

A Critical Analysis of Bernice Morgan's Portrayal of Female Characters and their Experiences

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I hereby declare that, except where duly acknowledged and referenced, this thesis is entirely my own work and has not been previously submitted to Waterford Institute of Technology or any other institution, nor has it been concurrently submitted for any other award.

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Abstract

Due to the decline of the oral tradition and the omission of women's stories from the official narrative, records of those living in the rural Outport communities of Newfoundland were rapidly vanishing. Within the sub-genre of Newfoundland women's writing, and classed as part of a settler literature, Bernice Morgan's fictional novels *Random Passage* and *Waiting for Time* offer insights into the daily lives of 19th and 20th century women living in the Outports, thus retrieving their stories from the margins of the male-dominated literary canon to ensure their survival. As Morgan's novels focus on women's narratives, this thesis provides a critical analysis of her portrayal of female characters, and their experiences. It contends that these characters negotiate the boundaries of transcendence and immanence and explore the possibility for a partial transcendence. In particular, the thesis investigates how Morgan's fictional account of female experience within the 19th and 20th centuries reflects the social and cultural mores of these periods, and analyses how the novels explore the attempts made by women to extend their legacy and impact beyond the confines of the domestic space. Informed by the existentialist feminist theories of Simone de Beauvoir, the study considers the characters within three stages of their lives – as young girls, married and unmarried women, and as mothers. The incorporation of socio-cultural and historical elements further informs contextual detail relating to women's situation during the timeframes of the novels. By depicting both characters who conform to and diverge from conventional female roles, Morgan both facilitates a more encompassing representation of life experience in the Outports, and illustrates how her female characters' choices and attempts to extend their legacies enable them to occupy liminal spaces of partial transcendence.

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1 Introduction

This thesis provides a critical analysis of Newfoundland author Bernice Morgan's female characters' experiences through a feminist existentialist lens. The thesis considers two of Morgan's novels *Random Passage* (1992) and *Waiting for Time* (1994). These novels, although fictional, offer insights into the daily lives of those in the Outport communities whose records were rapidly vanishing due to the decline of the oral tradition and the omission of women's stories from the official narrative. The theoretical framework adopts the theories of Simone de Beauvoir, articulated within *The Second Sex* (1949), as the primary methodology, and utilises Jean-Paul Sartre's theories on transcendence and facticity, to develop an understanding for de Beauvoir's interpretation of the concepts and the subsequent development of her existentialist philosophy. Furthermore, the thesis makes reference to the work of feminists Betty Friedan and Adrienne Rich, and incorporates the use of 19th century books on female decorum and 20th century magazines aimed at young girls and women to add a wider socio-cultural and historical element to the analysis.

The female characters in Bernice Morgan's *Random Passage* and *Waiting for Time* constantly negotiate the boundaries of transcendence and immanence, through their experiences and situations. The term 'situation', which is our "facticity" or "being... in the world" to adopt Sartre's philosophy (Barnes, in Sartre 1943, p.xviii), can also be used to outline or describe an individual's circumstances, or state of affairs, which is the case throughout this thesis. In her portrayal of these characters throughout their various life stages, Morgan challenges the transcendence/immanence dichotomy as theorised by Sartre, using female experiences to explore the possibility of partial transcendence. This theory of partial transcendence stems from the Beauvoirian interpretation of the theory. Sartre's ideas placed the concepts as being oppositional, wherein immanence is the facticity of being, and transcendence refers to the steps taken to actuate our existence. De Beauvoir's interpretation diverges from this way of thinking and instead develops from the standpoint that the two exist simultaneously and are intertwined. Thus, de Beauvoir's interpretation, which acknowledges both the freedom of humans to transcend, but also the limits and weights imposed by the external world that can hinder an individual's ability to transcend, constitutes an appropriate theoretical lens because, as this thesis argues, Morgan's characters struggle to transcend their relegation to

immanence.¹ Furthermore, de Beauvoir's theories constitute an appropriate lens as her text *The Second Sex* is the seminal text for feminist theory and regarding female experience, which is analysed through focusing on the core female characters in Morgan's novels. Morgan's novels show how women in the Newfoundland Outports experienced life as 'the second sex' and how they navigate the conditions imposed upon them. Thus, there is a correlation between de Beauvoir's subject matter and the focus of Morgan's novels that subsequently invokes the use of de Beauvoir's theory. Consequently, this thesis investigates how Bernice Morgan's fictional account of female experience within remote communities in Newfoundland during the 19th and 20th centuries reflects the social and cultural mores of these periods and explores how Newfoundland women struggled to surpass the confines of the domestic space.

Bernice Morgan's literary works reside within the area of Newfoundland women's writing. Prompted by the emergence of stories around migration during the Canadian Cultural Revival, Morgan claims her fictional narratives reflect the stories of her people, who migrated to urbanised areas from the Outport communities. Due to a decline in the oral tradition, and few written records documenting the experiences of those living in the Outports, as stated by Farley Mowat in 1966, accounts and records describing the experiences of those who lived in such places were rapidly disappearing, and could potentially become erased from the narrative of Canadian culture (Mowat in Overton 2000, p.178). Morgan's novels recount the narratives and focus on the experiences of women in rural Canadian outports, countering the dominance of male writers within the Canadian literary canon who typically focus on male experiences and accounts of events (Fuller 2004; Hammill 2007; Legge 1996; Porter 1998). Morgan's work retrieves women's stories from the margins of Canadian culture and history to ensure their survival (Legge 1996; Porter 1998).

As *Random Passage* and *Waiting for Time* tell the stories of women who have immigrated to Cape Random in Newfoundland from Weymouth in England, these stories can arguably be classified as Settler Literature. Travis Franks asserts that while a

¹ Both Sartre's and de Beauvoir's interpretations are considered in more depth in Section 3.4 'Theoretical Lens: Existentialist Feminist Lens using the Theoretical Framework of de Beauvoir and Sartre'.

definition of Settler Literature “may remain elusive and evolving”, it is generally distinguished as having emerged from settler colonialism (*AustLit* 2017). This term includes stories and narratives of those who settled in a space as part of a colonial project, but also expands to include the narratives of other groups affected by colonialism (2017). Morgan’s novels record the experiences of those who migrated from Britain and permanently settled in the ‘New World’ in the 19th century, and the experiences of their descendants in the following generations until the late 20th century, and thus can be considered as residing within this literary genre.

This thesis is comprised of five main chapters: a literature review, methodology chapter and three analysis chapters. The Methodology chapter considers the theories of de Beauvoir and Sartre in detail so as to provide a focused and robust argument for the application of a feminist existentialist conceptual framework to Morgan’s work. The analysis chapters focus on different stages of a woman’s life. Each analysis chapter corresponds to Simone de Beauvoir’s division of woman’s life stages as outlined in *The Second Sex* (1949), which act as a guide to woman’s situation during these stages. These analysis chapters consider how Morgan’s characters and their experiences of particular life stages represent negotiations of partial transcendence, in light of the social and cultural mores of the 19th and 20th centuries. For the purpose of this research, three stages of a woman’s life have been chosen for analysis; her situation as a young girl, as a married or unmarried woman, and as a mother, mirroring the stages as defined by Simone de Beauvoir in *The Second Sex*.

Chapter Two reviews Canadian and Newfoundland literature. Beginning with Canadian literature in its wider context, the chapter outlines central themes before considering Newfoundland literature as a subdivision. The chapter incorporates contextual detail relating to both the Canadian and Newfoundland Cultural Renaissances before focusing specifically on the marginalised female narratives within the Newfoundland Cultural Renaissance. Noting the particular preoccupation of this literature with themes of identity and survival within the Newfoundland landscape, the chapter concludes with a consideration of critical work exploring the literary works of Bernice Morgan, considering her mission in writing these novels and her own assertions as to the thematic concerns of the work and her contribution to Newfoundland women’s writing.

Chapter Three outlines the methodological approach and theoretical considerations of the thesis. Reiterating the research question, aim and objectives as stated above, the chapter illustrates the research paradigm, in terms of the philosophical assumptions, and epistemological and methodological concerns, before presenting the conceptual framework. As this thesis resides within the subject category of English literature, with the incorporation of socio-cultural and historical elements, the method for achieving the aim of the study involves criticism of both literary and non-literary works using an existentialist feminist lens. The conceptual framework thus considers the opportunities that arise through applying theory to Morgan's work, before focusing directly on the theoretical framework of Simone de Beauvoir as the primary theorist. Jean-Paul Sartre, whose theories around transcendence and facticity are necessary for understanding de Beauvoir's theory of partial transcendence, provides an enabling theoretical lens and is also considered here. In its conclusion this chapter outlines the primary research materials utilised throughout this research, providing a brief rationale and summary for *Random Passage* and *Waiting for Time*, before justifying the socio-cultural materials incorporated and the benefits of including such material within this study.

Chapter Four begins the first of three analysis chapters and focuses on the life stage of the young girl and experiences of adolescence. Considering the experiences of Lavinia Andrews from *Random Passage*, and Lav Andrews from *Waiting for Time*, the chapter analyses how these novels explore the concept of partial transcendence, by illustrating how young female characters negotiate the boundaries of their situations as a result of their choices around themes of education and employment. As Lavinia and Lav experience a degree of independence and freedom within their respective situations, they avoid a complete dependence on others, thus allowing them to transcend their facticity. However, due to societal norms regarding the behaviours and occupation of young girls, whose adolescence is characterised by the belief that this life stage is an idle time of waiting until they are old enough to marry, their ability to achieve transcendence is hindered and partial. The theoretical aspects of de Beauvoir's chapter 'The Young Girl', within *The Second Sex* (1949) informs the analysis within this chapter. Additionally, Sarah Stickney Ellis' *Daughters of England* (1842), and *Jackie* magazine (1964-1993), provide contextual information around the situation of the young girl during the 19th and 20th centuries, thus adding a socio-cultural and historical dimension to the analysis.

As the 'young girl' stage is considered to end upon marriage, Chapter Five focuses on Morgan's characters' experiences of marriage and of the role of wife. The chapter considers women who marry during this stage, but also considers women who choose to remain unmarried, with regard to how their experiences relate to the mores of the 19th and 20th century in which women who remained unmarried were seen as having failed as women. The experiences of Mary Bundle and Jennie Andrews in *Random Passage* depict the restrictions and expectations imposed on women, in relation to the attitudes surrounding marriage as illustrated by Jennie's experience of marriage and Mary's responsibilities as a wife. Through analysing the experiences of Lavinia Andrews and Lav Andrews, as a result of their choices to prioritise their careers over marriage, this chapter explores and interprets their situations as a negotiation of boundaries, and subsequently, as a demonstration of partial transcendence. This chapter is primarily informed by 'The Married Woman' chapter of Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949), due to de Beauvoir's observations of the experiences of women during this stage. Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), along with Barbara Welter's understanding of the 'Cult of True Womanhood' (1966), further support this analysis by offering additional insights around the expectations of married women and their experiences of this stage. Sarah Stickney Ellis' *Wives of England* (1834), and examples from *Woman* magazine (1937-Present), and *Woman's Illustrated* magazine (1936-1961), provide the socio-cultural and historical context for the analysis.

Chapter Six, the final analysis chapter, analyses Morgan's characters' experiences of motherhood. Outlined through the characters of Fanny Bundle and Meg Andrews, this chapter analyses how Morgan's characters conform to and resist dominant attitudes towards motherhood, with Meg Andrew's experiences portraying how mothers who conform to the stereotypical mother archetype can, despite this, achieve partial transcendence. In contrast, Fanny Bundle's experiences of single motherhood offer a critique of 19th century attitudes towards unmarried mothers, and highlight the relegation to immanence of women who deviated from the normative status quo. Considering the experiences of the characters Charlotte and Lav, the chapter also analyses the experiences of single mothers in the 20th century, with regard to the attitudes towards single mothers and their attempts to transcend in light of the challenges posed by their alternative situations as mothers. The primary theory utilised throughout this chapter is comprised of de Beauvoir's theories contained within 'The

Mother' chapter of *The Second Sex* (1949). Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), and Barbara Welter's interpretation of the 'Cult of True Womanhood' myth (1966), also contribute to the analysis. Finally, Sarah Stickney Ellis' *The Mothers of England* (1844), and examples of content within *Woman's Companion* magazine (1927-1961), and *Women's Illustrated* magazine (1936-1961), provide valuable socio-cultural and historical context around the situations and expectations of mothers within the 19th and 20th centuries.

Finally, the conclusion chapter considers how the analysis of Morgan's characters and their experiences across the three stages of young girl, married woman and mother reflect the social and cultural mores of the 19th and 20th century, concluding that Morgan's characters' choices and experiences read as a negotiation of the boundaries of these situations, situating them in liminal spaces of partial transcendence. With regard to the position of Morgan's works within the wider Canadian literary sphere, and taking into consideration developments within Canadian literature and society since the publication of the novels, the chapter will also outline the limitations of this research and consider subsequent scope for further research.

2 Literature Review

This chapter provides a review of a literature identifying main themes within Canadian Literature so as to contextualise Bernice Morgan's literary work. The chapter also provides contextual detail relating to the socio-cultural aspects of life in Newfoundland from 1820 to 1990 and in particular the Canadian Cultural Renaissance. Prior to its conclusion, the chapter reviews literature critiquing Morgan's work and summarises Morgan's own reflections on her literary output.

2.1 Canadian & Newfoundland literature

Faye Hammill states that "in the specific context of Canada, the question of national identity becomes particularly compelling" (2007, p.1). W. H. New remarks "how diverse Canadian culture is – how marked by politics and religion, how influenced by differences of language and geography" (1989, p.1). Immediately, the notion of identity emerges as an important thematic concern because, as a multicultural country, Canadian literature "resists the notion of a single, definable, national identity" (Hammill 2007, p.2). Malcolm Ross reaffirms this resistance of Canadians towards a single national identity, stating that "the prospect of a simple, monolithic, 'national' culture, or 'nationalist' culture does not exist" (in Karr 2000, p.197). New echoes this stating:

Canadian Literature is not bounded by citizenship (there were writers before there was a 'Canada', and there have been immigrants and long-term visitors since, for whom Canada has been home) [...] but definitions of a single Canadian identity are suspect. It is the cultural plurality inside the country that most fundamentally shapes the way Canadians [...] draw the dimension of their literature" (New 1989, p.2)

Canada's multicultural heritage creates strands of preoccupation and focus within Canadian literature: these strands include groupings that share commonalities or interest in language, region, and historical period, thus creating the rich diversity of topic and theme. Hammill's text focuses solely on the English Canadian literature sub-division of Canadian literature, but other literary sub-divisions include Québécois literature, written in the French language, indigenous writings, literature on Canada written by other nationalities, and literature written before Canada became a sovereign state. The sub-division of English Canadian literature, as focused on in this study, concerns anglophone writers, and includes further divisions, such as immigrant writers, temporary residents, and regions that were formerly politically separate, for example,

Newfoundland, which did not join Confederation until 1949 (Waite 2013). The rationale for these subdivisions is possibly due to political, cultural and geographical differences; for example, Western Canadian province authors convey different experiences from authors living and working within Atlantic Canada and the Maritimes (Harris 2015; Ricou 2015).

Hammill notes that “Canadian Literature from all periods is shaped by Canada’s particular social and physical landscapes, and by its history” (2007 p.3). As its complex history “complicates literary production” (2007 p.4), Hammill classifies four periods in Canadian history: ‘Early Colonial Era to 1815’, ‘Emigration and Settlement’, ‘Confederation and Early 20th Century’, and ‘1951-Present’. The ‘Early Colonial Era – 1815’, contains narratives from explorers and traders from as early as the beginning of the 1700s, with their accounts of their encounters in Canada. The majority of these are written in French with British narratives appearing in the 1780’s. The period Hammill terms ‘Emigration and Settlement’, spans from 1815 to 1867 and incorporates literature relating to the mass immigration of settlers from Europe. ‘Confederation and the Early 20th Century’ encompasses Confederation and the subsequent creation of Canada. This literary period includes the creation of the ‘Canada First’ movement, which aimed to “treat the universal human themes of Western Literature while using local settings and history to add a specifically Canadian dimension” (2007, p.9). Finally, the classification ‘Cultural nationalism and multiculturalism: 1951 – Present’ considers the pursuit of the Massey Commission which aimed to foster Canadian national identity through the arts and education, and the deliberate move within Canadian literature to include writing that explored exile and diasporic experiences.

2.1.1 The Canadian Cultural Renaissance

After Confederation, Canada experienced a cultural revival: to facilitate cultural production, the Massey Commission was appointed by the Canadian government to observe and provide suggestions to develop and support Canadian culture. The aims of the Commission were to educate and preserve cultural heritage and to inform “Canadian people [...] about their country, its history and traditions; and about their national life and common achievements” (Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences 1951, p.4). The resulting report, known as ‘The Massey Report’, “had a massive impact on the way culture is produced in Canada” (CanLit Guides

2014). The Royal Commission on National Development, commonly known as the ‘Massey Commission’ after its chairman Vincent Massey (CanLit Guides 2014), officially declared Canadian culture as threatened by culture emanating from the United States (Hammill 2007, p.10). This conclusion was derived from an “underlying ideology” throughout the report which maintained that “Canada did not yet have a national culture that was as valuable as the national cultures of France and England, or one that could withstand the influence of American culture” (CanLit Guides 2014). The Massey Report notes that Canadians:

benefit from vast importations of what might be familiarly called the American cultural output. We import newspapers, periodicals, books, maps, and endless educational equipment. We also import artistic talent, either personally in the travelling artist of company, or on the screen, in recordings and over the air. Every Sunday, tens of thousands tacitly acknowledge their cultural indebtedness as they turn off the radio at the close of the Sunday symphony from New York and settle down to the latest American Book of the Month (Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences 1951, p.15).

