

Utah on the Brain -- Narrative, Cognitive Science, and the Late Age of the Humanities

Film Screening: "People's Century"

This film begins with the bold idea of fighting fascism. Directly after fighting against the dictatorship in Germany, Russia started building their own miserable dictatorship, quickly alienating and demonizing their former ally, the United States, by propagandizing against them, and simultaneously suppressing its own citizens. I still cannot wrap my mind around how quick Russia's turnaround was on this. Their government either did not notice the hypocrisy of their actions, or they did see what it did for Hitler and figured they could get away with it since they were only acting it out upon their own people. This is just one of many examples throughout history of what happens when a person or group of people finds a foothold of power. Unfortunately, such a foothold rarely means long-lasting beneficial effects for a community or nation; it usually means power and luxury for a small few and suffering on many levels for the rest.

I believe that history repeats itself, and I feel like I can see almost countless instances of this today in the United States. For example, without getting too far into politics or conspiracies, it seems obvious that there is an equivocal Capitalist power struggle in America between political parties, and even with certain major corporations. As Wu-Tang so effortlessly once put it "Cash Rules Everything Around Me," and it seems like very few people or groups care about the masses being suppressed as a result of this uprising in Capitalism, similar to how the USSR government turned a blind eye to their own people as they implemented Communism. Our country is currently the most divided it has ever been since the Civil War, and this divide is certainly reminiscent of other societal and cultural divides humans have experienced.

Text Readings: E.L. Doctorow's "Andrew's Brain"

I loved this novel. It has been far too long since I have felt that way about a book. This book was deliciously multifaceted, and is still giving me a lot to think about even though I finished reading it weeks ago. I love thinking about the psychology of what Andrew *is*. And about *why* he switches between first and third person when he speaks, *how* he jumps around in plot and location, and *where* or *what* his consciousness is, and *if* there is any correlation between all of this and the way Doctorow wrote the book (by which I mean, the stream-of-consciousness style, the lack of quotation marks, etc. From the get-go of the book, I figured Andrew was an unreliable narrator. I doubted if the actual setting of the book was in a room with a government shrink and Andrew. I had the notion initially that Andrew had snapped as a result of the multiple traumatic events he had suffered through, and we were reading his recounted thoughts while he sat in a padded room. But as I thought more about it and pondered our in-class discussions, and given the circumstantial evidence the book/Doctorow has provided, I now wonder if Andrew is the massive computer that was referenced in the book. I think I want to write my paper on this novel, and explore this idea further, seeing what evidence I can compile.

Text Readings: E.L. Doctorow, "All the Time in the World" (excerpt)

I love Doctorow's writing because he really just *gets* how to write the voice of an inner monologue. He manages to write about all of those little details a person notices and thinks and knows, without it being a burden for the reader to read. I loved this piece for its honesty and clarity into the type of decaying situation most people would not say a word about if it were their own. I like the spin where there was a hint of the wife being the perfidious one, rather than it being the man, as always seems to be the case. I also liked how he wrote how a man can tire of

his marriage without there being an affair or anything else, that he is just a person who took on the kind of life society expects everyone to take on, who is now at the forefront of realizing and embracing the idea that he is done with it. Honestly, I don't think I have ever personally encountered that, and I found it refreshing. Men are people too, and they may not always get their "happily ever after." The narrator accepts that his wife and kids aren't close to him anymore and that it's over. The shoo-ing out of the raccoon family was symbolic of this, and so was the disinterested narrative tone, that seemed to introduce people and ideas and images, and release them without profundity in comment or conflict.

***Handout Prompt Response #5: The Narrative Rhizome- Meaning and Synaptic Synergy**

I have previously thought about the similarities between synaptic rhizomes and the associative network of allusions a person can have in their brain, but I think the concept is exemplified perfectly in *Andrew's Brain*. I think it is important for a person to read many books, watch many movies, listen to music, travel, talk to people, try new foods, and accept adventure as it is presented. By doing so, that person builds and strengthens their own synaptic rhizome network in several different ways. And on a larger level, the more people that build and strengthen their own network, the stronger and bigger the networks within societies and international communities becomes. Larger networks are more sensitive to making a higher quantity of quantity new connections when newer ideas and experiences occur, and they allow for more deeply enriched experiences, and the cycle repeats ad infinitum.

