National Library of Canada
Bibliothèque nationale du Canada

Canadian Theses Service
Service des thèses canadiennes

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4

NOTICE

The quality of this microform is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original thesis submitted for microfilming. Every effort has been made to ensure the highest quality of reproduction possible.

If pages are missing, contact the university which granted the degree.

Some pages may have indistinct print especially if the original pages were typed with a poor typewriter ribbon or if the university sent us an inferior photocopy.

Reproduction in full or in part of this microform is governed by the Canadian Copyright Act, R.S.C. 1970, c. C-30, and subsequent amendments.

AVIS

La qualité de cette microforme dépend grandement de la qualité de la thèse soumise au microfilmage. Nous avons tout fait pour assurer une qualité supérieure de reproduction.

S'il manque des pages, veuillez communiquer avec l'université qui a conféré le grade.

La qualité d'impression de certaines pages peut laisser à désirer, surtout si les pages originales ont été dactylographiées à l'aide d'un ruban usé ou si l'université nous a fait parvenir une photocopie de qualité inférieure.

La reproduction, même partielle, de cette microforme est soumise à la Loi canadienne sur le droit d'auteur, SRC 1970, c. C-30, et ses amendements subséquents.

NL-339 (r. 88/04) c

Canada

A Different Thread:
An Analysis of the Diary Form in the Representation of the Female Self

Ofelia Ribeiro

A Thesis

in

The Department

of

English

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts at
Concordia University
Montréal, Québec, Canada

December 1990

© Ofelia Ribeiro, 1990

National Library of Canada
Bibliothèque nationale du Canada

Canadian Theses Service
Service des thèses canadiennes

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4

The author has granted an irrevocable non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of his/her thesis by any means and in any form or format, making this thesis available to interested persons.

L'auteur a accordé une licence irrévocable et non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de sa thèse de quelque manière et sous quelque forme que ce soit pour mettre des exemplaires de cette thèse à la disposition des personnes intéressées.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in his/her thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without his/her permission.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège sa thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

ISBN 0-315-64712-4

Canada

ABSTRACT

A Different Thread: An Analysis of the Diary Form in the Representation of the Female Self

Ofelia Ribeiro

The contemporary woman author has experimented with different techniques in an attempt to find a form appropriate for her complex concerns as both woman and author. The extensive use of the diary in fictional form is a case in point as it utilizes and transforms what is primarily a nonfictional structure into a literary one. How this is done is examined using both a theoretical and a practical approach.

The use of theoretical criticism, notably feminist literary criticism, permits a critique of the differences inherent in literature written by men versus that written by women as well as how these differences translate into praxis. A historical perspective of the development of the diary, both in its fictional and its nonfictional form, will reveal how extensively it has been used in the past as well as how it is currently being employed. Special note will also be made of the narrative situation of the diary novel and how it differs from the real or nonfictional diary.

Several novels, Doris Lessing's The Golden Notebook, Alice Walker's The Color Purple, and Margaret Atwood's The Handmaid's Tale, will form the thrust of the literary interpretation of the contemporary diary novel in an effort to examine the nature of the representation of the female self. The importance of these three novels will be detailed to include the theoretical notions

detailed in earlier chapters with an emphasis on the structure of the diary form and how it is utilized in a fictional context.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Professor Laszlo Géfin for guiding and supervising both me and the composition of this thesis over the last few years. Without you it would not have the same effect. Thank you.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1
Feminist Theory and the Problematics of Gender 1

Chapter 2
The Development of the Diary Form 13

Chapter 3
Writing the Self 42

Chapter 4
Narrative Practice in the Diary Novel 61

Chapter 5
The Anxiety of Authorship: Literary Representations in The Golden Notebook 81

Chapter 6
Struggling to Survive: The Black Woman as Artist in The Color Purple 99

Chapter 7
Spaces Between Lines: The Discourse of the Survivor in The Handmaid's Tale 116

Chapter 8
Defining an Alternative Tradition 132

Notes 143

Bibliography 146

Chapter 1

Feminist Theory and the Problematics of Gender

> Postmodern knowledge is not simply an instrument of power. It refines our sensitivity to differences and increases our tolerance of incommensurability.
> Jean-François Lyotard, The Postmodern Condition

Feminist criticism has, along with other contemporary critical approaches, altered literary study forever. Literary criticism has traditionally been marked by a denial of woman. Non-feminist criticism, while claiming to consider woman's point of view, has applied the same standards to all texts without considering the particular circumstances that led to their production. In essence, traditional theory has ignored the stimuli that influence the writing of women's texts. Feminist theory has filled this void by examining the differences between literature written by women and that written by men in an attempt to redefine the nature of contemporary literature. In addition it has reclaimed lost or previously unknown works by women authors. In "The Feminist Critical Revolution," Elaine Showalter suggests that women authors, readers, and critics "bring different perceptions and expectations to their literary experience" (3) and, therefore, produce somewhat different forms of literature. Indeed, women authors have developed a discourse of "woman" which differs substantially from that which the literary canon has traditionally accepted. This discourse is not concerned primarily with rejecting previously-established notions of women's writing, but with "establishing the

identity of women's literature as an alternative tradition" (Bennett 233) -- a tradition that is considered different from that of men's literature. This alternative tradition and discourse will be discussed at length in my thesis in order to prove that it is not only viable but significant.

The problem with some theory is the blurring of difference and the notion that "women" are a single collectivity. But this, I believe, is false. Women cannot be considered simply as women, as though we are all the same. All the various aspects of our identity (for example, woman, worker, social activist, lover, mother) are always present. In addition, it is the functioning of these aspects together that determines, to some extent, the nature of each of them. Difficulties arising in one area, say the workplace, necessarily influence the outcome of events in another, the home for example. Many assumptions of differences between men and women arise from their natural or biological differences and, by extension, reflect the separation between public and private life. But these are connected, equal yet opposite sides of the same coin. Lucienne Crozier, the diarist in L. C., addresses this issue as "art in league with seduction, two halves in constant dialogue" (72), neither half taking precedence over the other, both necessarily in perpetual contact, within the individual. No two persons, female or male, are exactly the same because the various aspects that determine them differ from one individual to another. Women, then, are not a single collectivity but rather a collection of distinct individuals.

One can extend this to theoretical concerns that examine the connections between these various parts and how they are inextricably linked to one another. Lumping all women together into a single category can be perceived as what marginalizes them. In the same way, members of various races and classes, sexual and cultural groups, are similarly considered to be a single entity. To be marginalized means to be unable "to gain substantial support for a vision of change" (Adamson, Briskin, and McPhail 184) and is inherent in any group which undertakes a serious critique of society, a critique which challenges the authority of the dominant, Western culture. Increasingly, women are using theory and literature, in particular self-conscious fiction, to express their vision of a society which acknowledges woman's distinctiveness and allows them to create a place for themselves as equal partners. Linda Hutcheon summarizes it best in her article on Canadian women novelists and their challenge to tradition, "'Shape Shifters'":

> In literature written by women in Canada and elsewhere today, we find the same kind of radical critique of totalizing systems and so-called universal Truths as is to be found in contemporary post-structuralist philosophy and literary theory. The difference is that this critique, brought about through the study of sexual difference is enacted in the literature itself, particularly (but not exclusively) in the fiction of women writers. These novels -- often very self-consciously -- demonstrate how meaning and sexual identity are fixed through

> and by representation, and how one can never separate the social and the sexual in dealing with the lives of women. (220)

What is important here is that women are addressing their concerns through the medium of literature, especially through self-conscious texts as diaries, letters, autobiographies, and memoirs. Women are also engaging in other forms of writing, for example political texts, but these are not to be stressed here. In "Women and Fiction," Virginia Woolf suggests that women once had to lock their secrets away "in old drawers, half obliterated in the memories of the aged" (33). But this is no longer necessarily true. Now, women are organizing to back up their demands for equality. In universities, women scholars are demanding that women's literary achievements be taken into consideration.[1] In addition, women in the labour movement have, for the time being, made demands for equal pay for work of equal value in an attempt to remedy wage differentials between the sexes.[2] It seems that women in many walks of life are questioning the notion of their being a monolithic entity and demanding that restitution be made. Perhaps some day, women will attain what Woolf says they have long been denied -- "leisure, and money, and a room to themselves" (40), and in so doing, possibly erase the meaning of marginalization from memory.

Postmodern thought has acknowledged the importance of different cultures and has come to "the realization that our culture is neither as homogeneous nor as monolithic as we once believed it to

be" (Owens 58). There are a great many literatures with which we have not yet become acquainted, literatures that are just as valuable to many readers and scholars as those which have been traditionally studied. In recent years we have become more tolerant of the works of authors not included in the canon, such as the literature of the Third World, and, as a result, have been enriched by them. It seems to me that these are the great challenges to contemporary culture and literature: the acceptance of and tolerance for the difference of others.

Feminist theory confronts the notion of difference in an attempt to rescue women's voices from the previously unknown zone of literature. Sandra M. Gilbert, in the introduction to The Newly Born Woman, suggests that woman's use of words "are inevitably the signs of the repressed, enigmatic hieroglyphs of an absence violently striving to become a presence" (xvii-xviii). Female fiction, here defined as the work of a female author depicting a female protagonist from a decidedly female perspective, has in recent years addressed these problems in an effort to free women from the silence they live with. How can a woman express herself if she is forced to be silent about her experiences, or if no one listens to her, or if her thoughts and words are ignored, or worse? The idea is that if no one listens to women writing in the old traditional forms, then she must necessarily use new forms that allow her to speak in her own voice about the things that matter to her. To this end, women have experimented with literary forms such as the diary, which will be examined in the following

chapters.

In my thesis, I have chosen to examine the use of the diary novel by the contemporary woman author. The fictional journal is a literary extension of the personal diary which is a chronicle of personal experiences and thoughts written periodically, often daily. In addition, diarists compose their journals primarily for themselves, often without a reader in mind. The diary novel is structured like its nonfictional counterpart, either in whole or in part and often does not address a fictive reader.

Not only have women writers been at the centre of the development of the diary novel, as will be examined in the section detailing the history of the diary form, but they have used it to envisage a form of writing that is distinctive from that of men. In addition, the women characters in the fictional journals are the main protagonists and the major focus and are not defined in relation to men. In the process of depicting their heroines, women authors have allied themselves with feminist critics in challenging the universal truths and the marginalized roles assigned them. The main form of criticism used throughout this thesis is feminist literary criticism which is an important mode in itself and includes many other theoretical concerns, such as the psychoanalytical and the political. Each section of the thesis will be structured to include not only theoretical interpretations but also actual fictional excerpts to substantiate the theoretical claims.

From the outset, I chose the title "A Different Thread: An

Analysis of the Diary Form in the Representation of the Female Self" purposely to indicate that the diary form is an important and popular structure for self-expression. Each of the concepts mentioned in the title -- difference, analysis, diary, self-representation, female gender -- will be discussed in this thesis. Together, they answer any number of questions about contemporary critical theory and the problematics of gender. What is the diary form and how is the "self" represented through the art of writing? What is the notion of difference and how are contemporary women authors using the diary form as compared to male authors? How does critical theory relate to the actual writing of and interpretation of the literary text? The concept of analysis suggests the use of contemporary critical theories, in particular, feminist theories, to examine these practices.

I will begin my examination of the use of the diary form by first considering its history. Though some journal fragments exist as far back as the eighth century, the diary novel itself only dates from the early eighteenth century. The earliest journal fiction imitated and was, for a very long time, influenced by the real diary. The diaries, both real and fictional, told of women's and men's daily lives, their personal experiences, their travels to foreign lands, as well as the social and political forces that influenced their lives. From the beginning, women wrote most of the personal diaries and diary fiction. They poured their hearts into their journals, along with their anxieties and their joys. This is not to say that men did not keep diaries; they did, but

for very quite diverse reasons, as the historical development of the use of the diary novel will show. In addition, other narrative forms similar to the diary, such as the epistolary and the memoir forms, will be discussed in order to better distinguish them.

The third chapter will detail the nature of writing and how the self is represented through the act of writing a diary. The need to write one's story is sometimes overwhelming and leads the author to an in-depth self-examination. The use of first-person narration, through autobiographical forms like the diary, is a natural way to represent the realities of the individual mind because it is in our own minds that we know what is real. In addition, an attempt will be made to compare women's diaries to those written by men through an examination of both fictional and non-fictional diary excerpts.

The next section will introduce the narrative structure of the diary form. The daily journal is often written as an aid to memory for eventual memoirs and is not usually intended to be published as such. Lorna Martens has suggested that the "diary novel is an important subgenre of the first-person novel" (ix). I will consider this notion while investigating what is peculiar to the journal form as compared to others. The diary is written in the immediate present, unlike other forms which, though they may also be written in the present, reveal more about the narrator's past self than about her or his present self.

Another important aspect of the diary form is the diarist's relationship to the reader. F. K. Stanzel suggests that mediacy,

"or the rendering of mediacy, is perhaps the most important starting point for the shaping of the subject matter by an author of a narrative work" (6). This is perhaps even more true in the diary novel where a narrator has the unique opportunity of speaking directly to a reader without the use of an intermediary. It is through the act of narration that the reader is conscious of how close she or he is to the novel. Even though no particular reader is being directly addressed, the diarist seems to accept the existence of a reader who can sympathize with her and her life. The concept of mediacy is, therefore, often vital to the diary form, especially as used by contemporary women diarists, and can be interpreted as what distinguishes the fictional journal from other first-person narratives.

To theorize about women's writing practices is to address feminist criticism and how it legitimizes female experience. When writing is located in the margins or outside the accepted traditions, or if the author is herself marginalized, then her writing is limited. Bonnie S. Anderson and Judith P. Zinsser in their introduction to the history of women in Europe state that "gender has been the most important factor in shaping the lives of European women. Unlike men, who have been seen as divided by class, nation, or historical era, women have traditionally been viewed first as women, a separate category of being" (1:xv). It is woman's experience as woman that will be analyzed in the next pages; the "I" in the novels under study is the voice of woman writing in the diary form. This mode of expression erases, or at the least

minimizes, the limits inherent in writing as woman. The conflict, ever-present in the first-person novel, between self-realization and the flow of events, is presented explicitly in the diary novel as the diarist writes her tale, without reserve.

What is important in all the novels under examination in this thesis is the nature of self-representation. How do women characters extract meaning from their lives as human beings when their existence is based primarily in relation to others? How do they build meaning in their lives by building a world of women? How is this expressed through their literature and how do their chosen forms of expression differ from those used by men? What happens to the reader of these novels? How does she or he interpret a new role? These different questions and others will be addressed as three novels, The Golden Notebook, The Color Purple, and The Handmaid's Tale, are discussed in depth.

These novels are chosen deliberately, not only because they utilize the diary form and are written by contemporary women authors, but also because they have been widely read and discussed. Their popularity stems from their depiction of contemporary situations in a style and structure that most are familiar with and in which many readers engage in writing themselves -- the diary. This exposure to a literary form makes it accessible and fosters a line of communication between the diarist and the reader. Their relationship is one of symbiosis, the one needing the other for meaning.

The three novelists, Doris Lessing, Alice Walker, and

Margaret Atwood, represent three different English-speaking countries: Great Britain, the United States, and Canada. Although it was not deliberate, this adds another dimension to the thesis: the notion that the use of the diary form is universal. Not only do many people who are not novelists write diaries, a fact that will be substantiated in the historical analysis of the diary, but novelists throughout the world do so as well. Lorna Martens' study includes an extensive bibliography of diaries written in languages such as English, French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, Dutch, and Swedish. It is indeed a universal form.

To emphasize women's contemporary fiction does not necessarily lead to an undermining of men's fiction. Male authors do use the diary form in their fictional works. But it is women who have taken up this method in greater numbers and are using it in original ways. Sharon O'Brien, in her literary biography of Willa Cather, suggests that the woman author exists in a double bind: "either she could write as a woman, in which case she created a limited art, or she could write as a man, in which case she created an inauthentic art" (174). Either way she is compromised. Yet, the contemporary woman author has found a way out of this dilemma by developing new forms of literary discourse or by modifying already existing forms, such as the diary. This notion will be further examined in the final chapter while detailing the difficulties inherent in female authorship.

One of the problems encountered in writing this thesis was the lack of critical study of the diary form as an important con-

temporary form. There has been some discussion of the diary form as my bibliography will attest, but there has been very little examination of diary novels written in the English language and discussed as such.[3] I hope that this situation is remedied in the near future as more women authors utilize this form.

I regard the women authors I have studied not merely as writers who happen to be female but as women writers who have struggled to produce substantial literary works that go beyond gender. The need to reconcile the woman and the artist, to write from their experiences as women without necessarily limiting themselves to writing a woman's story, is a great challenge. To define woman's experience and identity in relation to her marginality and use this as a source for a vision for a changed society is, I feel, perhaps the only way to escape the double bind facing women. This will be the mark of our postmodern society.

Chapter 2

The Development of the Diary Form

> "Men have had every advantage of us in telling their own story. Education has been theirs in so much higher a degree; the pen has been in their hands."
>
> Jane Austen, Persuasion

Women writers have been, since the beginning of the novel, at the centre of the development of the diary novel. But it was not easy. Education for women only became a priority in the twentieth century, until then they had only limited access to educational opportunities. The few who knew how to write were either self-taught or were taught by other women. But the need to write, to express oneself, was always there: "For women who had no rights, no individual existence or identity, the very act of writing -- particularly for a public audience -- was in essence an assertion of individuality and autonomy, and often an act of defiance" (Spender 3). It is not surprising then that many of women's early novels took the form of letters and diaries. Their lack of formal education and their exclusion from most activities outside the home -- such as social and political events -- prevented them from leading an active public life. For these women, their personal writings -- in the form of letters and diaries -- were their means of examining and understanding their lives and their world.

This section will detail the development of the diary novel from the earliest journal to those written in the present day.

This chapter is necessary because there has been very little written about the development of the diary novel and its impact on the history of the novel. For those readers who are unfamiliar with this form, this chapter will provide a basis for the analysis that follows. For those who are, this section should furnish additional information about the nature of the diary form as used by women authors.

This chapter will concentrate on many diaries, both fictional and non-fictional, written in English. That is not to say that there are no diaries written in other languages; on the contrary, as studies on the German and French diary form have attested. However, because this thesis examines the contemporary English-language diary novel, journals written in languages other than English will be considered only in so far as they have influenced the development of the English-language diary form. In addition, the study presented here is, unfortunately, not exhaustive because to be so would require that the development of the diary form in the English language be this thesis' sole subject. Nevertheless, a general overview is essential to grasp the relevance of the diary form as it is currently used by the contemporary woman author.

In order to best understand the development of the diary as well as the impact it has had on literary history, this chapter will be subdivided into several sections. The first will consider the significance of an historical analysis of the diary form. The next five sections will examine the five major groups of diaries: travel, religious, social, literary, and personal or intimate.

Most diaries can be grouped in this fashion because they often make up the reasons why the diary is written in the first place. Each of these groups will be regarded separately not only to reveal the earliest examples of each but also to detail how each has developed over time, to the present day. The next section will consider the influence of other forms, such as the letter journal, the memoir, and the epistolary novel, on the diary novel. Finally, the chapter will end with the particular concerns of the twentieth-century fictional journal.

The Significance of an Historical Analysis

We sometimes forget the relevance of an examination of the historical development of literary forms; we are sometimes reluctant to recognize the significance of history when we study new forms. Nevertheless, such a study must be considered. As Hans Robert Jauss suggests:

> The history of literature, like that of art, can no longer maintain the "appearance of its independence" when one has realized that its production presupposes the material production and social praxis of human beings, that even artistic production is a part of the "real life-process" of the appropriation of nature that determines the history of human labor or development. (10)

Literary production does not exist independent of the social and political and cultural events around it. We write about these

events because they influence our lives. This is especially true of the diary novel, which is often a journal of events that occur as well as a document of our feelings about them and how they have served to influence us. An understanding of how the diary novel has developed over the years allows us to better interpret how the form has changed with time and how it has become conducive to the present day. An historical survey of the use of the diary and its fictional counterpart is therefore in order.

A literary work, even when it is a new form or an adaptation of an old form, does not exist in a vacuum. It often arises from structures that have long been in use, whether literary or non-literary. The fictional journal can be seen in this manner. It developed from the real diary and takes many of its features, mainly structural features, from it. Nevertheless, the diary novel as we know it today, a novel written completely or partially with a diary, did not appear until the late eighteenth century. Until then, the form was used sporadically, including only a few short diary entries. In order to better understand the use of the journal in fiction, we must also consider the real diary as well as other autobiographical forms, such as the letter journal, and the memoir and epistolary novels.

As a model for the fictional diary, the actual diary has lent many of its features to its literary sister. Both are conceived as first-person accounts, written daily or habitually about oneself and primarily for oneself, on events from the recent past or the present. The fictional diary can be described as a mimetic form of

the nonfictional diary and exists because its authors have imitated it or at least borrowed from it. Lorna Martens describes how the mimetic conventions of the diary novel have developed to the extent that it has become virtually indistinguishable from the actual diary (60). This is because they use many common conventions and also because they have a common history.

Journals of Travel and Adventure

It should not be surprising that the first diaries were written in England. It was here that the diary novel first made its appearance because the English had a tradition of journal-keeping. Religious, private, and travel diaries were widely kept in the seventeenth century, few of which were published, even though many were known to exist. Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe (1719) is considered to be the first fictionalized diary published. Until then there were only a few travel journals, notably seafaring journals published, for example John Dunton's A True Journall of the Sally Fleet (1637), and Richard Head's fictionalized account The English Rogue (1665) which includes the main character's diary. Captain Cooke's journal (published in 1712) of his voyage around the world was probably the first sea diary written in the present tense as events transpired. Many sailors wrote of their daily adventures at sea, mostly in retrospect after their return home, with the intent on publishing their journals. By this time, the sea journal was a popular and widely read form, conferring fame and wealth on its authors (Martens 64-5).

Sea journals have been widely used in fiction either in whole or in part. Edgar Allan Poe's "MS. Found in a Bottle" (1831) and The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket (1838), Malcolm Lowry's Through the Panama (1961) and Ultramarine (1963), based on his journal of his voyage to the Far East, are just a few popular examples of novels utilizing the diary form. In each case, the sea is the lure that invites the protagonist to write about himself and his adventures.

The effect of overseas exploration on literature is immeasurable. The customs and manners of peoples from other lands influenced the literature not only of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries but continue to influence the literature of our own age. The sense of adventure and discovery stimulated the imaginations of the authors who are the major figures in the literary canon we study today: the poetry of Spenser, Milton, and Dryden; the drama of Shakespeare, Dryden, and Molière; the novels of Cervantes, Defoe, Swift, and Samuel Johnson; and the essays of Montaigne and Bacon. Many of their works which have become classics either deal with or are set in the new worlds and have, over the years, contributed to our own present-day literary culture.

In examining the history of the diary form, it would at first appear as though the earliest works were written by men. They probably were, most sailors were male. Because women have traditionally been linked to the private sphere of life, few women took to the sea. Nevertheless, some did. Margaret Conrad in her study of the private papers of Maritime women found several travel

diaries written by seafaring women (17-19). Many of these women accompanied their husbands and fathers on their fishing expeditions and wrote diaries telling of their daily lives on the high seas from a uniquely feminine perspective. One can only imagine how many more women told of their adventures and hope that someday soon their unknown accounts will appear in print.