Canadian culture was also influenced by British culture, particularly in the legal domain as “the laws of the two countries [were] almost identical” (Laskin 1969, p.xiii), but also culturally, through the high-volume distribution of British periodicals in Canada.²

However, the Commission notes that while much of the social and cultural influence and impact on Canada originating from the United States was beneficial, such as the impact of scholarships and fellowships awarded to Canadian students by American universities within the American Association for the Advancement for Science (Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences 1951, p.13), it concludes that not all influence was “always [...] good for Canadians” (1951, p.14). While appreciating the value of:

gifts of money spent in Canada, grants offered to Canadians to undertake study abroad, the free enjoyment of all the facilities of many institutions which we cannot afford, and the importation of many valuable things which we could not easily produce for ourselves (1951, p.13),

the Commission also recognised the negative consequences of such close association and assimilation of another culture. One example, highlighted in the Massey Report, is

² For example, the periodicals used throughout the analysis of *Waiting for Time* in this thesis, while British, were available in Canada through Canadian Magazine Post (*Women’s Company* 1951). As further outlined within the Methodology, such periodicals influenced women’s attitudes and values.

the education of Canadians in America which resulted in “many...on completing their studies at American institutions, accept[ing] positions there and...not return[ing]” (p.15). This depletion of intellectual capital “starved [Canadian] universities, which lack not only money, but the community of scholarship essential to the best work” (p.15). Similar negative consequences were highlighted as existing within the Canadian legal profession. Laskin remarks that overseas influences profoundly impacted on Canadian law teaching methods and on available materials, as the Canadian legal profession “had to rely on English books, statutes and reports and on similar materials from the American states” (1969, p.68). Furthermore, in terms of cultural influences, The Massey Report finds the price paid for films, periodicals and other cultural imports as excessive. Quoting the *Canadian Periodical Press Association*, the Report maintains that “Canada...is the only country of any size in the world...whose people read more foreign periodicals than they do periodicals published in their own land, local newspapers excluded” (1951, p.19). The Report concludes that, while cultural exchanges provide choice for consumers and maintain vital and healthy competition (1951, p.19), an overabundance of imported culture was detrimental to the receiving culture, and that Canadian culture and literature existed at an economic and cultural disadvantage to imported cultures.

The Massey Report recommendations led to the creation of the National Library (1953), the Council for the Arts (1957) (Hammill 2007, pp.10-11), and the Governor General Awards (1936) thus promoting the creation of a new wave of Canadian literature (GGBooks N.D). Explicitly referring to the need for a re-evaluation of Canadian culture and literature, the Massey Report states:

A mass of outside values is dumped into our cities, and towns and homes. [...] We would like to see the development of a little Canadian independence, some say in who we are, and what we think, and how we feel and what we do (Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences 1951, p.226).

In order to support this development of Canadian cultural independence, state funding was made available to support indigenous research, broadcasting, conservation and culture. Following the transfer of political power from Westminster to Ottawa, a countrywide concern with cultural diversity developed which became known as the Canada First movement (Wallace 2001). In this movement Canadian artists detailed local settings and history, and “regional writing, in both idealist and realist forms, [...]

flourished in Canada” (Hammill 2007, p. 10), with the result that Canadian literature of the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries interprets and articulates concerns of identity and the integration of multicultural social, political and historical diversity.

2.1.2 The Newfoundland Cultural Renaissance

Anglophone writing by immigrants and temporary residents emanating from previously politically separate regions within Canada is identified as a sub-genre within Canadian Literature. Within this sub-genre, a further sub-division exists which is identified as Newfoundland literature. Prior to becoming a province of Canada, Newfoundland was a British colony in which the primary industry was commercial fishing. Bannister asserts that the economic and settlement plan was for Newfoundland to exist as “a seasonal station for the migratory fishery operated from England” (2003, p.4), where fishermen would migrate to Newfoundland in the summer before returning home in the winter to sell cod to the European market. The Star Chamber, which was an English Court of Law, passed laws in 1633 forbidding ships to transport settlers or to leave anyone behind upon their return to England (Newfoundland History 2004). However, later that century, fishermen and their families were permitted to settle on the island during winter and, by the nineteenth century, prosperous settlements on the island - notably St. John's, existed (Harris 2008). Pope comments that such settlements supported the development of the island's economy, claiming these “would permit a more efficient fishery” (2004, p.50).

In 1907, Newfoundland became a Dominion of the British Empire, an independent country but part of the Commonwealth, pledging its allegiance to the British Crown. Newfoundland's independence created political separation from the newly formed Canada until its reunion in 1949. Simultaneous with mainland Canada, Newfoundland received state funding to support a cultural renaissance during which, in efforts to preserve cultural history and identity, Newfoundlanders recorded the experiences and history of the island and its settlers. James Overton credits sociologist Harry Hiller for recognising that the catalyst for the Canadian cultural revival is linked to the oil production industry and “prospects for economic betterment” (2000, p.167). Hiller states that there was “compelling evidence for an historical feeling of uniqueness in Newfoundland” (p.167), and a fear that outside influences would cause the people of Newfoundland to “lose their individuality” (2000, p.170).

Newfoundland's outport records were preserved mainly through folk songs and tales. As England's first overseas colony, the folktales within the outport communities included many tales "brought over from the old country" (Widdowson 2009, p.22), as part of a larger tradition of songs, stories, dances and music. This long-established tradition allowed people to experience stories that had originated elsewhere, and to "revisit folktales that were once part of the narrative stock in both England and Ireland (2009, p.23), along with stories from French and Scottish descendants. Widdowson speculates that it was the rise of literacy and options for printing that "relegated the tradition of oral storytelling to the sidelines" (2009, p.20). Furthermore, resettlement arguably contributed to the vanishing stories and records. Previously:

together with singing, playing music and step dancing, storytelling was a major form of entertainment for men in the lumber camps or on fishing trips. Tales were told at wakes and other social occasions, and during leisure time in the home, when children would also be part of the audience, learning the stories from their elders (Widdowson 2009, p.27).

As social networks disbanded, local community tales subsequently suffered, as stories no longer retained the same significance outside of that area. Anna Kearney Guigné describes how Margaret Sargent McTaggart obtained bits of folk knowledge, which included "phrases and expressions found in the local dialect, the occasional fairy legend and anecdotes about local characters" (2007, p.183).

Mowat, who lived in Burgeo, an Outport community, recognised the disappearance of the 'old' Newfoundland and the 'old Newfoundlander' because of the developments taking place within the 20th century such as radio and cinema, which were slowly creeping in from the United States and mainland Canada. Guigné further discusses this disappearance, acknowledging that because folk knowledge is specific to the places in which it was recorded, the relevance and significance of these snippets of history consequently decrease when moved from the locality of their origin (2007). As a result, Mowat recognised the decline of the oral tradition, which had been prominent in Newfoundland. This recognition prompted a realisation that, while some material was collected to preserve the records previously maintained through the storytelling and oral tradition, some of the material produced was 'ignorant' "in both its omissions of important material, and its inclusion of totally irrelevant material". This led Mowat to express his concern relating to the arrival of a "time when people will not know what a pre-Confederation outport looked like" (in Overton 2000, p.178).

Thus, Mowat proposed plans to “preserve the history of our own time and the immediate past” (in Overton 2000, p178), as over the last seventeen years (since Confederation), Newfoundland had undergone a century worth of progress in moving from what he describes as a “feudal-primitive society into the gleaming material society of 20th Century North America” (Mowat in Overton 2000, p.183). However, Mowat critiques the government’s approach, which he argued neglected to preserve important aspects of outport communities’ histories. This critique alludes to two things. Firstly, Mowat refers to the 1957 resettlement project when the Provincial Government of Newfoundland under Premier Joseph Smallwood aimed to ensure access to government services for all Newfoundlanders. Resettlement was a post-Confederation government scheme designed to relocate residents of the rural outports, who “had no great future” (Smallwood in Maritime History Archive 2010), to urbanised areas to ensure access to modern amenities. Secondly, Mowat insists that more care be taken to “salvage what was good out of a past that had too much of evil in it” (Mowat in Overton 2000, p.183). This reference to ‘evil’ is most likely a reference to the colonial race crimes perpetrated against indigenous peoples, which eventually led to the extinction of First Nations groups such as the Beothuk.

Resettlement prompted the emergence of what Mowat terms the ‘New Newfoundlander’ (Overton 2000, p.183), which describes a resettled Newfoundlander advantaged in terms of food, education and vital services. However, Mowat criticises the Canadian government for “stripping” the Newfoundlander “from his history, from his story, without which he can have no culture of his own and no firm grip on certainty” (p.183). Thus, the cultural revival in Newfoundland gained a specific impetus and trajectory due to the unique traditions and culture associated with life in a remote rural outpost community which was recognised as endangered. An example of these vanishing ways of life were those of indigenous Canadian people, which prompted Horwood’s belief in the importance and value of recording the experiences, culture and customs of indigenous Canadian cultures, which were vanishing at “an increasing rate” (Horwood in Overton 2000, p.192).

2.2 Female narratives within Newfoundland Cultural Renaissance

Newfoundland writing, like the broader Canadian literary canon, is permeated by examinations of identity and history. However, despite Atlantic Canadian writers having “generated an extraordinary literary output from the nineteenth century on” (Dvorak and Howells 2006, p.6), Danielle Fuller asserts that the writing of Atlantic Canadian women has received scant scholarly attention (2004). She suggests that this is because the subject matter of this corpus of literature “lends words to lives that are felt, known and remembered as social realities by particular groups of people” (p.4), and as a result of power structures present within that society, some literature was discarded by ruling powers and thus “effectively ignored” (Fuller 2004, p.4). She recognises that the articulations of experiences and social realities of groups differ, which subsequently highlights the subjectivity of experience, and the value of differing perspectives within any cultural context.

Canada’s literary tradition can be said to be male dominated, wherein novels are set within professional environments and often recount the adventures of male explorers documenting expeditions to the New World (Hammill 2007). Female stories were often relegated to the margins within these literary traditions, in which, as Legge asserts, readers were “compelled to read between the lines” to glimpse, however briefly, the stories of the “women and labourers that accompanied the early explorers, or made their own separate voyages” (1996, p.63). Writers Joan Clark, Carmelita McGrath and Helen Fogwill Porter cite the publication of Margaret Laurence’s work as a turning point in Canadian literature, and Bernice Morgan credits Laurence as substantiating the legitimacy of domestic settings, female experience, and associated narrative focus:

For me, [Laurence] was the first writer that let me see that you could write about what was happening in the kitchen and it was important. What’s happening inside a house – it doesn’t always have to be a war or a boardroom. I always knew that it was important but not that it was a legitimate subject for a book, until I read Margaret Laurence (Morgan in Porter 1998, p.43).

Margaret Laurence, in examining the female experience from a female perspective, pioneered a literature that shifted its focus and setting from ostensibly dramatic settings and situations to critique and excavate concerns and narratives that were seemingly

more mundane, but were revealed to be as dramatic, complex and interesting as the narratives typically offered by male Canadian writers. This consequently inspired writers such as Bernice Morgan to tell similar stories that prioritise women's experiences.

2.3 Bernice Morgan

Atlantic women's writing predominantly focuses on stories of survival and, according to Fuller, it is the woman writer's "close identification with the life stories and histories she articulates" (2004, p.4) that is valued and valuable. Such 'close identification' is evident in Bernice Morgan's literary output, which Morgan claims are the stories of her people from the outports of her native Newfoundland, and which were prompted by the emergence of settler narratives and stories of migrants during the Canadian Cultural Revival. The revaluation and validation of such stories, through the work of Margaret Lawrence, encouraged Morgan to investigate her own cultural heritage and record the untold stories and histories of her community (Porter 1995, p.16). As previously outlined, the stories and experiences of life in outports were rapidly disappearing with the decline of the oral tradition, and Morgan's work, by taking form, setting and content from this oral storytelling tradition which was specifically associated with this unique way of life in Canadian history, provides, as Strong asserts, a bridge "to the communities of our past" (2001, p.109).

Overton, in discussing the decline of the oral tradition and the resettlement process which created the 'new Newfoundlander' (2000, p.183), describes a populous that suffered feelings of displacement and uncertainty with regard to a shared or collective identity. Having resettled in St. John's from the outports, Morgan had heard "idyllic" stories about community life (2003, p.374), but was similarly aware that these communities, who had lived and worked together for generations, had vanished: "there's nothing. There's not even a record" (Morgan in Porter 1998, p.41). Thus, Morgan joined a generation of writers who set out to reclaim these stories within the national narrative and whose work explores and reveals the complexities behind the choices and experiences of these vanished communities asking: "what made them go there and how did they stay?" (Morgan in Porter 1995, p.16).

2.3.1 Use of Themes and Conventions to Narrate Experiences of Life

Referencing Morgan and Helen Fogwill Porter, Fuller notes the shared fascination with women's everyday lives, their experiences and their histories, and a decision and commitment to narrating "a local knowledge of place, people and idiom" through the conventions of narratives of memory combined with realism (2004, p.117). This commitment produces literature that represents, reimagines and revalues "daily life from the standpoints of people who have been, and, as Fuller argues, continue to be disempowered by contemporary Canadian society" (2004, p.117). Morgan's literary output is praised for its "groundedness and realism" (Whalen 2001, p.26), focusing on the seemingly quotidian, the uneventful and the minor - the "non-festival" (Whalen 2001, p.24). Described as an opposite or contrast to the "festival activities" that exist outside the normal routine of everyday life, the non-festival is the "unremarkable, the ordered, the ritualistic, the ordinary and the commonsensical" (p.24). Morgan's novels narrate the "trials, challenges and intrigues" of the early settlers (p.23), and the domestic, the workday, and the routine feature as strong focal points within the narratives.

Additionally, considering Morgan's *Random Passage* with reference to historian Bettina Aptheker (1989), Tracy Whalen notes similarities within the novel with feminist folklore, which also centres on women's domestic activities, in contrast to male orientated narratives which are characterised as "competitive" and "individualistic" (2001, p.26). Morgan recounts having heard stories as "little snippets...my grandmother and my aunts and uncles told me" (Morgan in Porter 1995, p.17), alluding to the oral storytelling tradition. By documenting and examining women's traditions and stories passed orally through generations, women's ways of seeing and interpreting become visible (Aptheker 1989). *Random Passage*, as Whalen asserts, through its focus on female experiences, "celebrates women's activities and women's perspectives" (2001, p.26).

Additionally, Louise Sheridan identifies identity and memory as central thematic concerns within Morgan's literary work, highlighting "the importance of memory in the construction of personal and collective identity for women" within *Waiting for Time* (2008, p.23). Citing Gayle Greene's assertion that "memory is our means of connecting

past and present and constructing a self” (Green in Sheridan 2008, p.24), Sheridan identifies Lav’s decision to return to work in Newfoundland as a desire to “retrieve a personal history and sense of belonging” (p.24), and recognises this decision as motivated by the uncertainty within identity and history that characterises the ‘new Newfoundlander’ (Mowat in Overton 2000, p.183). Thus, Sheridan concludes, it is through memory and connections with the past that Morgan’s characters construct and consolidate a sense of belonging and an individual and collective identity.

Morgan’s fictional work is informed by actual events and experiences, a method which often results in the categorisation of *Random Passage* as historical fiction (Hill 1992; Porter 1994; Porter 1995; Whalen 2001; Sheridan 2008). Despite this categorisation, Morgan contends that she did not consciously create within this genre (Morgan in Porter 1995, p.17). Rather, *Random Passage* is inspired by sources including printed material, oral storytelling, family and local histories, and personal experience of Morgan’s own life in St. John’s (Fuller 2004, p.117). Thus, Fuller argues that Morgan’s novels and *Random Passage* in particular, are “located on the interface between social history and fiction” (2004, p.118).

2.3.2 A Feminist Re-telling

As Fuller notes, Morgan’s choice of female narrators and her delineation of women’s life and experiences makes her work “woman-centred” (2004, p.118). Adrienne Rich describes this approach as revisionist, and Legge as an art of “looking back” (1996, p.64). Within this genre, “women tell their own stories in their own particular ways” and tell the truth, but “tell it slant” (Legge 1996, p.64). Morgan’s use of female experiences and perspectives validates Fuller’s theory of the existence of multiple social realities and experiences which differ but remain mutually valid and valuable. However, it is important to note that Morgan’s work is ultimately fictional rather than historical, and that Morgan asserts that feminism in her writing emanates from the subject matter rather than a pre-determined intention. Helen Fogwill Porter suggests that Morgan’s feminist approach is “not self-conscious” (in Porter 1998, p.46). Echoing this, Morgan argues that her creative methodology was similar to her female contemporaries in that it was adopted “not self-consciously, perhaps, but as women” (in Porter 1998, p.46).

A feminist methodology prioritises women's stories and often those that may have remained untold over generations: "there are many unwritten stories that women, Newfoundland women, have waited for these many years" (Legge 1996, p.63). When interviewed by Marilyn Porter, Morgan considered the differences in male and female accounts of life on the Cape and experiences of resettlement: her reflection was that male accounts revolve around leaving "the tiny places and how nobody wanted to leave" (Fogwill Porter in Porter 1998, p.42), while female experiences were simply regarded as "different" (p.42). Morgan expands on this during an interview with Bruce Porter, wherein she explains that women's priorities were different, as they struggled to keep the home together in a place "where you were cut off, where you couldn't buy a new sewing needle for months of the year" (1995, p.17).

Throughout her novels, Morgan documents and illuminates the experiences of the women omitted from the official narrative. Legge contends that Morgan's novels are the "unsanctioned stories...retrieve[d] from the gaps in official histories and conventional male narratives", which provide "glimpses of lives as varied as grains of sand" (1996, p.63). Resituating these stories from the margins of previous literary accounts to the centre of the narrative, they use daily life as their focal point. Similarly to the women in Porter's novels (Fuller 2004), in addition to characters who conform to the expectations and roles required of them, Morgan's novels also include characters who do not uphold the ideals and expectations, and therefore do not conform to society's expectations. Morgan tells their stories through moments when their actions, emotions and choices upset the normative order by challenging the stereotypes, expectations and customs present within that society.