This is exactly the case with Doctorow in *Andrew's Brain*; it absolutely features its own network of references. Honestly, I missed more than a few of the allusions in this novel, because my own synaptic network is smaller or very different from Doctorow's, but I did appreciate all

off the allusions that I did notice. I found that all of them (whether direct or indirect) enriched the story and characters, and enhanced my own connection with the text.

This is part of what made this book not only clever, but a fascinating monolith within the neuronovel genre. The layered associative matrices here are brilliant and woven so carefully as to make the reading experience for the audience a real treat. The reader gets to enjoy Andrew and his story, his conversation with the Doc (and whether or not this person even exists), the delicious layers of unspoken psychology that make the reader question Andrew as an unreliable narrator, the psychology of Doctorow and why he wrote what he wrote as well as what has happened to him as a person to cause him to think about this book and its characters and specific references, and even how I read and experience this book and its references as the reader.

Having allusions is an interesting choice to make as an author, I think, because you are making a huge gamble in doing so. You may have some readers locate and understand all your references, but you may also have readers who (like me) only get some, or who get none at all.

With that said, I think it is a smart decision to write allusions, whether or not all your readers may understand each one of them. I think most people reading a book like this would probably be willing to research the allusions found within it of their own free will, and this action will help expand and strengthen their own neural synaptic network.

Notebook #2

A Poetic Walking Tour Through U.S. History -- From Vietnam to Vanishing Species

Commentary on Film Screening and Recommended Background Readings

Maybe it's because the Vietnam War sits closer in history to my own lifespan than most other major historical events, but this war and this era has always stood out to me as an

extremely interesting time in history, and one I can relate to. Most of the important issues fought for then are ones I relate to and fight for today. The post World War II era was a transformative time for the United States socially, economically, culturally, and especially politically. Across the United States, citizens were celebrating the nation's victory in the war. The economy had been jump-started, and new technologies were popping up every day, making our lives easier and increasingly fast-paced. The country was in a good place; better, in fact, than it had probably ever been. But with such happiness from social and economic prosperity, there came an equal worry of a fall. There were many things actually lying in wait at the time that could disrupt the happiness and prosperity of the nation. What the United States seemed to focus on primarily--if not solely-- was the sudden rise of Communism in Russia and eventually China. There was fear that with such rapid movement, the ideology would keep spreading until it reached the United States, which would wreak havoc on the nation's beloved capitalist mechanisms.

At some point, the United States decided to go to any lengths to protect itself from that ideology. And there, in a nutshell, we saw the rapid evolution of modern history laid out before our eyes. As wars are wont to do, it tore a people in two, politically, socially, and culturally. Almost in an instant, gone was the early post-World-War-II unity. The United States of America pride. And here were anti-war protesters, women's right protesters, black rights protesters, and even people fighting for (women's) sexual freedom. Everyone had a side, and no one was sure how things were going to turn out.

And I think, in a way, we still don't; the fires of these battles have not died out today. People began caring less about the unity and prosperity of the country, and more about gaining the voices and equality they were seeking. War was existing on smaller levels, and it was tearing a people apart on larger levels. Family units became divided over any number of these issues.

What connects me to the protestors of the 1950's, 60's, and 70's is that I am a protester for these causes, too, but in my own generation and time. Like those previous generations, my generation has also known war, and still battles with these same issues. However, with such rapidly evolving technologies, especially the internet and social media, we are able to take on other issues, including international ones. It is common to see families divide and friendships end over particular issues. Parents disown their own children for being gay or atheist. Perfect strangers end up in violent tirades over political or religious differences. Even the backlash is a battle, causing a movement towards making everything PC in an effort to not offend anyone who could be holding any number of obscure or specific beliefs. And with the internet, and comment sections on YouTube or whatever page, it is becoming common practice to see verbal hatred written everywhere, and culturally, it's just a matter of either getting used to it and tuning it out, or choosing to call out verbal terrorists either angrily or logically. The point is, everywhere you look nowadays, there's some small micro-battle going on. And if a particular cause gets enough attention locally or globally, we see an attempt to make a permanent change. We see revolutions often. We see our societies making social progress in one direction or another at astounding rates; of course, there is still a lot of justice to be acquired, but people are learning that there is becoming less and less of a place for hatemongering and ludicrous or antiquated ideologies.

It is interesting to think about how protests have moved from streets and congressional front lawns to the internet and between individuals. Education is more widely available (and so is criticism), and with this we are combating personal isolation with global connectivity.

