

Lectures On Literature Vladimir Nabokov

The Original of Laura is Vladimir Nabokov's final, incredible unfinished novel in fragments. Dr Philip Wild, a man of brilliance, wit, fortune and tremendous bulk, is used to suffering humiliations at the hands of his wife, the younger, slender, and rudely promiscuous Flora. But in a novel, a 'maddening masterpiece' documenting her infidelities, written by one of her lovers and given to the doctor, she appears as My Laura. Dishonoured, Wild still finds pleasure in life, by indulging in self-annihilation, beginning with the removal of his toes.

Timeless discussions of Austen, Dickens, Flaubert, Joyce, Proust, and others.

From award-winning literary scholar Robert Alter, a masterful exploration of how Nabokov used artifice to evoke the dilemmas, pain, and exaltation of the human condition Admirers and detractors of Vladimir Nabokov have viewed him as an ingenious contriver of literary games, teasing and even outsmarting his readers through his self-reflexive artifice and the many codes and puzzles he devises in his fiction. Nabokov himself spoke a number of times about reality as a term that always has to be put in scare quotes. Consequently, many critics and readers have thought of him as a writer uninterested in the world outside literature. Robert Alter shows how Nabokov was passionately concerned with the real world and its complexities, from love and loss to exile, freedom, and the impact of contemporary politics on our lives. In these illuminating and exquisitely written essays, Alter spans the breadth of Nabokov's writings, from his memoir, lectures, and short stories to major novels such as Lolita. He demonstrates how the self-reflexivity of Nabokov's fiction becomes a vehicle for expressing very real concerns. What emerges is a portrait of a brilliant stylist who is at once serious and playful, who cared deeply about human relationships and the burden of loss, and who was acutely sensitive to the ways political ideologies can distort human values. Offering timeless insights into literature's most fabulous artificer, Nabokov and the Real World makes an elegant and compelling case for Nabokov's relevance today.

Lectures on LiteratureMariner Books

First publication of an index-card diary in which Nabokov recorded sixty-four dreams and subsequent daytime episodes, allowing the reader a glimpse of his innermost life.

A landmark in Russian literature hailed as "one of the four great masterpieces of twentieth-century prose" by Vladimir Nabokov, author of Lolita. In this incomparable novel of the seething revolutionary Russia of 1905, Andrei Biely plays ingeniously on the great themes of Russian history and literature as he tells the mesmerizing tale of Apollon Apollonovich Ableukhov, a high-ranking Tsarist official, and his dilettante son, Nikolai, an aspiring terrorist, whose first assignment is to assassinate his father. "There is nothing like a ticking time bomb to supply fictional suspense, and perhaps no other

writer has ever used the device more successfully than Andrei Biely in *St. Petersburg* . . . Biely is a crafty storyteller who can keep a reader flipping the pages while whipping up an intellectual storm.” —Time

From the writer who shocked and delighted the world with his novels *Lolita*, *Pale Fire*, and *Invitation of a Small Creature*, and so many others, comes a magnificent collection of stories. Written between the 1920s and 1950s, these sixty-five tales--eleven of which have been translated into English for the first time--display all the shades of Nabokov's imagination. They range from sprightly fables to bittersweet tales of loss, from claustrophobic exercises in horror to a connoisseur's samplings of the table of human folly. Read as a whole, *The Stories of Vladimir Nabokov* offers and intoxicating draft of the master's genius, his devious wit, and his ability to turn language into an instrument of ecstasy.

Comparable in importance to Mikhail Bakhtin, Lydia Ginzburg distinguished herself among Soviet literary critics through her investigation of the social and historical elements that relate verbal art to life in a particular culture. Her work speaks directly to those Western critics who may find that deconstructionist and psychoanalytical strategies by themselves are incapable of addressing the full meaning of literature. Here, in her first book to be translated into English, Ginzburg examines the reciprocal relationship between literature and life by exploring the development of the image of personality as both an aesthetic and social phenomenon. Showing that the boundary between traditional literary genres and other kinds of writing is a historically variable one, Ginzburg discusses a wide range of Western texts from the eighteenth century onward--including familiar letters and other historical and social documents, autobiographies such as the *Memoires of Saint-Simon*, Rousseau's *Confessions*, and Herzen's *My Past and Thoughts*, and the novels of Stendhal, Flaubert, Turgenev, and Tolstoi. A major portion of the study is devoted to Tolstoi's contribution to the literary investigation of personality, especially in his epic panorama of Russian life, *War and Peace*, and in *Anna Karenina*.