Morgan's novels question and explore the complexities of belonging, arrival and departure, and reframe and refocus narratives that were typically marginalised within Canadian literature which prioritised male experience and occupations. Her work can also be critiqued and understood within feminism more generally in that her female characters depart from conventional female roles and situations thus disrupting the normative gender status quo. Morgan creates several female characters who attempt to move beyond lives of passivity and conformity and the domestic sphere, and these characters and their experiences provide the focus of this study. In order to analyse Morgan's portrayal of these characters, and their narratives and experiences in relation

to the aim of this research, this thesis subsequently invokes the theories of existentialist feminist philosopher Simone de Beauvoir. De Beauvoir's seminal text *The Second Sex* explores women's situation throughout history and offers an articulation of female experience with regard to their relegation to immanence across the eras from primitive forms of society to the 20th century in which she was writing. The depth of the research across the eras, including those in which Morgan's novels are set thus provides a lens through which Morgan's characters experiences can be understood and analysed in relation to women's situation at that time.

3 Methodology

3.1 Research Statement, Aim and Objectives

This thesis investigates how Bernice Morgan's fictional account of female experience within remote coastal communities in Newfoundland during the 19th and 20th centuries reflects social and cultural mores of these periods. Furthermore, the thesis analyses how Morgan's literary work explores the attempts made by women to extend the legacy and impact of their lives beyond the confines of the domestic space. The female characters in Bernice Morgan's *Random Passage* and *Waiting for Time* constantly negotiate the boundaries of transcendence and immanence through their personal experiences and situations. Through these characters, Morgan challenges Sartre's transcendence/immanence dichotomy, using female experience to explore the possibility of partial transcendence. This chapter justifies a qualitative methodological approach and the application of Simone de Beauvoir's existentialist feminist theory as the theoretical framework and, because de Beauvoir's theories were developed in conjunction with Jean-Paul Sartre's philosophical theories, Sartre's work is referenced as a means of considering de Beauvoir's theories. The chapter outlines and justifies the research method, provides a justification of the theoretical framework employed and outlines the primary sources utilised within the study.

3.2 Research Paradigm

3.2.1 Philosophical Assumptions and Epistemology

The research paradigm utilised within this thesis stems from a subjective ontological viewpoint. Unlike an objective approach, in which the method of understanding reality maintains the stance that there exists one universal truth that stands "independently of consciousness" (Crotty 1998, p.5; Scotland 2012), a subjective approach rejects the idea of one truth, instead contending that each individual has their own truth. Crotty asserts that in this approach, "meaning is not discovered, but constructed" (1998, p.9). In adopting this approach, the researcher assumes that the social world must be interpreted and is composed of terms and concepts that describe an intangible and subjective reality. Consequently, the epistemological position taken is interpretivist. Stemming from the work of Max Weber with regard to interpretation and understanding (Crotty

1998), Pizam and Mansfeld maintain that developing understanding remains the goal of research studies that adopt an interpretivist epistemology (2009, p.337).

3.2.2 Methodology

While an interpretivist approach can involve both quantitative and qualitative methods, this study utilises qualitative methods. Denzin and Lincoln state that qualitative research is “multimethod in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter” (1994, p.2). Contrary to positivism, which stems from an objective viewpoint in which the nature of reality is single and tangible, interpretivism recognises the possibility of various mutually viable meanings, which are socially constructed and relative to the time, context and culture from which they originate (Pizam and Mansfeld 2009, p.337). Moriarty notes that researchers utilising qualitative methods are concerned with “insight, discovery and interpretation rather than quantifiable evidence or proof” (2014, p.72). Bailey *et al* lend further emphasis to the interpretivist and subjective nature of this approach by considering that a possible part of the process is studying people, in order to “identify how their experiences and behaviour are shaped by the context of their lives, such as the social, economic, cultural or physical context in which they live” (2011, p.9). While this claim would undoubtedly be dependent on the topic, aims and objectives of a study, it highlights the subjective approach required for conducting such research, as it “implies an emphasis on processes and meanings” (Denzin and Lincoln 1994, p.4). However, contrary to Denzin and Lincoln’s claim that such processes and meanings are “not rigorously examined and measured” (1994, p.4), considering the nature of critical analysis, and due to the multitude and variety of possible meanings that exist from an interpretivist viewpoint, these processes and meanings arguably are examined within the rigorous parameters of a carefully refined and appropriate qualitative approach.

A qualitative approach allows the researcher flexibility in terms of methods, subsequently enabling an exploratory investigation that remains open to possibility, rather than confining the focus to the proving or disproving of a specific hypothesis. The specific aim of this study, i.e. the aim to investigate how Morgan’s fictional account of female experience in a Newfoundland Outport reflects the social and cultural mores of the periods in which her novels are set, thus justifies a qualitative approach. Furthermore, any analysis of the ways in which Morgan’s novels explore women’s

experiences necessitates an openness to various mutually viable interpretations stemming from the various considerations which inform an individual's understanding and interpretation.

3.2.3 Methods: Critical Analysis of Literary and Non-Literary Works

Critical analysis is a component of literary criticism (Peck and Coyle 2002), employed as a means through which a text is assessed. Critical analysis involves using a researcher's informed interpretation of the stylistic and thematic arrangement of a text in order to critique the form and content of the literature studied. This process aids the researcher in the aim of explaining and developing an understanding of the literature (Cottrell 2005). However, as this study analyses aspects of female characters' experience and situation, the focus is more concerned with the content of the literature, rather than the style. A critical analysis of a range of non-literary works is undertaken in order to provide the socio-cultural and socio-historical context which informs the creation and analysis of Morgan's work. The social, historical and cultural situation of Newfoundland provides necessary contextual detail to Morgan's novels and analysis of such texts provides valuable detail relating to women's situations during the timeframes of the novels considered. These contextual primary texts inform the analysis of the ways in which Morgan's work explores the particularities of female experience in Newfoundland outposts.

3.3 Conceptual Framework

Applying theory to practice provides an opportunity to consider interpretations and perspectives in guided detail. Following the formation of a research question, the conceptual framework afforded by theory provides a lens through which the data is analysed within the scope of the research aim (Reeves *et al* 2008). Feminist criticism considers "the representation of women in literature and with changing women's position in society" (Peck and Coyle 2002, p.184), thus illuminating female experience (Register 1980). Register declares that the proclaimed "mission" of feminist literary criticism is to "expose the misogynistic stereotyping of women in the classics [and] rescue female writers from oblivion and get them into the canon" (1980, p.268). While such marginalisation is not exclusive to Canadian writing, as noted by Peck and Coyle who highlight that an achievement of feminist criticism is the "rediscovery...of a whole

tradition of books by women ‘silenced’ by the traditional male canon” (2002, p.185), Atlantic women’s writing in particular has received substantially less critical attention from scholars in comparison to writing by their male counterparts (Fuller 2004, pp.3-4). Showalter (1975) asserts that this marginalisation results not from a lack of female writers, but rather that Atlantic women writers such as Bernice Morgan are rendered culturally invisible by a lack of critical attention. Applying a feminist theoretical framework to novels written by and about female characters addresses this inequality and “correct[s] this traditional imbalance” (Showalter 1975, p.442).

3.4 Theoretical Lens: Existentialist Feminist Lens using the Theoretical Framework of de Beauvoir and Sartre

French existentialist feminist, philosopher and social theorist Simone de Beauvoir’s theories, detailed in *The Second Sex* (1949), are applied as the theoretical framework within this study. As the theoretical material used is read in translation, secondary sources support the researcher’s interpretation and explication of the concepts and terminology used by de Beauvoir. As Bernice Morgan’s female characters struggle to resist passivity in their attempts to extend their activities and legacies beyond the domestic sphere, de Beauvoir’s theories of transcendence and immanence provide an appropriate lens to explicate their experiences. Additionally, as Morgan’s characters constantly negotiate boundaries between transcendence and immanence, and explore and experience partial transcendence, de Beauvoir’s rejection of Sartre’s contention that transcendence and immanence are mutually exclusive further justifies the application of de Beauvoir’s theoretical concepts to Morgan’s literary work. The subsequent sections support this assertion in greater detail.

3.4.1 Woman as ‘Other’

An important factor in the oppression of women and their subsequent relegation to the sphere of immanence is how they are viewed within society, and de Beauvoir asserts that in her own youth, she was “convinced of male superiority” (1949, p.352). Cultural anthropologist Sherry Ortner reinforces this idea in her statement that the view of male superiority/female inferiority is considered a “universal, pan-cultural fact” (1974, p.67). In *The Second Sex* de Beauvoir states that “humanity is male” and “he is the Subject, the Absolute – she is the Other” (1949, p.16). This labelling of women as ‘Other’ refers to

women's secondary position within a patriarchal or male dominated society, and throughout *The Second Sex*, de Beauvoir delineates the ways in which women are created by, as opposed to born into, patriarchal societies. Patriarchy refers to male domination (Beechey 1979, p.66), and to the power structures that reinforce a hierarchy in which males are considered dominant and thus superior to females (Beechey 1979; Sultana 2012). Subsequently, a patriarchal society can be defined as a society in which the social and cultural mores uphold these power structures. De Beauvoir asserts that within these structures a woman is defined "not in herself, but as relative to him; she is not regarded as an autonomous being" (1949, p.16). As de Beauvoir's interpretation of transcendence and immanence developed in reference to Sartre's philosophical work on these same concepts, the subsequent section outlines Sartre's theoretical position, allowing the philosophical challenges posed by de Beauvoir in relation to women's choices and limitations to be positioned in context and contrast.

3.4.2 Transcendence and Immanence as proposed by Sartre

Considered alongside de Beauvoir and Camus to be a founder of existential philosophy (Flynn 2011; Onof 2004), Sartre's existential phenomenology is characterised by his conception of the self and an interest in ethics (Onof 2004). Developed from a classic phenomenological base, Sartre prized Husserl's theories on the principle of intentionality (Sherman 2003; Flynn 2011).³ However, as acknowledged by Onof (2004), Sartre aimed to understand the human existence rather than the external world, which marks his divergence from Husserl. Sartre developed an "ontological account of what it is to be human" (Onof 2004), in which the main elements consist of the "groundlessness and radical freedom which characterise the human condition" (Onof 2004).

Transcendence and Facticity

In *Transcendence of the Ego* (1936), Sartre refers to two concepts as entities of consciousness; transcendence and immanence. Transcendence describes all that exists outside of consciousness - determinate objects that exist independently without requiring external justification. Additionally, he posited that transcendence can also

³ The principle of intentionality claimed that "all consciousness...intends an other-than-consciousness" (Flynn 2011), which diverges from Cartesian epistemologies.

refer to a considered movement from immanence towards transcendence. Conversely, immanence is described as “the inner unity of consciousness” (Daigle and Landry 2013, p.94) which is passive due to its dependence on its relational ties. Whereas in *Transcendence of the Ego* Sartre considers transcendence and immanence to be intertwined, in *Being and Nothingness* he retracts this view and instead suggests that the concepts are mutually exclusive (1943, cited in Daigle and Landry 2013, p.93). Daigle and Landry note that consciousness in itself is empty, but in its spontaneous movement towards the transcendent object, it becomes transcendent (2013). Herein the relationship between transcendence and immanence emerges - through their interconnected relationship with consciousness, the concepts necessitate each other (2013). Furthermore, in differentiating transcendence and immanence, Sartre theorises two types of being; the phenomenon of being, and the being of the phenomenon. These in turn define the concepts that preoccupy Sartre’s work—the being in-itself, and the being for-itself. The defining characteristics of ‘being in-itself’, as outlined by Flynn (2011), and Sherman (2003), are “self-identical” (Sherman 2003, p.171), and passive: existing as a separate entity and devoid of any relational ties, the ‘being in-itself’ “is without foundation: it just is” (Flynn 2014, p.190). On the other hand, the ‘being for-itself’ is defined as fluid, as something that exists only in relation to others. Referencing Husserl, Sartre asserts that “all consciousness...is consciousness of something” (1943, pp.11,21). As humans must always be conscious of something, the ‘being for-itself’ is interchangeable and dependent on relational ties. This leads Sartre to position the ‘in-itself’ and the ‘for-itself’ as an opposing duality which he termed ‘facticity’ (in-itself) and ‘transcendence’ (for-itself) (Sherman 2003, p.173; Flynn 2011).

Sartre notes that an individual’s facticity stems from the unchangeable ‘givens’ of his personal situation, which Onof characterises as “physical and social restraints” (2004), and Flynn expands on this to include his genealogy, culture, environment, or his native language (2011). In essence, elements of an individual’s facticity extend to include anything that exists outside his autonomy; as such an individual is, therefore, passive in his relational ties. Daigle and Landry explain this point in their phrase “we are always rooted in our facticity” (2013, p.105). However, while there are undoubtedly unchangeable givens for every individual, Sartre claims that human beings are always ‘in situation’ (Flynn 2011), i.e. individuals always do or are conscious of something, thus extending an individual beyond the facticity of his being. Sherman summarises this

by stating that “a human being, in sum, is essentially in tension, torn between the facticity of its given “self” (empirical ego), which is in the past, and the self that would transcend it” (2003, p.173). Herein a dichotomy emerges, wherein an individual is immanent through the facticity of his being, which Sartre asserts is ones “unjustifiable presence in the world” (1943, p.133). The individual continuously ruptures this facticity through his actions and choices, thus propelling himself towards transcendence, which Sartre describes as “the pro-ject of self beyond” (1943, p.52). Thus, if Sartre claims that if individuals are always ‘in situation’, i.e. he constantly makes choices, then humankind is ultimately “condemned to be free” (Priest 2001; Flynn 2011).

Freedom

Sartre’s theory of freedom maintains that individuals are “absolutely free” (Sherman 2003, p.168), wherein “each agent is endowed with unlimited freedom” (Onof 2004). Unlimited freedom refers to an individual’s ability to make choices, and the inevitability of having to make choices. Onof, in reference to Sartre’s contention that “existence comes before essence” (1946, p.2), notes that “to be human is characterised by an existence that precedes its essence” (Onof 2004). Here, Sartre claims that humans begin by existing and that there is no predetermined essence attached to an individual’s being. Rather, an individual must actuate himself in the world through his choices—hence the inevitability of choice. Flynn interprets this as the assertion that humankind is fundamentally free and “responsible for our [own] “world”” (2011). Consequently, individuals must actuate their being by creating themselves from a non-determined existence and assigning meaning to their various projects, undertakings or actions. Both Flynn (2011), and Onof (2004) highlight issues with this concept of unlimited freedom. Onof notes the possibility of the constraints mentioned above (2004), against which our ability to choose arguably cannot supersede. However, Sartre specifies that such limitations are examples of facticity, wherein there are certain ‘givens’ (1943). Sartre reiterates the point that, although an individual always exists within a social situation, the individual is not fully confined to or governed by it (1964, cited in Onof 2004), as his choices and personal projects allow him to move beyond or transcend the givens of this situation.

Thus, Sartre developed a philosophical position regarding the oppositional and mutually exclusive nature of the concepts of transcendence and immanence. However, as

previously suggested, de Beauvoir argues against the theory of absolute freedom for women, citing woman's relational ties, obligations, and treatment by others as limiting her freedom. De Beauvoir also refutes the notion of the mutual exclusivity of transcendence and immanence, arguing instead for the existence of partial transcendence. In *The Second Sex* (1949), she argues that women exist within a social and cultural system that reduces their freedom and choices. Asserting that this social and cultural position of women impacts profoundly upon female facticity and freedom, de Beauvoir consequently develops her existentialist philosophy in explicit recognition of these conditions.

3.4.3 De Beauvoir's Interpretation of Transcendence and Immanence

In *Pyrrhus et Cineas* (1944), as outlined by Mussett (2003), de Beauvoir maintains that while the external world can present as an objective reality, the other, or the internal world can reveal our fundamental freedom. This assertion suggests that humans, due to their self-awareness are fundamentally free but, as they are also a presence in the world and are therefore subject to its conditions their freedom is compromised or limited. De Beauvoir maintains that in terms of the relationship between freedom and situation, that "not every situation was equally valid" (cited in Daigle 2006, p.129). Scholz notes that de Beauvoir's existential ethics regard freedom as universal, and that everything humans undertake in life, which Scholz terms as 'projects', either reduce or extend this freedom (2008). In terms of the concept of transcendence, Mussett articulates de Beauvoir's interpretation of human subjectivity, stating that it "is essentially a 'nothingness', which ruptures being through spontaneous projects" (2003), and that this act of rupturing is thus known as 'transcendence' (Mussett 2003). To rupture this 'given', which can be otherwise identified as our situation as human beings, de Beauvoir proposes that an individual's transcendence is realised through a project, which Veltman characterises as "constructive activities that situate and engage the individual" (2006, p.114), and the end of which is determined as valuable in its own right, rather than requiring external validation (Mussett 2003). Thus, de Beauvoir contends that in order to fully transcend, a person must contribute to something more than their own existence rather than relying on validation from external sources or attempting to transcend through others.