The seafaring journal is an important subdivision of the travel diary which, from the earliest times to the present day, has had tremendous appeal. The tradition of writing about one's travels to faraway lands dates back to the eighth century when the abbess of Heidenheim journeyed to the Near East with the bishop of Eichstatt and dutifully recorded his impressions for him (Anderson and Zinsser 1: 185-6). Explorers to the Americas, Africa, and Asia during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, returned with tales of exotic lands and unbelievable riches which piqued the interest of many Europeans who had never before travelled beyond their immediate surroundings. Most famous of all was Marco Polo, whose Travels (1298-9) enjoyed a wide popularity and enormously increased European interest in the Far East. Soon many more people began their own travels, throughout England and to faraway America. Some of them kept diaries of their journeys, for example, Celia Friennes, who was possibly the first woman to travel alone throughout England in the late seventeenth century (Dobbs 183-5).

The early American and Canadian settlers brought the tradition of writing diaries with them from England. Though most diary keepers in this early period were men, recent studies have pub-

lished previously unknown diaries written by women. A wealth of material has been documented by Lillian Schlissel and John Mack Faragher in their books of the writings of the men and women who journeyed across the United States from Oregon to California, in the years 1840-1870. During these years, approximately a quarter of a million pioneers crossed America in search of land and wealth, in the form of gold and other precious metals. Many of these people kept diaries, of which about 800 are known to exist. Reading some of these, we encounter snapshots not only of routine events but also clear portraits of the major events in the lives of the nineteenth-century pioneer. Many of these accounts are very literary, as a short excerpt from Helen Carpenter's diary, vividly describing the hardships of the journey, shows:

> When the sun was just peeping over the top of the mountain, there was suddenly heard a shot and a blood curdling yell, and immediately the Indians we saw yesterday were seen riding at full speed directly toward the horses ... Father put his gun to his shoulder as though to shoot ... The Indians kept ... circling ... and halooing ... bullets came whizzing through the camp. None can know the horror of it, who have not been similarly situated.... [the Indians] did not come directly toward us, but all the time in a circular way, from one side of the road to the other, each time they passed, getting a little nearer, and occasionally firing a shot. (quoted in Schlissel 126-7)

Reading this excerpt one gets a sense not only of this woman's personal history but also of the very real dangers encountered by all the pioneers who trekked across the United States. Carpenter's concerns seem to be primarily personal -- for herself and for others travelling with her. But she also has a real sense for the dangers possible in this as yet unknown land. Having read just a few of these kinds of diary entries, one easily becomes totally engrossed in these pioneers' lives.

The early Canadian settlers also wrote diaries and novels of the hardships they encountered. Most of the writers were women: "what we know in literary terms of the life of the Upper Canadian settlers is seen mostly through the eyes of women" (McClung 4). Frances Brooke's novel The History of Emily Montague (1769) tells the story of the early Quebec City settlers through letters and personal accounts. Catherine Parr Trail recorded her journey from England to Canada in The Backwoods of Canada (1836). Elizabeth Simcoe, the wife of the Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada, wrote her Diary, published in 1911, detailing the beauty of the land that became her adopted home (McClung 7-9).

What all these various accounts reveal is woman's determination to write despite all the odds against her. Because women have traditionally been linked to the private sphere of life, few of their diaries or fiction were published in their lifetimes. Those few who were have generally been out of print or unavailable. Fortunately, in recent years, previously unpublished or unavailable works are now appearing and being read. In Canada, one group

claiming the past is the Maritime Women's Project which has collected memoirs, letters, diaries, and short fiction written by Maritime women between 1750 and 1950. In 1982, when Margaret Conrad published Recording Angels, more than 75 major documents had been located. One can only wonder how many more accounts and records have been destroyed or are still hidden away somewhere, waiting to be discovered. Conrad examines the diaries and letters written as a consequence of women's existence in a "male dominated world where women are marginal to the discourse" (2). These women often had nowhere else to turn to but the pages of their personal documents for self-expression. Diaries are written for oneself, letters are meant to be read by other women, thereby enforcing a woman's culture distinct from the male presence.

Today, the travel diary continues to be an influential guide to far-away lands or even to our own country. Prior to a vacation, many people reach for a travel journal detailing what the author did and see and use this information to plan their own trip. Others write a diary of events and sites seen during their journey, others still use their diary entries for personal purposes. Laurence Sterne's A Sentimental Voyage Through France and Italy (1768) has greatly influenced the travel diary even though it is not written in diary form but rather in epistolary form. Yorick's adventures are anecdotal and not related to each other except by virtue of the journey. Barbara Grizzuti Harrison's Italian Days (1989) is a more recent example of the same form. This text is a travel log through Italy but, on another level, Harrison's trip is

also a personal journey through her family's country and through her childhood recollections. Here, as in many travel diaries, the form is a frame that surrounds the short pieces together (Martens 109-10). In addition this work also shows how versatile the diary form is by expanding on the journey and making it personal, a means to remember the past.

Journals of Religious Experience

Another important type of diary commonly employed is the religious diary which is used for spiritual confessions, for expressing the religious feelings of believers, or for examining the questions of non-believers. Few of these were meant for publication but were intended as examples for the dedicated to imitate. The increased use of the diary grew simultaneously with the rise of the Quakers and the publication of the journal of George Fox, the founder of the Society of Friends, or Quakers (Dobbs 18). Soon the leader of the Methodists, John Wesley, encouraged his disciples to do likewise (Dobbs 27). The Puritans' diaries were especially introspective, and for the Pietists, "diary keeping meant vigilant self-observation, designed to protect the Christian from falling into sin" (Martens 55). Undoubtedly, these diaries are very personal in their subject matter by allowing their authors the opportunity to purge themselves of any un-Christian thoughts and to examine any unacceptable deeds they may have committed. Their common feature is the nature of their religious fervour. Yet, it is this ardour that differentiates the religious diary

from other types of diaries.

Religious diaries in themselves are not especially interesting. Except for their subject matter, they are significant only in being "the ancestor of the intimate diary, which in turn influenced the production of diary fiction" (Martens 74). Examination of one's most intimate thoughts is most easily portrayed using the diary form. One of the most important and influential modern novels, Jean-Paul Sartre's La nausée (1938), is an examination of the nature of experience as told by Antoine Roquentin, a French writer who is horrified by his very existence. Through his diary, he details and analyzes every thought and sensation he bears, to the point where a profound feeling of nausea overtakes him. Writing in a diary enables one to be totally honest by noting down one's thoughts without concern for structure or literary content. It is therefore an appropriate form to utilize whenever a character undergoes a crisis situation. The Reverend Thomas Marshfield in John Updike's A Month of Sundays (1976) is confined to a centre for men with indecent behaviour so as to allow him to examine the cause of his scandalous conduct. This he does in his diary entries. Here, Marshfield, like Roquentin, questions his existence, but unlike the French writer, the fallen minister never doubts or apologizes for his behaviour. These two novels share some common features: they are both structurally framed by the diary form, and their main characters engage in thoughtful, whether philosophical or religious, soul-searching. In addition, each shows the extreme range of feeling possible, all by virtue of

the diarist being true to himself and writing as honestly as possible.

The Journal of Social Events

Just as the religious diary occupies a distinct place in the history of the diary form, so too does the social diary. This form records events rather than feelings or religious fervour. Samuel Pepys kept his Diary from 1660 to 1669 when he stopped due to his failing eyesight (Dobbs 53). This journal like James Boswell's London Journal (1762-3) tells of these men's life and times with special emphasis on the events of the day. Many politicians, Britain's Lloyd George and Queen Victoria for example, also kept diaries detailing their public lives. Other important public figures who kept daily journals were Ralph Waldo Emerson and Benjamin Franklin. It is in the interest of the public figure to keep a record of his accomplishments and many chose to do just so.

Several accounts of the American civil war are in existence. Mary Boykin Miller Chestnut was a novelist who kept a diary during the war and writes a portrait of this era. She tells of the sufferings by soldiers and civilians. She writes about slavery and what people around her think of it. She portrays important people of the era and their involvement in the civil war. Unlike other diaries, this one is not a self-study but an analysis of the times and circumstances surrounding this violent period in American history (Jelinek 1986, 87). It is this feature that makes Chestnut's diary a social and not a personal diary.

Canadians have a special relationship with politics. Not only have politicians such as Charles Ritchie written and published their diaries, but ordinary citizens as well. Charles Ritchie's The Siren Years (1974) is especially interesting because it won the Governor General Award, a literary prize, for 1974. Rick Salutin's Waiting for Democracy: A Citizen's Journal (1989) tells of the author's involvement with the Canadian Coalition Against Free Trade as well as the federal election of 1988. Both of these works show how social and political events shape our lives and experiences and how we in turn can influence them.

Experiences during World War II proved to be especially rich material for diaries. In addition to the well-known diary of Anne Frank (1956), Luise Rinser's A Woman's Prison Journal: Germany, 1944 recently (1987) translated account tells of her internment in a Nazi prison. Written from the period of her arrest in 1944 until her release at the war's end, Rinser's diary was written on tiny scraps of paper and clothing. In it she tells not only her personal experiences, but also those of the women imprisoned with her as well as stories her lawyer tells her of the outside world. These two diaries are especially important because if the authors had not written their experiences, we would not today know of either Frank's or Rinser's existence. Journalist William Shirer wrote Berlin Diary: The Journal of a Foreign Correspondent, 1934-1941 as he witnessed Hitler's rise to power and the beginning of the second world war as the Nazis invaded Europe. Marguerite Duras' The War: A Memoir (1986) examines this same period from the perspec-

tive of a citizen living in occupied France. What is important about the social diary is that the author's life must be placed into the larger context of the period of history she or he is living in. The above-mentioned diaries are written with this in mind. If it was not for the war, their experiences would have been decidedly different and their journals would probably never even have existed. Diary novels set during wartime include Timothy Findley's The Wars (1977) and Marge Piercy's Gone to Soldiers (1987), both of which will be further examined in the next chapter.

Literary Journals

Professional writers, especially those writing in the twentieth century, see the diary as an important literary form and many keep personal diaries. Only a few well-known literary diaries as those of André Gide, Katherine Mansfield, Max Frisch, and Virginia Woolf, need to be mentioned. Their journals have greatly influenced many other writers who have patterned their own diaries after those of these authors. Literary biographers, as well, have used their subjects' journals as sources into their lives and experiences. Recently, previously unpublished diaries and letters have surfaced, for example the recent (1989) publication of Louisa May Alcott's diaries, allowing biographers a greater insight into the writer's imagination. These new materials allow the biographer the opportunity to directly "capture the meaning experience held for someone who lived in a different historical and social context" so as not to "impose the present upon the past" (O'Brien 4-

5), thereby allowing a more accurate interpretation of the writer's life and works.

The Personal Journal

All the above-mentioned diary forms are significant in themselves but by far the most important and most popular of the diary forms is the intimate or personal journal. As its name implies, this form is primarily concerned with the diarist's personal, everyday life, and is written in private for the diarist's benefit alone and generally not for publication. It differs from other types of diaries in that the central concern in the journal entries is the diarist and not any social, historical, or literary events or issues. The personal diary has its origins in France in the late nineteenth century with the publication of private diaries by public figures such as Henri-Frédéric Amiel's Fragments d'un journal intime (1882-84), Jules Michelet's Mon journal (1888), and Eugene Delacroix's Journal (1893). These were pubpublished in their entirety as diaries and not as accounts of historical value (Martens 115-16). Alain Girard examines these and other nineteenth-century "journaux intimes" in his text, Le journal intime. It was only a matter of time before the form appeared in literature. Nikolai Gogol's "The Diary of a Madman" (1835) showed how the form could be adapted for literary use and influenced Guy de Maupassant's "Un Fou" (1885) and "Le Horla" (1886). These short fictional works reveal a character's psychological deterioration over time as told in his own words, in diary form.

André Gide's Les Cahiers d'André Walter (1891) and Paludes (1895) as well as many of his other novels announce him as the first major twentieth-century author to use the diary form. Lorna Martens examines Gide's extensive use of the diary (138-55), with a special emphasis on La symphonie pastorale (1919) in her text on the diary novel. The versatility of the diary form is evident in novels as diverse as Bram Stoker's Dracula (1897), Sinclair Ross' As For Me and My House (1941), Saul Bellow's Dangling Man (1944), and John Fowles' The Collector (1963). Use of the diary as a literary device for the examination of the personal continues to be popular at the present time.

Several feminist critics have discussed women being at the centre of the development of the diary novel and its nonfictional counterpart. Dale Spender suggests that women have used and read diaries because it is through this form that they have "the most direct means of access to private lives" (96). Lynn Bloom and Orlee Holder argue that women's diaries emphasize personal experiences. Indeed, diary writing is an excellent tool for self-inspection as well as depicting growing self- and social-awareness. In her personal diary, the woman writer can express herself fully and honestly without having anyone looking over her shoulder questioning her beliefs or doubting her claims. The diarist's word is complete and final.

Fanny Burney's diary is an especially interesting case. During her lifetime, she was the well-known and widely-read author of Evelina (1770) and Cecilia (1782). But it is with her diary,

published posthumously, that she achieved her greatest fame. She wrote her most personal thoughts into her journal as well as portions of a novel. But when she was fifteen her aunt, believing it indecent for a young girl to keep a diary, destroyed it. Soon, in March 1768 she began a second diary addressed to "Nobody". The journal opens with the following entry:

> To have some account of my thoughts, manners, acquaintances and actions, when the hour arrives in which time is more nimble than memory, is the reason which induces me to keep a Journal. A Journal in which I must confer my <u>every</u> thought, must open my whole heart! But a thing of this kind ought to be addressed to somebody -- I must imagine myself to be talking -- talking to the most intimate of friends -- to one in whom I should take delight in confiding ...

Here, she expresses the need to talk to someone, to write all her most intimate thoughts, deeds, experiences in her private journal. The diary is, for Burney, a friend she can be totally honest with, hence she feels a need to give her diary a name, in order to truly call it her friend. Eventually, she does.

> ... To <u>whom</u>, then, <u>must</u> I dedicate my wonderful, surprising and interesting Adventure? -- to <u>whom</u> dare I reveal my private opinion of my nearest relations? my secret thoughts of my dearest friends? my own hopes, fears, reflections, and dislikes? -- Nobody!

Not trusting anyone in particular, especially not members of her

immediate family, she prefers to trust "Nobody." To "Nobody," then, she addresses her diary, her only true friend.

> To Nobody, then, will I write my Journal! since to Nobody can I be wholly unreserved -- to Nobody can I reveal every thought, every wish of my heart, with the most unlimited confidence, the most unremitting sincerity to the end of my life! ... From Nobody I have nothing to fear ... (quoted in Schrank and Supino 27)

And she continues to address "Nobody" for several years. Burney's story is typical for many women who lived in her time -- the eighteenth century. Social and familial restrictions refused to allow them the freedom to write what they wanted in whatever manner they wanted. Rather than being an exception, Fanny Burney's difficulties were common for other women writers. Lack of formal education for women did not help matters. Neither did the attitudes of critics who dismissed women's novels as "minor productions by unprofessional writers" (Rogers 23). As a result, few women were successful authors. Fanny Burney, along with Ann Radcliffe and Aphra Behn were among these. One can only imagine what their writing talents could have produced if all the restrictions could have somehow been lifted and they had been given the opportunity and the power to write as they pleased.

The Influence of Related Forms

The other form that women excelled at was in writing letters. The letter journal appeared in the mid-eighteenth century with

Samuel Richardson's Pamela (1740). Unlike diary novels which are intended only for the diarist, the letter journal is addressed to someone specific. Like the diary, the letter journal is intended as a record of events and experiences recorded habitually. It can also be seen as a variation of the epistolary novel. While the epistolary novel, written in great numbers in the eighteenth century, includes the correspondence of several writers, the letter journal is considered to utilize only the letters of one character (Martens 75-6).

Richardson's Pamela is often considered to be one of the most important novels in the history of literature. It is also known as one of the first examples of epistolary fiction. Yet, B.G. MacCarthy states that all Richardson did was "crystallize certain tendencies which until then had been fluid" (263). She writes that the tendency toward writing letters was very common for women of this period. Women often turned to letter-writing as a way to vent their frustrations and to express their views to their friends, views they could not state in public. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg discusses, in her essay on female relationships, the many manuscripts available -- primarily letters -- which reveal the closeness and intimacy that women of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries felt for one another. Because many women were separated by distance and thereby unable to speak directly to one another, their continued correspondence enabled them to overcome their anxieties. Letter-writing was therefore used as a vehicle for communication. What Richardson did, then, in Pamela was use a form that was ex-

tensively used in real life. Letters were an apt medium to reveal Pamela's morality and sensibility. As Robert Adams Day notes: "the elements of the genre which he [Richardson] brought to maturity were present in English fiction and had already been developed to a degree" (191). An already popular form now became an important and widely-used literary form.

The history of the epistolary novel begins with The Portuguese Letters (1669), the story of a nun confined to her convent who pours out her feelings into her letters. Aphra Behn published a novel based on a true story, Love-Letters Between a Nobleman and his Sister (1683) and a letter journal addressed to an unknown man, Love-Letters to a Gentleman (1696). Aphra Behn was a leading writer and dramatist during the Restoration, one of the few successful women writers before Jane Austen (Spender 48). Fanny Burney's Evelina is also an epistolary novel. Here, Burney uses the literary device of the letter to contrast Evelina with her social background. The letters in Evelina, written in a mood similar to that of Burney's personal diary, have a sense of mediacy and credibility absent in Richardson's Pamela. Richardson's influence was instrumental in the popularity of the epistolary novel, but as MacCarthy suggests "women writers of fiction played their part in preparing the raw materials which Richardson excellently fashioned" (286). Nevertheless, it was only after the appearance of Pamela that the epistolary novel became as widely known and read as it was.

Even though the epistolary and the diary forms share many

common features, they also display some very important differences. Virginia Walcott Beauchamp discusses Madge Preston's diary and letters, written in the late nineteenth century. Preston wrote numerous letters to her daughter at the same time that she would make entries into her diary. The letters are bright and cheery, describing local and home events. But the diary tells a completely different story of her despair and her unhappy life. Preston would write in her diary prior to writing the letters to her daughter. It is almost as if she could only write to her daughter once she expressed the truth. Perhaps she would not have been able to write her letters without first releasing her anger into the diary pages. Through the letters, "Madge can hold on to that life-saving, life-giving illusion of herself as the good woman whose virtue and dedication are to sustain and comfort the family" (46). But it is through the diary entries that we are able to see the truth. Here Preston writes of her husband's affairs and clearly reveals how she feels about them, as well as about her growing despair for her future, and her thoughts and attempts to keep the truth hidden from others, her daughter, in particular. Because the diary is not meant for anyone else's eyes, Madge feels she can be completely honest and forthright in her entries, something she cannot bring herself to do in her letters.

Another form that is often compared to the diary novel is the memoir. The diary reveals a living presence, while the memoir discusses a past life. The consciousness in the diary form is in a continuous state of flux, indeed, we see the character change and

develop over time. But with the memoir novel, the reader is exposed to a fully formed consciousness reminiscing over past events and noting how these influenced the writer's present state of mind. One of the problems with this form is the possibility of unreliable narration. A memoirist may want to give us only a partial truth or may conceal some evidence external to the story. In either case, we are never sure about the text's authenticity, being as it is easy for a narrator to flatter her or his past. This is much more difficult to do in the diary or epistolary novel where we are exposed to a narrator over long periods of time. We hear about events as they occur. The future is as yet unknown, thereby making it more difficult for the character to modify the text. "Letters and diaries are defined by a periodic and forward-marching time of writing" (Martens 34) while the memoirist is writing of past events with little mention of the present. Nevertheless, the memoir has a structural advantage over diaries and letters. A retrospective account, such as Simone de Beauvoir's Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter (1958), organizes the chronological unfolding of events which have formed the life of the memoirist. The diary and the epistolary forms emphasize the time when the writing was done and do not examine how the journal writer's life was later influenced by this time.

A great many epistolary novels were produced until the end of the eighteenth century when its use began to decline. The reasons for this were manifold but they essentially arose from a decrease in the use of letters as correspondence. By 1830, "the intimate

letter itself became passé" (Martens 100) and it became more unusual to confide one's secrets to a friend because of the growth in use of the personal diary. Because both the epistolary and the diary novels are considered mimetic forms of their nonfictional counterparts, the usage of the fictional forms followed suit. Thus, as the diary form became increasingly popular the epistolary form's use waned.

The nineteenth-century woman was essentially confined to her home and family. Wealthy families were able to hire servants to do the menial household jobs, but few families could afford to do so. The majority of women from all classes were ultimately responsible for family life and were encouraged to remain at home (Anderson and Zinsser 2: 132-63). It is therefore not surprising to see how diaries became popular. Being relegated primarily to the private realm, it was natural for women to write about what they understood and experienced every day in their personal diaries.

The Fictional Journal in the Twentieth Century

Several trends in literature in the latter part of the nineteenth and the early part of the twentieth century led to an increased utilization of the diary form. The period where the diary form took hold, from approximately 1885 to 1915 is also the period "when the non-epic genres, the theater and especially poetry, dominated and when of the epic genres the short story was preferred to the novel" (Martens 115). That is, short dramatic pieces were often selected over long novels. In addition, this period

witnessed the growth in interest and use of the concept of stream of consciousness which has been defined as "a type of fiction in which the basic emphasis is placed on exploration of the prespeech levels of consciousness for the purpose, primarily, of revealing the psychic being of the characters" (Humphrey 4). Writing in a diary is another excellent method for a protagonist to use to show her or his own psychic development, periodically, at regular intervals. Indeed, as Lorna Martens states, one of the first authors to use the stream-of-consciousness technique in a novel, Arthur Schnitzler, also wrote several short stories in diary form (134).

Late in the twentieth century, the diary novel continues to be widely utilized. Characters as diverse as Hilary Burde in Iris Murdoch's A Word Child (1975), Robert Service in Louis Auchincloss' Diary of a Yuppie (1986), and Lucienne Crozier in Susan Daitch's L. C. (1986), use the intimate journal to reveal their difficulties in adjusting to a world where they don't really belong. The diary structure "permits the spontaneous growth of both true perception and true expression" (Abbott 29), thereby enabling the diarists in these novels to examine the intricacies of moral and ethical behaviour in the difficult times of the twentieth century. Burde's haunting past -- his involvement in his ex-lover's death -- prevents him from engaging in a durable relationship with his present lover. Service's obsession with his work impedes him from realizing that his personal life should be given greater priority. Examining his daily life in a journal forces him to acknowledge his error. Crozier's inability to be involved in the social-

ist politics of 1848 Paris, despite her strong desire to do so, forces her to examine the nature of woman's marginalization from her society. Lucienne's journal, in turn, is framed by two very different interpretations on how woman's position in present-day America has not really changed since the nineteenth century. L. C. shows how important it is for women to create and assert their own sense of community, based on their own values and not those of the patriarchal society. A reexamination of the past allows us to study the present and to find our place in it.