"This book collects twelve classroom lectures on seven major works by Dostoevsky--*Crime and Punishment*, *The Brothers Karamazov*, *The Idiot*, *Notes from Underground*, and three others--by Joseph Frank, the author of the definitive five-volume biography of Dostoevsky published by Princeton University Press. Frank's widow, Marguerite Frank, has worked with a Russian translator and former student of Frank's, Marina Brodskya, to compile the lectures--some of which Frank had written out in their entirety, others for which he left extensive notes. The book will contain a preface, introduction, seven chapters (each containing one or two lectures on a major work), and lists of further reading and stage and screen adaptations of Dostoevsky's works. Each lecture is about 4,000 words and is written in a conversational style that is accessible for undergraduates but also demonstrates Frank's unparalleled knowledge of the Russian author and his world, providing wide-ranging literary and historical context. The editors include notes to explain references and allusions. The book also will include some images of Joseph Frank, Dostoevsky, a couple of artworks discussed in the lectures, and a sample of Frank's handwritten lecture notes"--

In *Matters of Fact in Jane Austen: History, Location, and Celebrity*, Janine Barchas makes the bold assertion that Jane Austen's novels allude to actual high-profile politicians and contemporary celebrities as well as to famous historical figures and landed estates. Barchas is the first scholar to conduct extensive research into the names and locations in Austen's fiction by taking full advantage of the explosion of archival materials now available online. According to Barchas, Austen plays confidently with the tension between truth and invention that characterizes the realist novel. Of course, the argument that Austen deployed famous names presupposes an active celebrity culture during

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the Regency, a phenomenon recently accepted by scholars. The names Austen plucks from history for her protagonists (Dashwood, Wentworth, Woodhouse, Tilney, Fitzwilliam, and many more) were immensely famous in her day. She seems to bank upon this familiarity for interpretive effect, often upending associations with comic intent. Barchas re-situates Austen's work closer to the historical novels of her contemporary Sir Walter Scott and away from the domestic and biographical perspectives that until recently have dominated Austen studies. This forward-thinking and revealing investigation offers scholars and ardent fans of Jane Austen a wealth of historical facts, while shedding an interpretive light on a new aspect of the beloved writer's work. -- Joseph Roach, Sterling Professor of Theater and English, Yale University, and author of *It*

-- Presents the most important 20th-century criticism on major works from *The Odyssey* through modern literature-- The critical essays reflect a variety of schools of criticism-- Contains critical biographies, notes on the contributing critics, a chronology of the author's life, and an index
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Nabokov begins his *Strong Opinions*: 'I think like a genius, I write like a distinguished author, and I speak like a child.' In the interviews collected here - covering everything from his own burgeoning literary celebrity to Kubrick's *Lolita* to lepidoptery - he is never casual or off-guard. Instead he insisted on receiving questions in advance and always carefully composed his responses. Keen to dismiss those who fail to understand his work and happy to butcher those sacred cows of the literary canon he dislikes, Nabokov is much too entertaining to be infuriating, and these interviews, letters and articles are as engaging, challenging and caustic as anything he ever wrote. Part of a major new series of the works of Vladimir Nabokov, author of *Lolita* and *Pale Fire*, in Penguin Classics.

In this, the final volume in John Updike's mock-heroic trilogy about the Jewish American writer Henry Bech, our hero is older but scarcely wiser. Now in his seventies, he remains competitive, lecherous, and self-absorbed, lost in a brave new literary world where his books are hyped by Swiss-owned conglomerates, showcased in chain stores attached to espresso bars, and returned to warehouses just three weeks later. In five chapters more startling and surreal than any that have come before, Bech presides over the American literary scene, enacts bloody revenge on his critics, and wins the world's most coveted writing prize. It's not easy being Henry Bech in the post-Gutenbergian world, but somebody has to do it, and he brings to the task his signature mixture of grit, spit, and ennui.