Similarly to Sartre, de Beauvoir contends that humans are constantly engaged in projects which transcend their given situations (Mussett 2003). In this sense, ‘situation’ is used to outline an individual’s state of affairs in an intersubjective world. Daigle and Landry define the human situation as the conditions into which each individual is born i.e., culture, gender, class, etc (2013). In *The Ethics of Ambiguity* (1947), de Beauvoir, referencing Hegel and Descartes, acknowledges an individual’s existence as being an “ambiguous reality” comprised of their freedom as humans and the obstacles they encounter in the world that resist this freedom (p.25). Mussett reiterates this ambiguity, asserting that human existence is a constant ambiguous mix of the internal freedom to transcend one’s given condition, and the paralysing aspects of the external world, the weight of which she notes is imposed on humankind in a way that remains outside the limits of an individual’s control (2003). While Sartre argues for transcendence and immanence as mutually exclusive, de Beauvoir “characterises transcendence as an activity that finds its opposite in passivity” (Daigle and Landry 2013, p101). Therefore, de Beauvoir does not consider transcendence and immanence as being mutually exclusive, but rather as existing simultaneously wherein “transcendence is a surpassing of immanence” and which finds its base in immanence (Daigle and Landry 2013, p.108). De Beauvoir asserts that “Human beings are only transcendent insofar as they are involved in projecting themselves beyond their passive facticity and towards a future being for themselves” (1944, p.121). This suggests de Beauvoir’s position is one which contends that, while humans have the ability to transcend their passive facticity, they can do so only by actively engaging in projects that enable and facilitate their transcendence through contributing to something bigger than the self. In this way, transcendence for de Beauvoir, is characterised by the individual’s activity in the world outside personal projects.

Transcendence and Immanence within The Second Sex

Echoing Strickling (1988), who notes de Beauvoir’s concern with women’s relegation to the sphere of immanence, Mussett describes *The Second Sex* as “an articulate attack on the fact that throughout history, women have been relegated to [this] sphere and the passive roles assigned to them by society” (2003). With regard to women’s relegation to immanence, and passive roles, Veltman claims that while men have “historically represented transcendence”, women have “originally represented immanence, the repetition of life, given her bondage to the natural functions of childbirth and

child-rearing” (2006, p.121). Using the existentialist proposition that holds freedom as a universal, as discussed above, Scholz acknowledges that, for this to be the case, people must achieve this freedom (2008). This marks a disagreement between Sartre’s and de Beauvoir’s concepts of immanence. Sartre allowed that an individual’s situation was something to be transcended and, as Mussett acknowledges, while Sartre recognises a person’s situation to be a limit, he asserts that situation is a limit to be surpassed or transcended (2003). However, as outlined in *The Ethics of Ambiguity* (1947), de Beauvoir disagrees, and referencing Descartes, claims that “the freedom of man is infinite, but his power is limited” (1947, p.28). She recognises these limits as “obstacles” that the world imposes (p.28), and while “certain obstacles let themselves be conquered...others do not” (1947, p.28). Mussett reiterates this, acknowledging the existence of limits that act “as strict and unsurpassable inhibitors to action or transcendence” (2003). De Beauvoir provides examples of such limits through highlighting the situations of oppressed groups, including slaves, and women, who “discover inferiority...as a fixed and preordained essence” (1949, p.324). These groups exist in what Mussett terms a ‘child-like’ world, wherein conditions are inexorably imposed upon them and that this creates situations which appear to result from a natural order (2003). Consequently, oppressed groups consider their situations as inevitable and impossible to resist. De Beauvoir argues that, because humans cannot revolt against nature, oppressed groups such as women become convinced that their situation results from an actual position of inferiority. Acceptance of this situation results in such groups remaining both ignorant of their oppression and oblivious to the possibility of freedom. Reverting to the aforementioned philosophical position that human existence is the ambiguous mix of transcendence and immanence, de Beauvoir observes that despite this, men have been privileged with the ability to transcend through projects, yet women have been unknowingly forced into repetitive and mundane lives of immanence. Therefore, as summarised by Mussett, de Beauvoir’s thesis in *The Second Sex* is to investigate how this “radically unequal relationship emerged, as well as what structures, attitudes and presuppositions continue to maintain its social power” (2003).

Within Book One, de Beauvoir examines and rejects biological, psychoanalytical and economic explanations for women’s situation, before turning to ontology, wherein she researches myths associated with women in order to explain her oppression. Here, as

acknowledged by Mussett (2003) de Beauvoir considers the formulation of ‘the cult of the feminine’ or “the eternal feminine” (de Beauvoir 1949, pp.13-15), two terms used to describe the ways in which codes of socially acceptable behaviour and achievements for women have arisen.⁴ Such codes “trap women into an impossible ideal by denying the individuality and situation of all different kinds of women” (Mussett 2003), with the cult of the feminine effectively maintaining women’s oppression. However, throughout Book One de Beauvoir argues that while such theories usefully contribute to explaining woman’s situation, in terms of how she came to be regarded as the ‘Other Sex’, such codes and myths remained insufficient in explaining woman’s oppression and relegation into immanence as a consequence of being regarded as Other.⁵

According to Mussett, in Book Two de Beauvoir usurps the “essentialism which claims women are born feminine” (2003). Beginning with the infamous quote “One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman” (de Beauvoir 1949, p.295), de Beauvoir rejects the assumption of woman’s inferiority as natural, arguing instead that woman is considered inferior as a result of collective “social indoctrination” (Mussett 2003). It is in Book Two that the concepts of transcendence and immanence become integral to de Beauvoir’s argument. She “contrasts immanence with transcendence...describing transcendence as constructive activity, progression and freedom from facticity” (Daigle and Landry 2013, p.108), and conversely “describes immanence as life-sustaining activity, passivity, and submission to facticity” (p.108). Noting de Beauvoir’s assertion that transcendence and immanence are not mutually exclusive, Scholz explains de Beauvoir’s position as arguing that every human being is both immanent and

⁴ The eternal feminine, also known as the ‘Cult of True Womanhood’, as coined by Barbara Welter (1966), refers to the societal ideals imposed onto women, which they are expected to maintain to be considered feminine. Women were judged according to the attributes of true womanhood by her husband, her family, friends, wider society, and even herself by comparing herself to what this myth maintains she should be. Welter describes the myth as being comprised of “four cardinal virtues – piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity” (1966, p.152). She states that if one were to put all these virtues together, “they spelled mother, daughter, sister, wife – woman” (p.152), and that maintaining each of the four allowed her to adhere to the ideals and achieve the mythical status of true womanhood, or the eternal feminine.

⁵ Throughout *The Second Sex* (1949), de Beauvoir refers to the patriarchal view that historically considers the male as the normative and the woman as being ‘other’. In the introduction, she considers this idea of the male being the subject, or “the absolute” (1949, p.15). She references various viewpoints which reinforced this, such as St. Thomas “who pronounced woman to be an ‘imperfect man’” (de Beauvoir 1949, p.16), which strive to show the extent to which “humanity is male and man defines woman not in herself but as relative to him” (p.16).

transcendent but that some social practices may imprison an individual, and particularly a female individual, within immanence (2008).

In *The Second Sex* de Beauvoir identifies these restrictive social practices as the ideals and norms instilled by patriarchal societies. The section 'Education' traces an unconscious education absorbed by women which, as observed by Mussett (2003), illustrates how women forego claims to transcendence and subjectivity in favour of accepting a passive role. That this education is unconscious is highlighted by Daigle and Landry who observe that "one's situation often closes off the possibilities for transcendence unbeknownst to the individual" (2013, p.108). As such, de Beauvoir asserts that female transcendence is discouraged from infancy through social conditioning and the prevalence of the concept of the eternal feminine, which indoctrinates societies with beliefs that women are unable to transcend their situation, making it both natural and immutable.

This passivity to which women believe they are confined is explored further in the section of Book Two entitled 'Situation'. This is referred to by Mussett, who notes that herein, de Beauvoir analyses the role of wife and mother, amongst other roles, illustrating how women are "forced" into "monotonous", immanent existences within the domestic sphere (2003). In Chapter One of this section, de Beauvoir asserts that men achieve transcendence by continuously working on projects that extend into the future and transpire within the public sphere, therein enabling them to contribute to something that extends their influence and activity beyond the facticity of their being (1949, p.449). Women, conversely, for reasons outlined above, typically remain confined within domestic spaces unable to exert influence or become active beyond the facticity of their being, despite ensuring the continuation of society by keeping house and bearing children (de Beauvoir 1949, pp.449-450; Daigle and Landry 2013, p.109). Scholz discusses this confinement, noting that due to the conditioning of girls from infancy, "all women believe they ought to try to play the feminine role" (2008). This concept of the 'feminine role' is presented by de Beauvoir as an important constraint that inhibits or prevents woman from transcending her facticity. The minimal independence afforded to a girl within patriarchal societies allows her to realise her potential freedom and transcendence, but she is then discouraged from acting upon or

realising these choices by practical and psychological barriers, thus making it difficult for her to realise her potential (Scholz, 2008).

Daigle and Landry note that de Beauvoir's argument maintains that the tasks performed by women within the domestic sphere are not transcendent activities because such tasks are merely necessary for survival or, in their repetitive monotony, are relegated to acts of immanence. While de Beauvoir "believes the human being to be both immanent and transcendent, ambiguous in nature" (2013, p.109), her argument in 'Situation' is that a happy synthesis of transcendence and immanence within the existing social patriarchal hierarchy is possible only for men (1949, p.449). While she observes that men also experience immanence, through repetitive reiteration of mundane tasks, unlike women, men have opportunities to become involved in projects extending beyond the necessary tasks of survival, reproduction and domestic management (p.449).

Daigle and Landry assert that de Beauvoir identifies opportunities for female transcendence through acts of generosity (2013, p.112). This allows woman the freedom of choice to act in the interests of others or acting in the interests of herself. Bergoffen interprets the consequences of this choice as follows: if she endorses the choice, she will require the help of others to support it and form an alliance to complete a project (2004). Being for others, then, allows woman to transcend with the help of others: if others share her values and join her in her projects, these projects can be realised, and woman can transcend her facticity (Bergoffen 2004). An example of woman transcending by acting in the interests of others is found in the act of cooking a family meal, which de Beauvoir analyses in Chapter Five 'The Married Woman'. De Beauvoir suggests that a woman may achieve transcendence by, for example, making a "successful dish" which is met with "warm approval" (de Beauvoir 1949 p.474). In this instance woman, creative with food and creating an atmosphere of joy exceeds the possible and perceived passivity of the task by using the art of cooking to create joy for others. However, de Beauvoir quickly points out that daily repetition deadens the potential creativity, joy and success of the task until it subtly slides back to the realm of facticity and immanence. Undertaken throughout the day, and on a daily basis, the act of cooking a successful meal becomes monotonous, and the joy, which is fleeting, must be revoked at each meal, over time making it part of the task rather than a triumph over the monotony of repetition.

Although de Beauvoir contends that woman's situation (which is dictated by her social relationships) is typically bound to immanence, she "maintains an existentialist belief in the absolute ontological freedom of human beings regardless of sex" (Mussett 2003), thus purporting that every human being is fundamentally free. Throughout *The Second Sex* de Beauvoir denies the existence of an 'essence' of woman, arguing against a defining naturally occurring characteristic (Scholz 2008). However, she does suggest woman's culpability in her facticity (Mussett 2003; Scholz 2008). Scholz notes that while female subordinate identity is socially constructed and maintained through ideological systems, that women unwittingly endorse and maintain these systems (2008). Mussett echoes this, arguing that women in patriarchal societies are guilty of rejecting their freedom in favour of the benefits that facticity can offer, such as social respectability, shelter, financial and domestic comforts (2003). Such women, de Beauvoir argues, are complicit in their subordination to men and, by so being, perpetuate the state of immanence for other women. De Beauvoir suggests that if woman's situation is to change, then she must insist upon and advance this change. Scholz argues that a woman must see herself as man sees himself; as subject and not object (2008). Woman must embrace her fundamental freedom and projects which further her freedom. Mussett (2003) and Scholz (2008) acknowledge three strategies outlined by de Beauvoir to facilitate this change. The first of these strategies is that woman must be allowed to accept work outside the home, thus giving her economic freedom and opportunities to participate in projects extending beyond the support of her basic existence. Secondly, woman should pursue and engage in intellectual activity, and finally, de Beauvoir advocates changes in social structures, suggesting that women should strive towards creating a socialist society, contending that economic justice and equality form key factors in the overall liberation of women from facticity.

De Beauvoir challenges Sartre's contention that all human beings surpass their immanence and that transcendence is inevitable. In *The Ethics of Ambiguity* (1947), she recognises that humans have an internal freedom to transcend their given situation, but suggests this freedom is not unlimited as Sartre proposes. Rather, de Beauvoir maintains that freedom for human beings is contingent on the situations imposed by the external world. Such situations exist outside the limits of an individual's control with the result that while individuals have, in theory, the freedom to transcend, whether they achieve this freedom is dependent on the external situations that are inexorably imposed upon

them. Examples of situations not easily transcended include the situation of oppressed groups whose lives and choices are imposed upon them by established power hierarchies. *The Second Sex* identifies women as an oppressed group within a patriarchal society, suggesting that, while some women possess the internal freedom to transcend, society confines other women to immanence. Illustrating this, and maintaining the idea that transcendence and immanence exist simultaneously in humans in an ambiguous manner, de Beauvoir explores a theoretical position contrary to Sartre's. De Beauvoir refutes the argument that transcendence and immanence present exclusive opposites suggesting instead that, for women, the concepts exist within an intertwined relationship.

From this argument the possibility of partial transcendence emerges within de Beauvoir's philosophy. Partial transcendence refers to instances wherein an individual negotiates the boundaries of the states of being 'for itself' and 'in itself', retaining elements of both. Individuals achieving partial transcendence reside in the liminal space of not 'either' or 'or', but rather 'both'. This occurs when an individual embraces her freedom of choice regarding her situation and engages in acts of transcendence which allow her participation in projects that encompass more than basic survival needs. However, while these acts can allow her the ability to surpass minor, or 'local' limits, she remains restricted in her freedoms and choices.

3.4.4 De Beauvoir's theory of Partial Transcendence

This study adopts de Beauvoir's theory of partial transcendence to analyse Morgan's portrayal of her female characters and their experiences. Considering the situation of Morgan's female characters, contrasting these situations with socio-cultural material advocating and describing the situation of women contemporaneous with the eras of the novels, this study examines how the female characters within *Random Passage* and *Waiting for Time* negotiate the boundaries of transcendence and immanence. Morgan's women characters, who are bound by the social constructs of the 19th and 20th centuries, despite the limits imposed on them by the external world, continuously embrace their freedom to make choices regarding their situations throughout their lives, and de Beauvoir's theories on partial transcendence provide a useful theoretical lens through which to view these fictional experiences.

The subsequent analysis chapters focus on three stages of a woman's life: her life as a young girl and her experiences during adolescence; her situation as a married, or unmarried woman; and finally, her experiences as a mother. Each chapter examines a number of female characters from *Random Passage* and *Waiting for Time*, focusing firstly on how the experiences and situations of those characters reflect the customs and social norms of society during those eras and, secondly, how Morgan's female characters attempt to extend their legacies beyond the confines of the domestic space. The theory utilised in each chapter is derived primarily from the correspondingly titled chapters of *The Second Sex*: 'The Young Girl' incorporates the adolescent years from the beginning of puberty, until the girl reaches young adulthood at the latter end of the teenage years; 'The Married and Unmarried Woman' focuses on the life stage that follows adolescence, when a woman has reached an age and level of maturity that society considers appropriate for marriage and taking on the role of wife. Finally, 'The Mother' discusses the stage following marriage wherein women were expected to enter into motherhood, thus completing the transition between girlhood and adulthood. Using de Beauvoir's observations as a guide to woman's situation during these stages, the three analysis chapters investigate how Morgan's characters' situations reflect social behaviours and customs of those periods and explore circumstances of partial transcendence. Such phrases help to distinguish the specific period in a woman's life under consideration and her situation during this time, subsequently allowing for a more focused analysis with regard to the expectations for women at any given stage. In terms of the variety of ages represented and the experiences portrayed throughout Morgan's novels, categorisation by life stage provides an increasingly in-depth way to analyse how Morgan uses female experience to explore partial transcendence, informed by these specific expectations and societal mores.

3.4.5 Liminality, the 'Third Space' and Scope for Further Research

Liminal spaces, according to Ashcroft *et al* (2007), are threshold or 'in-between' spaces - "a region in which there is a continual process of movement and interchange between different states" (p.117). Homi Bhabha refers to this liminal, or 'in-between' space as 'the third space', which Kalua describes as a space "loaded with ambiguity" (2009, p.25). Derived from Victor Turner's theory of liminality, these spaces are "necessarily ambiguous, since this condition and these persons elude or slip through the network of classifications that normally locate states and positions" (1969, p.95). While Ashcroft *et*

al consider the region of partial transcendence to be a continuum, moving in a flow constantly between transcendence and immanence (2007, p.117), Turner's interpretation instead poses that the concept of liminality can be used to describe partial transcendence as a state, which "prevents identities at either end of it from settling into primordial polarities" (Bhabha 1994, p5). As a threshold space between transcendence and immanence, partial transcendence acknowledges that human beings harbour both in an ambiguous mix, consequently enabling them to be simultaneously both and neither at any given time depending on the context, thus dismantling binary systems that previously presented transcendence and immanence as a dichotomy. Due to the similarities between the concept of partial transcendence and Bhabha's theory of the third space, this theory could be employed as a means of further conceptualising the theory of partial transcendence. However, due to the parameters of this research, as a result of various constraints, such as time, etc., extending the research to include the application of Post-Colonial theory is not considered in depth here.

3.5 Primary Research Materials

Morgan's *Random Passage* and *Waiting for Time* are selected as they foreground female experience and chart changing social mores and circumstances for women within the 19th and 20th centuries. Spanning circa 200 years, the timeframe of the story begins in the 1820s and continues through to the 1990s and briefly into the future with an epilogue to *Waiting for Time* dated June 2024. The timeframe of the novels allows for an intergenerational analysis of women's changing experiences and circumstances. The novels, which were conceived of and written as one volume, are published separately (Morgan in Porter, 1995). The decision to limit the corpus to the two novels and to limit the theoretical framework to the theories of de Beauvoir rather than incorporating more recent feminist theorists was motivated by an intention to create a tightly focused analysis within the limitations of the study.