Another important trend that is specific to the second half of the twentieth century is metafiction. This is a term given to fiction "which self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artifact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality" (Waugh 2). Texts which utilize this technique explore through fiction the act of writing fiction. Waugh examines the extensive use of this form in the contemporary novel, but it was Gerald Prince who first equated the popularity of the diary novel with metaliterary techniques (481). In the same way that authors have used their diaries to examine the art of writing (Virginia Woolf, for example), they have also used the diary novel to resolve their protagonist's personal crises in their development as writers. Doris Lessing's The Golden Notebook is an example of just such a novel.

It is interesting that women writers, concerned with the female specificity of experience, are experimenting with forms such as the diary. Some critics are, however, suggesting that the use

of the journal is particular to women alone. Sara Lennox notes that a feminist content requires a feminist form to reveal women's status in relation to men's. She examines contemporary German woman's literature to show how narratives in the form "of a series of short, only tenuously connected texts corresponds to the shape of most women's lives, which consist of a series of interruptions" (70). Lorna Martens agrees and expands on Lennox's thesis:

> One might conjecture that the diary is a particularly attractive form for women's fiction because, as a flexible, open, and nonteleological structure, it complements the nonautobiographical quality of women's lives and the traditionally dependent, accomodating female role. A diary can be written in snatches and with little concentration; it is adaptable to the housewife's interrupted day. (182)

These feminist critics suggest that the diary form is particularly conducive to woman's needs because it is a flexible and open-ended structure which complements woman's life. Even though this may be true to a point, these critics have unveiled an important bias in their approach to literature -- namely that women's lives are necessarily like those of the frustrated housewife whose sole role is to be flexible and accomodating to the needs of others. In addition, the use of the diary form is not specific to women authors for men use it quite extensively as well. The diary form is an important and very flexible structure that is instrumental for the expression of those who would otherwise be unable to express them-

selves, for example the Celies of the world, as well as those who need to relate subjects or experiences too difficult to express using other forms. Because its structure is loose, the diary form enables the protagonist to include details of personal experience and accounts of dreams with short literary pieces and printed sources, such as magazine and newspaper clippings, into her or his diary. Together, these relate not only a character's most personal thoughts and ideas but also those that dominate the era that character lives in.

For the feminist critic, woman's use of the diary form serves to "validate woman's perceptions of life by restoring their writing to public view" (Furman 63). The examination of previously unknown journals written by women not only validates these diaries by making them visible but, more importantly, establishes a body of female literature, and thereby expands our literary tradition. For the woman writer, experimenting with new literary structures, such as the diary, serves to "successfully challenge patriarchal discourse, either by disrupting traditional literary forms to reveal their suppression of women's voices or by developing new structures of discourse in which female subjects might start to speak for themselves" (Lennox 65). For the diarist, the use of the journal form allows her to create a very personal voice that relates previously unspoken female experiences. For the reader, the journal imparts a sense of mediacy available in only a few other forms, a mediacy that allows the reader a close relationship with the diarist and a sense of participation in the

novel's narrative situation. It is all these factors together that make the diary such a popular and important form to study.

Despite the difficulties women encountered in the past because of the lack of educational advantages or the exclusion from public activities, woman's presence in literary history is assured because of her writings. Woman's need to write, to express herself in any way possible, directly influences the type of fiction she produces. Writing a personal diary is one important way to ensure her concerns as a female self. Developing the diary form as a literary structure permits the expression of her interests as a woman artist. The underlying factor is the determination to address the difficulties women encountered in the past in order to control the present so that women can have as much advantage as possible in telling their personal stories.

Chapter 3

Writing the Self

> The human mind can write what it is because what it is is all that it is and as it is all that it is all it can do is to write.
>
> Gertrude Stein, The Geographical History of America

> Spinsters spin and weave, mending and creating unity of consciousness. In doing so we spin through and beyond the realm of multiply split consciousness.
>
> Mary Daly, Gyn/Ecology

The need to write one's story is oftentimes overwhelming. What we write explains what we are. How we write defines who we are. We chronicle our personal stories because only we know exactly our individual experiences. Women authors, in particular, have attempted, since they first learned to write, to claim the pen because only they knew the truth about their own lives. To write about themselves was often the only subject available to them and one of the most common methods they often used to record this most personal of subjects was via the diary form. This section will examine woman's need to write as well as how the utilization of the diary form enables woman to express her creativity by writing about her self.

In the diary, the self is the centre of the text and dictates the need for self-affirmation. The self has conscious control over the writing, over the content -- the subject matter. The "I" writing the diary is the authority, the voice controlling the

text. To be able to write about oneself means to say out loud: "I AM. I want to tell you my story. I want you to know about me. I want you to know that I exist." Once, woman writers would ask as Emily Dickinson once inquired in a poem: "I'm Nobody! Who are you? / Are you -- Nobody -- Too?" (no. 288). Dickinson here suggests that to be a "nobody," lacking a specific identity is perhaps better than being a "dreary ... Somebody!" The writer's alienation from the conventions associated with womanhood forces her to recognize herself as a "nobody." But in her writing, woman often confronts this classification of the self by others, and often rejects it as a definition of who she is. Writing her story is, for woman, a challenge to the traditional gender ideologies that bind her and have historically silenced her creativity. As Dale Spender notes: "To write," for the eighteenth-century woman writer, "was to be; it was to create and to exist. It was to construct and control a world view without interference from the 'masters'" (3). If being a "somebody" isolates her, then being a "nobody" empowers her by allowing her to be "anybody" she wants. Writing autobiographically, choosing the language and form of self-writing -- diaries, letters, and biography -- makes her the centre of the text and provides her with the space necessary for her creativity.

A fairly large amount of women's early writing was autobiographical and writing about oneself continues to be popular. Writing in a form as accessible to all as the diary is enables the author to use language to give shape and meaning to her life. Judith Kegan Gardiner suggests that "twentieth-century women

writers express the experience of their own identity in what and how they write, often with a sense of urgency and excitement in the communication of truths" (184). What subject does one know more about, or is more concerned with, than oneself. For the contemporary woman, like the eighteenth-century author, writing about herself autobiographically assures her existence.

Diaries may be written for any number of reasons. Writing in a journal is a voyage into ourselves, into our personal lives, thoughts, as well as our innermost feelings. The ability to express in language what is hidden in our unconscious forces us to examine it more closely in our conscious minds. We must acknowledge our secrets, review them, and somehow connect them to the rest of our lives. Diary writing is, therefore, an act of asking our minds for revelation of that which is within but hidden inside us all. Unlike other forms of communication, writing encourages us to seek out the words that best describe the indescribable, without which we would be silenced. In this way, journal writing can be seen as therapeutic, like an unpaid psychiatrist who listens and responds to us, and allows us to discover who we really are. Most of the authors of personal diaries I have examined, began to write in response to a personal crisis. Before they realize it, these diarists have poured out on paper the confusion and frustration that confronts them. Once these are down in black and white, they are easier to understand and accept. The secrets we write in our journals make up a part of our lives that, for whatever reason, we are still uncomfortable with, or perhaps, un-

willing to reveal. Admitting their existence on paper, perceiving them as real, is a step necessary for our personal growth and development. Then, as we grow to accept them through our writing, these secrets gradually become less threatening. "Fixing the unspeakable in words can be an act of survival" (Beauchamp 47), as it was for Madge Preston. The diary is, in this way, a structure we can experiment with, we can play with different ideas, and build our confidence without having to seek approval from others. The voyage within can, indeed, be restorative.

The need to write is powerful even when we are children. Young children are encouraged to draw lines and objects and identify them as people and places they know well, another way of telling a story. Many distant relatives receive letters drawn with crayons from pre-school children, detailing the youngsters' experiences through their drawings or sketches. The art of writing well, through good penmanship, is encouraged in the early school years. Tremendous influence is placed upon the ability to communicate verbally and in letters, and many children are judged on their abilities as writers from an early age. Writing a daily journal is often an important first step when learning compositional skills. As a child, I recall being taught "flow writing" because the words were supposed to "flow" from one's mind to the page. Learning to write this way, using our personal diaries, was to enable us to connect what was in our minds with what we were supposed to be writing about. The content of this form of writing carries a full range of emotions and sensations, but is essential-

ly a form of play, intended to be enjoyable and relaxing. The sense of fun was always supposed to be part of our learning experiences.

But I now sense that this appreciation of our creativity is what is really fun about journal writing and why many engage in it. The diary is a place we can play with words, with ideas, with fantasies, without anyone else knowing anything about it. It is our private place where we can be as imaginative or as dull as we want to be. It is our individual creativity which marks us and binds the journal together: the pleasure of writing. H. Porter Abbott, in his study of the diary form, suggests that authors use "the diary structure because its lack of formal restraint permits the spontaneous growth of both true perception and true expression" (29). One can approach the diary with nothing particular to write about and allow the mind to wander, the pen feverishly rushing to catch up and record everything as fast as it can. One needs no special tools to write a diary, only a bit of paper and a sense of discovery.

Margo Culley has suggested that, even though men have always kept journals in larger numbers than women, diary literature is often considered synonymous with women because of "the emergence of the self as the subject of the diary" (3). This is more true of the twentieth century woman writer, as Gardiner suggests, than of the contemporary male author: "Many recent women's novels portray the growth of women's self-awareness in the characters' minds and also work to create that awareness" (188). For these women, the

diary is an important means of expression. Diarists write in order to communicate with a self that is often in the process of becoming conscious or of undergoing some radical change. This is especially true of writers who have had difficulties publishing their texts and who continue to struggle for recognition. For these women, writing a diary is a means to survival. As Moira Monteith states even authors such as Virginia Woolf found "the form of the diary liberating or exploratory, a place where things could be written that were not written either in letters or published work" (8). Historically, the emergence of diary writing allowed women the opportunity to write while allaying their fears of not being published or read by an audience. In addition, it encouraged them to record their personal experiences and to reveal their individual selves via their creativity.

To best understand the significance of woman's use of the diary form in their search for authentic self-expression, it is necessary to examine the limits imposed by the patriarchal system. The notion of woman as "other" is built into the language we use everyday. Woman is defined as one who differs from the norm, which patriarchal culture considers to be male. Woman is not the one but rather the other, the non-male fraction of humanity. Her creativity is based on absence rather than presence. This notion of woman as other was first put forth by Simone de Beauvoir in her classic text, The Second Sex. The woman w iter produces her texts, therefore under the constraints that define her position as "woman" within a dominant system which relegates her to a secondary

position, to one of object rather than subject, to a role considered inessential and submissive rather than important and dignified. These binary oppositions support and condition stereotypes which confuse sexual function with personal worth, as Mary Ellmann shows in great detail in her text, Thinking About Women. The question of sexual ideology, or how the sexes see themselves and each other in a male-dominated society, is perhaps the most important limitation on self-expression. The stereotypes we have grown accustomed to throughout our lives are cast in our language and influence how we write our stories. Women who do not challenge these gender ideologies and the limits they place around women's lives, are inevitably silenced or forced to imitate how men write.

Terry Eagleton suggests that woman is more than just other, that she is "an other intimately related to him [man] as the image of what he is not, and therefore as an essential reminder of what he is" (132). This means that the status of woman as subordinate informs man of his position as primary, thereby classifying woman not as who she is but as what she is not. Woman as non-male is her new status, a status that ensures her continued silence or obliges her to imitate man in order to be less non-male, less an other, more a one.

This concept of woman as other seems to have influenced the discourse of the eighteenth and nineteenth-century woman author, and it has further led many women authors of the early twentieth century to address this issue. Rachel Blau DuPlessis reveals how stylistic and structural "ruptures" in the works of authors such

as Olive Schreiner, Virginia Woolf, and H. D. institute a literary advance on the established system of representation (1-19), a system that encourages woman's position as subordinate and non-male. To this day, many women authors, such as Doris Lessing, Alice Walker, and Margaret Atwood, have endeavoured to address their positions as women writers.

Mary Daly was one of the first feminist critics to suggest that women should break down the patriarchal walls and search for a self that is not "other." She advocates a revolt against language that is patriarchal in designation and suggests the use of a feminist language game to replace it. In her text, Gyn/Ecology, she calls for punning, hyphenating, capitalizing, and reinventing words in order to create new meanings. She calls for "women amazing all the male-authored 'sciences of womankind,' and weaving world tapestries of our own kind" (10-11). In this way, women would be "dis-covering" and "de-veloping" new methods for self-expression, methods which are uniquely feminine and not an imitation of male writing.

Feminist critics have, for years, tried to describe woman's style of writing as distinct from that of man's. Among these is Elaine Showalter, who in "Feminist Criticism in the Wilderness" defines woman's space as a female wilderness or "wild zone" that "stands for an area which is literally no-man's-land, a place forbidden to men .... Experientially it stands for the aspects of the female life-style which are outside of and unlike those of men" (30). As Showalter sees it, woman must seek her own place because

her personal language and experience have been silenced and repressed by the dominant male culture. Approaches, such as that by Showalter, seek a particularly female voice that writes about the female self and experience. But how does it differ from the uniquely male voice which discusses the male self and experience?

Throughout this thesis, I have made use of critical claims that state that the diary form is an intrinsically female form. Several critics have also made this suggestion along with the assertion that women's experiences, being diffuse, lend themselves to expression in the diary form. Among these theorists are Lynn Z. Bloom and Orlee Holder who argue that "women's autobiographies tend to be much less clearly organized, much less synthetic" (207) than men's. This, they add, is because women emphasize their private experiences unlike men who stress their public lives. Patricia Meyer Spacks asserts that women have "traditionally had more difficulty than men about making public claims of their own importance" and this is why they have leaned toward the writing of diaries "which require no such claims" (112). Estelle Jelinek, in Women's Autobiography: Essays in Criticism, seems to agree in presuming that "irregularity rather than orderliness informs the self-portraits by women". She further adds that women's autobiographies are formless, fragmented, disjointed, disorganized, and nonlinear in their structure. All these are in keeping with the "multidimensionality of women's socially conditioned roles" (7). What these critics fail to account for is the enormous volume of diaries written by men as well as for the existence of women's

journals which do display narrative closure -- having a beginning, a middle, and an ending -- and, further, fully-developed diarists who have come to terms with their selves.

One wonders if it is correct to compare women's diaries to men's. To maintain that women read and write differently just because they are women serves to limit their abilities as distinct individuals, whose different perspectives underline their methods. To argue that women relate events that pertain only to themselves as women is to confine them in a way, not physically as they were confined in the past, but intellectually by suggesting that they can only do so much compared to men who are somehow limitless in their abilities. Emphasizing difference also implies not taking women's work seriously enough to be judged on the merit of the quality of the work produced but rather interpreted according to gender. Women's journals differ from those written by men, not because they are written by women, but because their subject matter and reasons for writing journals differ. In their introduction to their text on women's narrative strategies, Catherine Rainwater and William J. Scheick ask an appropriate question:

> Can female authors be said to participate in a literary tradition which has consistently disenfranchised and misrepresented women; or has this very disenfranchisement and misrepresentation brought about the total displacement of women artists from tradition to the extent that their works depart radically in form and con-

tent from those of their male counterparts? (3)

I do not have an answer to this question. But I do have another equally important question: Why is gender emphasized over other factors in women's lives, such as class, sexual orientation, and race, which also influence women's literary works? These interrelated pressures also occupy an important place in women's fiction. Women authors such as Dorothy Bryant and Nadine Gordimer have contributed to these themes. One of the more famous studies of the interaction between factors of gender, class, and race is Alice Walker's The Color Purple (1982), which will be further examined in a later chapter.

In all my readings of literature and criticism, I have yet to come across any detailed examination, using literary examples, of the differences between the novels written by women and those written by men. This has forced me to question whether or not such an endeavour is worthwhile. Are the differences present in a literary text intrinsic to that text? Is there not a possibility that each individual author, regardless of gender, has a unique vision of life which thereby marks the author's text as different from any other written before or after it? Could the divergences be related to the variance in subject matter? I sense that these issues must be examined in detail before the notion of difference can be completely understood.

John Mack Faragher's study of the diaries written by the men and women on the overland trail in the nineteenth century is one of the few texts that focuses on the dissimilarities between

women's and men's actual diaries. There has been no corresponding study of diary fiction. Like most other aspects of the fictional journal, there has been little, if anything discussed in any real depth. I did not find very much criticism on the diary novel, so I was not surprised to discover a lack of analysis on comparisons between fictional journals. Many critics suggest distinctions between the writings by women and those by men, but few include examples, let alone clearly state what these differences are. It is almost as if they are assuming that diversity must exist, just as surely as men and women are biologically different. But I believe this must be substantiated.

Faragher discusses gender distinctions in the midwestern society of the early pioneers. He notes the strict divisions of labour between the sexes and states that each sex spent the majority of its time with members of the same sex. The societies were indeed separate. Women were primarily occupied with the household, while men spent the major portion of their time away from home, hunting, prospecting for gold and minerals, or farming (110-143). The "single most important distinction between the social and cultural worlds of men and women was the isolation and immobility of wives compared to husbands" (112). Even here, in backwoods America, far from civilization, women were relegated to the private sphere of life and men to the public. The patriarchal system was not in any danger of disappearing. "In contrast to men, women's social relationships were mostly within their families" (121). It was through the tight circle of family and close friends that wom-

en structured their lives. This had the effect of creating a specific female culture based on women's common experiences -- as women, mothers, and wives.

The differences in their lifestyles and in their visions of how life was for them is revealed through the diaries these pioneers kept. Faragher suggests that

> differences between the worlds of men and women are reflected in the emigrant diaries. Despite similarity in content, there was a notable difference in the style of men's and women's writing. Women usually wrote with a pervasive personal presence, most often using the first person. ... Men, on the contrary, typically employed the more impersonal 'we' (128-9).

Women, therefore, utilize the subjective pronoun while men use the impersonal pronoun. Women diarists often saw themselves in relation to what was going on around them, unlike male diarists who noted only the events as they occurred. It is interesting to compare diary entries, although it is important only to compare items detailing similar subjects. Men's writing seems plain and blunt as compared to women's. Compare the following excerpt from the diary of James Frazier Reed to that of Catherine Haun following it:

> Fri 10 made this day 14 and encamped at the Willow Springs good water but little grass 3 Buffaloes killed the Main Spring 1-1/2 miles above
>
> Sat 11 Made this day 20 Miles to Independence Rock

> Camped below the Rock good water 1/2 way
>
> Sun 12 Lay by this day. (quoted in Faragher 130)

Reed's interest lies primarily in the progress he has made as well as the presence of water in the areas where he sets up camp, thereby making his diary a record of events only. He does not document the dangers encountered while killing the buffalo nor how he felt at the time. There is no mention of whom he travelled with nor of their impressions of the land. There being no discussion or description, Reed's diary is not especially interesting except as a record of his existence and progress. Catherine Haun, on the other hand, reveals quite different concerns in her vivid description of a day in the life of the journey across America:

> This was the land of the buffalo. One day a herd came in our direction like a great black cloud, a threatening moving mountain, advancing towards us very swiftly and with wild snorts, noses almost to the ground and tails flying in midair. I haven't any idea how many there were but they seemed to be innumerable and made a deafening terrible noise. As is their habit, when stampeding, they did not turn out of their course for anything. Some of our wagons were within their line of advance and in consequence one was completely demolished and two were overturned. Several persons were hurt, one child's shoulder being dislocated, but fortunately no one was killed. (quoted in Schlissel 176)

These extracts are typical of both Reed's and Haun's diary. Any

number of entries could have been quoted with the same effect. These were chosen because they both note the presence of the buffalo and what happened when they were encountered. Reed simply tells us they were killed, while Haun describes the danger the animals wrought as well as their effect on the travellers, injuring some while also destroying some wagons. With Haun's diary entry, this reader felt a sense of immediacy with the author and the events she describes. One feels Haun's presence throughout her diary. This directness is totally absent in Reed's diary entries. Undoubtedly, Haun is a better writer, but I have not found a woman author who was as enigmatic as Reed in his journal entries.

What seems clear to me, at least in these examples, is that woman's need to write differs substantially from that of man's. Men from this period used their diaries to record events as they occurred. Women's diaries, at least in this context, seem more stylistically elaborate than men's, with more extended descriptions of not only what they experienced on a daily basis, but also of their neighbours and the world around them. The diary was possibly, for these women, a friend, someone they could speak to as honestly and as completely as they would never dare to another human being. Feeling alone in a vast unknown land, the diary was quite probably their only true friend.

A similar study comparing diary novels written by men and those by women should prove to be illuminating; however, it is not within the scope of this thesis to do so. A short description of some major differences between two recent novels, <u>The Wars</u> by

Timothy Findley and Gone to Soldiers by Marge Piercy is, however, permissible. These two novels were chosen because they share a similar content. Robert Ross is the main protagonist in The Wars, while Jacqueline Lévy-Monot is a major character and diarist in Gone to Soldiers. Both perform similar acts of heroism during a major world war, yet the manner in which their stories are told is quite distinct.

The story of Robert Ross is structured around the events that lead to the protagonist's last desperate act. It is narrated by an unknown archivist, who should have unlimited knowledge of Ross' personal and public life, as well his thoughts and emotions. Yet, while reading this novel, one comes away feeling that the narrator is quite limited as to any information about Ross' life or motivations. In order to complete the picture of what led the main character to the war and his eventual demise, the archivist relies on the memories of those who were closest to Ross, through transcripts of taped conversations, descriptions of photographs, and excerpts from diaries and letters. Everything we learn about Robert Ross is second-hand. The reader does not hear from the protagonist himself but rather from what others have said or written about him.

From the novel's start, the reader is asked to wear the shoes of the researcher and to experience the events as they occur. We are told that "in the end, the only facts you have are public. Out of these you make what you can, knowing that one thing leads to another" (10) and that "other parts, you know you'll never find.

This is what you have" (11). This repeated address to "you" -- to the reader -- forces us to question whether this story is real or completely fabricated. This novel is not a memoir of one person for another; there are no actual photographs printed, only imaginary ones; there is no complete and unadulterated diary, only an invented one. In this way, it is almost as if the reader is expected to be the actual narrator of the story, forced to play an active role in the outcome of the novel. The "you" being addressed throughout is the bearer of meaning of the literary experience.

This differs substantially from Gone to Soldiers which is basically a novel told in third person, but from several different limited points of view. There are ten major characters, each pronouncing their personal story from their particular perspective. The character with the most sections is Jacqueline Lévy-Monot, who writes her own story in diary form. When we first meet her, Jacqueline is a young seventeen-year-old attending school in Paris. Soon, however, the second world war begins, the Germans arrive, her father begins to work with the French resistance, and her mother and sister are imprisoned in a concentration camp. Throughout, Jacqueline discusses the realities of life in occupied France as well as her efforts to know what has happened to the members of her family.

From the start, we are involved with Jacqueline, in the capacity of listener. We hear of the hardships of being Jewish in Nazi-occupied France from a survivor. We understand her feelings of torment following an argument with her mother shortly before

her parent is arrested. "I almost cannot write," she tells us, "I have been weeping so long my eyes are swollen and raw and my sinuses completely blocked" (149). We appreciate her pledge to her diary, her only faithful friend, to survive this frightening period of history. "What little we have been able to learn is terrifying. ... I cannot eat or sleep. I am keeping a vigil," she affirms (151). We comprehend why Jacqueline eventually joins with the Jewish resistance movement against the Germans, and we go into hiding with her whenever the enemy approaches. As she becomes adept at smuggling children across the border into Spain, we feel exhilaration with each of her successes, even as the danger mounts with each attempt. We cry along with her when she loses a child on the mountains, when she realizes that the Germans will go to any length to capture her, as well as when her lover and fellow resistance companion is killed by the Nazis.