This essays focus on Nabokov's lectures on European and Russian literature at American universities, and sheds new light on the relationship of his views on aesthetics to the development of his own oeuvre.

The acclaimed author presents his unique insights into the works of great Russian authors including Tolstoy, Dostoevski, Gogol, Gorki, and Chekhov. In the 1940s, when Vladimir Nabokov first embarked on his academic career in the United States, he brought with him hundreds of original lectures on the authors he most admired. For two decades those lectures served as the basis for Nabokov's teaching, first at Wellesley and then at Cornell, as he introduced undergraduates to the delights of great fiction. This volume collects Nabokov's famous lectures on 19th century Russian literature, with analysis and commentary on Nikolay Gogol's *Dead Souls* and "The Overcoat"; Ivan Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons*; Maxim Gorki's "On the Rafts"; Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* and *The Death of Ivan Ilych*; two short stories and a play by Anton Chekhov; and several works by Fyodor Dostoevski, including *Crime and Punishment*, *The Idiot*, and

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The Possessed. This volume also includes Nabokov's lectures on the art of translation, the nature of Russian censorship, and other topics. Featured throughout the volume are photographic reproductions of Nabokov's original notes. "This volume . . . never once fails to instruct and stimulate. This is a great Russian talking of great Russians."

—Anthony Burgess Introduction by Fredson Bowers

No marriage of a major twentieth-century writer lasted longer than Vladimir Nabokov's. Véra Slonim shared his delight at the enchantment of life's trifles and literature's treasures, and he rated her as having the best and quickest sense of humour of any woman he had met. From their meeting in 1921, Vladimir's letters to his beloved Véra form a narrative arc that tells a forty-six year-long love story, and they are memorable in their entirety. Almost always playful, romantic, and pithy, the letters tell us much about the man and the writer; we see that Vladimir observed everything, from animals, faces, speech, and landscapes with genuine fascination.

The acclaimed author of *Lolita* offers unique insight into works by James Joyce, Franz Kafka, Jane Austen, and others—with an introduction by John Updike. In the 1940s, when Vladimir Nabokov first embarked on his academic career in the United States, he brought with him hundreds of original lectures on the authors he most admired. For two decades those lectures served as the basis for Nabokov's teaching, first at Wellesley and then at Cornell, as he introduced undergraduates to the delights of great fiction. This volume collects Nabokov's famous lectures on Western European literature, with analysis and commentary on Charles Dickens's *Bleak House*, Gustav Flaubert's *Madam Bovary*, Marcel Proust's *The Walk by Swann's Place*, Robert Louis Stevenson's "The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," and other works. This volume also includes photographic reproductions of Nabokov's original notes, revealing his own edits, underlined passages, and more. Edited and with a Foreword by Fredson Bowers Introduction by John Updike

One of the seminal works of fiction of the 20th century, *The Metamorphosis* finds traveling salesman, Gregor Samsa, inexplicably transformed into a large, monstrous insect-like creature.

Table of contents

A unique portrait of Vladimir Nabokov told through the lens of the years he spent in a land that enchanted him, America. The author of the immortal *Lolita* and *Pale Fire*, born to an eminent Russian family, conjures the apotheosis of the high modernist artist: cultured, refined-as European as they come. But Vladimir Nabokov, who came to America fleeing the Nazis, came to think of his time here as the richest of his life. Indeed, Nabokov was not only happiest here, but his best work flowed from his response to this exotic land. Robert Roper fills out this period in the writer's life with charm and insight- covering Nabokov's critical friendship with Edmund Wilson, his time at Cornell, his role at Harvard's Museum of Comparative Zoology. But Nabokov in America finds its narrative heart in his serial sojourns into the wilds of the West,

undertaken with his wife, Vera, and their son over more than a decade. Nabokov covered more than 200,000 miles as he indulged his other passion: butterfly collecting. Roper has mined fresh sources to bring detail to these journeys, and traces their significant influence in Nabokov's work: on two-lane highways and in late-'40s motels and cafés, we feel *Lolita* draw near, and understand Nabokov's seductive familiarity with the American mundane. Nabokov in America is also a love letter to U.S. literature, in Nabokov's broad embrace of it from Melville to the Beats. Reading Roper, we feel anew the mountain breezes and the miles logged, the rich learning and the Romantic mind behind some of Nabokov's most beloved books.