As a result, I feel like this global connectivity has made me consider how now, more than ever, choices of any magnitude have rippling effects on society and the rest of the world.

Comments on W. S. Merwin's Poetry in general

Honestly, I struggled with this unit despite my best efforts. Poetry, compared to any other form of literature, is something I'm kind of weird about; I've always felt that poetry is the one form of writing that is immeasurably personal and emotional. When reading someone else's poetry, it consistently begs the question "Can anyone really understand this piece like the author did?" I read poetry and panic, wondering if I have the right to analyze it or even read it, and if I have read the piece "accurately" or not. So, I don't feel like this will be my best notebook of the semester, but I will put my best foot forward.

In reading Merwin's poetry, I occasionally felt like I did not understand all of what I was reading. With more abstract, frequently comes less concrete. And while I was provoked by the imagery of each poem I read, I often yearned to know the full and complete meaning. Sometimes after reading for a while, I got frustrated, sat the book down, and walked away from it; but I always came back to it, because I generally like the writing and felt compelled, and with renewed effort, re-read it and found layers of new meanings.

Overall, whether I totally understood the context or not, I like the writing. It was full of brilliant imagery

***Comparison and contrast of "Leviathan" and "For a Coming Extinction"**

I had quite an experience studying these two poems. When I first read "Leviathan," I supposed I didn't read it too carefully. I originally (mis)took the beast as a metaphor for God, even though the descriptions didn't exactly paint the subject in the usual bright white light behind a bearded holy being form. Instead, descriptions of a creature of such massive proportions seemed to create the allusion to a grander being. I took the poem as a story about a mighty god towering over his frightened subjects.

This made me wonder what kind of commentary Merwin was making about God, or war, or even of life and death. I wondered, are humans actually subject to the whims of a vastly powerful deity? Are we supposed to be afraid of God, and is this poem meant to remind us of his Old Testament wrath and power? Could it, alternatively, be Merwin's statement against God, written *because* Merwin had been in war and experienced firsthand its tragedies and sufferings, and had thoughts at some point about God not existing? Or was it a warning to all humans in an increasingly non-religious and existential world that we need to not shun God?

Then I re-read the poem, and paid closer attention to its imagery and allusions. Simple descriptors such as "black sea-brute," "bone-wrecks," "lost bodies," "frightening to foolhardiest mariners," "hill of dark underfoot," "the cold deep," and "the shadow under the earth," laid it all out for me; these Leviathan descriptors were extremely dark, and not of God but of a demon- the devil himself. Another reading revealed even more proof, illuminating such Biblical passages as "he is that curling serpent," "would find gates of no gardens," and "a lost angel." The symbolism from this poem aligned itself very well with fantastic Christian mythology and even with general Leviathan folklore.

I sat the book down at this point, to ruminate over the poem for a minute. I didn't accept the God/devil symbolism as the deepest level of meaning in the poem; it was too well-written to be equivalent to some trite, undergraduate-level writing. So I thought about the Leviathan, and the mention of Jonah, and realized that the beast could be a whale, not just some horrific Biblical beast. I disregarded my previous notions of religion, and thought about what life must be like for a whale, and how people only think about one gigantic solo whale in the context of vast, dark waters on overcast stormy days. I think we all know whales live in pods, but think that for some reason, the really enormous ones just wander alone in deep, mysterious waters a million times

bigger than them. And suddenly it hit me that Merwin writes whales as humans, and/or humans as whales. Humans always feel lonely, despite most of us having family or friends, social media, books, and all other sorts of devices that can help connect us. The poem is a kind of stunningly existential statement on human loneliness, and of making peace with such bold meaninglessness. It doesn't matter if God exists, or doesn't, and same for the devil. It doesn't matter that we are alive and feel insignificant. We are alive and, even though it sounds tautologous, that is that. It's the human struggle; it's our choice what we do with this knowledge. The beauty and profundity of this hit me on the head like a brick and left me speechless.

Later, I read "For a Coming Extinction," and I think I also did not read this well the first time; my interpretation changed each time I read it. Originally, I read it as like the angry young atheist I used to be- as an angry note to God stating that humans are the top of the food chain, not him. I felt like I was struck by the means through which we sent this message: through a dying whale that we (ironically) assumed was going to heaven, and who would meet with God personally long enough to deliver our message, which was some kind of "screw you."

