

1. The passage

Scrapbooking offers Woolf the visual, rhetorical, and material strategies by which to do more than simply include female voices in public debate; she takes aim at public dialogue's existing structures of address and exchange. Rather than isolate foreign and domestic policy questions, she fuses distinct donation requests in order to combat the perception that preventing war and promoting gender equality are distinct causes. This move can be tendentious when it leads Woolf to minimize the differences that inform pacifist and feminist campaigns and to indict institutional bodies of which she is an indirect beneficiary (by virtue of belonging to the class she calls "daughters of educated men").<sup>27</sup> However, it also combats what she calls the "hypnotic power of dominance" by restoring connective tissue to segmented spheres of knowledge (*Three Guineas*, 177). The eclecticism of Woolf's amateurism enables her to provide a social portrait wider and more holistic than a professionalized disciplinary study focused on a single issue or policy question. Such a holism, with its emphasis on making distinct groups apparent to and accountable to one another, serves the project of preventing war just as, in Woolf's estimation, the siloing of knowledge into university and government offices serves the project of perpetuating it. This is because the tendency to isolate authority and expertise from accountability to an uninitiated and differentiated public precipitates the belligerent contradictions of the liberal state. Those contradictions—Michael Taussig, following Weber, calls them "magic"—put a premium on individual freedom while at the same time curtailing that freedom through an institutionalized patriarchy and unwavering militarism so endemic to England's top legal, religious, and educational institutions as to be invisible to its professional class (its "Sirs").<sup>28</sup>

*Three Guineas* asks readers to see the pillars of English liberalism, particularly the universities, less as guarantors of freedom than as gatekeepers of information and influence. Woolf famously embraces her status as an outsider to these institutions, but that polemical embrace is couched within recurring and decidedly less glorious images of lurking before them and within them. Women "haunt the sacred gates" of Oxford and Cambridge; those admitted into such august institutions "linger" round newly discovered "forbidden places" once inside (*Three Guineas*, 35, 50). The systematic exclusion or diminution of women within English higher education leads Woolf toward a vision of women's education as surreptitious and profane: "culture for the great majority of educated men's daughters must still be that which is acquired outside the sacred gates, in public libraries or in private libraries, whose doors by some unaccountable oversight have been left unlocked" (107). More autodidactic than systematic, the education of women is marked by trespass and transgression. For women, knowledge is stolen property and reading an activity done on borrowed time."

2. Close Reading

1. “Rather than isolate foreign and domestic policy questions, she fuses distinct donation requests.” The authors use diction to clearly delineate the methods of the professional and the amateur. Woolf ‘fuses’ different issues together, melting each into one another until they are secure, while Micir and Vadde describe professionals to ‘isolate’ specific issues and subjects and evolve them individually almost like each is a petri dish.
2. The following sentences raise criticism calling the fusing ‘tendentious.’ Micir and Vadde choose to place a counter argument right after the arguments declaration. This represents the importance of counter arguments to advocates of obliteration.
3. “(by virtue of belonging to the class she calls ‘daughters of educated men’)” This parenthetical is used to remind the reader of the gendered nature of amateurism.
4. The analogy of magic and religion returns in this paragraph to further develop the analogy as well as give the reader
5. “so endemic to England’s top legal, religious, and educational institutions as to be invisible to its professional class (its ‘Sirs’)” Endemic
6. “Haunt the sacred gates” The diction of haunt takes metaphoric inspiration from Obliteration’s description of being a shadow form. The thematic consistency of shadow/haunt/linger further develop and clearly outline the shape of obliteration’s nature.
7. Public and private libraries leaving the doors unlocked for women to trespass and learn is sarcastically called an ‘unaccountable oversight.’
8. There are metaphors where knowledge is ‘stolen property’ and reading is ‘an activity done on borrowed time.’ This frames education for women as something they do not have the right to. It also details amateurism to be dangerous and in active confrontation with the men’s institution.
9. “so endemic to England’s top legal, religious, and educational institutions as to be invisible to its professional class (its “Sirs”).” There is some humor in this statement because it shows how absurd the state of English institutions had gotten.
10. Micir and Vadde refer to what Woolf did as a ‘move.’ This implies that there are other types of ‘moves’ an intellectual can make each with its pros and cons.
11. The comparison between holistic narratives preventing war and universities hoarding and gatekeeping knowledge creating more war reveal a deep and necessary connection between literature and obliteration. It implies that the two are connected to and necessary to one another.
12. Micir and Vadde write about Woolf’s “polemical embrace” of the outsider. The figurative language suggests that the authors consider Woolf to have the skill and the training equivalent to someone in an institution.
13. The authors write that Woolf created a “social portrait” with her Three Guineas. This is a fitting metaphor because she is cutting and pasting portraits of people and portraits of America.
14. The University, a pillar of English Liberalism, being labeled a ‘guarantor’ of freedom references the economic structure that undergirds these pillars. A ‘guarantor’ is just

another instance of a bureaucratic middleperson whose job is to guarantee something. It calls into question whether these pillars even need to exist at all.

15. (its “Sirs”) This parenthetical presents this information in a humorous way. This joke satisfies the function of representing the absurdity

### 3. Synthesis

This paragraph articulates the connection between obliteration and amateurism; obliteration is the product of the “trespass and transgression” amateurs necessarily embark on as they pursue knowledge. A consequence of this condition is that amateurs must inevitably create their work on a medium that is ephemeral and unstable. The inclusion of Woolf’s perspective through her experience with her production of obliteration provides a demanded example of what this ‘move’ could look like in practice. The figurative language from the authors clarify the state of gathering scraps and fusing them together in order to create something that challenges the current institutional strategies. The inclusion of Woolf and the connection back to magic and sorcery trodd the path of the obliteration while reorienting the reader’s opinion of the university.