There is only one possession that Jacqueline carries with her at all times: her diary "worn around my neck in a bag" (483). Each evening, Jacqueline details the events of that day as well as her reactions and thoughts about the war, about her friends and family, as well as the details of her personal life and dreams. What is it about the diary that makes her want to carry it around with her, close to her heart, at all times? For Jacqueline, the diary is where she can write down all her thoughts and ideas, where she can express herself honestly and completely, where she can make sense out of the turmoil around her, and ultimately where she can write about her true self. The diary is her one true

friend, her soul-mate, who listens without question, who acknowledges her authority and allows her to be a "somebody." Others may keep their secrets to themselves or speak them to perfect strangers, but Jacqueline's overwhelming need is to write them down in her diary. She writes everything in code (434), so that no one else can read or understand what she has penned. It is crucial that her thoughts remain secret, for her eyes only.

I believe that this is what ultimately differentiates the diaries written by women from those written by men. Woman's need to write is more desperate, as shown in the above excerpts, because in penning a diary one is composing a letter to a friend, a reader, someone who will understand and sympathize with the diarist's condition. Voicing one's spontaneous perceptions and true expressions of one's world to "Dear Diary ..." enables woman to reveal her creativity by writing intimately about her self. This is why the need to write is often overwhelming and why many women weave their thoughts and experiences together, thereby creating a unity where there previously was none, and venture into writing their personal diaries.

Chapter 4

Narrative Practice in the Diary Novel

> In reading a novel, any novel, we have to know perfectly well that the whole thing is nonsense, and then, while reading, believe every word of it.
> Ursula K. Le Guin, Left Hand of Darkness

The question of what people see when they open a novel is a timeless one, the answer to which differs depending on whom one asks. Nevertheless, picking up a novel, any novel, is a decisive act. Rarely do we know what we will encounter within the novel's pages, or how we will react while reading them. But an encounter always takes place and a reaction inevitably results. We may be thrilled, disgusted, or perhaps even left indifferent by the contents. We may believe every word we read or we may throw it away with expressions of dismay. Regardless of our decision, we have participated in the narrative situation of that novel.

Most diary novels have certain features in common, but not all diary novels have the same features. Instead of limiting this study to some of the different uses of the journal form, a case Valerie Raoul has already done in great detail, I will instead concentrate on "the communicative situation of diaristic writing" (Kühn-Osius 166), a situation requiring two principal agents, notably the diarist/narrator of a text and the listener/reader of that same text. What makes the diary novel worthy of narrative study? In order to answer this question, we must first examine

what the diary novel is and how it differs from its nonfictional sibling -- the real diary. Once this is established, the role of the narrator will then be examined as well as the role of the reader. Together, these different focal points of discussion -- the text, diarist, and reader of the diary novel, assert the credibility of the narrative situation.

Understanding any text involves some careful examination of not only what the text is saying, but also who is saying it and to whom. Whether or not the message or information being communicated is accurate and/or true is important only once the participants in the writing and reading of that text have been clearly identified. Until then, the issue is irrelevant because it does not change the fact that the text exists or that it needs both a sender and a receiver in order to have a presence. Along with other forms of communication, the three aspects which make up the narrative triangle are the message being communicated, the sender of the message, and the receiver of this same message. These three angles comprise the narrative triangle and must be kept in mind during the reading process.

The Nature of Narrative

One of the simplest, yet most complete, definitions of narration is given by Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan. She suggests that, firstly, it is " a communication process in which the narrative as message is transmitted by addresser to addressee" and secondly, "the verbal nature of the medium used to transmit the message"

(2). It is this second part which distinguishes narrative in fiction from that in other narrative forms, such as film or painting. Seymour Chatman, in his structuralist approach to narrative theory, argues that each narrative text has two distinct parts: story and discourse. The former refers to the content of a text or the sequence of events, the latter to the means by which this content is communicated (18-22). The nature of the narrative situation is, thus, a double one, a study of the events as they are transmitted through language and the actual act of transmission.

The basic elements relating to story and discourse can be located in the diary form, both fictional and real. The diary text has three basic constituents: it is a first-person account, it is a timely record, often written daily but not necessarily every day, and it is the actual text of the diary itself. In the real journal, the story told ultimately refers to the diarist's world, as it exists for her or him. On the other hand, for the fictional diarist, the story told refers to a world fabricated by that same diarist. This world, being a fictional one, is contrived and shaped by the events that arise and influence the diarist. Regardless, the journal must be written in installments, detailing present events or those from the recent past. Diarists (whether fictional or "real") cannot choose what to write about because time has not sufficiently passed that they can decide which events are important and which are not. The diarist may seem to be the controlling presence of the text, but in actual fact is limited by the act of narration which does not allow for insight into the

future.

Though both the fictional diary and its nonfictional sister share several common elements, there are some noticeable differences between the two forms. According to Käte Hamburger, first-person fictional narratives are indistinguishable from nonfictional first-person texts. She asserts that "every first-person narrative ... presents itself as nonfiction, i.e., as a historical document" (312). When a diary novel is examined, it appears structurally to be like a real journal. It is only upon extensive study that one begins to see a marked distinction between the two forms. Valerie Raoul suggests that the forms, though similar, have distinctive features:

> A real journal is based on personal narcissism and is the attempt by an individual to seize certain aspects of himself and his life and to fix them in a written image. The fictional journal, on the other hand, depicts the production of a particular type of text: it reveals something about narration, rather than something about a particular self. It is a form of narcissistic literature, whose fictivity is ultimately flaunted rather than concealed. (11)

Narcissistic literature, here, is synonymous with self-reflexive, self-conscious, auto-representational literature, and is not meant to be derogatory. Linda Hutcheon defines narcissistic literature as a "process mimesis" emphasizing the aspect of storytelling, rather than a "product mimesis" stressing the story that is told

(Narcissistic Narrative 36-47). The fictional journal, then, is always aware of its fictivity, that it is a work of fiction and the imagination and not a real historical document. The diary novel may appear to be like its nonfictional counterpart in its structure and theme, but it is not an actual diary. It may present itself as being an authentic diary written by an actual diarist, but it may also provide clues about the nature of the narrative process, being namely a communicative act fixed in written language. At times, it may also draw overt attention to its fictivity by analysing or questioning the nature of the creative process itself. Either way, confusion may arise between what is real and what is fiction, and between what is a first-person fictional narrative and what is a first-person non-fictional narrative.

It has already been suggested that the fictional diary is mimetic of the real diary. This does not mean that the diary novel is an exact duplicate of its nonfictional counterpart, but rather that it shares certain structural principles with the real journal. Michał Głowiński calls this situation "formal mimetics" and describes it as follows:

> The form performing the "imitation" plays an active part, for under the guise of more or less total reproduction, it introduces the "imitated" elements into the limits of the rules peculiar to itself: a novel imitating a model such as that of a memoir or diary, for example, novelizes them and, consequently, reveals different features from those which characterized the

> model in its primary sphere. Thus, formal mimetics never relies upon the total assimilation or entire transferring of structural principles from one type of expression to another. Formal mimetics rather resolves itself into a set of analogies which ought to suggest identity but, at the same time, attest to the impossibility of achieving identity. (106)

The nonfiction model is always present in the diary novel, whether it be an outright imitation of the original form, whether it extracts only certain principles of the journal, or whether it utilizes the diary as a model for parody. Many novels adopt the guise of reproduction, in whole or in part, so that mimetic considerations must be established while examining both the form and content of the fictional diary. The novel cannot reproduce the real writing-of-a-diary situation because it has no need to. Rather, it employs diary conventions by introducing them into the fictional text where they can be recognized by the attentive reader. The suggestion of identity with the real journal can only be made if the reader recognizes the model which is being referred to here, since "detecting the model is the indispensable condition of understanding the narration which refers to the model" (Głowiński 107). The reader, then, must detect the presence of the model of the real diary in order to participate in the extraction of the text's meaning, even if it is perceived as a parody of what is expected.

In order to comprehend the relation between the diary novel

and its nonfictional counterpart, one can suggest that the fictional diary embodies the narrative situation of the real journal. The diary novel is a larger entity that includes the model of the diary within itself. The real journal consists of the diarist and the text that she or he writes. Whether or not a reader is addressed is problematic and is contingent upon the diary being shown to an actual reader. The fictional journal consists of a diarist who is actually a fictional character, the text of the journal, and a fictive reader who may or may not be present. So the two forms are structured very similarly, or the fictional journal simulates the actual diary form. Except that the structure of the diary novel is incomplete. Outside the triangle of the fictional journal, there is another outer one: the diary novel is written by a real author and meant for real readers. The published text of the fictional journal is not actually produced by the diarist. The author of the novel is not the same as the narrator/diarist, but is the actual consciousness who reproduces the journal as a structural account of a character's life-story, with an actual reader in mind, thereby forming the actual written text we see before us. Anna's diary was actually written by Doris Lessing, Celie's by Alice Walker, and Offred's by Margaret Atwood. We are the actual readers of these novels, the readers who, as Głowiński suggests above, "detect the model" of the diary in order to understand the "narration which refers to the model." Martens suggests that the entire first narrative triangle -- the fictional diary -- is included within the communicative situation of the larger

triangle: "The communicated object in this second narrative triangle is the entire first narrative triangle of fictive narrator, narrated world, and fictive reader". By embodying these basic principles of the actual diary, the fictional journal becomes a mimetic version of the original. The basic underlying difference between these two forms is, then, "based on the existence of a simple communicative situation in the former and a framed communicative situation in the latter" (Martens 33).

How does this apply to the definition as given by Rimmon-Kenan, that narrative is both a communication process and the method by which this communication is transmitted? Further, how does this model relate back to the credibility of the narrative situation? Both these aspects are interrelated because it is only upon examining definitions that one is then able to conclude on the plausibility of such a situation within a fictional text. The presence of a second narrative triangle has the effect of raising doubt as to whether what the fictive diarist says about her life is true, especially if there are statements or conjectures inserted by the author, which suggest otherwise. There is a sense, then, of a second voice pervading the diary novel -- the author. Doris Lessing is the overall controlling consciousness in Anna Freeman's diary, Margaret Atwood is the voice behind Offred's desperation, and Alice Walker is the understanding speaker of Celie's own words. Therefore, the author's presence is pivotal to the diary novel's communicative situation by being both the originator of the communication process and the creator behind the method by

which this communication is transmitted.

A fictional diary is an interaction between writer and reader. As Roland Barthes, in "From Work to Text," suggests, a literary text "exists only as discourse. ... In other words, the text is experienced only in an activity, a production" (75). It is therefore a communicative situation, a dialogue between author and reader. This is what makes the diary novel an especially interesting form to study. The fictive diarist, while appearing to be true to her story, telling the events as accurately as possible, has no real control over her diary. The author, on the other hand, has absolute control, and may, if she desires, stress the diarist's unreliability, or add her own personal comments by means of various structural devices.

One important way for the author to add commentary to the diary novel is by utilizing an editorial frame. The presence of "Historical Notes" in The Handmaid's Tale is such an example, and can be seen as an imitation of an actual editorial comment included within a document to explain its historical importance. But in a fictional text, it serves as a reminder that the identity of the diarist and the text's author are not the same. It thereby reinforces the fictivity of the diary, by flaunting it rather than concealing it, as Raoul suggests above. In addition, the editorial frame emphasizes the "distance established between the external and internal communication situations", or between the two narrative triangles, "with the 'editor' occupying a bridge position" (Raoul 18) between them.

The editorial comment may be used to supply additional information or to attempt closure on the diary's story which may have ended abruptly, as in Offred's case. It may also be used to question the diarist's integrity, as in L. C., where two editorial frames comprising footnotes, an introductory word, a mid-novel explanatory note and a concluding comment serve to put Lucienne's story into doubt. One editor, Willa Rehnfield, dismisses L. C.'s diary as false and begins to translate it to suit her. Then, the reader is introduced to another editor, Jane Amme, who disputes Rehnfield's translation, primarily in footnotes. In the mid-novel explanatory note, Amme further questions Rehnfield's methods and discusses the role of the translator as necessarily one of objectivity and utmost accuracy, especially in relation to the diary of a previously unknown woman. All this compels the reader to decide whether Lucienne's story is true despite the existence of conflicting outside evidence as well as the uncertain accuracy and objectivity of questionable translators. The dilemma leads one to accept Lucienne's version of the events, there being too many unreliable outsiders to believe. The two editors, instead of bridging a gap, have actually widened it, leading the reader to accept Lucienne's diary as real, rather than to reason out which editor's translation is the correct one.

To broaden perspective, many diary novels include excerpts from other sources. For example, in The Golden Notebook we find, in addition to Anna's diary, an inner novel, short story summaries, newspaper articles, and a third-person narrative. In The

Color Purple, letters between Celie and her sister are provided. All these different inclusions serve a similar purpose in enhancing outside information to reinforce the diary's validity. In so doing these additions accentuate the fictivity of the narrative situation.

Since the diary is mimetic only insofar as it gives "an illusion of mimesis" (Genette 165), transcriptions from outside sources add to the text's credibility. And even though this may also be true for other literary forms, it is more so for diary fiction where, if these inclusions were not present, there would be no other intermediary between diarist and reader. Therefore, the illusion of mimesis will differ depending on the relationship between the diarist/narrator and listener/reader. We read only the diarist's view of events, what she hears others say, what she feels may occur as a result of these impressions. Even though events may be transposed as accurately as possible, the reader has no guarantee that the diarist was faithful to the words as they were actually uttered. The nature of the narrative situation is, thus, dependent on the roles of the narrator and the reader.

The Role of the Narrator

The narrator in a fictional diary is the character who is a protagonist in the events she or he records. The reason the diary exists is a relevant issue as is whether or not it is read by anyone. Kühn-Osius suggests that the most important aspect of diaristic writing is the relation between narrator and reader. But

sometimes diarists write primarily for themselves and give little or no details as to why they may be writing in the first place. Nevertheless, they are the reason behind the journal's existence and must be seen in this manner.

Utilizing the first-person in a fictional journal can be problematic. Diarists are not always aware of their role in the narrative situation, oftentimes they are not even aware that they are playing a role. Do the writers of the words in a diary realize that the person, the "I" who writes the words, is not the same as the "I" who experienced them? Gérard Genette, in Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method, discusses the possibility of a discrepancy between story-time and text-time. He suggests that there is a relation between the time the events in the story are supposed to have occurred and the amount of time the narration of these events takes (86-88). But even though the diary is a first-person form which focuses primarily on the present moment, the diarist cannot record events at the very instant they happen. Narration cannot be simultaneously experienced and written down in a diary. As Derrida suggests, there is no such thing as simultaneous narration because writing is a sign of a "deferred presence" ("Differance" 138). The diarist cannot be in two places at the same time. When the narrator/diarist recounts what has transpired, the "I" who narrates what has happened is no longer the one who experienced the events that are being recounted. Therefore, in the diary, narrative-time is close to story-time, but only at a minimal distance.

The unreliability of a narrator/diarist is often based on the diarist's limited insight. This lack of credibility is not peculiar to the diary form but to all first-person narratives. As F. K. Stanzel suggests:

> The unreliability of the first-person narrator is not... based on his personal qualities as a fictional figure, e. g., character, sincerity, love of truth, and so on, but on the ontological basis of the position of the first-person narrator in the world of the narrative. The presence of such a narrator in the world of fictional characters and his endowment with an individuality which is also physically determined leads to a limitation of his horizon of perception and knowledge. For this reason he can have only a subjective and hence only conditionally valid view of the narrated events. (89)

Completely omniscient narrators are rare and should be nonexistent in the diary form because their subject is limited to their present situation. Not knowing what the future will bring validates their present authenticity.

The narrating "I" can be seen as a third-person writing about the events as they occurred in the recent past. First-person narration allows the narrator the opportunity to speak of her or his own experience, but it does not necessarily make it possible for the narrator to do so. Writing in a diary, on the other hand, affords the diarist the opportunity to speak of her or his experiences while at the same time making it possible for the narrator

to do so, because essentially they are the same individual, separated only by time. Dorrit Cohn describes the writing of a fictional diary similar to an autonomous monologue, the fiction of both failing "the moment either of them explains his existential circumstances to himself" (208). The diarist is, thus, never aware of her fictional self, her narrating "I" or how the events she is describing will result.

Diarists recreate the scenes as closely as possible, in essence they relate an imitation of the events as they occurred. In addition, they reproduce language as they know it or as others have used it. Głowiński calls first-person narration mimetic, an imitation of "literary, paraliterary, and extraliterary discourse as well as -- what is a common enough phenomenon -- ordinary language" (106). But this does not mean that the imitation is a photocopy or an exact duplicate of the original, but rather like the case of the real diary versus the fictional diary, an expression that utilizes some of the original's structural principles. It is therefore analogous to, similar in nature, not identical to literary discourse and everyday language.

The diarist uses everyday language to express private experiences and to record events that seem relevant at the time of their writing. In Chapter 3, we saw how James Frazier Reed's diary entries note only dates and events as they occurred. There is no general commentary or thoughts on his circumstances. The reader does not sympathize with Reed because there is no sense of his individuality, what made him special, what led to his journey, and

what he eventually extracted from his experiences. There is little interest in Reed except insofar as his being one of the early travellers to the American Midwest. Yet, diarists may use literary discourse to reflect on such aspects of life as art, society, and politics, and how these influence their lives. As Kühn-Osius suggests, "the diary turns into a slow revelation of the semi-visible narrator's ego as reflected in his reactions to various experiences" (173). In using commentary, the diarist has the capacity to overcome the limitations of everyday language, for she is no longer merely expressing personal experiences, but dealing with her experiences in terms of rational discourse.

The diarist is the presence of a voice that barely utters a sound, her diary is her cry to be heard. How long before someone listens depends on several factors, like the figures in Betty Goodwin's painting How Long Does It Take (1985), where a nude kneels with her head turned as though listening to a distant sound that seems to emanate from the ground, while another nude bends over, also listening. The title comes from the wording at the bottom of the painting, "Do you know how long it takes for any one voice to reach another?" I am reminded of this painting as I consider the voice of the narrator in a fictional diary. The reason the journal is being written is that the diarist refuses to be silenced, she needs to tell her story. Writing about her present and immediate past enables her to analyse it and in so doing allows her to respond to it. This deeper understanding of the self leads to a better recognition of the self than the narrator had

before. The elements which were only voice/silence until now can be extended to presence/absence and to narrating "I"/narrated "I". The narrating character, or narrating "I", is the presence that voices her story, while the narrated "I" is the protagonist that is being discussed -- written about -- in the diary. The experiencing or narrated "I" is the absence that is unable to utter a sound, even though she is the subject of the diary entries, and the one who has experienced the events as described. While the narrated "I" is busy living, the diarist or narrating "I" is still at her desk, articulating her changed condition by recording it in her personal diary.

Whether or not a diarist is considered a credible narrator is dependent on whether or not a reader is intended. If the diarist is writing for no one, or only for herself, then she is quite credible -- to herself. But since the fictional diary supposes a communication between the diarist and her reader, this becomes an important point. To suggest that a narrator is unreliable (Booth 158-165) or possibly deceptive is only of interest in the presence of a reader.

The Role of the Reader

The fictional diary depends on a series of messages written in order to keep up with a series of incidents. While reading the text, the reader observes both the events as they unfold and the efforts of the narrator to relate what these events signify. Perhaps the text of a real diary would exist without a reader, but

then who would know of its existence? One could argue and say that diarists write primarily for themselves. But why do they write? Surely not to provide information, unless of course they wish to use it at a future date. In a fictional diary, the reader is a required element of the narrative triangle. Even if the narrator has has nothing special to say and no one special to say it to, he may write "to reassure himself that the channel of communication is still open, that he could convey something to someone, if the opportunity arose" (Raoul 65). Essentially then, the reader plays two important roles: in the discourse or narrative situation, the reader is required to keep the communication "channel" open, but in the story the reader acts as a friend, a listener, someone who will understand and sympathize with the narrator's predicament.

For many diarists, the reader is not an actual person they know but rather an abstraction. This invented reader is sometimes given a name, for instance Anne Frank's "Kitty," or Celie's "God," or Fanny Burney's "Nobody." Often the reader is not addressed directly and the diary entry begins simply with a date. Nevertheless, the diarist must decide how explicit she needs to be, whom she wants to address, and how much she wants to tell. Addressing someone specific, even if it is only an invented reader, allows the diarist the opportunity to write down all her thoughts and ideas as clearly and as honestly as she can. Without an implied reader, the diarist would have no need to describe events or to reflect on how these and other experiences have influenced her life. Without an actual reader, we would not even have known that

the diarist existed. For example, if she had not felt the need to write to Kitty, Anne Frank's presence would have been absent and her story would remain unknown.

The act of reading is only a beginning. Wolfgang Iser suggests that the reader must actively participate in extracting meaning from a fictional text. This participation, he further adds in The Implied Reader, is "an essential precondition for communication between the author and the reader" (30). The reading process is therefore dynamic, necessitating what Iser, in The Act of Reading, calls an "interaction between text and reader" (107). Rimmon-Kenan summarizes this dynamic adequately as requiring a certain level of competence from the reader.

> Just as the text pre-shapes a certain competence to be brought by the reader from the outside, so in the course of reading, it develops in the reader a specific competence needed to come to grips with it, often inducing him to change his previous inceptions and modify his outlook. The reader is thus both an image of a certain competence brought to the text and a structuring of such a competence within the text. (118)

To interpret something is to give it meaning. Such a dynamic requires a particular type of reader -- an ideal or implied reader -- who comes to the text with "a certain competence," which, though not defined, does anticipate a certain level of understanding of literary history and literary theory. The reader must, therefore, be an ideal representation of a reader, otherwise she

or he would lack the "competence" so necessary to the above theorist. An ordinary reader -- my next-door neighbour with no literary background, for instance -- would simply not do because she would not be able to, according to Linda Hutcheon in Narcissistic Narrative, "share with the writer certain recognizable codes -- social, literary, linguistic, etc." (29). To actively participate and interact with a text seems to require a level of expertise too far out of reach for many readers.

The reader's participation thereby entails listening to the narrator's story, bringing into the story relevant outside information, filling in the blanks left by the author, and arriving at an interpretation of the text. Narrative as a form of communication from text to reader, then, only arises if there is an implied reader in the process. The real reader -- you and I -- only exists through our implied counterparts.

The act of reading goes beyond participation from the reader. For Chatman, reading is "preliminary to the aesthetic experience" (27). Active participation will inevitably lead to an interpretation of the literary work which becomes the aesthetic experience. Chatman further adds that readers should "fill in gaps with essential or likely events, traits and objects which for various reasons have gone unmentioned" (28). No text can say everything and there will always be blanks that a reader will have to fill in. This is especially true for the journal form where the diarist may not feel the necessity to express everything. Iser terms these gaps "spots of indeterminacy" which the reader has to com-

plete. These spots are actually "blanks which the reader is made to fill in by his own (text-guided) mental images in order to constitute the meaning of the work" (Act of Reading 172). Only then will the process be complete.