Upon reflecting on that idea, I realized it was at least somewhat ridiculous, and I couldn't see Merwin writing that. So then I thought that maybe the poem was a direct message to the whale, letting him know that that we, the humans, were created on a different day than him and the animals, and that we are more important than them. It was almost brutish, the way the narrator says humans don't really care how many animals have died or that the majestic whale was dying now, too. What a bold statement, to tell God we control nature and regulate death now, and that we have relegated him to some less-than-human station.

While I'm still considering this as a valid interpretation; it certainly pairs well with "Leviathan" in regards to existentialism. But I also kept thinking about it, and thought about the

idea of humans controlling nature and sending animals to their death. The more I thought about it, the more I thought it sounded like global warming, or at least the human tendency to destroy the earth--and its animals and ecosystems--for human wants and needs. This notion fits well with the fact that Merwin is an environmentalist and a Buddhist. Buddhism believes, if I may be allowed to create such a small nutshell here, that if one living creature is hurt, then all are; our actions all have consequences. I hypothesize that perhaps this poem was a statement on the detrimental effects humans are having on the earth.

This idea feeds off of the existentialist idea from “Leviathan” in an interesting manner, I thought. If all humans become existential, then all that matters eventually are personal experiences, especially good ones over the unpleasant. To that end, then, destroying ecosystems and killing animals to extinction is no longer a worry.

But I don’t know if Merwin intended any of this. I fear I may well have overanalyzed.

Aside from the imagery and possible meanings, the next thing that stood out to me in “Leviathan” was the beautiful alliteration. This is one of my favorite writing devices, and when it is used well, I think it makes the writing infinitely more powerful, and it is always a pleasure and privilege to read it. I ended up liking these poems a lot more than I originally thought I would. I don’t think I can ever know what Merwin intended as he wrote these, but they are strong pieces that certainly gave me a lot to think about.

Notebook #3

Minority Reports Becoming Major Voices

Martin Luther King and Malcolm X

The easiest way to distinguish the philosophies of these two men is with biblical dictums: Martin Luther King preached “turn the other cheek” whereas Malcolm X stated the more

discordant “an eye for an eye.” These men were contemporaries who held polarized opinions and ideologies, but as I mentioned in my *Lowland* presentation, people can be “close, but unlike.”

Martin Luther King once said, “Freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed.” Malcolm X once said, “Nobody can give you freedom. Nobody can give you equality or justice or anything. If you’re a man, you take it.” These quotes are remarkably similar in their message but were spoken by two people who effected different ideologies, attitudes, and beliefs.

Martin Luther King believed, not unlike his predecessor Mahatma Gandhi, that peaceful resistance would overcome hate. His efforts for peace are what made him a timelessly important and influential American, and are what garnered him the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964. Dr. King had the choice to react in any manner he wanted in regards to these undeniably horrific periods in American history; the fact that he looked at the situation and said, in grand oracular fashion, let there be peace and equality, speaks to his high character and philosophies.

Malcolm X believed that the civil rights movement would never be taken seriously until violence was met with violence, and he believed that no other means aside from violence would help the movement take a step forward. Additionally, his primary focus was not peace, as it was for Dr. King, but rather on blacks and the need for their self-empowerment and self-acceptance. I think what influenced Malcolm X was both law enforcement’s and white America’s treatment of black citizens at the time. He was more exposed in his lifetime to racism and violence than perhaps Dr. King was, with his family home burned down and his father murdered by white supremacists, and condoned violence as an acceptable means for the black community to protect itself. I saw a kindred spirit to Malcolm X in *The Lowland*: Udayan. When Subhash was first in America, Richard told him that he considered Gandhi to be a personal hero. Subhash’s

reactionary thought was that “Udayan would have scoffed, saying that Gandhi...had disarmed India in the name of liberation.”

I see both the advantages and disadvantages of the ideologies of both Martin Luther King and Malcolm X. Peace, to me, is the more desirable and powerful choice, the one that will get you further. It shows intelligence and maturity. However, a part of me completely understands the urge to fight violence with violence. When I was fifteen, I moved to California to live with my biological father and stepmother. They ended up abusing me physically and emotionally for half a year before I was able to escape. It took me many years to stop feeling angry towards them and to stop wanting to hurt them back. I have only recently made peace with the idea that violence only begets more violence, and that if I want to see a cessation of it, then I must heed Gandhi’s nonviolent advice, which states “Be the change that you wish to see in the world” and not pursue violent retaliation. I know my personal experience is just a small atom in the universe compared to what we are talking about here but it does allow me to understand where both men are coming from.

