Daily Modernism



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In contrast to autobiographies, which are intended for a public audience and can be read as a novel, diaries have traditionally been thought of as the private record of a person's life. In "Daily Modernism", Elizabeth Podnieks shows that the diary can and should be read as both autobiography and fiction. Redrawing established boundaries between genres, Podnieks builds a broad critical and theoretical range on which she maps the diary as an aesthetic work, showing how diaries inscribe the aesthetics of literary modernisms. Drawing on feminist theory, literary history, biography, and personal anecdotes, she argues that the diary is an especially subversive space for women writers. Podnieks details how Virginia Woolf, Antonia White, Elizabeth Smart, and Anais Nin wrote their diaries under the pretence that they were private, while always intending them to be published. She travelled extensively to examine the original diary manuscripts and offers unique first-hand descriptions of the manuscripts that underscore the artistic intentions of their authors. "Daily Modernism" contributes to the ongoing feminist revision of literary history and, in its disruption of traditional

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concepts of 'major' and 'minor' literary forms, paves the way for a much needed reconsideration of the diary as a valid literary achievement.