During the process of filling in the gaps left open by the diarist, a link begins to form between the text and its reader. The diary form is mimetic of the real diary yet, concurrently, it is also aware of its fictivity. The reader, in detecting the model that the fictional diary refers to, has the tools necessary to extract meaning from the text. The narrative as message is then communicated through the medium of language. The reader who is often addressed directly, starts not only to understand the text but also begins to sympathize with the narrator/diarist, thereby lending an ear to her story. The act of narration itself is a discourse that makes the reader aware of the mediacy of the novel as well as the role she or he can offer in unravelling the meaning of the text.

The ultimate question of whether or not a text is credible inevitably lies with the reader. The mediacy of the reader to the text is one of the reasons the diary form is popular today. Almost everyone recognizes the form and many have indulged in writing journals themselves. Though readers generally know that a novel is a work of the imagination and not exactly true, they are still involved in the outcome of the text. Through their active participation in the narrative situation, readers can decide whether or not the narrator and the story told are plausible.

Chapter 5

The Anxiety of Authorship: Literary Representations in The Golden Notebook

> This is what I am: watching the spider
> rebuild -- "patiently," they say,
>
> but I recognize in her
> impatience -- my own --
>
> the passion to make and make again
> where such unmaking reigns.
>
> Adrienne Rich, from "Natural Resources"

The contemporary woman author utilizes literary techniques, such as the diary form, to voice what cannot be expressed in other forms. She builds her method to relate the complexities of the modern world around her, complexities that influence her judgement and her modes of expression. The anxiety of authorship, or the fear that she is unable to write, pervades the works that she eventually creates. Lily Briscoe, in To the Lighthouse, recalls being told that "women can't write, women can't paint" (223), but proceeds nevertheless to do just so. The creative urge, the need to write is forever present in the writer's mind and leads her to translate her insecurities into self-awareness through her art. Like the spider that patiently weaves its web, the woman artist must also take the time to develop a new method, or rework a traditional method, that will allow her full expression of her new-found knowledge.

The novel under study in this chapter, Doris Lessing's The Golden Notebook, confronts this anxiety of authorship through the

use of the diary form. This novel can and has been studied using various approaches, and published essays have demonstrated the richness inherent in this text. In this chapter, my approach will be one to emphasize the novel's diary structure as well as its narrative situation. In the novel, we learn of Anna Freeman Wulf's insecurities and failure to write a conventional novel because she knows it cannot adequately express the fragmentation that she feels exists in her life. But using her personal diary to examine her predicament, Anna reveals her fears as well as her attempts to overcome them so as to begin anew.

Theoretical approaches to literary discourse serve to clarify and to consolidate how the woman author uses her form in the expression of her innermost thoughts. Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar state that the anxiety of authorship results from woman's attempt to enter the "literary subculture ... inhabited by male writers, a subculture which has its own distinctive literary traditions" (50) and is restricted primarily to men. To be a woman wanting to share in these practices, is a risk that many authors, especially those living in the nineteenth century, nevertheless undertook. Though Gilbert and Gubar fail to note it, even the nineteenth-century woman writer had a literary tradition as rich as that of male authors. Dale Spender's study of women novelists prior to Jane Austen notes that women wrote as far back as the seventeenth century and that Austen herself was "the inheritor of a long and well-established tradition" of women novelists (1). Woman's determination to write is therefore as old as the need to

express oneself.

In this chapter, an examination of The Golden Notebook will show not only how the diary form can be used for self-expression but also how it frees women authors from the use of conventional language and confinement of form. The diarist's assertion that she is a unique individual and different from men as a group in no way diminishes her creativity even though her need to write seems somehow more urgent than even she realizes. What makes the diary novel important is the theme of the diary and the idea of writing a diary. Why does the narrator begin keeping a diary? What does writing mean to her? An examination of The Golden Notebook will determine that the diary form is an integral component of the novel's structure and addresses the limitations of language in the diarist's search for self-expression. Finally, it will be resolved that the narrator's quest for freedom of expression ties in with the representation of her self as female.

The Structure of the Notebooks

In The Golden Notebook, we are confronted with four separate notebooks, each identified with a different colour. Anna's search for a way to relate her different identities -- as woman, writer, mother, lover, social activist -- is what leads her to separate them into different notebooks, each involving different aspects of her life: "I keep four notebooks, a black notebook, which is to do with Anna Wulf the writer, a red notebook, concerned with politics; a yellow notebook, in which I make stories out of my

experience; and a blue notebook which tries to be a diary" (461-2). Each of the journals is written in a different style and from a different perspective, "each of which she hopes will prove the right means of reproducing the reality of her experience" (Martens 241). The notebooks must then be seen both individually and together to complete the picture of Anna's identity which otherwise would be incomplete.

Why the text is divided in this fashion is an expression of the division Anna feels within herself. It also relates to her desire for an end to the dissension she feels. It is only upon seeing her life separated into the different journals that she is able to connect them together and write "The Golden Notebook" which consolidates all her different identities into one -- that of Anna herself. Roberta Rubenstein, in her book about Lessing, asserts that "all five [notebooks] are incomplete by themselves; only when they are superimposed does the complete picture emerge" (106). Together they form the body of the text, which is then framed by the fictional "Free Women" sections. The division of notebooks, therefore, epitomizes the central problem of the novel as expressed through the novel's structure: the fragmentation of Anna's experience.

In an attempt to connect the various notebooks as well as the novella, The Golden Notebook's structure is developed in a sequence that repeats several times. A section entitled "Free Women" precedes each succession of notebooks which always follows the same order: black, red, yellow, and blue. This repeats four times

and concludes with "The Golden Notebook." As Rubenstein suggests, this order moves from one of "detachment or 'objectivity' toward the increasing immediacy and 'subjectivity' of the blue notebook/ diary" (Novelistic Vision 75), thereby ensuring Anna a closer examination of her self.

The black notebook details Anna's experiences in Africa, her homeland, which she fictionalized in her published novel Frontiers of War. Even though one can never relive one's past experiences as they were, Anna attempts to do so. But she feels guilt for having written a novel which she says distorts the truth of what actually happened. She calls it a "lying nostalgia, a longing for licence, for freedom, for the jungle, for formlessness" (82), for the past as she would have preferred it. This guilt is one of the factors that leads to Anna's writer's block, her inability to write the truth. The black notebook is, therefore, Anna's attempt to reconstruct the past in order to connect it with her present life.

The red notebook discusses politics and Anna's involvement with the British Communist Party. She originally joined the party because of her "need for wholeness, for an end to the split, divided, unsatisfactory way we all live", yet participation in the party did nothing to dispel this disjointedness, but rather "intensified the split" (171). When Anna abruptly cuts her ties to the party she does so because she can no longer connect her personal experiences to the party's activities. The notebook ends with a series of newspaper clippings that describe violent acts around the world and with the word "freedom" underlined wherever

it appears, thus signifying the party's failure to eradicate violence in the world.

The yellow notebook is comprised of Anna's fictional work, and includes "The Shadow of the Third," an unfinished novel. Here, the main protagonists are Ella and Paul, who are really extensions of Anna and her lover Michael but on a fictional level. It is written using a third-person point of view, a factor that enables Anna to gain perspective of herself from another dimension -- the literary:

> I, Anna, see Ella. Who is of course Anna. But that is the point, for she is not. The moment I, Anna, write: Ella rings up Julia to announce, etc., then Ella floats away from me and becomes someone else. I don't understand what happens at the moment Ella separates herself from me and becomes Ella. No one does. It's enough to call her Ella, instead of Anna. (447)

At this point, the distinction between what is real and what is fictional begins to blur and the possibility that Ella's consciousness is included within Anna's becomes feasible. Yet, at the same time, they are irreconcilable because, for Anna the writer, art and life are necessarily woven together.

The blue notebook is central as it discusses Anna's present activities as well as her attempts to discover the truth about herself. "Why do I never write down, simply, what happens? Why don't I keep a diary?" Anna asks (232). All the experiences mentioned in the blue journal are treated in the other notebooks,

but, as Joseph Hynes suggests, "in the diary they are rather more fully developed as Anna talks most intimately with 'herself'" (105). Also included in this journal are newspaper clippings appearing at a time when she is unable to write about the things that concern her personally. They relate events that occur while she undergoes psychoanalysis with Mrs. Marks, or Mother Sugar as Anna calls her. At the same time, the clippings give a sense of reality to a section that also discusses dreams. In a further attempt to grasp reality, Anna writes down everything that comes to her mind, flow-writing all that occurred on September 15, 1954 (327-360). Yet, she is not sure the entry represents truth so she crosses it out. When her best friend's son Tommy asks her why she scratches it out, Anna replies: "'I keep trying to write the truth and realising it's not true'". But Tommy points out to her that "'perhaps it is true,' ... 'and you can't bear it, so you cross it out'" (272). Nevertheless, Anna does not tear out the pages of the text, a move that would suggest that she was afraid of the truth about herself. The text is still there, in readable condition. Anna chooses the diary form because it allows her "to exorcise the ghost of her old idealizing self. She hopes to purge her mind of distorting dreams and illusions, by recording only the facts of experience" (Draine 41), thereby allowing her to examine herself actively and objectively rather than passively and subjectively.

"The Golden Notebook" is the last diary Anna writes when she decides it is no longer necessary to divide herself up: "from now

on I shall be using one only" (576). This diary is structured like a movie showing Anna's life which "succeeds in breaking down the subjective viewpoint that has shaped her memories and shows her the reality of her past transsubjectivity" (Martens 241). The film can be seen as a metaphor for Anna's visualization of the aspects of her past that she "had still to work on" (596) in order to overcome the "lying nostalgia" of her past memories and bring them in line with her present situation. As the images begin to fade, Anna begins to see the film as "beyond my experience, beyond Ella's, beyond the notebooks, because there was a fusion, and instead of seeing separate scenes, people, faces, movements, glances, they were all together" (611), the past fused with the present into a single memory.

"The Golden Notebook" helps Anna to recognize that writing has been a sort of escape from reality for her and not a means of self-discovery. As images of the past flash by, Anna learns the deeper truths of her personal experiences and realizes her difficulty in labelling them in concrete terms. She admits that

> Words. Words. I play with words, hoping that some combination, even a chance combination, will say what I want.... The fact is, the real experience can't be described. I think, bitterly, that a row of asterisks, like an old-fashioned novel, might be better. Or a symbol of some kind, a circle perhaps, or a square. Anything at all, but not words. (609)

Language cannot adequately describe the thoughts, feelings, and

ideas we have about our most personal experiences. Some other mechanism must be found, perhaps through visual images. It is Anna's attempt to transcend herself as subject and unite all her fragments together that leads her to write the novel we read.

The "Free Women" sections are the frame around all the notebooks. The Golden Notebook begins and ends with a "Free Women" section, thereby structuring the novel as a full circle, one of the images Anna uses in the above quote to adequately express her experience. Written in a third-person narrative voice, this section connects all the separate journals together. Here, Anna is no longer determined to find absolute truth because she now realizes truth to be relative. Now she is able to present what she feels is the complete truth -- the novel as a whole, "the ultimate expression of her balanced perspective" (Draine 47). In this way, the "Free Women" sections can be seen as the objective truth balanced against the fictional or subjective truths of the notebooks.

The combination of realism with fiction serves to both confuse and clarify Anna's condition. John Carey suggests that the novel confuses the reader by introducing fictional elements not introduced as fiction and that this blurs the distinction between them (23). On the other hand, one can assume that this disjointedness serves a purpose in expressing exactly what is going on in Anna's mind. She has divided herself up into categories and part of the healing process she must undergo necessitates her writing it out fictionally. Anne Mulkeen in her study of the novel's realism, suggests that the novel is arranged like a grid, an intri-

cate system that allows a "criss-crossing of a multiplicity of viewpoints with a multiplicity of events and issues" (262), separately suggesting chaos, but together implying order. The inclusion of newspaper articles performs a similar function by giving Anna an objective angle to the events that influence her life. They clarify, for her, her role in society as a writer.

The Limitations of Language

Anna addresses the limitations of language in her search for self-expression. She is ambivalent about the "capacity of language to convey meaning" and about her ability to find meaning through language (Fuoroli 150). The use of the diary form allows Anna the means to communicate her inner conflict in an accessible manner and to search for meaning through words. When she reads her diary, she searches for order yet finds none. Words have suddenly lost all sense: "They have become, when I think, not the form into which experience is shaped, but a series of meaningless sounds, like nursery talk, and away to one side of experience" (462). Words no longer convey meaning.

Anna joins the British Communist Party because it uses a special language with specific meanings that allow her to express her personal problems and to identify the social instability she sees in the world. Yet, even this language fails both hers and society's needs and she is concerned that she may never find meaning in words because they remind her of "the fragmentation of everything, the painful disintegration of something that is linked

with what I feel to be true about language, the thinning of language against the density of our experience" (301). Words are inadequate to relate the experiences we undergo, the stories we want to tell about ourselves. No special system of language with specific meanings will change that and this is why Anna leaves politics altogether.

In the title essay in A Small Personal Voice, Doris Lessing argues that a writer must be committed. The only thing that distinguishes our literature from that of previous ages is a "confusion of standards and the uncertainty of values". Lessing further adds:

> Words, it seems, can no longer be used simply and naturally. All the great words like love, hate; life, death; loyalty, treachery; contain their opposite meanings and half a dozen shades of dubious implication. Words have become so inadequate to express the richness of our experience that the simplest sentence overheard on a bus reverberates like words shouted against a cliff. (5)

Anna, by virtue of being a writer, is intimately connected to the power of words. But when words fail her, she splits up and disintegrates into fragments in the hopes that she will find the truth. "Anna's attempt at self-definition slowly collapses because it hinges on the power of words, and words cannot contain a reality too immense for them" (Kaplan 162). In this way, The Golden Notebook is written to show the inadequacy of language to express personal experience, to define the ineffable, and to reveal the rich-

ness of our lives.

Gradually, Anna becomes aware that she must arrive at a knowledge that goes beyond words. She calls this knowledge "naming," a kind of "rescuing the formlesness into form. Another bit of chaos rescued and 'named'" (457). This is like fixing words to represent the things they signify, by giving them a centre or a point of origin. In "Structure, Sign and Play," Derrida suggests this centre serves "to orient, balance, and organize the structure ... but above all to make sure that the organizing principle of the structure would limit what we might call the play of the structure" (278). By orienting and organizing language, "naming" provides a coherence where it did not previously exist. Naming essentially fixes the chaos that contains words so that they have meaning and are not babbling nonsense. As Anna describes:

> First I created the room I sat in, object by object, "naming" everything, bed, chair, curtains, till it was whole in my mind, then move out of the room, creating the house, then out of the house, slowly creating the street, then rise into the air, looking down on London, at the enormous sprawling wastes of London, but holding at the same time the room, and the house and the street in my mind, and then England, the shape of England in Britain, then the little groups of islands lying against the continent, then slowly, slowly, I would create the world, continent by continent, ocean by ocean ... Sometimes I could reach what I wanted, a simultaneous know-

ledge of vastness and of smallness. (531)

The game of "naming" seems like child's play, yet it implies a very serious effort, namely that of providing order where there may be none. At the same time, it is an attempt by Anna to overcome the limitations of ordinary language.

Anna's writer's block is a result of the limitations she feels language puts on her. Her inability to write can be seen as both an indication of her sensibility to the reality around her and a consequence of her fragmentation which prevents her from resolving the block. When she is finally able to reconcile her vision with her reality, Anna produces her fictional work. Keeping a diary, even a fragmented diary, allows her to respond to the flow of thoughts through the medium of words or symbols which together are as much a part of writing as they are a part of living. Only now is she fully free to crack the riddle that has pursued her: what is reality and how can one document it through language?

The aim of the novel is ultimately to arrive at a coherent wholeness away from the chaos that marks Anna's identity. In so doing, she arrives at a point where her "outer and inner worlds are aspects of a unity" (Marchino 253), of essentially a single unity. This knowledge of self is crucial for Anna because she feels "faced with the burden of recreating order out of the chaos that my life had become. Time had gone, and my memory did not exist, and I was unable to distinguish between what I had invented and what I had known" (597), and so she realizes her fabrications

were false. This is the point where she reconciles her fears and decides to put away all her coloured journals and write all her thoughts into one "golden notebook". This is the mark of her wholeness: "now beyond my experience, beyond Ella's, beyond the notebooks, because there was a fusion, and instead of seeing separate scenes, people, faces, movements, glances, they were all to-together" (611).

The last "Free Women" section recalls the first section where Anna felt that reality and the power of language were both escaping her. She felt that truth was something that she had known before as truth. But, with her wholeness now intact, Anna is able to experience a reality and a new-found knowledge of the power of words as she never was before: "she [Anna] knew she had had an experience for which there were no words -- it was beyond the region where words could be made to have sense" (625). This knowledge of the power and limitation of words is what finally dissipates the anxiety of authorship that Anna had at the start of the novel.

Narrating Anxiety

Despite the existence of several notebooks, Anna is suffering from writer's block. Early in the black notebook she states that she is unable to write the kind of novel that she prefers: "a book powered with an intellectual or moral passion strong enough to create order, to create a new way of looking at life. It is because I am too diffused" that she decides never to write another novel (80). The novel we are reading is the result of Anna's an-

guish. In the preface to The Golden Notebook, Doris Lessing equates the writer's block to the intolerable situation in a world teeming with war and disparity. How can a writer engage in art if there is despair all around? How, indeed, especially if the writer's own life is in a similar state. Lorna Martens suggests that the text includes both the notebooks and the novella of "Free Women" because "this additive construct comes closer to the truth" (245) of Anna's problems and their resolution. The discontinuity she experiences is reflected in her collection of notebooks, the writing of which helps Anna overcome her writer's block.

This novel's complicated structure is crucial to Anna's self-definition even as it reinforces its fictivity. Together, all the notebooks are a record of Anna's divided self and her effort to unite herself. The Golden Notebook is "an aesthetic whole uniting all the fragments" (Burkom 56). The divisions in Anna's life are, as Lessing writes in the preface to the novel, "the essence of the book, the organisation of it, everything in it," both "implicitly and explicitly," and "we must not divide things off, must not compartmentalise" (10), because doing so may lead to the dilemma of expression. Yet, we are never aware of Anna's individual consciousness, we only note her writing about it, essentially after the fact. The realization that this is all fictional results from the narrative situation of the diary novel. Even when a third-person perspective is used in the "Free Women" sections, it is still not Anna's consciousness we are reading about but rather her being a character in the novel. As Kaplan suggests, the notebooks are

"Anna's written analysis of her conscious [and] must remain somewhat incomplete" (141) because of her difficulty in defining reality through language.

To the reader, the "Free Women" frame suggests that Anna Freeman Wulf is not only the diarist of each of the five notebooks but also of "Free Women." This forces the reader to recognize that both "The Golden Notebook" and the inner novel, "The Shadow of the Third," are "fictional variations on equivalent themes. The distinction between subjective and objective reality is revealed to be totally nonexistent, for all perception is interpretation, there is no single authoritative view of events" (Rubenstein, Novelistic Vision 102). This view is reinforced with the story told at the end of "The Golden Notebook" of the Algerian soldier who feels the need to discuss his thoughts with the French prisoner whom he had tortured earlier (618-9). Both men were subsequently shot because they were perceived as fraternizing by the Commanding Officer. This image is seen earlier in the blue notebook when Anna dreams she is an Algerian soldier fighting for freedom (579), an image that remi[illegible]s the reader of the newspaper clippings of violence in the red notebook, underlying the lack of freedom in the world. The image is repeated in "The Golden Notebook" when Anna tells of the freedom fighters looking over her shoulder while she writes. "'Why aren't you doing something about us,'" they ask her, "'instead of wasting your time scribbling?'" (614). Indeed, all perception is interpretation. Anna's guilt over writing instead of taking action is at the root of her writer's block and her anxiety

of authorship. The only way to cure it is by writing another novel, The Golden Notebook, which we have just read. The need to translate personal insecurities into self-awareness is shown here through the medium of the fictional journal. With the diary form, the author of the personal notebooks and the objective "Free Women" sections has found a method that allows her full expression of her new-found knowledge. In so doing, she has alleviated the anxiety of authorship that plagues her.

The success of The Golden Notebook suggests that woman's creativity is not inextricably linked to what Gilbert and Gubar call the male literary subculture. Rather this fictional work attests that a woman author can actively pursue the difficulties inherent in literary creation. Woman's anxiety of authorship therefore goes beyond the fear that she is unable to write and into the realization that the tools available to her are insufficient to produce the works that adequately represent her female self.

The structure of the diary allows the woman author the means to represent the anxieties she may feel about herself as well as her inabilities to express herself through conventional forms. Revealing her thoughts in her diary, in a timely manner, the woman author has the opportunity to present her female protagonists in the act of defining themselves and in resolving their difficulties. Anna Freeman Wulf defines her reality through the medium of her personal diary, structured to resemble both her developing creativity as well as her growing self-awareness. At the same time she can address her concerns for the limitations inherent in lan-

guage as well as her attempts at overcoming them by questioning the validity of existing language.

Rachel Blau Du Plessis argues that twentieth-century narratives by women authors "rupture" traditional sequences or syntax in order to evade closure on plots that insist on the traditional marriage/death ending popular in the nineteenth-century. Woman's literature indeed addresses this problem for she is no longer man's "passive creation" (Gubar 77) but a creator in her own right. Woman's literature insists that no woman is a "blank page" and that every woman is the potential author of that page. The use of the diary form enables women to develop a structure of discourse that permits the female character to speak for herself, in her own voice, about her private concerns.

Chapter 6

Struggling to Survive: The Black Woman as Artist in The Color Purple

> Every woman who writes is a survivor.
> Tillie Olsen, Silences

> Every writer born opens within himself the trial of literature, but if he condemns it, he grants it a reprieve which literature needs to use in order to reconquer him. However hard he tries to create a free language, it comes back to him fabricated, for luxury is never innocent: and it is this stale language, closed by the immense pressure of all the men who do not speak it, which he must continue to use.
> Roland Barthes, Writing Degree Zero

The need to write one's personal story is sometimes curtailed by the sheer impossibility of knowing how to write. Presently, the female author suffers both from the problem of creating a literary text using language that affirms male dominance and therefore confines her to a silent role, and using this language of silence to affirm her existence and role in her society. If Roland Barthes' analysis is accurate, then the utilization of language should allow the female writer the freedom to produce new forms of discourse, or modify already existing forms, which will allow her an unlimited and non-traditional mode of expression. Though Barthes was referring primarily to male authors, the same can be suggested for female authors. Alice Walker, in "Saving the Life That is Your Own," recalls being asked what she considered to be the major difference between the literature written by white and black Ameri-

cans. She replies that, though she has not given much thought to this question, "it is not the difference between them that interests me, but, rather, the way black writers and white writers seem to be writing one immense story -- the same story, for the most part" (5). The main distinction is not in what they write but why, especially as regards the diary form. As was explained in chapter 3, woman's need to write diaries differs substantially from that of man's. Woman's urge to write seems more desperate because in writing in a diary she is overcoming the silence that envelops and confines her by confronting this very language and using it to affirm her place in society.