Set in the 1820s, *Random Passage* charts the lives of the Andrews family who set sail from Weymouth, England to Cape Random, a fictional outpost on the coast of Newfoundland. The novel follows the Andrews family and the community they join on the Cape and charts their struggle to survive in that strange and harsh environment. The narrative focuses on the female characters' experiences and is presented within the third person, most often from the point of view of Lavinia, who records her experiences to

allow future generations “to know how it was in the beginning” (Morgan 1994, p.90). *Waiting for Time* follows a descendant of the Andrews family, Lav, the great-great-great-granddaughter of Ben and Meg in *Random Passage*. The novel is set in the 1980s and includes narrative accounts from 1901. The point of departure of *Waiting for Time* is Lav’s embarkation to Newfoundland from the Canadian mainland which initiates in her a journey of discovery of the history of her ancestors, which frame her reflections on her own experiences and identity.

Focusing on a small core of central female characters, both novels explore the expectations, limitations, ambitions and frustrations of female experience which expose the ideological and social hierarchical systems operating within nineteenth and twentieth century Newfoundland and offer comparisons between social mores and women’s situations in both times. In addition to analysing women’s attempts to extend the legacy and impact of their lives beyond the domestic sphere, the novels also provide a long view of the history of female experience and women’s negotiated attempts to traverse the boundaries of transcendence and immanence. Considering these experiences, which occur within the “non-festival” moments as discussed by Whalen (2001, p.24), through an existential feminist lens, this research engages with “previously unwritten women’s histories” (Fuller 2004, p.116). In analysing the attempts made by Morgan’s female characters to transcend their relegation to immanence, in light of the social and cultural mores, the study is centred on the experiences of those who were traditionally excluded from the official narratives, thus adding to the discussion around literature and marginalised communities.

As context is essential for forming interpretations, deepening an understanding of the texts and “see[ing] how the literary material corresponds to the experience from which it is drawn” (Register, 1980, p.280), other research materials include texts concerning coastal Newfoundland, with regards to customs, traditions and societal norms. Furthermore, as the novels follow a family of British settlers and their descendants, socio-cultural context regarding settlers to the region provide useful cultural and historical information. 19th century books regarding female decorum such as *The Daughters of England* (1842), *The Wives of England* (1834), and *The Mothers of England* (1844) by Sarah Stickney Ellis provide detailed descriptions of the accepted duties and responsibilities of girls and women in this century. Comparable twentieth

century texts are considered in relation to *Waiting for Time* and for similar purposes i.e. to reveal the situations and expectations of and for women. These materials include *Jackie* (1964-1993), *Woman* (1937-Present), *Woman's Companion* (1927-1961) and *Woman Illustrated* (1936-1961) magazines. Such an approach is justified by Fuller who utilises socio-cultural materials in the form of women's newspapers and women's agenda books in similar research and who argues for the value of these materials in "valoriz[ing] local women's histories, life writing and contemporary experiences" (2004, p.5).

In terms of the cultural and social customs of society across these eras, McLean *et al* assert that "the media are [sic] considered to be one source of influence and pressure, along with family and peers, which reflect and promote cultural ideals" (2019, p.2). Examples of these ideals include beauty, as "a common element of many forms of media is the portrayal of idealised images of human beauty" (McLean *et al* 2019, p.1), and ideals of femininity. Ballaster *et al* describes these ideals of femininity as "var[ying]...from historical moment to moment" (1991, p.10), but consistently offering a "dominant" ideology of women as:

the repository of the nation's virtue...here defined as essentially domestic and private, bound to 'family' ideals of affection, loyalty and obligation, to domestic production or housekeeping (1991, p.10).

Therefore, although the ideals conveyed vary historically, they continue to promote and consolidate perceived standards of beauty and link femininity with conformity to particular ideals. Tiggemann indicates that women buy magazines for "entertainment...inspiration... [and] social learning" (2009, p.73), thus influencing consumers in a way that Gurevich *et al* describes as "persuasive" (2005, p.6). Furthermore, Gurevich *et al* discuss various studies conducted in the 1960s and 1970s, which conclude that the media plays "a central role...in consolidating and fortifying the values and attitudes of audience members" (2005, p.9). They further note that such results consequently indicate that the power of the media is not in creating ideologies, but in "renewing, amplifying and extending the existing predispositions that constitute the dominant culture" (p.14). The inspiration offered by magazines, added to "repeated exposure to consistent media messages...shape viewers' perceptions of social reality" (McLean *et al* 2019, p.3). These factors, combined to pressurise individuals to conform

to certain ideals and trigger a process of internalisation, culminate in the individual's aspiration towards these ideals "as personal standards" (McLean *et al* 2019, p.2).

As periodicals thus help spread the dominant ideologies within society, by influencing consumers through both their printed content and the use of advertisements, they provide an invaluable resource for researchers in that they implicitly articulate social and cultural mores of the time in which they are written and published. Illustrating the behaviours and values of the specific time periods that Morgan's characters fictionally inhabit, cultural artefacts such as conduct books and periodicals allow for a socio-cultural analysis of their experiences. They contribute to the understanding of what life was like, in terms of expectations and perceptions of femininity for women during these eras. Thus, familiarity with the socio-cultural and historical context of the texts facilitates the aim of the study which is an investigation of the ways in which Morgan critiques, explores and reveals this context through her fictional account of female experience in coastal Newfoundland communities.

4 The Young Girl: Waiting, Threshold Spaces and Partial Transcendence

This chapter focuses on Lavinia Andrews within *Random Passage* and Lav Andrews within *Waiting for Time* and considers how their experiences reflect the negotiations of ‘young girls’ in crossing boundaries of confinement and passivity.⁶ As *Random Passage* begins, Lavinia Andrews is seventeen years old while her descendent Lav Andrews is in her late thirties as *Waiting for Time* opens. Though these characters are depicted at different stages in their lives, they recall their adolescent experiences within the respective novels.

De Beauvoir’s definition of the ‘young girl’ incorporates the years from the beginning of puberty at eleven to thirteen and finishes at approximately age eighteen (1949). She states that during this time:

she is already free of her childish past, and the present seems but a time of transition...Her youth is consumed in waiting, more or less disguised. She is awaiting Man (de Beauvoir 1949, p.351).

The adolescent years for women are thus considered a period of idleness within 19th and 20th century societies as, in order to reach the next stage of her life, which is that of married woman, woman needs a husband, a “liberator” from this period of idleness (de Beauvoir 1949, p.352). Throughout ‘The Young Girl’ chapter, de Beauvoir emphasises the importance of girls attaining husbands, stating that “there is unanimous agreement that getting a husband – or in some cases, a ‘protector’ – is for her, the most important of undertakings” (1949, p.352). This importance of marriage is imposed on girls from all angles: “everything tells the young girl that it is in her best interests to become their vassal” (p.352). Within her social circle, “friends envy and admire the one who gets the most masculine attention”, and even in her home “parents urge her to it; her father is proud of his daughter’s success, her mother sees a prosperous future in it” (p.352). De Beauvoir’s ironic tone emphasises that both family and society consider marriage as an “honourable career”, allowing the girl to “keep her social dignity intact, but also find

⁶ The term ‘Young Girl’, as utilised throughout this thesis, correlates with the terminology throughout *The Second Sex* (1949).

sexual fulfilment as loved one and mother” (p.352).⁷ However, prior to marriage the young girl is permitted to fill her time with other occupations.

As reflected within the titles, both *Random Passage* and *Waiting for Time* are characterised by the theme of waiting. Throughout Morgan’s texts, many characters exist in a state of waiting and anticipation. As stories by Atlantic women writers are predominantly tales of survival (Fuller 2004), considering the harsh landscape and environment, this perpetual waiting affects Morgan’s male and female characters: the characters wait for winter to end, for Gosse’s ships to bring supplies, for the caplin to arrive and the cod season to begin. However, Morgan’s young girl characters also wait in a different dimension, in that they wait to ‘become’ women - a status that finds full expression in the state of matrimony. This chapter focuses on the experiences of the protagonists Lavinia Andrews from *Random Passage* and Lav Andrews from *Waiting for Time*, and considers their experiences of waiting to become women and the occupations that fill this waiting period with regard to the cultural and social mores of the 19th and 20th centuries.

4.1 Lavinia

De Beauvoir observes that following puberty, an inferiority complex instilled during the girl’s childhood is confirmed, and consequently, “the girl loses ground in the intellectual and artistic domains” (1949, p.357). While de Beauvoir acknowledges various reasons for this, the most common reason she cites is that “the adolescent girl is not given the encouragement accorded to her brothers – quite the contrary” (p.357). In addition, the girl is expected to “be also a woman, and...add the duties of her professional study to those implied in her femininity” (p.357), signifying that the young girls’ occupations must be undertaken alongside her duties within the home and that these domestic responsibilities must not suffer as a result. However, pursuing an education and employment offers the young girl a degree of freedom from the passivity imposed upon her by her situation.

⁷ The institution of marriage is considered in greater depth in Chapter Five of this thesis.

Morgan illustrates this degree of freedom in Chapter One of *Random Passage*, wherein Lavinia reminisces on the life she left in Weymouth. Prior to their migration to the Cape, Lavinia received “two winters of Sunday school” in which she learned basic literacy, writing and arithmetic skills (Morgan 1992, p.111). According to her employer Mrs. Ellsworth, these skills could have offered prospects, had Lavinia remained in Weymouth instead of leaving with her family (Morgan 1992, p.20). Noting that she is the only maid that can read and write (p.21), Lavinia’s experiences of schooling highlight the freedom *and* the restrictions experienced by young working-class women. De Beauvoir notes that girls were afforded some opportunities to pursue other occupations during their adolescence, but that they were typically discouraged from prioritising these as “family tasks [were] superimposed upon their schoolwork” (1949, p.357).

Lavinia’s efforts to obtain an education arise through her careful negotiation of her situation. Morgan emphasises that Lavinia’s education is obtained through her Sunday school which she attended only because Sunday was considered a day of rest by her employer (Morgan 1992, p.18). This small freedom enables Lavinia to obtain a perfunctory education and, by choosing to pursue an education, and by managing her time to ensure that her other responsibilities did not suffer, Lavinia resists the confines of the domestic sphere and productively occupies her girlhood with an occupation that resists immanence and passivity. Having literacy and arithmetic skills provide greater economic independence, enabling Lavinia to independently manage her limited finances thus providing her with opportunities and a degree of autonomy unavailable to those young girls who submit themselves to the fate “woven” for them (de Beauvoir 1949, p.351).

Furthermore, by portraying Lavinia as a maid, Morgan reflects the social mores of 19th century society which dictated that girls were limited to employment that was considered socially acceptable. Kathryn Hughes confirms this by stating that in patriarchal societies women were regarded as belonging in the domestic space (2014): this assertion echoes de Beauvoir’s observation that “success is reserved for men” (1949, p.358). In Weymouth, Lavinia negotiated these mores by seeking employment that was considered appropriate, thus establishing a degree of independence, and that offered “good prospects” (Morgan 1992, p.14), albeit these prospects are limited.

Sarah Stickney Ellis claims that a girl's life in the 19th century is characterised by waiting and anticipation, writing that "youth is the season for acquiring" (1842, p.33). However, Stickney Ellis places particular emphasis on the various skills considered acceptable for a woman, such as cleverness of hand, noting that such a skill adds "additional charm" to a girl's appeal, while enabling her to serve within the home with an assured confidence (1842, p.33). Described as a "clean, decent girl" (Morgan 1992, p.22), Lavinia secures paid employment allowing her to acquire these skills in an environment where she is supported by women.

This situation was considered a great opportunity for girls within the 19th century: Stickney Ellis claims that, as household duties were woman's responsibility, domestic service provided young women with learning opportunities "to know how to do everything which can properly come within a woman's sphere of duty, [which] ought to be the ambition of every female mind" (1842, p.33). This experience offers young women opportunities to accrue the necessary knowledge and experience to successfully manage domestic life. Stickney Ellis regards this as a great achievement as such abilities allow women to become an effective "mistress of her own affairs" (1842, p.37). This confidence and ability to manage enables the young woman to surpass a position of passive dependence. Evidence of the importance of developing this ability emerges within *Random Passage* following the Andrews' family's emigration, wherein skills of flexibility and dexterity become vital to survive in such a harsh environment. Instances of how women's dexterity and domestic experience and confidence that form vital aspects of survival on the Cape include Lavinia's use of children's games to teach other family members how to count (Morgan 1992, pp.149-150); Sarah Vincent's use of moss to soak up blood (p.33); Mary Bundle's knowledge and experience of herbalism enabling her to save Joe Vincent's finger (p.85); and the women's boiling of spruce needles to make tea (p.36). Some of these instances simply indicate the creativeness that having a cleverness of the hand can provide in a situation, thus helping to make life easier; for example, Lavinia's use of the children's game 'chip-chip' to teach Mary Bundle to count (p.150). The game enables Lavinia to impart the knowledge in a way that it was more easily and quickly understood than conventional methods which "took weeks to impart" (p.150). However, other instances such as melting the snow in buckets to get water (p.33) and "boiling down seaweed" for eating (p.46) highlights the fact that, for the women on the Cape, such dexterity is not only useful, but also essential for

survival. The experience, skill set and confidence that Lavinia has gained through her employment enables her to surpass the confines of passivity, as she no longer relies primarily on men to be her “protectors” (de Beauvoir 1949, p.352). Instead, she actively contributes to the collective effort to survive, thus extending her legacy and impact and contributing to the project of the collective.

Furthermore, Lavinia’s limited financial independence also allows her to negotiate patriarchal attitudes and practice which confines women to lives that are characterised by a dependence on men (de Beauvoir 1949; Maier 2007). While man was encouraged to occupy the public sphere, working to establish his independence and autonomy within the world, and thus, achieve transcendence, woman was expected to embody immanence, remaining within the domestic space (de Beauvoir 1949, p.447; Hughes 2014). This resulted in an expectation that men provide for the family, which consequently confined the woman to passivity with regards to the household income, except in cases of exception. Exceptions to this included certain groups of women, including widows, such as Jennie Andrews. Other examples include, but are not limited to, women whose husbands could not adequately provide for the family; and women who remained single or without families of their own.

Steady paid employment allows Lavinia a degree of financial freedom, unlike the women observed by de Beauvoir, who “were not encouraged to take charge of their own amusements” and instead are “enjoin[ed]...to take a passive role” (1949, pp.358-359). Earning her own income enables Lavinia to contribute to the financial security of the wider family (Morgan 1992, p.65), to provide herself with hair ribbons and lace gloves, without having to rely on her mother and brothers (p.65), and can also surprise the children with sweets (p.65). De Beauvoir observes that an important factor in the difficulty encountered by young girls upon adolescence is that “up to this time she has been an autonomous individual: now she must renounce her sovereignty” (1949, p.360). This creates an internal conflict in the young girl, who consequently struggles with her original autonomy on one hand, and the social pressure to accept passivity on the other. In her financial independence Lavinia rejects the renunciation of her sovereignty, instead embracing her internal freedom to retain her independence, and an element of autonomy over her life and her affairs.

However, on the other hand, while Lavinia chooses education and employment, she is not entirely free of the constraints imposed on young girls. De Beauvoir claims that during this time, a woman “had no valid aims, only occupations” (1949, p.351). Here she refers to the concept of waiting, highlighting that, regardless of the success of a girl’s (or young woman’s) occupations, these are considered as merely a means of passing the idle time until marriage. Societal expectations for young girls play an integral role in their relegation to immanence: de Beauvoir remarks “how readily a woman can give up music, study, her profession, once she has found a husband” (1949, p.391), and emphasises girls’ willingness to abandon everything other than domestic occupations.

The impact of social attitudes and of many young women’s willingness to renounce their sovereignty is illustrated in Lavinia’s reminiscences in Chapter One, of a young Weymouth puppet-seller (Morgan 1992, p.14). Although Lavinia had created a multitude of “good prospects” for herself (p.14), including the opportunity of promotion to cook (p.22), thus allowing her “a respectable life” (p.22), she often speculates on her missed opportunity with the young man. She declares that while “they had never spoken[,] [they] would have” (p.14), inferring the possibility of their marriage and the consequent willing relinquishing of her sovereignty. This instance reinforces de Beauvoir’s claim that a young girl’s occupations were not considered equal in importance to that of obtaining an acceptable husband.

Lavinia is further confined within a condition of passivity due to her geographical situation. By identifying a potential suitor while living in Weymouth, Lavinia had also subsequently identified a possible end to the idle period; as a man, the puppet-seller could have been a source of liberation from the confines of waiting. However, having moved to the Cape, which is described as nothing more than “a sand-bar jutting out into the North Atlantic” (Morgan 1994, p.19), and is inhabited only by one family other than their own, along with the storekeeper Thomas Hutchings, the means to end her period of idleness has disappeared, due to the absence of suitors on the Cape. This in turn results in the indefinite prolonging of the young girls waiting. This prolonging projects girls into a liminal space, as they physically mature beyond the stage of adolescence, but on the other hand remain confined to girlhood by society, due to the lack of potential for marriage, which was regarded as essential in the process of becoming a woman.

Morgan presents this liminal space in Chapter Nine in which Lavinia negotiates the threshold of girlhood and adulthood. Noting the children's persistence in confiding in her, which they had done since they were toddlers, this highlights a confidence the children have in Lavinia that they do not have in the other adults. Their confidence and feeling that they could trust her with their stories and secrets stems from how they view their aunt; not married like their parents and other adult relatives, Lavinia acknowledges that she is not regarded as an adult, but she also realises that neither is she one of the children. Lavinia recognises her difference and ponders her decreasing tolerance for the children's tales, "tell[ing] them crossly to stop their prate about monsters and ghosts" (Morgan 1992, p.122). Observing that the children are "often rebuffed" when they try to confide in her illustrates the liminal space that Lavinia occupies (p.122). Although she has grown out of childhood occupations, which as de Beauvoir notes constitutes the moment when the young girl is "free of her childish past" (1949, p.351), Lavinia remains unable to occupy the adult world as she is without a husband and therefore barred from crossing the confines of girlhood. Thus, Lavinia feels as though "she is adrift in limbo, neither child nor adult, stranded in a byway she should long ago have passed" (Morgan 1992, p.122). This liminal state represents the experience of waiting and illustrates how young women in the time and place of Morgan's novels remain within the confines of waiting, despite age and maturity, simply due to remaining unmarried, an event that was considered key in escaping and crossing this threshold into womanhood.