A major reexamination of the novelist Vladimir Nabokov as "literary gamesman," this book systematically shows that behind his ironic manipulation of narrative and his puzzle-like treatment of detail there lies an aesthetic rooted in his intuition of a transcendent realm and in his consequent redefinition of "nature" and "artifice" as synonyms. Beginning with Nabokov's discursive writings, Vladimir Alexandrov finds his world view centered on the experience of epiphany--characterized by a sudden fusion of varied sensory data and memories, a feeling of timelessness, and an intuition of immortality--which grants the true artist intimations of an "otherworld." Readings of *The Defense*, *Invitation to a Beheading*, *The Gift*, *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight*, *Lolita*, and *Pale Fire* reveal the epiphanic experience to be a touchstone for the characters' metaphysical insightfulness, moral makeup, and aesthetic sensibility, and to be a structural model for how the narratives themselves are fashioned and for the nature of the reader's involvement with the text. In his conclusion, Alexandrov outlines several of Nabokov's possible intellectual and artistic debts to the brilliant and variegated culture that flourished in Russia on the eve of the Revolution. Nabokov emerges as less alienated from Russian culture than most of his emigre readers believed, and as less "modernist" than many of his Western readers still imagine.

"Alexandrov's work is distinctive in that it applies an 'otherworld' hypothesis as a consistent context to Nabokov's novels. The approach is obviously a fruitful one. Alexandrov is innovative in rooting Nabokov's ethics and aesthetics in the otherworldly and contributes greatly to Nabokov studies by examining certain key terms such as 'commonsense,' 'nature,' and 'artifice.' In general Alexandrov's study leads to a much clearer understanding of Nabokov's metaphysics."--D.

Barton Johnson, University of California, Santa Barbara Originally published in 1991. The Princeton Legacy Library uses the latest print-on-demand technology to again make available previously out-of-print books from the distinguished backlist of Princeton University Press. These editions preserve the original texts of these important books while presenting them in durable paperback and hardcover editions. The goal of the Princeton Legacy Library is to vastly increase access to the rich scholarly heritage found in the thousands of books published by Princeton University Press since its founding in 1905.

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An intoxicating yet sensitive novel about the sexual experiences of ten couples from Tarbox, New England. Well-to-do, sociable, articulate but dangerously unfulfilled; they play word games in the evening and adultery all year round.

New essays providing an up-to-date picture of the engagement of artists, philosophers, and critics with Kafka's work. Professor Timofey Pnin, late of Tsarist Russia, is now precariously perched at the heart of an American campus. Battling with American life and language, Pnin must face great hazards in this new world: the ruination of his beautiful lumber-room-as-office; the removal of his teeth and the fitting of new ones; the search for a suitable boarding house; and the trials of taking the wrong train to deliver a lecture in a language he has yet to master. Wry, intelligent and moving, Pnin reveals the absurd and affecting story of one man in exile.

In the stories by Anton Chekhov there is no seriousness of the plot, as in Dostoevsky's novels, but together with simplicity and funny side of everyday life Chekhov's characters are not less dramatic or deep. However, polished sarcasm is not an obstacle for Chekhov to show his characters in a warm and realistic way. There is no grotesque of Saltikov-Schedrin who turns people into images; we can recognise an ordinary modern man on the pages of Chekhov's stories.