The question of texts written by marginalized groups has remained unanswered and essentially remained invisible until the latter part of the twentieth century. Black women, in particular, have been, by virtue of their race, excluded from the Western literary canon. Henry Louis Gates Jr. suggests that race is "a trope of ultimate, irreducible difference between cultures, linguistic groups, or adherents of specific belief systems which -- more often than not -- also have fundamentally opposed economic interests" (5). Instead of renouncing the language of Western traditions, black artists have modified traditional forms and developed a personal language and style of writing which asserts their important role in literature as both different and equal.

In this chapter, an analysis will be provided of black feminist ideology and how it relates to The Color Purple. In addition, the main character's choice of the diary form will be examined to

determine not only why Celie decides to express herself through a journal's pages but also how she modifies language in order to overcome the hardships inherent in writing her personal text. An important element in my reading of this novel is that it is a woman-centred or "womanist" text: the focus is not only on one black woman character but on the relations between women characters. Alice Walker uses the term to identify writing meant for other women which is concerned primarily with their personal experiences. Walker calls In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens "womanist prose" to emphasize that women should not be considered in terms of their relationships with men, for example as mother or wife, but in terms of their relationships with other women, as sisters or lovers (xi-xii). This will be further treated using excerpts from the novel.

Because woman's status is often approached using the race-sex analogy, the experiences of black women are assumed to be related to those of either black males or white females. But this undervalues and may even exclude black women and their realities for they are not a single group but rather a group of individuals. For black women, as Deborah F. King suggests "the basis of our feminist ideology is rooted in our reality" (71). A black feminist ideology must therefore be sensitive to the situation of black women, not as a collectivity but as separate individuals. In addition, black women must be allowed to interpret and define their own realities and not have them pre-determined by other groups. Further, a black feminist ideology must challenge the notions of

racism and sexism which threaten to exploit black women. Finally, black women must be presumed equal, independent, and capable of complete self-expression, through modes of expression which allow them to be honest and forthright about their situation (King 72).

Celie, in The Color Purple, is a poor, uneducated black woman from the American south who is marginalized from society, both sexually and racially. A woman in her situation usually lacks not only the opportunity to write but also the knowledge of how to compose her thoughts clearly and legibly. Yet Celie insists on overcoming her silence and writes her experiences in her personal diary. The structure of the diary form is both accessible to her -- she can write down anything she wants any time -- and necessary. If she were unable to write in a diary, she probably would not have written at all and we would never have known of her existence. The Color Purple is the result of her endeavour, Celie's triumph through language.

The use of the diary form enables Celie to become more self-conscious. She sets out to overcome the sexual, racial, and linguistic barriers that surround her by developing her awareness of her sexuality and her power as woman, by rebelling against the role of black woman she has been forced into, and by overcoming the silence through a personal language that allows her to voice her self as woman, black, and alive. With her new-found ability to write, Celie evolves from "a passive recorder of unstructured facts to a conscious artist" (Cheung 170), in command of her life. At the start of her diary, Celie merely notes her experiences and

the events occurring around her with little commentary. Gradually though, she becomes more introspective and begins to question what she observes.

The diary form provides an immediacy to the action. We are privy to Celie's addressing "God". He is the only one who will listen to her without threats for telling the truth. The novel opens with the line "you better not never tell nobody but God. It'd kill your mammy" (11). This double negation suggests an urgency in not talking to anyone, in not speaking the truth about her situation. The reader provides the same sort of ear that God does by not disclosing any of Celie's secrets and by sympathizing with her. What is important is that Celie must address someone, "long as I can spell G-o-d I got somebody along" (26). She must feel that there is someone out there who is interested in her as a human being and as a black woman. When she realizes that her sister Nettie is still alive, Celie makes her the addressee. God is no longer the all-powerful owner of all the words but an "it", a spirit who needs love as much as any other being (178). She now has another human voice to speak to, someone who will listen to her without question, someone real to be close to.

The diary entries and the transcribed letters together connect all the characters and events as they move back and forth in time, revealing the development of Celie into an independently-thinking individual. Time passes relatively quickly in the novel, as Steven C. Weisenburger suggests. In the first diary entry, Celie is fourteen years old and pregnant, in the second, she is

pregnant again, and in the third, her child is taken away. This tells us that several years have passed, and throughout the novel, the reader is never sure of the time or how many years have lapsed. Several years pass until Shug arrives and Celie begins to write more frequently. When Shug overcomes her illness, the entries once again become more infrequent. Weisenburger notes several discrepancies in the time of the text and suggests this confirms the "erroneous plotting" on the part of Alice Walker, the writer with the power "to construct a world -- literally, the illusion of presence -- for her reader" (263). Though any work of fiction is necessarily a work of the imagination, I disagree that, in this case, Walker was careless in her plotting. A diarist does not have to record everything that happens to her as it happens, to do so would be next to impossible as all her time would be spent writing instead of experiencing. One can interpret the gaps in time as non-narrated time: Celie is merely recording what did happen and not necessarily what is taking place at this very moment. Because the diary is continuous and does not project events before they actually happened, the novel cannot be seen as flawed. When one picks up her pen to describe the present, images from the past sometimes appear, and one is naturally drawn to write about them. Perhaps this is what happens to Celie.

The novel opens with a detailing of the repeated rapes she resigns herself to at her father's hands. Her mother dies, screaming and cursing Celie, blaming her for the rapes and leaving her with the overwhelming guilt of having committed incest, a

guilt she cannot surmount. This guilt deepens with the belief that her father has killed her children. Her oppressed state further worsens as she is given away in marriage to Mr.____ as if she is a possession that can be bought and sold, a slave to a black man. It is only when Shug Avery arrives to live with Celie and Mr.___ that a relationship develops, a relationship that fosters Celie's independence. The one obstacle still remaining for total freedom, however, is Celie's lack of self-confidence and her realization that she is alone in the world, with no children or beloved sister. Writing in her diary can be seen as a substitution, a replacement, for her lost family. In recounting her life Celie is also controlling it by giving it substance and order.

In a woman-centred text such as The Color Purple it is the relationship between women that is stressed. Relationships with men seem only temporary and traumatic when they occur, for instance the rapes by her father and the beatings by Albert. For Celie, the most important bonds are those she shares with her sister Nettie and with Shug. "I don't even look at mens. That's the truth. I look at women, tho, cause I'm not scared of them" (15), Celie says. Even during lovemaking with Albert, all Celie thinks about are the women in her life: Nettie and Shug Avery (21). Daniel W. Ross suggests that "even as an imaginary construct, Shug stirs Celie's first erotic feelings. When the real Shug steps into Celie's life, these feelings become activated" (76). In this society, women support and stand by one another. Celie loves Nettie so much that she is prepared to suffer abuse rather than

allow Nettie to suffer: "Sometime he [her father] still be looking at Nettie, but I always git in his light" (15). This role of protector is extended to Shug Avery when she comes to live with her and Mr. ___. " I work on her like she a doll or like she Olivia -- or like she mama" (57). As the relationship grows, Celie is in turn protected by Shug who refuses to leave her "until I know Albert won't even think about beating you" (77).

Under Shug's guidance, Celie is introduced to the mysteries of the human body and to the pleasures of sexual experience. At first, Celie is disgusted by the appearance of her naked body, but gradually, she comes to see herself as an object of beauty, a rose: "Ugh. All that hair. Then my pussy lips be black. Then inside look like a wet rose" (79). When asked what she thinks, Celie tells Shug: "It mine, I say" (80). By accepting and taking pride in her body, Celie demonstrates her desire to grow into an independent human being. With her new sense of identity, she is finally able to break away from masculine domination and join the community of women who accept her as she is.

It is now Shug's turn to nurse Celie to health. When asked what sex was like with her stepfather, Celie tells how he would force himself on her and then lie to her mother about the whole affair. Celie's abuse continues with Albert who does not think to talk with her or even ask her if she wants him. Nobody ever cared about her, Celie cries, no one ever loved her. At this point, Shug declares her love for Celie and proceeds to kiss her: "Us kiss and kiss till us can't hardly kiss no more. Then us touch each other"

(109). This scene culminates in sexual ecstasy for both women. Their expressions of love are oral: through oral sex and through language -- by listening to one another's stories and by singing to one another. When Shug composes a song for Celie, it is the "first time somebody made something and name it after me" (75). Their love for one another continues to grow until Shug leaves Celie for a young man. At this point, Celie stands in front of a mirror and wonders:

> What would she love? I ast myself. My hair is short and kinky because I don't straighten it anymore. Once Shug say she love it no need to. My skin dark. My nose just a nose. My lips just lips. My body just any woman's body going through the changes of age. Nothing special here for nobody to love. (229)

That Celie overcomes her need for Shug is a sign that she is ready to assert identity as herself alone. She is no longer Shug's lover but a woman in her own right, a woman just like any other, just as she was not merely her stepfather's daughter nor Albert's wife. Even though she believes there is nothing special about her, she finally realizes that she is an independent human being, a black woman who is self-assured and capable of surviving on her own.

A major obstacle to her independence is removed when Celie learns that Nettie is alive and in Africa and that Mr. ___ has kept Nettie's letters hidden from her. These letters to Celie are an important part of the structure for they both introduce a different consciousness -- Nettie's -- and validate Celie's own.

Elizabeth Fifer sugests that the letters "encompass and interconnect all the characters in two alternating voices; Celie and Nettie shape themselves before our eyes, helping us understand a grief that stretches over thirty years" (156). Celie would not have been aware of the truth of her family if Nettie had not informed her. Through the letters we learn that Celie's children are alive and well in Africa with their adopted parents, Corinne and Samuel, and Nettie. In addition, we discover that the sisters' real father was lynched while Celie was still very young and that the man she assumed to be her father was actually her stepfather. With the statement "pa is not our pa!" (162), Celie is finally able to unload the heavy burden of guilt that has weighed her down for many years. In addition, this information challenges Celie to reexamine the violence done to her, to realize that she was not to blame for it, and to understand that she had a right to fight back.

Through her diary, Celie declares herself to be someone to reckon with. She asserts her existence in the diary's opening line: "I am fourteen years old. ~~I am~~ I have always been a good girl" (11). By crossing out "I am" she is revealing a personal crisis of identity, that she is nothing and that she better "shut up and git used to it" (11). Then by claiming that she has always been, Celie is not only asserting her existence but also stating that she is important and not to be overlooked. This affirmation of self is developed through the diary form until at last she is able to stand up to Mr. ___ when she insists on going to Memphis

with Shug. The reaction of those around her is one of shock: "all round the table folkses mouths be droppin open" (181), because this is the first time she has spoken back to Albert. She is finally articulate enough to fight for herself, to declare herself not a victim but a survivor.

The notion of fighting for oneself recurs throughout the novel and serves to reveal the development in Celie's awareness of her deep desire to be free and happy. Nettie first tells Celie that she must fight back in relation to Mr. ___'s children. But Celie replies "I don't know how to fight. All I know how to do is stay alive" (26). Later, Albert's sister Kate comes to visit and also tells Celie that she must fend herself against Albert and his children. But once again Celie thinks that Nettie fought back and now she is dead, so "what good it do? I don't fight, I stay where I'm told. But I'm alive" (29). Sofia also tells Celie she must defend herself against Mr. ___ (47), but later is herself imprisoned when she does so. Celie survives by being a victim, by recognizing that retaliating only leads to more problems. So she stays where she is and allows any form of abuse as long as she is allowed to survive. She may not be happy, but she is alive.

Celie finds an outlet for self-expression through the art of sewing. The recurrent image of working with cloth and sewing materials begins when Celie sees a photograph of Shug Avery, "the most beautiful woman I ever saw", all decked in furs and heavy make-up (16). Later that night Celie dreams of Shug, wanting to be just like her. Soon after she dresses up like Shug, "wearing

horse-hair, feathers, and a pair of our new mammy high heel shoes" (17). But her dream is abruptly ended when her stepfather beats her up, thereby also curtailing Celie's quest for individuality and beauty. The image returns when she sees her daughter Olivia and Corinne in a store buying sewing materials. Celie recognizes Olivia as her daughter in her heart and tells us that she embroidered stars, flowers, and Olivia's name on her panties before she was taken away (22). Clothworking is a vehicle which can "create the bonds between members of a community, especially a familial one" (Tavormina 223), a bond Celie desperately seeks, having no family of her own other than Albert's.

Celie's independence is finally assured when she becomes a seamstress and designer of pants. She begins to sew pants in order to avoid killing Mr. ___ : "a needle and not a razor in my hand" (137), thus affirming the artistry in her, by becoming creative rather than destructive. The pants Celie makes are designed individually and differ depending for whom they are meant. Shug's are loose, soft, and wrinkle-free, Squeak's are "the color of sunset", Jack's are camel, strong, and with large pockets "so he can keep a lot of children's things". Finally Celie makes a pair for Nettie with a drawstring waist to battle the African heat, promising that "every stitch I sew will be a kiss" (191-2). Celie lovingly sews each pair of pants, thinking carefully for whom they are meant and incorporates their needs into the styling. For Celie, sewing is an act of love. It is also her means to economic independence as the successful owner of "Folkspants, Unlimited", a title she adds to

her signature.

Celie's skill as a pantsmaker attests to her refusal to remain marginalized by a society that insists that pants are made for men to wear (238). By creating a successful business, she forms "a new creation" that refuses to discriminate between gender and she dispels the notion that black women must be marginalized, relinquishing the centre for "the ludic and unconfined spaces of the margins" (Baker and Pierce-Baker 713). In Celie's world, woman has an equal place. Even Albert eventually joins her in creating garments. He used to like sewing when young but stopped when everyone laughed at him. Nevertheless he enjoyed it (238). Once they were separate but now Celie and Albert are bonded through the creation of pants and matching shirts.

Corinne's quilts can be seen as symbols for the novel's structure. She began making one when she saw the Olinka's beautiful quilts of animals and people. Corinne made hers such that they "alternated one square of appliqued figures with one nine-patch block, using the clothes the children had outgrown, and some of her old dresses" (170). The quilts are composed of memories of who wore what when, memories full of emotions. Corinne's quilt is "an icon dense with history -- personal, familial, artistic, national, racial, human -- and with union and reunion" (Tavormina 227). They weave together varied experiences and stories about life, separately each patch making its own comment, together breathing a knowledge and wisdom that can be handed down from one generation to the next. The novel is structured much like this: a patchwork

quilt, each patch a separate experience connected to every other patch, threaded together by language, in an effort to consolidate the differences into meaning.[1]

Celie's use of language, both her personal language and that of her society, is crucial to the story. The use of black woman's dialect both enriches the novel's form and content, and explores writing other than that of white or male literary structures (Smith 174). Though sweeping, this last statement does rightly suggest that Celie would have had difficulty using traditional language, not only because she is uneducated and thereby unfamiliar with it, but also because it is foreign to her and her community, which utilizes this black dialect. Celie's language is very much her own and is a statement in her refusal to be marginalized. As Walker suggests in "Finding Celie's Voice":

> It is language more than anything else that reveals and validates one's existence, and if the language we actually speak is denied us then it is inevitable that the form we are permitted to assume historically will be one of caricature, reflecting someone else's literary or social fantasy. (72)

Celie writes down what happened to her, in her own personal language -- dialect -- the only language she knows. Even when she is told that she would better herself if she would improve her language, she refuses, saying: "'What I care? I ast. I'm happy'" (193). According to Fifer, the "dialect creates the reality -- it is uneducated but personal, different but precise" (158). It is like

a patchwork quilt, a collage of characters, overheard conversations, private discussions -- a collection of vignettes from Celie's world.

Traditional forms of language being unavailable to her, Celie exploits the form of communication best known to her, best capable of allowing her to express her personal thoughts, and of revealing her growing self-awareness. If she were unable to write in the manner that she is most comfortable with, Celie would be silenced. Writing about silence is a common theme in the fiction of women from minority or cultural groups. These women are often caught in the gaps between cultures and are commonly unable to resolve their conflicts through direct action (Cheung 163), resulting in an inability to express themselves. Celie begins the healing process by communicating to God. By writing to Him, Celie hopes to acquire the right to use some of His words herself, especially words that would remedy and improve her situation. "Celie participates in the creation of meaning for herself through language. Without language, silence would have ensured madness or, as in her mother's case, an early death" (Fifer 156). For Celie, therefore, writing is a form of therapy.

In the novel, a sharp contrast is made between Celie's dialect and Nettie's traditional use of language. Celie's diary entries are subjective and highly emotional, while Nettie's letters are composed objectively and with tolerance. As Celie writes about her personal world, Nettie discusses the outer world, unknown to Celie. Examining both women's writing together, one sees diametric

opposites that coexist: personal/public, subjectivity/objectivity, inner world/outer world. This sense of duality would ordinarily bring forth a tension in a text, but in The Color Purple, these opposites balance one another. Because language names and orders experience, it is a potential trap that favours one end of the balance over the other. Yet, Celie, by virtue of her dialect and the use of a form that allows her to be herself, is not trapped but remains free to express herself the best way she can. In the process of writing, what is inside emerges to the outside and entrapment leads to liberation as the imagination becomes limitless.

Without the diary, Celie would not have existed for the reader. So when she addresses God she is in fact demanding that someone look at her and acknowledge her as somebody. "'You skinny, you shape funny ... you black, you pore, you ugly, you a woman ... you nothing at all'" (187), Albert tells her. Through her diary Celie asserts that though she may be black, poor, and ugly, she is a woman who needs to be regarded. In essence, she exists. Like the colour purple, no one should walk by Celie and not notice her.

One can only guess at how different The Color Purple would be if it was somehow composed another way. Celie's story could have been constructed as a third-person or even a first-person narrative, but it would lack the intimacy afforded in the diary situation. In addition, using the fictional journal and the letters, "the dominant mode of expression allowed women in the West" (Christian 469), enables Celie to work with a method that has provided women throughout the ages complete freedom of self-expres-

sion. Further, the diary form provides Celie with an available, if imaginary, reader who will sympathize with her situation as a black woman and who accepts her own interpretation and definition of her own realities, without any pre-conceived notions from the reader. Finally, the fictional journal reinforces the notion of a black feminist ideology that is rooted in Celie's reality.

Chapter 7

Spaces Between Lines: The Discourse of the Survivor in The Handmaid's Tale

> They say, the language you speak is made up of signs that rightly speaking designate what men have appropriated. Whatever they have not laid hands on, whatever they have not pounced on like many-eyed birds of prey, does not appear in the language you speak. This is apparent precisely in the intervals that your masters have not been able to fill with their words of proprietors and possessors, this can be found in the gaps, in all that which is not a continuation of their discourse, in the zero, the O, the perfect circle that you invent to imprison them and to overwhelm them.
>
> Monique Wittig, Les Guérillères

It is difficult to imagine how one would survive in a totally autocratic society that is unconcerned with its residents. One can only suppose that perhaps it would be in the little things, the small, hidden pleasures, that one could somehow overcome the power that such a society would have over its citizens. But what is the nature of that power if one could somehow find a hidden space, a space no one was somehow able to control, except for you alone, and then you were somehow able to confuse that society to the point where it no longer had any influence over you? Where is that space? In The Handmaid's Tale, Gilead is just such a society, and Offred is the heroine who undergoes a feminist journey which involves violating the boundaries of her society and finding on the other side of the wall the self that cannot survive within the walls. Throughout the novel, Offred works at punching holes through the Gileadean system, holes through which she eventually

finds the freedom she so desperately seeks. She begins by revolting against the pre-ordained language of Gilead, a revolt that enables her to open up a space in which she, as woman, can penetrate. Next, she addresses the society's lack of propensity to love by actually engaging in illegal relationships with men, notably her commander. Gradually, the spaces in Gilead's walls become large enough and Offred escapes.

In this futuristic story, Offred presents her world through her personal diary which details both the events that led to the formation of Gilead as well as everyday existence in that society. In The Handmaid's Tale, we learn that the republic of Gilead is a totalitarian theocracy in what was known as the United States. American fundamentalists have taken over the government and, in their attempt to eliminate the excesses of the society they replaced, have developed a sterile, puritanical world in which the traditional roles of men and women have been restored in their extreme. The men serve primarily as commanders or guardians of the state while women are divided into categories according to function: Wives, Marthas (servants), Econowives, Handmaids, Aunts, and Unwomen (women without gender because they are unfit for any other category). People are known by their functions only and wear costumes appropriate to them: mothers or handmaids wear red, "the colour of blood" (8), wives blue, and aunts khaki, because they indoctrinate the young handmaids, as in an army camp. In The Handmaid's Tale, women are completely controlled by men and are arranged in a hierarchy of value, from Wives to Aunts. But even

the most privileged -- the Wives-- are themselves limited and controlled. During the birth of a baby, the women recite: "From each according to her ability; to each according to his needs" (111), stressing "his" needs and "her" ability. Women are only capable, then, when responding to man's needs.

People in Gilead are not allowed to communicate with one another except when necessary. Language is forbidden between individuals because words are considered to be weapons that free people. The fundamentalist revolution has therefore repressed all forms of expression of freedom and equality. Even a hidden message that Offred discovers is forbidden by the very fact that it is in writing (49). Offred is silenced by the society she inhabits but she works toward her freedom through language. What is ironic is that the freedom to speak and be heard -- the main things denied her -- is the means she uses to define herself. Offred's voice serves as a record of her emergence from silence.

Offred, the diarist, is a handmaid who must bear the child that her commander Fred's wife, Serena Joy, is unable to conceive. In a society that values children to such a large extent, however, children are noticeably absent. The only child we actually read about is Offred's daughter in the time before Gilead. There are no other children. The only baby born mysteriously disappears and we are led to believe that it is deformed and therefore classified as an Unbaby, as Ofglen tells "'it was a shredder after all'" (202), an unwanted child who was undoubtedly destroyed. Repeated chemical and nuclear disasters have made both wives and commanders sterile

and have forced many to take unusual steps. At one point, Serena Joy even arranges for Offred to have sexual intercourse with Nick, in the hopes that the encounter will lead to a pregnancy (192-4).

In her society Offred has no identity apart from her function. She is "of Fred," her commander's belonging and is not free to do, say, even think as she pleases. Offred is made to be "afraid" of the Eyes, secret government spies, that observe peoples' every moves and report on them if they do otherwise than allowed. Women have been stripped of their personal belongings, even their names have been taken away. Offred tells us: "My name isn't Offred. I have another name, which nobody uses now because it is forbidden. I tell myself it doesn't matter ... [but] it does matter" (79-80). The handmaids are known only in relation to their commanders, to the point that in the "Historical Notes," researchers are only interested in Offred's identity for determining who commander Fred was (288). In Gilead, Offred's childbearing capability is her new identity, an ability that responds to men's needs. Human reproduction is the sole concern of this society, to a point where the ability or power to procreate erases any sense of individuality. Gileadean institutions are based solely on the fundamental beliefs that equate masculinity with controlling power and sexual potency, and femininity with reproductive power and submission to authority (Howells 63-4). In Gilead, then, sex and gender are analogous, the handmaids merely "two-legged wombs" (128). This description of women in parts rather than as whole is what takes away their sense of identity (Rubenstein 103), their

sense of themselves as they used to be before Gilead and now.

Gilead can be seen as a technological nightmare which dehumanizes its citizens. It rejects any technological advances that may cure its infertility and favours a very Biblical interpretation to procreation. According to Stephanie Barbé Hammer, Gilead is a society that rejects technological advances outright because it wants to keep all power to itself. It insists on total control, the absolute control of all power through its control of life itself -- the children of the future.