4.2 Lav

20th century character, Lav Andrews in *Waiting for Time*, exists in a similar liminal space to her ancestor Lavinia, despite advancements within the types of occupations available to her. For example, Lav's opportunity to achieve an education is significantly more than Lavinia's two winters of Sunday school resulting from the Sunday School Movement in Britain in 1780. Lav lives in a time when education for young women is normalised.⁸ As an adolescent Lav is studious, interested in science and in discovering

⁸ The introduction of the 1871 compulsory school laws in Ontario required all children aged between seven and twelve to attend at least four months of school per annum. This was raised to children aged eight to fourteen in 1891 (Oreopoulos 2005, p.8). By the mid-20th century, following the 1951 School's Administration Act, schooling up to age sixteen was mandatory, unless in the case of exemptions wherein children over fourteen had to seek employment to help support the family (pp.8-9).

the “secrets hidden inside the earth” (Morgan 1994, p.13). However, as de Beauvoir was writing *The Second Sex* in the mid-20th century, the ideals and stereotypes outlined are also consistent with those circulated throughout the society in which Lav lived, circa 150 years after Lavinia. Alderson notes that in magazines aimed at adolescent girls at this time, despite the fact that young women received better educational opportunities, marriage continued to be considered the preferred option for women (1968; de Beauvoir 1949). This is described by Alderson as the existence of an “anti-intellectual bias” (1968, p.27), imposed upon women who decided to obtain second and third level educations, rather than pursuing employment or developing a social life through which she could meet potential suitors.

Noting that girls often chose to remain in school rather than obtain lower paid jobs or get married, Alderson suggests that second-level education was orientated towards those who intended to pursue third-level education, or those who required a skillset beyond what was offered during the mandatory junior cycle. Alderson’s analysis suggests that unless young women fit into either of these categories, they would typically leave school to get unskilled and lower paid employment or to get married. By remaining in school, and then pursuing a doctoral qualification, Lav presents an example of young women who rejected the expectation that this stage of life is characterised by acts of waiting for potential suitors. By pursuing her interest in education, Lav achieves financial independence, thus retaining her intellectual autonomy.

Additionally, Morgan presents Lav as a woman who retains her independence through employment. The novel portrays Lav as an adult, with an insight into her childhood and adolescence offered through the medium of memory, rather than as it happened. However, while she is not a ‘Young Girl’ in that she is not an adolescent, Lav’s current situation as an independent adult can be attributed to her experiences and choices during that period of her life. As previously outlined, Alderson critiques the ways in which 20th century periodicals aimed at adolescent women continued to reinforce the narrative that it was the role of young women to marry before she could enter her next life stage: using the medium of story strips, she notes that a frequent theme explored by such

magazines is that of “wish fulfilment” (1968, p.10).⁹ Wish fulfilment, as defined by Alderson, is the desire by young women to find an acceptable suitor. The wish is realised when “the girl gets the boy, but not only a boy, but the right boy”, and subsequently lives ‘[happily] ever after’ (p.10).

Magazines such as *Jackie* act in a similar fashion to the books of feminine decorum within the 19th century, in that they instil and clarify dominant societal expectations for women. While some content is obviously ironic and comic, the underlying message—that obtaining a boyfriend and potential husband is of significant importance, remains the same.¹⁰ One example of such content includes a listicle titled ‘21 Ways to Make Him Notice You’, which includes suggestions wherein girls are advised not to be overly or aggressively competitive but instead learn to lose gracefully as “boys are afraid of pushy girls” (*The Biggest Jackie Annual Ever* 2008, p.275). This echoes de Beauvoir’s observations that men do not like “garçons manqués, or blue stockings”, or girls who are “too daring” (1949, p.359), in correlation with the ideals which perceive women as being dainty and docile.

Considering de Beauvoir’s observations about the caution young girls should exercise to avoid being perceived as overly competitive or intellectual, Lav’s decision to pursue a career actively rejects the stereotypes that made idols of docile and submissive women. This stereotype stems from the ideals of femininity which, according to de Beauvoir (1949), involves appearing to be “weak, futile [and] docile” (p.359). Such traits are upheld within the various myths surrounding femininity, promoting ideas of the perfect woman. Examples of these myths include the Victorian ‘Angel in the House’ ideal, which valued morality and self-sacrifice (Acton, cited in Ermarth 1997), believing that women should be devoted and submissive to her husband, as “Man must be pleased; but him to please/ Is woman’s pleasure” (Patmore 1854, p.135). The ‘Cult of True Womanhood’ further continues these ideals into the 20th century, with submission

⁹ Story strips, or comic strips, are used to tell a story using a number of drawings arranged in a horizontal sequence.

¹⁰ Examples of this ironic content are evident in the listicle ‘20 Ways to be Irresistible’; for example, one piece of advice offered is to “take a party of boys to the Hampton Court Maze, and hide yourself in the middle. They won’t be able to get away from you – however hard they try, they’ll keep coming back!” (*The Biggest Jackie Annual Ever* 2008, p.205).

being considered “perhaps the most feminine virtue” (Welter 1966, p.158), as while men were “the movers, the doers, the actors women were the passive, submissive responders” (p.159).

Working in a public sector job propels Lav into the public sphere, which, according to de Beauvoir (1949), was considered as reserved for men. Morgan emphasises this by creating Lav as a minority within her workplace as, both in Ottawa and Newfoundland, all other named co-workers are male, with the exception of the character of Mrs Alice O'Reilly, whose role is undefined though most likely administrative as Lav considers her as “the glue that holds the civil service together” (Morgan 1994, p.32). Lav, whose adolescent dreams of becoming a scientist rejects the centrality of a male figure in her wish fulfilment, instead competes aggressively within the educational environment prioritising herself, her education and her career and deliberately pitting herself intellectually in a predominantly male-dominated field. In choosing this path when she was a young girl, Lav exemplifies those women who reject the status quo and who refuse to conform and submit to the ideals of society. In retaining her freedom and autonomy, a situation possible as a result of her choices as an adolescent, Lav provides an example of the potential impact of such decisions on a woman's future. Unlike those who accept the status quo and submit to the ideals, Lav's choices enable her to transcend the fate of other women who by choice or default remain relegated to immanence.

However, regardless of her efforts, both as a young girl and as an adult, to avoid being confined to a life of dependency on a man, and despite the progression between the early-19th and mid-20th centuries, the situation surrounding females with regard to the male being considered her liberator continues to be enforced¹¹. Thus, Lav is also

¹¹ Progression in the 20th century for women included the revival of the women's movement throughout the late 1960's and 1970s (Marsden 2012, p.185), and the creation of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in 1967, which aimed to “inquire into and report upon the status of women in Canada, and to recommend what steps might be taken by the Federal Government to ensure for women equal opportunities with men in all aspects of Canadian society” (Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada 1970, p.vii). According to Morris (2016), the report outlined 166 recommendations across a variety of issues from education and employment, to pay equity and childcare policies. These recommendations incited change across Canada; Marsden notes that with regard to employment, by the 1970's – which is arguably around the time when Lav entered the workforce, “women's permanence in the labour force became accepted as the social norm and the major push to equality in pay and access reached all parts of Canada and all industry sectors” (2012, p.231).

confined within a waiting period as, despite Morgan portraying her as successful, she is nonetheless confined by the views of society surrounding male superiority/female inferiority. While men do not require external validation for their achievements, the girl:

has much more difficulty than the young man in finding self-realisation as an independent individual...[as] neither her family nor the mores are favourable to her efforts in this direction (de Beauvoir 1949, p.391).

De Beauvoir acknowledges this power dynamic, describing it as “male prestige” wherein men are “masters of the world” (1949, p.352). This offers partial explanation of one aspect of belief surrounding female inferiority and man as woman’s liberator because, as society fails to acknowledge woman’s achievements as credible in their own right, she consequently requires external validation through men’s commendation of her achievements. At this point, Lav is an adult, and yet she continues to be confined to waiting for her efforts to be validated and her accomplishments credited by men. This is illustrated further by Lav’s colleague Ian Farman who suggests that she would be suitable for a research job in the Newfoundland branch of the Department of Fisheries. Highlighting the various requirements for such a task, he notes that the candidate must be:

someone who knows the scene here in Ottawa – someone with enough policy experience to oversee regional people – to work with them, pull the PK3 stuff into a cohesive package, something we can get a policy planning document out of before the next election (Morgan 1994, p.27).

In between noting that Lav was “certainly qualified” and “familiar with existing policy” (p.27), he validates her suitability by commenting that she has “worked with Philip long enough to know what’s involved in producing an acceptable report” (p.27), thus swiftly undermining her own capabilities and approach to problems, which she described as being “even more analytical than [Philip’s]” (p.22). This instance again relates back to the experience of waiting that confines girls to this liminal space.

Morgan considers this aspect of young women’s limited ability to transcend in the fact that despite Lav’s extensive list of attributes, her professional credibility is achieved only through validation of her work and reputation by male colleagues. Lav’s status as the only female researcher within her department emerges in her mention that “certain people in her department considered her promotion unearned” (Morgan 1994, p.22), and her suspicion that her colleagues assume that it was her partner Philip who secured her promotion, rather than her own ability (p.23). This suspicion is confirmed following

Philip's departure to Australia, when Lav notices that "she was being watched" (Morgan 1994, p.26), and her growing awareness that "her position was not as secure as it had been" (p.28), a fact that is highlighted by a "new attentiveness" demonstrated by her colleagues on her day-to-day work (p.26).

Conclusion

Through her portrayal of her young women, Morgan illustrates the difficult negotiation that such women must make to achieve transcendence to overcome limits imposed by cultural and societal mores. Through the characters of Lavinia and Lav, Bernice Morgan considers how young women can achieve partial transcendence in occupations which can provide them with tools and skills necessary to retain some independence and autonomy. However, while young women can strive to avoid relegation to a state of total dependence upon men, traditionally and universally accepted female roles restrict and inhibit young women's freedom and ability to transcend their facticity.

Additionally, by offering brief moments of insight into Lav's adolescence alongside her current situation as an adult, and referring back to the choices she made to remain in education and pursue her doctorate, Morgan uses Lav's transcendence of the categories outlined by de Beauvoir to expand discussion around the categories. Through Lav's situation being considered as the product of her choices as an adolescent, Morgan offers an insight that reaches beyond the boundaries of the 'Young Girl' category, by providing an example of the potential impact the choices made by young girls can have on her situation throughout future stages of her life. Furthermore, Lav's continuing confinement by these traditional female roles also challenges de Beauvoir's categories and the suppositions regarding female experience within these categories; for example, the timeframe around the period of waiting being limited to the woman as a young girl. Thus, while her choices as an adolescent impacted her situation as an adult in enabling her to transcend beyond being relegated to complete immanence, it also highlights how social mores regarding women needing a man can also transcend beyond the boundaries created through categorising people by life stage. In particular, Lav's situation as an adult confined to requiring external validation for her projects demonstrates how limits that confine young girls can continue to restrict women's ability to transcend as an adult, regardless of her choices.

The enduring power of these roles corral young women into a liminal space, wherein they partially transcend situations of immanence but continue to be confined by persistent beliefs that women require husbands. Prior to the arrival of this husband, these beliefs dictate that a young woman should occupy herself with suitable occupations that would support her in caring for the family that the husband would provide, and that would enable her to cross the threshold between girlhood and womanhood. However, even after girls mature beyond the stages where they first become subjected to the ideals, they can remain in this liminal space due to the transcendental nature of the accompanying expectations for women. Social and cultural mores perpetuate these beliefs, and subsequently continue to impose restrictions on women as a result of the expectations to conform. The following chapter considers Morgan's depiction of the life stage where the young woman is expected to become a married woman and enter the role of wife.

5 The Married and Unmarried Woman: Womanhood, Independence and Partial Transcendence

Traditionally, in Western society the period of idleness characterising a young girl's adolescence ends with marriage, marking as Simone de Beauvoir asserts, her "destiny" (1949, p.445). While de Beauvoir notes that marriage in the 20th century changes as a result of "economic evaluation in women's situation" (p.445) she maintains that "it is still true that most women are married, or have been, or plan to be, or suffer from not being" (p.445). In this quote de Beauvoir acknowledges expectations of women to marry, further emphasising some women's necessity to marry in her remark that "marriage is [Woman's] only means of support and the sole justification of her existence (1949, p.446). De Beauvoir asserts that women who do not marry become outsiders as "marriage is the only means of integration in the community" (1949, p.447), and that unmarried women "are, socially viewed, so much wastage" (p.447). De Beauvoir's term "wastage" reemphasises the recognition of marriage as woman's destiny.

Despite retaining a level of independence, there are persisting factors that inhibit Morgan's unmarried women characters in their claim to transcendence. One such factor is a widely held societal expectation that women should marry. The belief that marriage was "the normative role for adult women", and that "wife/motherhood was the major occupation as well as status for adult women" (Cott 1975, pp.18-19), is also critiqued by de Beauvoir who observes that "the celibate woman is to be explained and defined with reference to marriage, whether she is frustrated, rebellious, or even indifferent to that institution" (1949, p.445). De Beauvoir's use of the term 'defined' suggests that woman can only be explained or understood in relation to her marital status and that, without identifying this status, it is impossible to enter into any discourse about women. The ironic tone of de Beauvoir's writing is obvious here but the irony serves to underline the commonly received attitude that woman can only be defined in terms of her relationship with man and such, the irony of the critique exposes the common belief that "the childless, single woman was a figure to be pitied" (Abrams 2014). Continuing in this ironic tone, de Beauvoir suggests that "to love her husband and to be happy is a duty

[woman] owes to herself and to society” (de Beauvoir 1949, p.481). Such attitudes imply that unmarried women were somehow failed women, a contention that Welter implicitly suggests through her visual of the woman by the fireside (1966), in which she illustrates the expected domesticity of the woman, wherein she was expected to remain in the domestic space in her role as wife and mother.

De Beauvoir articulates mid-twentieth century attitudes judging women who diverged from the normative order and the negative perceptions of those women who failed to maintain these ideals, and critiques the expected subjugation of woman to her husband following marriage, wherein women were expected to “renounce [their] sovereignty”, to become man’s “vassal” (1949, p.449):

She takes his name; she belongs to his religion, his class, his circle; she joins his family, she becomes his ‘half’ (de Beauvoir 1949, p.449).

Here de Beauvoir asserts that following marriage, woman not only renounces her sovereignty, but also her previous identity to assume her husband’s identity, including his name, religion and class. Subsequently she is, as de Beauvoir terms it, no longer her own person, but rather the wife of *husband’s name*. Stickney Ellis also comments on the submission expected of married women in the 19th century, noting that there is something considerably “beautiful” about a woman “who can bear to have her domestic affairs at any moment deranged, so as may best suit his feelings” (1834, p.251). These expectations were further enforced by legislation. During the period in which *Random Passage* is set, the Laws of Coverture were in full effect in British colonies with Blackstone stating that under these laws:

by marriage, the husband and wife are one in law: that is, the very being or legal existence of the woman is suspended during marriage, or at least is incorporated and consolidated into that of her husband: under whose wing, protection and cover, she performs everything (1756, p.442).

Laws of coverture prevented married women from entering into any legal agreements without their husbands’ permission (Backhouse 1987, p.593; Finn 1996, p.705). Additionally, women were legally forbidden to own property (Harvard Business School 2010; Backhouse 1987, p.592). Married women, as emphasised by de Beauvoir (1949), Stickney Ellis (1834), and Finn (1996), under laws of Coverture, “[lost] some of the rights legally belonging to the unmarried woman” (de Beauvoir 1949, p.449). It was not

until the Married Women's Property Act in 1870 that married women obtained "legal rights or existence outside of their husbands" (Finn 1996, p.705).

With regard to rejecting the normative order, de Beauvoir observes how marriage is considered "an honourable career" for a woman (1949, p.352), and as this role was perceived by society to be her ultimate aim and destiny, it was consequently regarded as her best option (de Beauvoir 1949, p.352; Anderson 1984, p.377; Japp 1978, p.493). The narrative defining the role and limitations of married women is continuously reinforced and perpetuated by idealised concepts of womanhood which decree a wife's place as within the domestic space and her new role as mother (Anderson 1984, p.379; Hughes 2014). However, by challenging these ideals, and pursuing paths other than marriage, *Random Passage* and *Waiting for Time* explore how an unmarried woman retains aspects of her independence but also explore how remaining unmarried presents woman with sorrows as well as gains. This chapter focuses on the experiences of Lavinia Andrews from *Random Passage* and Lav Andrews from *Waiting for Time* and also makes reference to the minor character of Jennie Andrews in *Random Passage*. Lavinia and Lav remain unmarried while Jennie Andrews feigns a marriage that never actually took place. Focusing on how these characters' experiences relate to the social and cultural mores of the 19th and 20th century, the chapter interprets these character's lives as negotiations of partial transcendence.

5.1 Lavinia

Through remaining unmarried, Lavinia experiences a degree of agency unavailable to married women. Whereas women in this life stage who become wives find themselves restricted, confined in their ability to make decisions and escape the boundaries of domesticity, Lavinia is not limited by these boundaries. Instead, her decision to remain unmarried enables her to enter and leave the domestic space. Additionally, she retains the opportunity and agency to make her own decisions and, while she can accept and benefit from the opinions and help from others, she is not dependent on the will or choices of others. This independence is explored in Chapters Four and Eight of *Random Passage*, through Lavinia's ability to relinquish "the cooking, the cleaning – all the griefs of women, to her mother and Meg" (Morgan 1992, p.52). While Lavinia has duties within the home, she can renounce these, thus retaining autonomy in relation to how she chooses to occupy herself. This is observed by Mary Bundle, who longingly

watches Lavinia “disappear over the crest of the hill” with the children each day (Morgan 1992, p.55).