In this book, acclaimed Dostoevsky biographer Joseph Frank explores some of the most important aspects of nineteenth and twentieth century Russian culture, literature, and history. Delving into the distinctions of the Russian novel as well as the conflicts between the religious peasant world and the educated Russian elite, *Between Religion and Rationality* displays the cogent reflections of one of the most distinguished and versatile critics in the field. Frank's essays provide a discriminating look at four of Dostoevsky's most famous novels, discuss the debate between J. M. Coetzee and Mario Vargas Llosa on the issue of Dostoevsky and evil, and confront Dostoevsky's anti-Semitism. The collection also examines such topics as Orlando Figes's sweeping survey of the history of Russian culture, the life of Pushkin, and Oblomov's influence on Samuel Beckett. Investigating the omnipresent religious theme that runs throughout Russian culture, even in the antireligious Chekhov, Frank argues that no other major European literature was as much preoccupied as the Russian with the tensions between religion and rationality. *Between Religion and Rationality* highlights this unique quality of Russian literature and culture, offering insights for general readers and experts alike. Nabokov's translation of Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin* (1964) and its accompanying Commentary, along with *Ada, or Ardor* (1969), his densely allusive late English language novel, have appeared nearly inscrutable to many interpreters of his work. If not outright failures, they are often considered relatively unsuccessful curiosities. In Bozovic's insightful study, these key texts reveal Nabokov's ambitions to reimagine a canon of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Western masterpieces with Russian literature as a central, rather than marginal, strain. Nabokov's scholarly work, translations,

and lectures on literature bear resemblance to New Critical canon reformations; however, Nabokov's canon is pointedly translingual and transnational and serves to legitimize his own literary practice. The new angles and theoretical framework offered by Nabokov's Canon help us to understand why Nabokov's provocative monuments remain powerful source texts for several generations of diverse international writers, as well as richly productive material for visual, cinematic, musical, and other artistic adaptations.

This first major critical biography of Vladimir Nabokov, one of the greatest of twentieth-century writers, finally allows us full access to the dramatic details of his life and the depths of his art. An intensely private man, Nabokov was uprooted first by the Russian Revolution and then by World War II. Transformed into a permanent wanderer, he did not achieve fame until late in life, with the success of *Lolita*. In this first of two volumes, Brian Boyd vividly describes the liberal milieu of the aristocratic Nabokovs, their escape from Russia, Nabokov's education at Cambridge, and the murder of his father in Berlin. Boyd then turns to the years that Nabokov spent, impoverished, in Germany and France, until the coming of Hitler forced him to flee, with wife and son, to the United States. This volume stands on its own as a fascinating exploration of Nabokov's Russian years and Russian worlds, prerevolutionary and émigré. In the course of his ten years' work on the biography, Boyd traveled along Nabokov's trail everywhere from Yalta to Palo Alto. The only scholar to have had free access to the Nabokov archives in Montreux and the Library of Congress, he also interviewed at length Nabokov's family and scores of his friends and associates. For the general reader, Boyd offers an introduction to Nabokov the man, his works, and his world. For the specialist, he provides a basis for all future research on Nabokov's life and art, as he dates and describes the composition of all Nabokov's works, published and unpublished. Boyd investigates Nabokov's relation to and his independence from his time, examines the special structures of his mind and thought, and explains the relations between his philosophy and his innovations of literary strategy and style. At the same time he provides succinct introductions to all the fiction, dramas, memoirs, and major verse; presents detailed analyses of the major books that break new ground for the scholar, while providing easy paths into the works for other readers; and shows the relationship between Nabokov's life and the themes and subjects of his art.

“Wonderful, compulsively readable, delicious” personal correspondences, spanning decades in the life and literary career of the author of *Lolita* (*The Washington Post Book World*). An icon of twentieth-century literature, Vladimir Nabokov was a novelist, poet, and playwright, whose personal life was a fascinating story in itself. This collection of more than four hundred letters chronicles the author's career, recording his struggles in the publishing world, the battles over *Lolita*, and his relationship with his wife, among other subjects, and gives a surprising look at the personality behind the creator of such classics as *Pale Fire* and *Invitation to a Beheading*. “Dip in anywhere, and delight follows.” —John Updike