It is an interesting idea to attempt step into the shoes of these cultural giants, to take their perspectives and ideologies into account whilst considering the current state of civil rights in the United States in regards to recent events regarding violence against black youth from law enforcement. After watching videos of their speeches, and reading more about each, I felt like I started to understand their ideologies better, and it became more clear how they may react to such events as the shootings of Trayvon Martin in Florida, Michael Brown in Missouri, and Derrien Hunt in Utah. Each of these were prime examples of unnecessary violence against young black men.

I think Dr. King would still put forth the same message from his “I Have A Dream” speech, which stated “We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again, we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force.”

Alternatively, I think Malcolm X might react oppositely. He was tired of seeing blacks on the receiving end of all this unwarranted violence and hatred. In one of his speeches, he boldly stated “you need judo, you need karate, you need all the things that will help you fight for freedom.” He also said “You’re not to be so blind with patriotism that you can’t face reality. Wrong is wrong, no matter who does it or says it,” which I think is an excellent reflection on violence committed against citizens by cops. Cops are supposed to be protectors of all people and upholders of this nation’s laws, representatives of the American justice system; but when they are actively working against that and hurting citizens, then the blame is on them.

Response to the *Writers on America* Articles

The first writer I read was Bharati Mukherjee. I loved her assertion that you are not necessarily defined by what your heritage is or where you are from, and that, essentially, the label really deserves to be placed where your heart is. And juxtaposed with that idea was another, that where she was from (Calcutta) did not exist except where it was able to suckle bits of literature from other countries and cultures. I also loved her response to American literature, and how it evolved over time as she spent time away from Calcutta in the West. How truly American, to break away from the motherland, from tradition and custom, from tyranny, and to come to lean on and enjoy the freedoms and protection the American Constitution offers.

I think it’s only once you have been away from an environment or lifestyle for some time that you gain the ability to process any opinions and ideas about it. To be able to see if you are

better off without it, or if it still hurts and reconciliation is necessary. To learn where that event or place really stands in your mind, and in your life. Time is always telling.

But what I really liked about the article, more than anything, was her very American response to the questioning and critiquing of American writers, which stated that we are too innocent, too young, too ignorant, too selfish, too over-privileged, ad nauseum ad infinitum, to be able to write well or relevantly. She dismissed the accusations with a wave of her hand, and declared that while we are young and innocent and that our writing reflects that, we are not naive. That “American fiction is written in a context of relative innocence, a reality that is both limiting and liberating. If American fiction has relevance in the world, it is for the odd innocence it celebrates...We are the beneficiaries of much suffering and heroism, and we’ve not been called on to pay our dues. Until we do, our innocence is provisional, our freedom is still qualified.” I love this quote and find it to be immensely empowering. We are aware of and knowledgeable about our past, and about the history of the world, but we are in a place where we do not have to dwell on it which and we can write about anything, regardless of how much this kind of contradiction obfuscates other writers from around the world.

The other article I read from the selections was by Naomi Shihab Nye. This article was a fast read that left me wanting more. What I liked was her clean-cut message, that America is young but this is not an indictment against us as our youth is balanced by our freedom of speech. Our strength lies in that we are a melting pot of cultures, races, religions, and economic backgrounds, and what makes us great is our capacity for accepting and embracing others, welcoming them to our American family. I find this article a delightful upbeat contrast to the more vitriolic words spoken and attitudes conveyed by, say, Malcolm X. The words are positive, encouraging, proud, and uniting in their simplicity. The idea of an America with loving open

arms is an image that is not present enough during any point of American history, yet it's one of its structural tenants- a place that welcomes immigrants, where all men are equal and free to enjoy life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

***Response to Focus Question 4**

We have information coming at us from all angles, and exponentially more for each decade we move through. From books, film, radio, internet, news, journalism, blogs, street signs, colors, phone icons, body language, etc., we are inundated with words, signals, and ideas on a daily basis that we are expected to process and react to at a moment's notice. It is our job to understand how each of these messaging systems works, what its limits are, and what to do with all of the received information in a certain period of time.

Perhaps one of the commentaries Lahiri was trying to make, through injecting a variety of media, entertainment, and news sources into *The Lowland*, was that it is not always possible for a person to collect, understand, and use all of these signals. They are all informative, but if there are too many, it quickly becomes useless noise. This is especially the case when information-- specifically news--is coming from a biased source who gets to pick and choose what bits of news to tell and from angle they want to give it, or even if they want to tell it at all.