Despite being the same age as Lavinia, Mary’s freedom is curtailed by daily tasks of keeping the home, preparing the meals and caring for children. Lavinia, “with brothers to provide for her and a mother to pamper her” is “safe and secure” (p.55), and does not have to support herself. Furthermore, her married female relations (her mother and sister-in-law) undertake most of the domestic work. Lavinia can thus afford to spend her time “gallivantin’ with the young ones” (Morgan 1992, p.59), while Mary remains burdened by the ceaseless work of caring for children and husband. Woman’s endless, repetitive duty is identified by de Beauvoir, who notes that the “male needs her” (1949, p.446), and that woman is enjoined “to take care of his household” (p.447). Adrienne Rich comments further on this duty, observing the role played by women as “comforter, nurse [and] cook” (1972, p.19). Morgan illustrates this in Chapter Eight when, following the men’s return from the Labrador coast where they had been ‘swiling’, Mary and the other women immediately cease their current tasks to haul water, scour bodies, scrub clothing and delouse hair (Morgan 1992, p.101).¹² The sense of urgency with which the women go into action echoes de Beauvoir’s recognition of the constant battle waged by woman against dirt, which is perceived as an “evil” that threatens to bring disruption and disorder into her space (de Beauvoir 1949, p.470). The text describes the women “in a rage to be rid of all that dirt” (Morgan 1992, p.101), highlighting the intensity of woman’s effort to keep her home and husband clean. Rather than leave the men to themselves, the women “scrub the men down” (p.101), stripping them of their clothes (p.102), washing and delousing their hair (p.101), and ensuring they are fed and warmed before helping them to bed (p.101). In stating that this is the eighth year the men have gone ‘swiling’, Morgan emphasises the perennial nature of the women’s work (p.101).

Stickney Ellis also emphasises the duty of care woman has to her husband, claiming that tending to her husband in his time of need is a central responsibility of the married woman, and asserts the charm of the woman “who can put aside all her own little ailments, for the more important consideration of those of a husband” (1834, p.251).

¹² ‘Swiling’ is a term describing the process of sealing (Dictionary of Newfoundland English 2018).

Discussing this responsibility of care within the broader category of domestic management, Stickney Ellis further reinforces this subservient role of the married woman by asserting that such devotion to her husband and household is necessary in making woman “what every married woman ought to be – the support and the comfort of her whole household” (p.252). Mary Bundle’s enactment of her duties in relation to her home, husband and children highlight the ways in which such responsibilities confined married women to the home. Morgan illustrates that Lavinia freely escapes the pandemonium unfolding in each kitchen as a result of the men’s return from sealing. Although Lavinia is enlisted to help her married relations and friends by fetching water from the pond for the men’s baths, she is simultaneously free to take some time by the pond and relish in the peaceful silence there (Morgan 1992, p.103). Lavinia chooses to enter the different houses and can choose when to withdraw, choices that would not be hers if she was married. After bringing water to Mary, Lavinia escapes to Meg’s house (p.105), and her freedom to move in and out of the domestic space and across several thresholds symbolises her ability to negotiate and cross the boundaries that confine the married female characters.

The extent of the freedom and autonomy Lavinia retains by remaining unmarried is further illustrated in Chapter Ten, wherein she assumes the role and responsibilities of teacher. Lavinia asserts her frustration at being dictated to by others with regard to what the children should learn, describing her feelings as “some sick of having people tell [her] what to do” (Morgan 1992, p.126). In the absence of an official curriculum, each parent wants Lavinia to teach their children something different:

Ben thinks the boys should be able to measure board and draw out plans...Sarah says all that’s needful is to learn the bible by heart, [and] Mary wants her sons to be able to tally fish and count money (Morgan 1992, p.126).

Lavinia’s autonomy emerges in her negotiation of the options and in her assertion of her own will. This negotiation, assertion and autonomy offers a stark contrast to the restrictions placed on the freedom of married women. Had Lavinia been married, she would have been subject to her husband’s opinion with regard to any decision-making processes. However, as an unmarried woman, she becomes a ‘femme seule’, retaining her identity and freedom to enter into contracts and make decisions (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2007; Encyclopaedia Britannica 2017). Having this independence, Lavinia can consequently make decisions regarding the school without restriction.

As lessons are held in Meg's kitchen, prior to the building of a separate school room, Meg also has some influence on the children's education. However, unlike the influences of the man on the decisions of woman, whose preferences are subordinate to his dictates, there is equality between Meg and Lavinia allowing for negotiation and compromise, as is indicated in Meg's comment, "between us we'll teach them youngsters to read and write – and not concern ourselves with what the rest wants" (Morgan 1992, p.127). Through this situation and relationship, Morgan illustrates an example of the ways in which women arrive at moments of compromise and solidarity; a point not commented upon in de Beauvoir's theories. Simultaneously, as a similar instance is only acknowledged between Meg and Lavinia and does not take place between any male characters within the novels, Morgan also indicates that this equality and level of negotiation only occurs between women. Consequently, by illustrating these moments, Morgan represents how the phenomenon of negotiation and compromise between women can create solidarity through which women are free and capable of exercising autonomy, discretion, and competent and confident decision making. Considering that schooling for the children was initially Meg's idea (Morgan 1992, pp.110-111), this autonomy impacts on both married and unmarried women, as it enables women in both of these situations to have an impact on decisions and actions that occur outside of the domestic arena, thus psychologically extending woman's impact and legacy beyond the parameters expected by societal expectations.

Morgan's portrayal of these moments between the female characters highlights how solidarity between women can subvert the transcendence/immanence paradigm, thus challenging the theory by extending thoughts around the paradigm and women's opportunity for transcendence. In the final chapter of *The Second Sex*, 'The Independent Woman', and the conclusion chapter, de Beauvoir suggests that women be permitted to, and should participate in activities that would help overcome their situation. However, in her discussion of women's situation or in her suggestions around overcoming their confinement within immanence, de Beauvoir does not include moments of solidarity amongst women in *The Second Sex*. Thus, the opportunity for considering the impact that a collaboration between women on a project can have on their abilities to extend their legacies and achieve transcendence is overlooked. Unlike a partnership between a man and woman, in which the male's perceived superiority ensures his precedence, collaboration between women does not have this inherent hierarchy. Subsequently,

rather than Meg and Lavinia's joint efforts in setting up a school for the children confining them further in their relegation to immanence, the extent of what they create together as equals suggests that within moments of female solidarity, woman's ability for transcendence can be strengthened. In this instance, both Lavinia and Meg negotiate creating a school together through drawing on both of their personal strengths, which for Lavinia is her education and ability to teach, and for Meg is her decision-making, organisation and planning skills. As each woman's part in the project holds equal importance, and both women can freely exercise their autonomy, the subsequent success of the school arguably impacts on both Lavinia's and Meg's claim for transcendence, as both their legacies are extended beyond the confines imposed by social mores. Through these actions, both Meg and Lavinia arguably subvert normative codes; as their partnership is all-female, there is no male presence to oversee their project. Thus, the collaboration does not form part of the traditional patriarchal structure that contributes to women's relegation to immanence.

Lavinia's role of teacher also frees her from the confines of the domestic space. This independence is illustrated in Chapter Eleven, through the symbolism contained in the physical spaces that Lavinia occupies as a result of her position as teacher. The schoolroom, which contains a bed for Lavinia (Morgan 1992, p.139), provides her with a space of her own and is described as a "lean-to", built onto Ben and Meg's house (p.139). On the other side of the wall is "Meg's kitchen" (Morgan 1992, p.136); Meg's identity being exclusively linked to this room symbolises the limitations of married women, as observed by de Beauvoir, who notes that "the woman is confined within the conjugal sphere" (1949, p.469), and which she further asserts as a "restricted space" where "reality is concentrated inside the house" (p.469). By obtaining a space outside the home Lavinia physically and symbolically escapes these confinements, eschewing facticity and achieving transcendence through her role as teacher rather than wife or mother.

Lavinia's profession of teacher was one that was considered acceptable for women in this era. Japp (1978) discusses what professions were considered as acceptable employment for women, noting that if it was necessary for a woman to work, teacher and governess positions were considered the most "socially acceptable" (p.493). The role of teacher arguably also protects Lavinia, to a certain degree, from the negative

perceptions that surrounded unmarried women in the 19th century. Michael Anderson discusses these, noting in particular “the spinster problem” (1984, p.378). The term spinster pejoratively describes unmarried women, which Anderson notes as women who were aged thirty years of age and over, a time when woman’s “marital chances had begun to decline” (1984, p.378).¹³ Lavinia’s role gives her a valued purpose within society—in becoming a teacher, Lavinia avoids being perceived as ‘wastage’. However, women were reminded in law that their duties as married women were to be focused within the domestic sphere, as until 1944 in Britain, and until 1955 in Canada, there existed a marriage ban preventing married women from holding public sector jobs such as teaching (Barber *et al* 2013; Stoddart 2012; Public Service Alliance of Canada 2015). This ban stemmed from attitudes that held that women could not successfully combine and balance their responsibilities at home with their duties in work (Barber *et al* 2013). Lavinia’s role as teacher enables her to negotiate a different experience of this life stage. During the 19th century, teachers were considered to have a level of authority and status within the community. According to Pedersen this authority differed between the public schoolteacher and the private headmistress, with the public schoolteacher aiming to “secure professional recognition and [seek] distinction in the public sphere” (1975, pp.137-138). Lavinia’s status is illustrated through the building of a purpose-built school room which she will manage. In creating this space, the men of the Cape recognise Lavinia’s authority as teacher and the value of her contribution to the larger project of building a sustainable life on the Cape.

Even though Lavinia chooses to remain unmarried, and enjoys various benefits as a result of her decisions, she cannot enjoy the same level of independence as men who are free to work and participate in family life. Women were not regarded as capable of successfully combining public and private roles which, as de Beauvoir maintains, was only an option for men:

In his occupation and his political life he encounters change and progress...and when he is tired...he gets himself a home, he settles down, and has an anchorage in the world (1949, p.449).

¹³ The Oxford Dictionary currently defines spinsters as women who remain unmarried past what society perceives as the prime age for marriage (2018).

De Beauvoir describes how man can, following marriage, simultaneously enjoy life within the public and private spheres returning home after work to restore his “soul” (p.449). Woman, on the other hand, “has no other job than to maintain and provide for everyday life in an ordinary way” (pp.449-450), and unmarried women who chose to work outside the home did so with caution, lest they exude so “much character [as to] frighten” men and hinder her chance of securing a husband (de Beauvoir 1949, p.359).

However, Lavinia is not immune to criticism of her unmarried status, nor does her role of teacher give her equality of independence with men. Lavinia is aware of the negative connotations of remaining unmarried as is evidenced by her niece Jane’s talk of playhouses in Chapter Eleven, which makes Lavinia think that “perhaps...I am turning into an old maid aunt” (Morgan 1992, p.141), and her belief that, in the view of Sarah’s daughter, Emma, she is considered a “middle-aged spinster school teacher” (p.145). Emma tells Lavinia “with great satisfaction” that she (i.e. Lavinia), Annie and Patience “will all be old maids” (p.141), highlighting societal expectations on women to marry. De Beauvoir asserts marriage as woman’s best option as the role of wife opens up “important social strata in which no other vista opens before her” (1949, p.450).

While the children of her friends move through their girlhood and towards marriage, Lavinia finds herself “alone in the lean-to school room...beside herself with misery” (p.174), questioning “what will become of me” (p.173), and chiding herself for not “[going] after Thomas when he was coming into the school [and letting] him know how she felt” (p.174). From this, it emerges that Lavinia’s decision to retain her autonomy is purchased at a price: envisioning what her life could be like had she chosen marriage similar to the majority of other women on the Cape, she:

[conjures] up visions of me and Thomas Hutchings, of us livin’ together, havin’ a house with glass windows, with cups and saucers, a garden, clocks that tick – children (Morgan 1992, p.158).

Upon realising this and acknowledging her regret for not telling him how she felt (p.174), Lavinia becomes aware of the limits of woman’s situation that remain regardless of the freedoms she may have secured and her realisation that these limitations do not constitute an aspect of male experience. Through Lavinia’s losing Thomas to Fanny as a result of taking her time to develop a courtship with Thomas, and not immediately admitting her feelings towards him, Lavinia presents an example of how women continue to be confined by limits that cannot be surpassed regardless of

their choices. Due to the beliefs of society which perceive that women cannot successfully combine familial and professional duties, restrictions such as marriage bans continue to inhibit the woman's abilities to transcend. Thus, Lavinia remains confined by the realisation that the choice to pursue one option came at the price of another, and that attaining both was not a viable option. The impact of Lavinia's unconventional choices to prioritise her career over pursuing a relationship has effectively disadvantaged her emotionally. By maintaining a reserved disposition rather than openly admitting her feelings for Thomas, and subsequently risking retribution, as such actions were considered unfeminine (de Beauvoir 1949, p.359), Morgan's portrayal of Lavinia illustrates how women are often forced into a destiny not of their choosing, thus exposing the limitations of female autonomy, and subsequently their ability to transcend.

5.2 Lav

As discussed, de Beauvoir notes that, in traditional 20th century societies, woman was expected to remain in the home as a housewife "doomed to the continuation of the species and the care of the home" (1949, p.449), while her husband, the "productive worker" pursued a job in the public sphere (p.449). In her critique of myths which idolise images of woman in the home, Welter notes the restrictions of women's freedom and the reduction of her person and function which was limited to her relational position to others as opposed to an assertion of an individual identity, "the true woman's place was unquestionably by her own fireside – as daughter, sister, but most of all as wife and mother" (1966, p.152).

Welter asserts that, of the varied societal expectations of women, priority was typically placed on woman's skills and devotion within the domestic realm, which in turn were placed high "among the virtues most prized by the women's magazines" (1966, p.162). Tiggemann *et al* analyses the content of such magazines, noting that their content focuses on topics relating to "self-improvement and inspiration, for example, tips on style and grooming...[and] social learning, that is, to learn how people behave" (2009, p.7). This focus on social learning which, in these magazines becomes social instruction perpetuates ideals of a domesticated woman, and fulfil a similar function to the 19th century books on female decorum. An example of this is evident within an advertisement for an 'Electrolux' vacuum cleaner in *Woman* magazine (1949, p.25).

The advertisement states that the product would “give her an extra hand to simplify her home cleaning” (p.25). The gender specific language highlights received mid-20th century attitudes and gendered behaviour in relation to decision-making, financial authority and workload allocation. In stating that the product will help *her* with the cleaning of *her* home upholds the stereotype of the home being the woman’s space and her responsibility. The man’s contribution is to make the decision relating to the purchase of the product and to provide the funds for this purchase, which further reinforces gendered perceptions of work, and firmly identifies man as the “economic head” of the household (de Beauvoir 1949, p.449).

De Beauvoir discusses woman’s daily obligations, observing how they give woman “no autonomy; it is not directly useful to society...it produces nothing” (1949, p.475). As a result of her confinement and relegation to undertaking such tasks, she is subsequently “[denied]...careers or any commitment outside the home” (Friedan 1963, p.37). Subsequently, as de Beauvoir observes, these domestic tasks only assume meaning through their link to ensuring the ability of the husband and children to transcend, thus binding woman within a state of passivity and facticity. Having renounced their autonomy and independence, in favour of attempting to achieve the perceived ideal of having the dream life with a husband, children and nice house, the women researched by Friedan are restricted to the boundaries of the domestic space. This restriction applies both physically, wherein they remain dependent on their husbands, and in terms of their legacies, which, according to de Beauvoir (1949), is limited to their responsibilities in this space (p.475).

An example of Lav’s surpassing these restrictions arises in Chapter Two when she recalls her voluntary work in the National Gallery (Morgan 1992, p.22), and in Chapter Four when the narrative reveals that Lav spends “most of the day at the university” reading Lavinia’s journal (Morgan 1994, p.54). Lav’s freedom to pursue her own interests contrasts with the married woman as described by Friedan (1963), whose routine is “busy, and dull” (p.16), and revolves around cooking and cleaning. One woman, as quoted by Friedan, describes how:

I get up at eight – I make breakfast, so I do the dishes, have lunch, do some more dishes and some laundry and cleaning in the afternoon. Then it’s supper dishes and I get to sit

down a few minutes before the children have to be sent to bed...That's all there is to my day. It's just like any other wife's day" (1963, p.16).¹⁴

The repetitive and restricted nature of a married woman's day is evident in the quotation above. The extensive list of daily responsibilities confines woman to the home leaving little or no time for other interests. Lav, on the other hand, often goes "supperless, sometimes lunchless" (Morgan 1994, p.54), to the archives and gives "most of [her] time and thought" to the journal (p.55). Without the duties of wife or mother, her leisure time is not restricted and through her choices, Lav, similarly to her great aunt Lavinia, negotiates the boundaries of the domestic space as consequently, she can embark on a personal project of personal and community significance. As such, Lav occupies a liminal position with regard to the contribution such work can make. In addition to enabling her to learn of her ancestral history, the research undertaken also impacts on the community by contributing to knowledge on the lives of the early settlers in the Outport communities. This allows Lav to extend her legacy in a way similar to that by which Morgan and other Atlantic women writers contribute to the larger project of preserving the stories, histories and experiences of early settlers in rural outport communities.

