

Faulkner's Narrators

Beacon Hill Seminars, Fall 2016 – Six Sessions

Stephen Senturia

Assignment for November 16

Reading:

> *The Sound and the Fury*, Dilsey, pp. 265 to the end, the Chapter entitled “April Eighth, 1928.”

> Excerpts from *The Portable Faulkner*, on the web page:

The Compson Appendix

The Nobel lecture

Discussion Topics:

The so-called ‘Dilsey’ section is our first encounter with third-person narration. Its pose is external, not associated with a specific person’s point-of-view. We find descriptions! Please pay attention to them as you read.

This chapter brings the story to an end: the escape by Quentin, her theft of Jason’s hoard of embezzled money, the black sermon in the church, and Luster and Benjy’s carriage ride in the wrong direction around the central square of Jefferson.

The Compson Appendix, written long after the novel, creates a broader context for the novel, but *it is not the novel*.

We will discuss as many of the following topics as time permits:

> The descriptions of Dilsey and Benjy. Please highlight these for reading in class. Faulkner’s language is especially vivid.

> Dilsey’s role in the family.

> The erosive dynamics between Jason, his mother, and Dilsey. Please cite relevant text.

> The view into the black church and its role in the novel.

> Jason’s interaction with the sheriff and with the train porter.

The final-quarter hour is reserved for a discussion of the larger themes of the novel, supported by the Compson Appendix and the Nobel Lecture.