações. Existem capítulos que acontecem inteiros dentro de uma única ação (Laura fazendo bolo, por exemplo), mas não é sobre o bolo. E sim sobre TUDO QUE SE PASSA NA CABEÇA DELA enquanto ela faz o bolo.

É como se o autor jogasse a gente dentro da cabeça dessas três personagens e a gente vai acompanhando uma linha de raciocínio contínua, que apresenta um monte de reflexões sobre a vida, a morte, o amor, o casamento, filhos, passado. Cada capítulo me fazia refletir sobre alguma coisa diferente, e esse é o tipo de livro que você termina de ler muito mais rico do que quando começou.

O final é maravilhoso, me encheu de emoção, me pegou de surpresa e me deixou bem feliz por ter lido antes de assistir o filme. Tudo em "As Horas" foi uma surpresa para mim e eu estou muito feliz de ter finalmente conhecido essa história.

Ah, e se alguém que estiver lendo essa review estiver em dúvida sobre ler esse aqui porque ainda não leu Mrs. Dalloway, seguinte: NA MINHA EXPERIÊNCIA DE LEITURA não fez falta. Eu conheço a história de Mrs. Dalloway bem por alto apenas, mas dentro de "As Horas" esse conhecimento não é cobrado. Claro que muita coisa deve ficar mais clara se você já leu Virginia Woolf, mas *precisar* não precisa. É isso, bjs.

Ana says

~rtc