The major problem with this society is that it has forgotten the nature of love. Gileadean society is one where "nobody dies from lack of sex. It's lack of love we die from" (97). As she reminisces about what love meant in the time before Gilead, Offred realizes that it was considered central to one's life. She used to believe in total love to a single man: "The more difficult it was to love the particular man beside us, the more we believed in Love, abstract and total". Now, however, love is not even considered, let alone thought of: "Love? said the Commander," as if it was something new, a word he had never heard before, a word he was unable to spell (211).

Offred's diary is an attempt to connect her past experiences with her present situation. She repeatedly reminisces about her past life wherein she had a job, a marriage, and a child. She sees her past as one of freedom, her present as a kind of prison, where she is completely powerless. Atwood's view of the self and perception is related to her views of duplicity. "By reducing relation-

ships to polar opposites -- subject/object, mind/body, male/female, or culture/nature -- we set up adversary positions, the power politics of victims and victors" (Grace, "Duplicity" 56). This sense of duality pervades The Handmaid's Tale and includes other opposites such as public/personal, imprisonment/freedom, present/past and reality/fiction. These adversities influence the manner by which Offred views her world and how she constructs her diary in her determination to escape Gilead. Until then she remains in a world of her mind, thinking about words such as "chair" and its myriad of meanings, none of which is necessarily related to any other (104).

Confusion about words and their meanings stems from Gilead's unwielding control of its citizens every move and thought. Without realizing it, Offred has herself submitted to this control. She is fascinated by some Japanese tourists because they represent the life she once had. But she is both attracted and repelled by them, Gileadean society having changed her mind about what she used to believe. The heavily made-up women wear short skirts and sheer stockings, and they walk on spiked heels which seem to throw them off balance (27). Offred mistakenly identifies their appearance with freedom. But this is not real freedom. As Hammer suggests both Offred and the tourists are "prisoners of their societies. The only difference between them lies in the fact that Offred's culture has abolished the benevolent 'western' toleration of women's hard-won but still relatively small and superficial prerogatives" (64), such as wearing short skirts and high heels. Aunt

Lydia tells the handmaids that "in the days of anarchy [pre-Gilead], it was freedom to. Now you are being given freedom from" (24). The only problem is that freedom from is no real freedom because it implies constraints, something Gilead has several of, from the physical -- the walls around Gilead, walls no one is allowed to traverse -- to the psychological, through the denial of personal identity.

Offred refuses to submit to the powers that deny her identity in spite of the danger this decision could bring. She could very well be banned to the toxic waste dumps in the colonies if anyone even suspected her to harbour such thoughts. Her only other possible fates would be either that of Ofglen who commits suicide rather than betray the underground, or Moira who is condemned to a brothel. Offred senses that we are all unique and capable of having an identity separate from one another and, most importantly, separate from our functions in life. Wearing red has made Offred sensitive to the colour and what it implies. As she examines the smile on a hanged man's lips, hanged possibly for committing the atrocity of aborting a fetus, Offred compares it to the red tulips in the garden as well as to blood. Though each is the same colour, they differ substantially from one another.

> The red is the same but there is no connection. The tulips are not tulips of blood, the red smiles are not flowers, neither thing makes a comment on the other. The tulip is not a reason for disbelief in the hanged man, or vice versa. Each thing is valid and really there. It

> is through a field of such valid objects that I must pick my way, every day and in every way. I put a lot of effort into making such distinctions. I need to make them. I need to be very clear, in my own mind. (32)

Just as the red on the man's lips, the tulips, and on blood are each distinctive, so too is Offred. Each thing is valid because it is uniquely different from every other thing. She must be sure of their dissimilarities for they ensure her own existence. Offred's resistance to making individuals insignificant and thereby powerless is revealed through her determination to tell her story.

Using the diary form, Margaret Atwood selects a structure that enables Offred to speak freely about her concerns. The Handmaid's Tale can be seen as a "prison narrative where a woman's only way of defiance against abuses of political power is her ability to make things visible through words" (Howells 30). Gileadean society demands that women be silent, invisible, and totally submissive. Aunt Lydia warns the handmaids that talk and visibility are dangerous because "to be seen -- is to be -- penetrated. What you must be, girls, is impenetrable" (28). But to be impenetrable also means not allowing any feelings in just as to be silent means the inability to express oneself. Offred completely disagrees with Aunt Lydia's assertion. She refuses to be silent and unseen. Instead, she desperately seeks to express herself, to experience emotions again, to have companionship and someone to talk to. Frank Davey suggests that Atwood's language "communicates to the reader the presence of a consciousness both detached from

the conventional language-system it is using and (by virtue of its using this language-system) at some distance from the 'wordless' female realm it prefers" (55). Offred is such a consciousness that while using language to describe her life, she also realizes the fictivity of her story through the language she is using.

It is relevant that Offred considers her tale a reconstruction. "All of it is a reconstruction. It's a reconstruction now, in my head" (126). Indeed, it is more than that: it is an oral autobiography, dictated on tape. She further suggests that her text may be incomplete for:

> It's impossible to say [or describe] a thing exactly the way it was, because what you say can never be exact, you always have to leave something out, there are too many parts, sides, crosscurrents, nuances, too many gestures, which could mean this or that, too many shapes which can never be fully described, too many flavours, in the air or on the tongue, half-colours, too many. (126)

Does this mean her story is flawed? I think not. Here, Offred describes the reality of any text. To be totally complete, one would have to have spent more time writing about an event than the amount of time it took to experience it. Narrated time, therefore, is only a summary of what actually occurred. How does this relate to an oral text? Offred may, at times, appear to be rambling on but in actual fact is chronicling events as though she was writing them. Dorothy Tannen has compared spoken and written narratives by having her students record oral conversations and then asking the

same students to write the same information down. What she discovered was that though "there is slightly less information in the written version, ... the written text is far shorter than the decreased information accounts for. The most striking difference is the increased integration or compactness of the written text" (9). What this means is that though a written diary would perhaps be shorter in length than an oral diary, the latter would not have more information. Indeed, whether a diary is written or is taped has no bearing on the content of the text. An oral text has, on the other hand, the added benefit of involving the audience directly with the speaker by sweeping them up in the rhythm of the sound, just as one is swept up by music and its rhythm. In The Handmaid's Tale, Offred involves the reader, not with the sound of her voice because the text is transcribed, but with a personal understanding and care for the reader to whom she speaks directly. One can consider that this novel would perhaps be more effective as an oral diary than as a written diary in part because of the emotional involvement between Offred and her text's reader.

The diary form forces Offred to acknowledge that the story she is telling is both real and fiction. This "isn't a story I'm telling" but "it's also a story I'm telling". Because it relates the events of her life it is very real to her, yet she also realizes that whoever listens to her story will interpret it primarily as a work of fiction. In addition, thinking of it as a story will ensure that someone is listening because "if it's a story, even in my head, I must be telling it to someone". This

need for a listener/reader is then an assurance of her existence because "you don't tell a story only to yourself. There's always someone else", someone who acknowledges you are, "even when there is no one" (37).

In Survival, Margaret Atwood notes that an author cannot be separated from the art she creates: "A piece of art, as well as being a creation to be enjoyed, can also be ... a mirror. The reader looks at the mirror and sees not the writer but himself; and behind his own image in the foreground, a reflection of the world he lives in" (15). For Offred, the tale is a reflection of her self, of whom she was, and who she hoped to be, with Gilead firmly in the background. Because she is not allowed to read or write, she envies the commander his books and study: "I envy the Commander his pen" (174) and his right to use it. In Gilead, men alone have the power to read. Women can be read to but they cannot read by themselves. Even the Bible is kept under lock in case the women should want to steal it. In Gilead, only men have access to the power of the word. Offred envies the Commander the power of his pen as well as his accessibility to words. Earlier, Offred suggests that she is able only to exist "in the blank white spaces at the edge of print" (53). This is where she finds her freedom, in the spaces between the lines.

Susan Gubar, in "'The Blank Page' and the Issues of Female Creativity," suggests that the phallus is a weapon, much like the pen that writes on a virgin page. It is therefore problematic for women, like Offred, who want to appropriate the pen and write

their stories. The same can be said for Lily Briscoe, in To the Lighthouse, who is told that women cannot write or paint. But women can and do create. They take up the powerful pen and write their personal stories in forms, like the diary, which allow them to be honest and complete. Women may have been thought of as blank pages waiting to be written upon by men, but "blank pages contain all stories in no story, just as silence contains all potential sound and white contains all color" (Gubar 89). By dictating her diary, Offred claims the pen for herself through speech, thus not only reaching out for a reader to tell her story to but also crying out for her need to survive. And when readers look at the text they see themselves as well as their own worlds and how these relate to Offred.

The diary entries are addressed to no one in particular, but to anyone who may care to listen. Offred appeals to "Dear you ... Just you, without a name. ... I will say you, you, like an old love song. You can mean more than one" and ultimately "you can mean thousands" (37-8). One can almost hear the desperation in her voice as she calls out to "you" to listen to her story, to allow her to experience again, and to provide her with companionship. Offred needs a soul-mate, someone who will listen to her, sympathize with her condition, and understand her. It does not have to be anyone specific, as long as there is someone -- we, the listeners/readers. Is something lost by the fact that Offred's tale is transcribed? We are no longer able to actually hear her voice but we can, nevertheless. The urgency is there and we hear

Offred's voice while we are reading her tale. In addition, we feel the rhythm of her voice as we read her personal story and are helplessly swept up into it.

Sherrill Grace in her essay "Articulating the 'Space Between'" states that Margaret Atwood perceives words "like space, stereotypes, and myths, as a potential trap" (4). Though Offred is trapped in her world, she uses her art, through words, to free herself. It may not be what we know as "real" freedom for it is imaginary, but for Offred, it is better than no freedom at all. Out of the disorder of Gilead, she is able to create another world in her mind, a world that goes beyond Gilead. Ultimately, Offred tells us, "if it's a story I'm telling, then I have control over the ending. Then there will be an ending, to the story, and real life will come after it. I can pick up where I left off" (37). Having the power of the pen, Offred can control the outcome of the story. She can create a happy ending even if she does not believe it will come true. In her imagination, Offred can then return to her old life, with her husband Luke and her daughter, to the time pre-Gilead. She can then forget all the horrors she survived through. She can pretend it was just a bad dream.

Elizabeth Kingden has suggested that the use of the historical present to narrate Offred's story is a flaw. But the diary form requires that events be discussed as soon as they occur or, that being an impossibility, as soon to the present as possible. Offred tells her story the moment she has access to a tape machine and though the story she communicates is not presently taking

place, she is speaking about the recent past. Kingden also suggests that the narrative "takes place in a very brief space of time" (32), but as we have seen narrative time does not always include story time. In addition, Offred did not offer any structure to the tapes which were "arranged in no particular order, being loose at the bottom of the box; nor were they numbered" (284). There is a possibility, then, that the order is other than what was iintended. There could be some doubt whether Offred recorded her thoughts on a daily basis and the fifteen sections in the novel do not necessarily refer to different days, the seven sections entitled "night" not separate nights. Nevertheless, Offred's diary remains a testimonial affirming her existence.

Offred's diary is discovered and read in the future. In the "Historical Notes," we are informed that we have just read a transcript of Offred's taped diary that she lost or hid before she escaped Gilead. This epilogue is a factual account that attempts to authenticate the diary as real and not a forgery. In the year 2195, Giledean society is a curiosity, of particular interest to archivists and anthroplogists. Offred's story is finally being read, but I don't think these readers are what she had in mind when she addressed them as an assurance for survival. These scientists are not interested in Offred's life or her reason in telling her story. Their interest lies in "the workings of the Gileadean empire" (292). Arnold E. Davidson suggests that the scholars' objective examination of the text is only a further depersonalization of Offred and thereby an extension of Gileadean power (114-

5). Her story then is refabricated to suit future needs, needs contrary to her own. This may suggest that her diary is a failure because its aims are not attained, but perhaps they are. Offred's story is believed to be real, her existence is thereby assured. Her voice has spoken out and has been heard. What remains in doubt are details about the world she lived in. Gilead is obscure and will probably remain so for a very long time. Offred had no way of knowing whether "this is my end or a new beginning" (276), only the reader knows for Offred only survives in our minds.

The novel has been called a dystopia by several critics. As such it is a critique of our present society. Is Margaret Atwood warning us that the society of Gilead may one day come about? Or is there something else at work here? Gilead is a society consumed by the need to control. "While dystopias may be fear-laden horror fiction (how the dream turns into a nightmare), the emphasis is not on horror for its own sake, but on forewarning" (Malak 10). The use of irony to theorize the contrast between surface realities and the possibility of other truths can be seen as a reconstruction of Offred's experience. The text we read is itself a reconstruction, as Offred herself admits. Her repeated use of ironic comments reinforces the notion that her world has gone mad. When she quotes from the slogan that says that woman's abilities must respond to man's needs, she adds the comment "It was from the Bible, or so they said. St. Paul again, in Acts" (111). Her added comment "or so they said" casts doubt on the authority of the statement and its distorted interpretation by Gileadeans. The ul-

timate irony is that Offred uses the medium she has been denied to express herself. Offred's voice is therefore a record that women can emerge from their confinement in silence to relate to others through written and oral discourse. In this way, The Handmaid's Tale is a triumph for Offred who escapes from Gilead in order to tell us her story. At the same time she is telling us about her ability to survive, not through the powerful pen but through the gaps between words and the spaces between lines. Offred's story tells us that we, too, must claim the pen to survive because it is only through our individual records that we can exist in the minds of others.

Chapter 8

Defining an Alternative Tradition

> And let the daughters of uneducated women dance ... and let them sing, "We have done with war! We have done with tyranny!" And their mothers will laugh from their graves. "It was for this that we suffered obloquy and contempt! Light up the windows of new house, daughters! Let them blaze!"
>
> Virginia Woolf, Three Guineas

As discussed at the outset of this thesis, women authors have developed a discourse which differs from that in the literary canon. This discourse is not concerned primarily with the rejection of traditional concepts of women's writing, but rather with the establishment of an alternative tradition of women's literature -- a tradition that differs from that of men's literature without necessarily denouncing it as irrelative. Both women's and men's fiction are connected by history and circumstance though often unrelated by form or subject. Our literary mothers, such as Jane Austen, Fanny Burney, and Virginia Woolf are the forbearers of this tradition while our literary sisters, such as Doris Lessing, Alice Walker, and Margaret Atwood are the inheritors.

The novels examined in the three previous chapters all reveal that woman's creativity is not inextricably linked to what Gilbert and Gubar call the male literary subculture. Rather these fictional works attest that women authors actively pursue the difficulties inherent in literary creation. Woman's anxiety about authorship therefore goes beyond the fear that she is unable to write and into the realization that the tools available to her are

insufficient to produce the works that adequately represent her female self. Woman's determination to survive, despite the odds against her, odds as extreme as oppression by her society or even by her fellow man, are insufficient to prevent her from telling us her story.

The nature of the narrative situation in the fictional journal is one that reinforces the sense of intimacy between the diarist and the reader. The journal is both a form of communication between the diarist and the reader and the medium used to convey this communication. Although these features are true for any narrative, they are enhanced in the diary form by virtue of the central role the reader plays in the text. Because the fictional journal is mimetic of the actual diary, one can suggest that the fictional journal embodies the narrative situation of the real diary. In doing so it includes the communicative situation of the actual diary within itself.

In the novels examined, The Golden Notebook, The Color Purple, and The Handmaid's Tale, the most significant observation is that there is a special intimacy created by the use of the diary form. The structure and perspective of the diary both authenticate the story and substantiate the main characters' claims that their story is real and very personal. Their desperate need to tell it reinforces this suggestion. I believe this is what differentiates the diaries, both fictional and nonfictional, written by women from those written by men. Women, in penning a diary, are essentially composing a letter to a friend, a reader, someone who

will understand and sympathize with their predicament. The fact that these works are written by women is important, both in terms of its critical reading and its understanding by the reader. A study of the use of the diary form by male authors could prove to be an important annex to this thesis, a study which has unfortunately not yet been made available. The diary novels written by men which I have examined do have a similar sense of intimacy, though the diarists' concerns and need for a reader are not the same. But that should be the subject of another thesis.

To simply say that there are biological differences between the sexes does not necessarily translate into divergent forms of expression. Mary Ritchie Key suggests that linguistic distinctions can not be explained by gender. "Most of the differences noted have to do with vocabulary choice and grammatical devices, neither of which has to do with the physiology of speech mechanisms" (17). Difference, then, can be more appropriately described as marked between individuals rather than between sexes. In addition, Key's observations suggest that biological sex (or, identification as male or female) needs to be distinguished from social gender (or, identification as masculine or feminine), since they are not equal. Further, one should examine how women's writing is an expression of woman's experience and how reading as a woman is an interpretation of woman's role in the world.

The main concern of most feminist critics analyzing women's writing has been in identifying experience with the search for an authentic female voice. This search is essentially what differen-

tiates women's writing from men's and is located primarily in woman's use of language. In "Toward a Feminist Poetics", Elaine Showalter has named this notion "gynocritics" and defines it as

> a female framework for the analysis of women's literature, to develop new models based on the study of female experience, rather than to adapt male models and theories. Gynocritics begins at the point when we free ourselves from the linear absolute of male literary history, stop trying to fit women between the lines of the male tradition, and focus instead on the newly visible world of female culture. (131)

This study of women as writers with themes and structures distinct from that of men is an attempt to forge a new tradition and not to find space for women's concerns in men's literary traditions.

Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar's study of the nineteenth-century woman writer, The Madwoman in the Attic, is another text that examines woman's attempt to articulate her concerns in a distinctive female voice. They identify similarities between women writers, a "coherence of theme and imagery ... encountered in the works of writers who were often geographically, historically, and psychologically distant from each other" (xi). These related approaches not only assert woman's writing as different but also develop a female literary tradition separate from that of male authors. But what texts do they compare? Are these texts similar in content? How have these texts been compared? These are very important questions because if Gilbert and Gubar did not actually

compare texts, then how can these be said to differ? If the content is not similar, for example if similar subjects are not discussed, then the differences can lie in their subject matter. The method used to analyze these texts should also be described so as to ensure its validity to the reader. If there is no method and if no actual comparison is done, then it can be assumed that the statement was made without evidence.

But how does one judge the significance of one tradition over the other? Many women writers adopt the dominant male discourse and appropriate it to express their own experiences -- Offred's use of language can be seen in this manner. Others, such as Celie, employ a language that is natural for them and refuse to utilize traditional language because they believe it excludes them and denies them the right to be heard. Another option available is to question the inadequacy of ordinary language to relate their experiences, as Anna does. "The simple notion that language passively reflects a coherent, meaningful and 'objective' world is no longer tenable. Language is an independent, self-contained system which generates its own 'meanings'" (Waugh 3). Thus each of these approaches is equally valid and no more significant than the other.

Joanna Russ in her study of how women authors have been silenced, notes the main methods used to suppress or deny the existence of women's writing. But the growing body of critical theory attesting to woman's increasingly important role as author has invalidated this claim. Joyce Carol Oates denies that there is

such a thing as a distinctive female voice because "the serious artistic voice is one of individual style, and it is sexless" (11). Hélène Cixous, in her manifesto "The Laugh of the Medusa," suggests that "it is impossible to define a feminine practice of writing, and this is an impossibility that will remain, for this practice can never be theorized, enclosed, coded -- which doesn't mean it doesn't exist" (883). To define feminist writing practices is to confine them to a position of difference, to fix their meaning through binary oppositions which eventually reduce them, and thereby subordinate the feminine to the masculine order. Yet, to deny their existence means to shut them away forever until challenged. Neither seems adequate.

The other way to examine contemporary women's literature is as a process involving a reader. Women's experience, it has been suggested, will lead them to examine and interpret literary texts differently from men. As Jonathan Culler questions:

> If the experience of literature depends upon the qualities of a reading self, one can ask what difference it would make to the experience of literature and thus to the meaning of literature if this self were, for example, female rather than male. If the meaning of a work is the experience of a reader, what difference does it make if the reader is a woman? (42)

Reading, then, is an experience and different readers have separate reasons for reading and read texts divergently depending on their reasons. Nevertheless, as Patrocinio P. Schweickart

notes, "the question of how we read is inextricably linked with the question of what we read" (40). What we are encouraged to read are the literary texts that make up the canon. Some believe that not enough women authors are included in the literary canon, and so as to confront this disparity, feminist critics have called for a revision of the canon to include more works by women and to develop alternate reading strategies which will lead to the inclusion of more women writers of fiction.

The texts examined in this thesis all invite the reader to participate and to share in the diarist's experience. Whatever the message we are being sent, what is important is that the heroine needs to send one. She needs our presence to express herself, to exist in our minds, thereby ensuring her own existence. Even if language is inadequate to relate her experiences, Anna continues to use it while also questioning it. Even if she is marginalized by both her sex and her race and prevented from being an independent and self-assured woman, Celie insists on writing her diary. Even when threatened with death or disaster if found out, Offred is determined to address us with every ounce of energy she has left. These diarists are not pronouncing themselves for any particular reader, they are not specifically voicing out their concerns to a woman reader. They are writing to somebody, anybody who cares to listen or to read. A male reader can just as easily participate in the diarist's experience. What is important is that the text be read.

Contemporary feminist narratives are both experimental and

political in intent. Sara Lennox suggests that women's literature can be understood as "a variety of voices in which the beginnings of a new female subjectivity are explored and elaborated, a female aesthetic forged in feminist praxis, as a process" (73). In an attempt to explore these voices women authors use forms such as the diary which allow them to relate their concerns in a flexible method. The new feminist subjectivity which results addresses the problem of woman's alienation from the traditional conventions of womanhood. Toril Moi contends that:

> The study of a female tradition in literature, while not necessarily an attempt to create "a female enclave", is surely more than a methodological choice: it is an urgent political necessity. If patriarchy oppresses women as women, defining us all as "feminine" regardless of individual differences, the feminist struggle must both try to undo the patriarchal strategy that makes "femininity" intrinsic to biological femaleness, and at the same time insist on defending women precisely as women. (82)

Privileging differences between genders is actually an acceptance of the cultural stereotypes which institute and maintain sexism both for women and for men. Women are just as capable of becoming oppressors as men though few are studying this issue. Although I agree that feminist literary criticism must be political in nature because the subject it addresses is political, I disagree that literary theory must be reduced to the political to make it

viable. Literature should be studied in its own right and not because it has a particular political message to proclaim. Feminist theory cannot, by itself, change the world's agenda. Nevertheless, without political action, theory is relatively ineffective. Yet, I believe that there is not one feminist theory that is somehow unified but rather a myriad of feminist theories all addressing different aspects of the same central issue: the situation of women in the contemporary world.

Differences in style and use of language between female and male writers exist. We have seen how women authors have been at the centre of the development of the diary novel. Their purpose has been to envisage a form of writing that is distinctive from that of men, a form that will assert their position as the male author's equal. The diary form enables the female writer to represent her self through the art of writing, an art that is sometimes the only means she has for self-expression. In this way, her reasons for writing differ from that of many male diarists: her need to write is intimately linked with her need to survive. The subject of her creativity is often the private rather than the public realm of life because, for woman, writing her personal story is a challenge to the traditional gender ideologies that control and silence her. Perhaps because their existence is assured, male diarists do not seem, at least in the fictional journals I have examined, to have as desperate a need for a reader to listen to their story. Thus, the differences between diarists lie primarily in their subject matter and their reasons for writing.

