MODERNISM

• A style and period of literature that took place from about 1890 to roughly 1940, but particularly by 1922 (as a reaction to WWI).
• Characterized “chiefly by a rejection of 19th-century traditions and conventions of Realism.”
• Modernist writers tended to see themselves as an avant-garde disengaged from bourgeois values, and disturbed their readers by adopting complex and difficult new forms and styles, such as Stream of Consciousness.
• T.S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land* and “The Love Song of Alfred J. Prufrock”; Virginia Woolf’s *Mrs. Dalloway*; James Joyce’s *Ulysses* all played with fragments, abstraction and stream of consciousness.

POSTMODERNISM

• Considered to date from the close of WWII (1945) to the present, but particularly from the early 1960s.
• Extends the ideas of modernism, but takes them to the extreme. By the 1960s some traits of modernism had become, inevitably, conventional.
  o Fragmentary narrative structure
  o Examination of inner states of consciousness
  o Struggle for identity in a hostile/meaningless world
  o Abstract ideas and images
  o Intertextuality
  o Counterculture/beat generation
• Samuel Becket, Vladimir Nabakov, Jack Kerouac, Tom Stoppard, Margaret Atwood, Hunter S. Thompson, Kurt Vonnegut, Joseph Heller