Subhash discovered this firsthand (p.87, or chapter III section 1, paragraph 3), on his way back to India upon learning of Udayan's murder. He mentioned being surprised about not hearing anything from the Western media about the Naxalite attacks. In fact, he was only able to glean information face-to-face once he was back in India. Subhash was not wrong in wondering why there was no Western coverage of the attacks; but it likely would have been easy for Western news media, especially American news media, to decide that there was nothing

noteworthy about it or relevant to the United States worth reporting on. It didn't matter to the American news sources that the attack literally hit home for Subhash.

There were also gaps in communication for the duration of Subhash's first stay in America. Instead of talking with his family many times a day, as he was used to, he was now going for days, weeks, even months without hearing anything from them, like a drought. All he got were quick bursts of information, almost like a telegraph or the morse code he used to practice, from Udayan which he was encouraged to dispose of immediately. He was not even able to save it for future reference. It reminded me of the cold, distanced urgency of news, and I wanted so badly for Subhash to have more communication with his family.

What he ultimately ended up getting was a different kind of signal- a black-and-white photograph of Gauri (the first instance of photography in the novel, chapter I section 6). Not only did it hearken a change in Subhash's future and in the novel's tone, but also a change in media-film, instead of (or perhaps, in contrast with) words. They say a picture is worth one thousand words--as Udayan stated in his letter "This is in lieu of a formal introduction..." letting the photo speak for him--but I wonder, can a few well-chosen words write a stronger image? Exactly how accurate can a photograph be--especially a black-and-white one--in terms of relaying important details and pure information to a viewer? I did not feel like the Gauri that Subhash stared at in the photograph was much like the Gauri in real life. Lahiri describes the woman in the photograph as being at ease, playful, smiling, even compelling, when we later learn she is cold, distant, and a bit off mentally. While it was fitting that he did not, I think Udayan should have written more about Gauri in his letter to Subhash. It would have meant more to Subhash, and perhaps even guided him to make better choices for his and Gauri's future together.

Written words are steeped with deeper meanings, well beyond what film, radio, journalism, or historical accounts could ever aspire to illuminate. Literature from any point in time has irresistibly saturated lines you can read between for days, and inferences and ideas for you to discover and do with whatever you please. It invites you to stay inside the minds of the characters for a while, seeing what makes them tick, discovering their likes, or even what their desires and kinks are. It encourages you to sit on an idea, ruminating, and it encourages you to strengthen your neural network by making connections to other books and experiences. No other medium allows for such a powerfully transcendent and visceral experience as literature consistently does. It allows you to play with time, lingering on perfect little details or thoughts, over the course of as many pages as you'd like. Thinking about literature like this makes me reminisce on the first four lines of William Blake's *Auguries of Innocence*:

To see a world in a grain of sand
And a heaven in a wild flower,
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,
And eternity in an hour.

There's a metaphor here for the capacity for the inward (mathematical) eternity that each hour or second or word or page contains. Time is irrelevant, infinite, abstract, yet it is also concrete and always moving forward, just as a novel does. It also flirts with the propensity to see a myriad of worlds contained in something as abstract and small as a grain of sand or the page of a book, the power of which literature commands like no other medium.

When we think of literature in comparison to other mediums, we typically first think of movies. I don't think the transition from book to movie has ever worked successfully, and I don't even bother with movies made from books anymore. I think the transformation always sacrifices

too much of the book, whether it's the commentary, the inner monologues, plot points, or anything else, so what's the point? Books have the leisure of taking however much time and space they need in order to work correctly, and film simply doesn't. Naomi Shihab Nye said that "Writing was a way to slow time down, to claim a moment and a space on the earth, to look INTO things, not just at them." It summarizes the notion perfectly, that time in books is extremely important and powerful, that it is something to be enjoyed, stretched out, sunk into, like a long, golden summer evening.

Even with the time aspect reversed, where we take a mere three pages in a book to set something up, it could take an hour to recreate on film. In a movie script, a cue descriptor for the actor to do something as simple as walking through a door could take pages of notes on how to walk through, with what affect or attitude, just for a second's work on screen. Film cannot afford to spend time on much of anything, and novels can. This idea makes Gauri's fascination with and study of time even more interesting (and a bit meta, frankly). It is an interesting commentary on experience versus reality, in regards to time, to Gauri's study of time and philosophy, and even to the comparison of literature versus film.