The conflict between self-representation and the flow of events are often limited by language. But the diary form enables the woman artist to present these limitations in a form that allows her to tell her tale without reserve or ambiguity. An examination of the narrative situation of the diary form further shows that the mimetic qualities and the flexibility of the fictional journal allows the woman author the means to freely reveal her situation to a fictive reader who necessarily exists to listen or read about the diarist's existence. In addition, the acknowledgement of the fictivity of the narrative situation ensures that her story will be read by someone, hopefully someone who can understand and sympathize with the heroine's predicament, because it is through her text that she survives in the reader's mind. The fictional diary is therefore an effective technique that allows full expression of the self and minimizes the limits inherent in writing as woman. The use of the journal form essentially allows the female author to speak in her own voice about the things that concern her as a female self.

The diary form is a powerful technique that allows its authors the means to mediate successfully between their private and public worlds. The diarists of Lessing's, Walker's, and Atwood's texts have utilized a structure which allows them to speak words and consider thoughts they would not have had otherwise. The form has enabled them to go beyond difference to an area where alternative ways of thought, action, and speech are not only acceptable but accessible to anyone. By confronting theory rather

than relying solely on experience the diary expands the possibilities for an alternative tradition, for a different thread that represents the female self as whole and not fragmented.

Notes

Chapter 1

1

Several articles have been published concerning women's demands that universities acknowledge the work of women writers. Some of these can be found in Elaine Showalter's The New Feminist Criticism: Essays on Women, Literature, and Theory, especially Carolyn Heilbrun's article, entitled "Bringing the Spirit Back to English Studies." Here, Heilbrun insists that feminism and feminist literary works have not been taken seriously in universities because the old masters -- the vast majority of which are male -- remain entrenched in the canon.

2

Some ten thousand union workers from across Quebec marched in Montreal on May 27, 1989 demanding pay equity in fields dominated by women. See Mary Lamey's "Thousands March to Boost Pay for Women," The Gazette, May 28, 1989, p. A-1 and Martha Brooks' "Breaking the Wage Barrier," Montreal Mirror, June 16-June 29, 1989, pp. 7-8. In an attempt to force the Quebec government to address this issue, public sector unions in 1989 decided to push for it in its negotiations with the provincial government. Janet Bagnall in "The Push for Equal Pay," (The Gazette, April 1, 1989, p. B-4, and Francine Pelletier in "Poisson d'avril," (La Presse, 1 Avril, 1989, p. B3) both address the question of woman's access to pay equality. The notion of the pink-collar ghetto is not, however, a recent one. The issue has been extensively discussed since

at least 1975, International Women's Year, and perhaps even earlier. See Martha W. Griffiths' "Can We Still Afford Occupational Segregation?" and Jean Lipman-Blumen's "Toward a Homosocial Theory of Sex Roles: An Explanation of the Sex Segregation of Social Institutions," in Signs 1 (spring 1976). For an examination of pay equity legislation in Canada see the March 1986 issue of Canadian Dimension.

[3] Valerie Raoul has made an extensive study of the French diary novel in her The French Fictional Journal: Fictional Narcissism / Narcissistic Fiction and in "Documents of Non-Identity: The Diary Novel in Quebec." (Yale French Studies 65 (1983) 187-200.) Lorna Martens, in The Diary Novel, makes an extensive bibliography of works on the German diary novel.

Chapter 6

[1] Judy Chicago's The Dinner Party is an important piece of artwork that connects different materials together like a patchwork quilt. See Chicago's The Dinner Party: A Symbol of Our Heritage (Garden City: Doubleday, 1979).

The use of varied materials continues to this day. An important example is the quilt being made by victims of AIDS in their statement for life. Another is DAWA, Diasporic African Women's Art, which organized a travelling exhibition that came to Montreal in the summer of 1989 entitled "Black Women: When and Where We Enter." The show combined the use of traditional painting

materials with non-traditional forms such as clothwork, screen prints, wood panels and sculptures, and written texts. Mixed together in various works, the different media state the artists' views on women's roles in society, roles sometimes at odds with women's desires.

Bibliography

Diaries and Fiction Cited

Atwood, Margaret. The Handmaid's Tale. Toronto: Seal Books, 1986.

Auchincloss, Louis. Diary of a Yuppie. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1986.

Burney, Fanny. Evelina. 1770. London: Virago, 1984.

Daitch, Susan. L. C. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1986.

Duras, Marguerite. The War: A Memoir. Trans. Barbara Bray. New York: Pantheon Books, 1986.

Findley, Timothy. The Wars. 1977. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1987.

Frank, Anne. The Diary of a Young Girl. 1956. Trans. M. Mooyaart. New York: Pocket Books, 1972.

Harrison, Barbara Grizzuti. Italian Days. Garden City: Doubleday, 1989.

Johnson, Thomas H., comp. and ed. Final Harvest: Emily Dickinson's Poems. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1961.

Lessing, Doris. The Golden Notebook. 1962. London: Panther Books, 1973.

Murdoch, Iris. A Word Child. 1975. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1986.

Piercy, Marge. Gone to Soldiers. New York: Fawcett Crest, 1987.

Richardson, Samuel. Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded. 1740. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1984.

Rinser, Luise. A Woman's Prison Journal: Germany, 1944. Trans. Michael Hulse. New York: Schocken Books, 1987.

Ritchie, Charles. The Siren Years. Toronto: Macmillan, 1974.

Salutin, Rick. Waiting for Democracy: A Citizen's Journal. Markham, Ontario: Viking, 1989.

Sartre, Jean-Paul. La Nausée. 1938. Paris: Gallimard, 1980.

Schrank, Barbara G. and David J. Supino, eds. The Famous Miss Burney: The Diaries and Letters of Fanny Burney. New York: The John Day Co., 1976.

Shirer, William. Berlin Diary: The Journal of a Foreign Correspondent 1939-1941. New York: Knopf, 1941.

Sterne, Laurence. A Sentimental Voyage Through France and Italy. 1768. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1980.

Updike, John. A Month of Sundays. New York: Fawcett Crest, 1976.

Walker, Alice. The Color Purple. New York: Washington Square Press, 1983.

Woolf, Virginia. To the Lighthouse. 1927. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1976.

Theoretical Works

Abbott, H. Porter. "Letters to the Self: The Cloistered Writer in Nonretrospective Fiction." PMLA 95 (1980), 23-41.

Abel, Elizabeth, ed. Writing and Sexual Difference. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982.

Adamson, Nancy, Linda Briskin, and Margaret McPhail. Feminist Organizing for Change: The Contemporary Women's Movement in Canada. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1988.

Anderson, Bonnie S., and Judith P. Zinsser. A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present. 2 vols.

New York: Harper and Row, 1988.

Barthes, Roland. Writing Degree Zero. Trans. Annette Lavers and Colin Smith. Boston: Beacon Press, 1970.

---. "From Work to Text." Ed. Josué V. Harari. Perspectives in Post-Structuralist Criticism. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1979. 73-81.

Beauchamp, Virginia Walcott. "Letters and Diaries: The Persona and the Real Woman -- A Case Study." Eds. Leonore Hoffmann and Margo Culley. Women's Personal Narratives: Essays in Criticism and Pedagogy. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1985. 40-47.

Bennett, Donna. "Naming the Way Home." Neuman and Kamboureli 228-245.

Bloom, Lynn and Orlee Holder. "Anais Nin's Diary in Context." Jelinek, Women's Autobiography, 206-20.

Booth, Wayne C. The Rhetoric of Fiction. 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983.

Chatman, Seymour. Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978.

Cixous, Hélène. "The Laugh of the Medusa." Trans. Keith Cohen and Paula Cohen. Signs 1 (summer 1976), 875-93.

Cixous, Hélène and Catherine Clément. The Newly Born Woman. Trans. Betsy Wing. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986.

Cohn, Dorrit. Transparent Minds: Narrative Modes for Presenting Consciousness in Fiction. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978.

Conrad, Margaret. Recording Angels: The Private Chronicles of Women from the Maritime Provinces of Canada, 1750-1950. Ottawa: The Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women, 1982.

Culler, Jonathan. On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982.

Culley, Margo, ed. A Day at a Time: The Diary Literature of American Women from 1764 to the Present. New York: The Feminist Press, 1985.

Daly, Mary. Gyn / Ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism. Boston: Beacon Press, 1978.

Day, Robert Adams. Told in Letters: Epistolary Fiction Before Richardson. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1966.

de Beauvoir, Simone. The Second Sex. Trans. H.M. Parshley. New York: Random House, 1974.

Derrida, Jacques. "Differance." Speech and Phenomena and Other Essays on Husserl's Theory of Signs. Trans. David B. Allison. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973, 129-160.

---. Of Grammatology. Trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976.

---. "Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences." Writing and Difference. Trans. Alan Bass. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978, 278-293.

Didier, Béatrice. Le Journal Intime. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1976.

Dobbs, Brian. Dear Diary: Some Studies in Self-Interest. London:

Elm Tree Books Ltd., 1974.

DuPlessis, Rachel Blau. Writing Beyond the Ending: Narrative Strategies of Twentieth-Century Women Writers. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985.

Eagleton, Terry. Literary Theory. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1978.

Eile, Stanislaw. "The Novel as an Expression of the Writer's Vision of the World." Trans. Teresa Halikowska-Smith. New Literary History 9 (autumn 1977) 115-28.

Ellmann, Mary. Thinking About Women. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1968.

Faragher, John Mack. Women and Men on the Overland Trail. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979.

Furman, Nelly. "The Politics of Language: Beyond the Gender Principle?" Eds. Gayle Greene and Coppelia Kahn. Making a Difference: Feminist Literary Criticism. London: Methuen, 1985. 59-79.

Gardiner, Judith Kegan. "On Female Identity and Writing by Women." Abel 177-91.

Gelfand, Elissa D. and Virginia Thorndike Hules. French Feminist Criticism: Women, Language, Literature. An Annotated Bibliography. New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1985.

Genette, Gérard. Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method. Trans. Jane E. Lewin. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980.

Gilbert, Sandra M. "A Tarantella of Theory." Introduction. Cixous and Clement. ix-xviii.

Gilbert, Sandra M. and Susan Gubar. The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979.

Girard, Alain. Le Journal Intime. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France. 1963.

Głowiński, Michał. "On the First-Person Novel." New Literary History 9 (autumn 1977) 103-114.

Gubar, Susan. "'The Blank Page' and the Issues of Female Creativity." Abel 73-93.

Hamburger, Käte. The Logic of Literature. Trans. Marilynn J. Rose. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973.

Homans, Margaret. "'Her Very Own Howl': The Ambiguities of Representation in Recent Women's Fiction." Signs 9 (winter 1983) 186-205.

Horowitz, Irving Louis. "Autobiography as the Presentation of Self for Social Immortality." New Literary History 9 (autumn 1977) 173- 179.

Humm, Maggie. Feminist Criticism: Women as Contemporary Critics. Brighton, Sussex: Harvester Press, 1986.

Humphrey, Robert. Stream of Consciousness in the Modern Novel. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1954.

Hutcheon, Linda. Narcissistic Narrative: The Metafictional Paradox. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier Press, 1980.

---. "'Shape Shifters': Canadian Women Novelists and the Challenge to Tradition." Neuman and Kamboureli 219-227.

Iser, Wolfgang. The Implied Reader: Patterns of Communication in

Prose Fiction from Bunyan to Beckett. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974.

---. The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978.

Jacobus, Mary, ed. Women Writing and Writing About Women. London: Croon Helm Ltd., 1979.

Jauss, Hans Robert. Toward an Aesthetic of Reception. Trans. Timothy Bahti. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983.

Jelinek, Estelle C., ed. Women's Autobiography: Essays in Criticism. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980.

---. The Tradition of Women's Autobiography: From Antiquity to the Present. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1986.

Key, Mary Ritchie. Male / Female Language. Metuchen, N.J.: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1975.

Kühn-Osius, K. Eckhard. "Making Loose Ends Meet: Private Journals in the Public Realm." The German Quarterly 54 (March 1981) 166-176.

Lennox, Sara. "Trends in Literary Theory: The Female Aesthetic and German Women's Writing." The German Quarterly 54 (March 1981) 63-75.

MacCarthy, B.G. Women Writers: Their Contribution to the English Novel, 1621-1744. Oxford: B.H. Blackwell, 1945.

Martens, Lorna. The Diary Novel. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

McClung, Molly G. Women in Canadian Literature. Toronto: Fitzhenry and Whiteside Limited, 1977

Moi, Toril. Sexual / Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory. London: Methuen, 1985.

Monteith, Moira. Women's Writing: A Challenge to Theory. Sussex: Harvester Press, 1986.

Neuman, Shirley and Smara Kamboureli, eds. Amazing Space: Writing Canadian Women Writing. Edmonton: Longspoon Press, 1986.

Oates, Joyce Carol. "Is There a Female Voice?" Ed. Janet Todd Gender and Literary Voice. New York: Holmes and Meir, 1980. 10-11.

O'Brien, Sharon. Willa Cather: The Emerging Voice. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.

Owens, Craig. "The Discourse of Others: Feminism and Postmodernism." Ed. Hal Foster. The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture. Port Townsend, Washington: Bay Press, 1986. 57-82.

Prince, Gerald. "The Diary Novel: Notes for the Definition of a Sub-Genre." Neophilologus 59 (1975) 477-481.

Rainwater, Catherine and William J. Scheick, eds. Contemporary Women Writers: Narrative Strategies. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1985.

Raoul, Valerie. The French Fictional Journal: Fictional Narcissism / Narcissistic Fiction. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980.

Renza, Louis A. "The Veto of the Imagination: A Theory of Autobiography." New Literary History 9 (autumn 1977) 1-26.

Rimmon-Kenan, Shlomith. Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics.

London: Methuen, 1983.

Rogers, Katherine M. Feminism in Eighteenth-Century England. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982.

Russ, Joanna. How to Suppress Women's Writing. London: The Women's Press, 1983.

Schlissel, Lillian, ed. Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey. New York: Schocken Books, 1982.

Selden, Raman. A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory. Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 1985.

Schweickart, Patrocinio P. "Reading Ourselves: Toward a Feminist Theory of Reading." Eds. Elizabeth A. Flynn and Patrocinio P. Schweickart. Gender and Reading: Essays on Readers, Texts, and Contexts. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986. 31-62.

Showalter, Elaine. "Literary Criticism." Signs 1 (1975) 435-460.

---. "Feminist Criticism in the Wilderness." Abel 9-35.

---. "The Feminist Critical Revolution." Showalter, The New Feminist Criticism 3-17.

---. "Toward a Feminist Poetics." Showalter, The New Feminist Criticism 125-143.

---. ed. The New Feminist Criticism: Essays on Women, Literature, and Theory. New York: Pantheon Books, 1985.

Singer, Godfrey Frank. The Epistolary Novel: Its Origin, Development, Decline, and Residuary Influence. New York: Russell and Russell, 1963.

Smith-Rosenberg, Carroll. "The Female World of Love and Ritual:

Relations Between Women in Nineteenth-Century America." Eds. Elizabeth Abel and Emily K. Abel. The Signs Reader: Women, Gender and Scholarship. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983. 27-55.

Spacks, Patricia Meyer. "Selves in Hiding." Jelinek, Essays in Criticism 112-32.

Spender, Dale. Mothers of the Novel: 100 Good Women Novelists Before Jane Austen. London: Pandora Press, 1986.

Stanzel, F.K. A Theory of Narrative. Trans. Charlotte Goedsche. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.

Tanner, Deborah. "Oral and Literate Strategies in Spoken and Written Narratives." Language 58 (1982), 1-21.

Toliver, Harold. Animate Illusions: Explorations of Narrative Structure. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1974.

Waugh, Patricia. Metafiction: The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction. London: Methuen, 1984.

Weedon, Chris. Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory. London: Basil Blackwell, 1987.

Wittig, Monique. "The Mark of Gender." Ed. Nancy K. Miller. The Politics of Gender. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986. 63-73.

Woolf, Virginia. "Women and Fiction." Ed. Deborah Cameron. The Feminist Critique of Language: A Reader. London: Routledge, 1990. 33-40.

Works on Margaret Atwood:

Atwood, Margaret. Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature. Toronto: Anansi, 1972.

Davey, Frank. Margaret Atwood: A Feminist Poetics. Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1984.

Davidson, Arnold E. "Future Tense: Making History in The Handmaid's Tale." Van Spanckeren and Castro. 113-121.

Ehrenreich, Barabara. "Feminism's Phantoms." The New Republic 17 (March 1986) 33-35.

Grace, Sherrill. Violent Duality: A Study of Margaret Atwood. Montreal: Vehicule Press, 1980.

---. "Margaret Atwood and the Poetics of Duplicity." Eds. Arnold E. Davidson and Cathy N. Davidson. The Art of Margaret Atwood: Essays in Criticism. Toronto: Anansi, 1981. 55-68.

---. "Articulating the 'Space Between': Atwood's Untold Stories and Fresh Beginnings." Eds. Sherrill E. Grace and Lorraine Weir. Margaret Atwood: Language, Text, and System. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1983. 1-16.

Griffith, Margaret. "Verbal Terrain in the Novels of Margaret Atwood." Critique 21 (1979) 85-93.

Hammer, Stephanie Barbe. "The World as it will be? Female Satire and the Technology of Power in The Handmaid's Tale." Modern Language Studies 20 (spring 1990) 39-49.

Howells, Coral Ann. Private and Fictional Words: Canadian Women Novelists of the 1970s and 1980s. London: Methuen, 1987.

Ketterer, David. "Margaret Atwood's The Handmaid's Tale: A Con-

textual Dystopia." Science-Fiction Studies 16 (1989) 209-17.

Kingden, Elizabeth. "A Faulty Diagnosis of Society's Ills as Seen in Margaret Atwood's The Handmaid's Tale." Writers' Magazine 10 (1988) 7, 32.

Malak, Amin. "Margaret Atwood's The Handmaid's Tale and the Dystopian Tradition." Canadian Literature 112 (1987) 9-16.

Rubenstein, Roberta. "Nature and Nurture in Dystopia: The Handmaid's Tale." Van Spanckeren and Castro. 101-112.

Van Spanckeren, Kathryn and Jan Garden Castro, eds. Margaret Atwood: Vision and Forms. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1988.

Works on Doris Lessing:

Abel, Elizabeth. "The Golden Notebook: 'Female Writing' and 'The Great Tradition.'" Eds. Claire Sprague and Virginia Tiger. Critical Essays on Doris Lessing. Boston: G. K. Hall and Co., 1986. 101-107.

Brooks, Ellen W. "The Image of Woman in Lessing's The Golden Notebook." Critique 15 (1973) 101-109.

Burkom, Selma R. "'Only Connect': Form and Content in the Works of Doris Lessing." Critique 11 (1968) 51-68.

Carey, John L. "Art and Reality in The Golden Notebook." Eds. Annis Pratt and L. S. Dembo. Doris Lessing: Critical Studies. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1974. 20-39.

Draine, Betsy. "The Postmodern Order of The Golden Notebook." Modern Fiction Studies 26 (summer 1980) 31-48.

Fishburn, Katherine. The Unexpected Universe of Doris Lessing: A Study in Narrative Technique. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1985.

Fuoroli, Caryn. "Doris Lessing's 'Game': Referential Language and Fictional Form." Twentieth-Century Literature 27 (summer 1981) 146-165.

Hynes, Joseph. "The Construction of The Golden Notebook." Iowa Review 4 (1973) 100-113.

Kaplan, Sydney Janet. "Doris Lessing." Feminine Conscousness in the Modern British Novel. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1975. 135-172.

Lessing, Doris. A Small Personal Voice: Essays, Reviews, Interviews. Ed. Paul Schleuter. New York: Vintage Books, 1975.

Marchino, Lois A. "The Search for Self in the Novels of Doris Lessing." Studies in the Novel 4 (summer 1972) 252-261.

Marder, Herbert. "The Paradox of Form in The Golden Notebook." Modern Fiction Studies 26 (summer 1980) 49-54.

Markow, Alice Bradley. "The Pathology of Feminine Failure in the Fiction of Doris Lessing." Critique 16 (1974) 88-100.

Martens, Lorna. "Doris Lessing: The Golden Notebook." Martens 223-245.

Mulkeen, Anne M. "Twentieth-Century Realism: The 'Grid' Structure of The Golden Notebook." Studies in the Novel 4 (summer 1972) 262-274.

Rubenstein, Roberta. The Novelistic Vision of Doris Lessing: Breaking the Forms of Consciousness. Urbana: University of

Illinois Press, 1979.

Ryf, Robert S. "Beyond Ideology: Doris Lessing's Mature Vision." Modern Fiction Studies 21 (summer 1975) 193-201.

Singleton, Mary Ann. The City and the Veld: The Fictions of Doris Lessing. Canbury, N.J.: Associated University Presses, Inc., 1977.

Stitzel, Judith. "Reading Doris Lessing." College English 40 (January 1979) 498-504.

Works on Alice Walker:

Baker, Houston A. and Charlotte Pierce-Baker. "Patches: Quilts and Community in Alice Walker's 'Everyday Use.'" The Southern Review 21 (summer 1985) 706-20.

Berlant, Lauren. "Race, Gender, and Nation in The Color Purple." Critical Inquiry 14 (summer 1988) 831-859.

Cheung, King-Kok. "Imposed Silences in The Color Purple and The Woman Warrior." PMLA 103 (March 1988) 162-174.

Christian, Barbara. "Alice Walker: The Black Woman Artist as Wayward." Ed. Mari Evans. Black Women Writers (1950-1980): A Critical Evaluation. New York: Doubleday, 1984. 457-477.

Fifer, Elizabeth. "Alice Walker: The Dialect and Letters of The Color Purple." Rainwater and Scheick 154-171.

Gates, Henry Louis, Jr. "Writing 'Race' and the Difference It Makes." "Race," Writing, and Difference. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986. 1-20.

Harris, Trudier. "From Victimization to Free Enterprise: Alice

Walker's The Color Purple." Studies in American Fiction 14 (spring 1986) 1-17.

King, Deborah K. "Multiple Jeopardy, Multiple Consciousness: The Context of a Black Feminist Ideology." Signs 14 (autumn 1988) 42-72.

Ross, Daniel W. "Celie in the Looking Glass: The Desire for Selfhood in The Color Purple." Modern Fiction Studies 34 (spring 1988) 69-84.

Smith, Barbara. "Toward a Black Feminist Criticism." Showalter, The New Feminist Criticism. 168-185.

Tavormina, M. Teresa. "Dressing the Spirit: Clothworking and Language in The Color Purple." The Journal of Narrative Technique 16 (fall 1986) 220-230.

Walker, Alice. "Saving the Life That Is Your Own." In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1983. 3-14.

---. "Finding Celie's Voice." Ms. (December 1985) 71-72, 96.

Weisenburger, Steven C. "Errant Narrative and The Color Purple." The Journal of Narrative Technique 19 (fall 1989) 257-75.