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Pre-order Rachel Cusk's new novel, *Second Place*, now! In the wake of her family's collapse, a writer and her two young sons move to London. The upheaval is the catalyst for a number of transitions - personal, moral, artistic, and practical - as she endeavours to construct a new reality for herself and her children. In the city, she is made to confront aspects of living that she has, until now, avoided, and to consider questions of vulnerability and power, death and renewal, in what becomes her struggle to reattach herself to, and believe in, life. Filtered through the impersonal gaze of its keenly intelligent protagonist, *Transit* sees Rachel Cusk delve deeper into the themes first raised in her critically acclaimed novel *Outline*, and offers up a penetrating and moving reflection on childhood and fate, the value of suffering, the moral problems of personal responsibility and the mystery of change. '[*Transit*] confirms that one of the most fascinating projects in contemporary fiction is unfolding in Rachel Cusk's trilogy.' Adam Foulds

'In 1605 a crippled, greying, almost toothless veteran of Spain's wars against the Ottoman Empire published a book. That book, *Don Quixote*, went on to sell more copies than any other book beside the Bible, making its author, Miguel de Cervantes, the most widely read author in human history. Cervantes did more than just publish a bestseller, though. He invented a way of writing.' In Cervantes' time, 'fiction' was synonymous with a lie. Books were either history, and true, or 'poetry' which might be invented, but had to conform to strict principles. *Don Quixote* tells the story of a poor nobleman, addled from reading too many books on chivalry, who deludes himself that he is a knight errant and sets off to put the world to rights. The book was hugely entertaining, broke the existing rules, devised a new set and, in the process, created a new, modern hybrid form we know today as the novel. *The Man Who Invented Fiction* explores Cervantes's life and the world he lived in, showing how his life and influences converged in his work, and how his work – especially *Don Quixote* – radically changed the nature of literature and created a new way of viewing the world. Finally, it explains how that worldview went on to infiltrate art, politics and science, and how the world today would be unthinkable without it.

A rich compilation of the previously uncollected Russian and English prose and interviews of one of the twentieth century's greatest writers, edited by Nabokov experts Brian Boyd and Anastasia Tolstoy. "I think like a genius, I write like a distinguished author, and I speak like a child": so Vladimir Nabokov famously wrote in the introduction to his volume of selected prose, *Strong Opinions*. *Think, Write, Speak* follows up where that volume left off, with a rich compilation of his uncollected prose and interviews, from a 1921 essay about Cambridge to two final interviews in 1977. The chronological order allows us to watch the Cambridge student and the fledgling Berlin reviewer and poet turn into the acclaimed Paris émigré novelist whose stature brought him to teach in America, where his international success exploded with *Lolita* and propelled him back to Europe. Whether his subject is Proust or Pushkin, the sport of boxing or the privileges of democracy, Nabokov's supreme individuality, his keen wit, and his alertness to the details of life illuminate the page.

One of the twentieth century's greatest novelists offers his take on the Spanish classic. The author of *Lolita* and *Pale Fire* was not only a master of fiction but a distinguished literary critic as well. In this collection of lectures, which he delivered at Harvard in the

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early 1950s, Vladimir Nabokov shares insights based on a chapter-by-chapter synopsis of the seventeenth-century novel by Miguel de Cervantes, a timeless classic and one of the most deeply influential works in all of Western literature. Rejecting the common interpretation of Don Quixote as a warm satire, Nabokov perceives the work as a catalog of cruelty through which the gaunt knight passes. Edited and with a preface by Fredson Bowers, this volume offers “a powerful, critical, and dramatic elaboration of the theme of illusion” (V. S. Pritchett, *The New York Review of Books*).

Morn, a masked king, rules over a realm to which he has restored order after a violent revolution. Secretly in love with Midia, the wife of a banished revolutionary, Morn finds himself facing renewed bloodshed and disaster when Midia's husband returns, provoking a duel and the return of chaos that Morn has fought so hard to prevent. The first major work and the only play of Vladimir Nabokov, author of *Lolita* and *Pnin*, *The Tragedy of Mister Morn* is translated and published in English here for the first time, and is a moving study of the elusiveness of happiness, the power of imagination and the eternal battle between truth and fantasy.

A novel constructed around the last great poem of a fictional American poet, John Shade, and an account of his death. The poem appears in full and the narrative develops through the lengthy, and increasingly eccentric, notes by his posthumous editor.

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