Lav's decision in *Waiting for Time* to pursue a career rather than marriage illustrates a situation in the 20th century similar to Lavinia's in the 19th century, wherein her choices allow her to negotiate the boundaries of her situation as a woman, without being confined by the perceptions of society with regard to what is expected of them. Contrary to Lavinia's experiences, in which paid employment allowed her to negotiate her situation and avoid being restricted by the negative perceptions attached to remaining unmarried, the society in which Lav lives regarded employment for women outside the home as normal, resulting in Lav not experiencing the same degree of social criticism as Lavinia. However, despite the normalising of women working outside the domestic sphere within the mid-20th century, marriage continued to be predominantly perceived within society as woman's destiny, and that, still, "girls expected marriage" (de Beauvoir 1949, p.452). According to de Beauvoir, this expectation followed the conditioning girls received throughout their childhood and adolescence where woman

¹⁴ Friedan notes that the woman quoted was "interviewed by sociologists studying working-men's wives" (1963, p.17), thus explaining how this particular insight was collected.

“is led to prefer marriage to a career” (p.450), and is indoctrinated with the belief that obtaining a husband was a means of escaping her facticity (p.352). By choosing to pursue a career Lav enables herself to surpass the confines of passivity through accessing a level of fulfilment through the impact of her contribution to a larger project that extended beyond her immediate survival or the survival of the next generation.

Friedan discusses the dissatisfaction of wives who hope to transcend through their husbands (1963). She observes that women, having renounced their individuality, and taken the identity of their husband, undertake the occupation of “housewife” (p.8). According to the myths of femininity previously mentioned, the housewife “had found true feminine fulfilment” (p.7), as “she had everything that women ever dreamed of” (p.8). However, despite having obtained everything she had been taught to desire, the housewife experienced a situation wherein she was frustrated and dissatisfied, with the result that she suffered from a “problem that has no name” (p.9). This problem with no name is arguably frustration stemming from a monotonous confinement within the domestic sphere which was restrictive and repetitive.

The extent to which Lav surpasses this frustration is illustrated in Chapter Two of *Waiting for Time*, in the event of her relocation from Ottawa to Newfoundland to oversee the Oceans 2000 project. Unlike the female experiences critiqued by Friedan, Lav extends her legacy. Lav must compile a report for the government to model “developing a strategy that will promote science and technology as the driving force for economic activity on Canada’s coastal waters” (Morgan 1994, p.40). The subsequent outcome of this project is ultimately to put in place:

a policy that will be responsive to the needs of the private sector and consistent with government’s strategy to maximise development and exploitation of the resources of our oceans for the benefit of the people of Canada (p.40).

The importance of this project gives Lav agency that is closed off to the married women researched by Friedan, who are “confined, by necessity, to cooking, cleaning, washing, bearing children” (1963, p.29).¹⁵

¹⁵ While this project is fictional, the overall situation has a basis in fact; for example, subsequent events in the novel lead to a declaration of a cod moratorium and the consequent closure of the fisheries, which was a real event that took place in 1992 prior to the publication *Waiting for Time*. This inclusion of real events contributes to the aim outlined in the Literature Review of ensuring that records and accounts are kept for the preservation of history and the benefit of future generations.

However, Lav's freedom comes at a cost which is highlighted in the contrast between her active working days, and the emptiness she encounters upon her return home. Lav has the freedom and financial independence to "dedicat[e] the weekend to her physical well-being" (Morgan 1994, p.40), and to treat herself to new clothes and a trip to a gym and spa. Such freedom of choice appears to suggest that Lav transcends a life dedicated to others, as implied through Lav's contentment, where she states that "those who say money cannot buy happiness lie" (p.40). However, upon spending the evening reading alone in her rented house, she finds herself weeping, thus presenting a contrast to how "she had thought herself content, pleased with her own company" (p.41). She partially blames the book she is reading, which causes her to lament the situation of all living things, who eventually must die and are slowly erased by the passing of time, but also for "something else, something closer, more personal" (p.41). This instance of Lav's reflection exposes the sorrow that transcending can bring particularly to women. Following her assistant Mark's decision to send an inaccurate report back to the DFO without Lav's knowledge or permission (Morgan 1994, p.40), Lav realises the possible implications. She realises that taking the job in Newfoundland has "probably ruined her career" (p.44). This realisation exposes the vulnerability of women who opt for a career: if Lav's career is irreparably damaged, Lav is left without the legacy of a successful career or a family life and is exposed to financial and emotional hardship without the comfort of either. Thus, Lav's experience critiques the precarious position of women whose careers may be negatively impacted by men in ways which they may not be able to control. If such circumstances arise, these women are confined to immanence through their failed career and are more vulnerable to economic and emotional hardships as a result of their decision to remain independent of family obligations.

Lav's situation reflects the experiences of women more generally, as outlined by de Beauvoir (1949), who contends that women are instructed to believe that the combination of "two destinies", i.e. a destiny in and outside the domestic sphere, are "incompatible" (p.291). Thus, woman must choose between a husband and family, which Friedan describes as "everything that women ever dreamed of" (1963, p.8), and a career. If she chooses marriage, she is compelled to renounce her sovereignty and individuality in favour of devoting herself entirely to her duties as a housewife. However, while this offers an element of security and support, it can invoke feelings of dissatisfaction as a result of her passivity, as outlined by Friedan (1963), who notes that

the housewife is “[denied]...any commitments outside the home” (p.37). As she is “forbidden to join men in the world” (p.34), her impact and legacy is consequently limited to within the boundaries of the domestic space, which reinforces de Beauvoir’s observations wherein she notes that woman “is allowed no direct influence upon the future nor upon the world” (1949, p.450). On the other hand, if she were to reject this idolised role of housewife in favour of a career, as Lav has done, while she enables herself to retain her autonomy, she renounces the prospect of having the family life, as exemplified by Lav’s empty house. Furthermore, due to the precarious position of a woman working in the public sphere, as evident through the consequences of Mark’s report, remaining unmarried places her in a position of vulnerability in terms of her legacy. Thus, even though Lav has everything the married women wish for, her inability to have it all, and the vulnerability she experiences in this situation consequently prevent her from achieving full transcendence.

5.3 Jennie

Lavinia’s mother, Jennie Andrews’ experience also reflects the conventions of marriage within the 19th century in relation to the importance of upholding ideals of womanhood within the state of matrimony. Jennie and her ‘husband’ Will feigned their marital status as indicated within the text which reads they “had not really wed” (Morgan 1992, p.17). They partake in no ceremony, but rather “run away from home to live under a bridge” (p.17). Historian Ginger S. Frost discusses how this situation was not uncommon between the 18th and 20th centuries, wherein:

some couples consciously dissented from the marriage ceremony because of its indissolubility, the influence of the state or the church on it, or the disabilities that it gave to women (2008, p.169).

Frost offers insight into reasons couples opted to remain unmarried, including the passivity of women under the marriage contract as observed by de Beauvoir (1949, pp.446,448,449). Frost echoes the power structure that results in female inferiority, claiming that these “marital dissenters” called for “flexibility about divorce and equal rights for women”, where “the rights and duties would...be the same for both partners and both [would] have a say in the terms” (2008, p.169). This alludes to the restrictions imposed upon women following the marriage ceremony, which continuously reinforced the superiority of the husband over his wife.

The importance of conforming to certain socially accepted practices such as marriage is illustrated through Jennie's careful creation of a narrative surrounding her fictional wedding day. Blau discusses ideals surrounding marriage, including the "myth of the perfect marriage" (2016). She asserts that such myths stem from fairy tales, wherein characters find their true love and live happily ever after. Such stories perpetuate the concept that woman can only be defined and explained through her relationship with man, thereby maintaining the belief that woman needs a husband, and will find fulfilment, or meaning and definition as de Beauvoir phrases it, in her role of "queen in her hive [as] wife, mother, mistress of the home" (1949, p.467). Such beliefs also stem from ideological discourses surrounding marriage which perpetuate the idea that marriage provides the woman with "energy for living and meaning for her life" (p.467). These discourses arguably confine women to passivity, which in turn restricts women not only within a married state but also to create the appearance of an ideal marriage that perpetuates the normative but fictional order.

Frost (2008) discusses the ideologies surrounding non-traditional relationships in the 19th century. In the context of Morgan's novels, this is limited to male/female non-traditional relationships.¹⁶ Frost maintains that relationships that deviated from the ideals, such as examples of cohabitation, were considered to be a sin. However, she also notes that couples in such situations "insisted they were married in all important aspects. They fulfilled spousal duties, shared the same last name, reared children and kept lifelong commitments" (Frost 2008, p.2). Jennie and Will's situation exemplifies the cohabitation Frost describes, as their marriage is traditional in the sense that Jennie took Will's last name, they reared three children, and remained together until Will's death. The only difference in their relationship is that it is not considered legal in the eyes of the Church or State, and thus, as noted by Frost (2008), is considered improper. Religious dogma and attitudes towards women contributed to the ways in which women were understood, judged, explained and defined. According to Welter (1966), the 'Cult of True Womanhood' also measures woman's femininity by her display of "four cardinal virtues – piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity" (p.152). Welter

¹⁶ Instances or experiences of same-sex relationships are not treated within *Random Passage* or *Waiting for Time*.

describes piety as being “the source of her strength”, as religion “belonged to woman by divine right, a gift of god and nature” (p.152). This virtue speaks to the moral mores of society. Consequently, cohabitation was considered inappropriate because cohabiting women were construed as straying from society’s standards of femininity that positioned piety as a core virtue associated with women.

Jennie’s care to ensure that her relationship with Will conformed to norms as dictated by the church and state highlights the importance of being regarded as conforming to and maintaining societal values. In particular, Jennie’s descriptions of “the straw hat she wore and the crooked old minister that refused to ring the church bell” (Morgan 1992, p.18), add detail to her fictional narrative, which is instrumental in the pretence that her marriage was legitimate. It also alludes to the severity of the implications that being associated with such a relationship would have for women, due to the measures taken to keep up pretences. Through Morgan’s characters’ experiences, the restrictions and expectations in relation to ideal marriages is evident. In her situation as a married/unmarried woman, Jennie’s experience exemplifies how woman remains confined to passivity within marriage, despite her attempts to surpass the limits placed on women who choose to undertake the role of wife, by consciously choosing to dissent from normative behaviour. Nevertheless, cohabiting women remain as bound by the mores and ideals of society as married women. Through Jennie’s attention to detail in creating a narrative that enables her to successfully feign a marriage that never happened, Morgan critiques the attitudes surrounding cohabitation within the 19th century. Through the experiences of this character, Morgan also illustrates the extent to which women are confined to passivity by these attitudes, as evident through Jennie’s need for a story that would protect her from the judgement and ostracization that would accompany her situation.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined Bernice Morgan’s female characters and their experiences of the situation of women, both married and unmarried, during the stage of life following the end of her adolescence. Considering the various experiences of Bernice Morgan’s female characters in their situations, using their efforts to transcend relegation to the immanent existence of the married woman, Morgan challenges the transcendence/immanence dichotomy theorised by Sartre, presenting women’s

experiences as a struggle that results in the possibility of partial transcendence. Outlined through the experiences of Lavinia and Lav, and with reference to the experiences of Jennie Andrews and Mary Bundle, Morgan reflects the cultural and social mores of the 19th and 20th centuries in relation to marriage and the situations of woman as wife. These experiences also enable Morgan to diverge from de Beauvoir, by continuing the discussion to include situations that are not included in de Beauvoir's theory such as moments of solidarity between the women and moments where they subvert the normative codes. Such additions to the discussion extend thought regarding de Beauvoir's interpretation of the transcendence/immanence paradigm; for example moments of solidarity between the women create partnerships that not only strengthen their claims to transcendence through the impact of their collaboration on the project on their legacies but also exhibit elements of subversion, as their all-female collaboration does not adhere to the patriarchal structure that contributes to their relegation to immanence. Through Lavinia and Lav, Morgan also critiques examples of unmarried women who maintain degrees of autonomy and individuality exposing how, while these characters' decisions allow them to enjoy a certain level of independence, their freedom and ability to transcend remains conditional.

6 The Mother: The Image of the Mother, Limitations and Partial Transcendence

As already demonstrated in this thesis, cultural and social mores within traditional 19th and 20th century Canadian societies considered motherhood and the continuation of society to be woman's destiny after marriage. Consequently, this stage follows from that of 'The Married Woman'. After marriage, motherhood was considered the next step in completing the transition into adulthood and womanhood. Friedan observes the ways in which maternal devotion is measured as a total submission to home and family, noting a comment from an editor who stated that "[women] are only interested in the family and the home" (1963, p.24). Simone de Beauvoir notes that within traditional societies, a woman's destiny is fulfilled through motherhood, observing that:

it is in maternity that woman fulfils her physiological destiny; it is her natural 'calling', since her whole organic structure is adapted for the perpetuation of the species (1949, p.501).

Stickney Ellis praises the act of mothering, exclaiming "how beautiful, then is that instinct of maternal love" (1843, p.50), in accordance with the values outlined in myths of femininity, as the pinnacle of womanhood. As previously noted, Welter acknowledges female roles as "mother, daughter, sister, wife – woman" (1966, p.152), inferring this combination of roles as constituting the essential aspects of womanhood with motherhood as premier amongst them. De Beauvoir critiques the prioritising of motherhood as an essential aspect of womanhood, suggesting woman is indoctrinated through repetition to understand the term 'mother' as a synonym for woman, and motherhood as an unequivocally positive experience. She asserts that "from infancy woman is repeatedly told that she is made for childbearing and the splendours of maternity are for ever being sung to her" (1949, p.508). This chapter focuses on Morgan's depictions of motherhood as a negotiated stage of partial transcendence wherein motherhood, which de Beauvoir ironically asserts is a "marvellous privilege" (1949, p.509), is explored and disputed through the characters of Meg, Charlotte and Lav.

6.1 Meg

Morgan portrays Meg as the dutiful and devoted wife and mother and an embodiment of the stereotypical ideal mother as is outlined above. Describing Meg as standing one morning “like some old goddess, tall and pregnant in her long flannel nightgown”, Lavinia is reminded of “the angel expelling sinners from the garden” (1992, p.80), thus likening her to a vision of ethereal and celestial perfection. Upholding the ideals perpetuated by this vision, the character of Meg constitutes an example of a woman who appears to have achieved the complete fulfilment that was believed to accompany motherhood. A prominent example illustrating this fulfilment is outlined in Chapter Eleven following a good summer where, for the first time since their arrival, the Cape community experiences comfort and security. All the characters experience feelings of contentment, but Meg exemplifies complete contentment with Lavinia noticing that now and again Meg will:

look up from some household task to gaze happily around at tables and chairs she’s polished to a gleaming smoothness; at shelves lined with jars of jam, bags of soap, candles, oil, bread; at the solid walls of the house her husband has built (Morgan 1992, p.137).

Meg’s experience of contentment and fulfilment through her work in the home and for her family manifests in her autonomy and action within a space that she regards as her own. Having this space and a deep satisfaction in her work within it allows Meg to achieve what de Beauvoir terms an “ideal of happiness” (1949, p.467), which, combined with husband and children, symbolises “permanence”, and “a secure future” (p.467). Luxuriating in the comfort of her home, which Lavinia describes as “the nicest house on the Cape” (Morgan 1992, p.105), full of family, and a surplus of food, Meg enjoys “such a feeling of security [she] could look at it forever” (p.139).

Meg’s feelings of contentment and security are invested in her ambition for her son Willie, whose success, she believes will consolidate her achievement. Following the bounteous summer, Meg longs for two things; “to see a church in this place and to have our Willie doin’ the Lord’s work” (Morgan 1992, p.136). Meg’s ambition is to see her child succeed and Meg’s contentment, financial security and legacy to the larger project of the development of a successful and sustainable community life on the Cape will come to full fruition through him. As de Beauvoir notes, in being a mother “[woman] is no longer an object subservient to a subject...her body is at last her own, since it exists

for the child that belongs to her” (1949, p.513). Having obtained the things she has been conditioned to desire in life – the nice home, the husband, and the children – she now “enjoys the comforting illusion of feeling that she is a human being in herself, a value” (p.513).

Meg’s devotion to God emphasises her conformity to ideals, as noted by Welter (1966), who acknowledges that, alongside the four roles played by the ideal woman, of the four cardinal virtues discussed above, “piety was the core” (p.152). As piety was considered a vital aspect in a woman’s character, and thought to be her calling to “[bring] the world back ‘from its revolt and sin’” (Welter 1966, p.152), Meg’s ambition for Willie to grow up to be a minister, “the highest calling she could imagine for her darling” (Morgan 1992, p.111), further exemplifies Meg as an exemplar of the ideal mother figure. Meg can, she believes, realise her contribution to building a sustainable life on the Cape through Willie’s role as a minister. Through his work Meg hopes to extend her legacy beyond the home and even beyond the Cape as Willie reclaims the world from ‘revolt and sin’. In her maternal role, Meg “will share his immortal fame” (de Beauvoir 1949, p.531) and subsequently extend her legacy and impact beyond the confines of the domestic space.

The legitimacy of woman’s transcendence through her children’s achievements is questioned by de Beauvoir, who asserts that transcendence in this way is “only an illusion” (1949, p.513), as within this type of transcendence woman continues to require external validation. Passive in her dependence on the actions of others, woman subsequently remains confined by her inability to achieve transcendence on her own, as her child “does not take her out of immanence” (p.539). Woman in this position, de Beauvoir asserts, has “no independent grasp on the world or on the future” and thus “[seeks] to compensate for all these frustrations through her child” (1949, p.529). While Meg may enjoy satisfaction through Willie’s achievements her own achievements remain unchanged. Meg’s powerlessness over her facticity is evident in Willie’s lack of interest in education. Lavinia acknowledges Willie’s lack of interest in Meg’s plan for him but supposes that Willie “could learn if he put his mind to it” (Morgan 1992, p.110). Morgan’s narrative makes it clear that Willie is uninterested in learning or education in general and that he is, as de Beauvoir notes, “an independent subject” (1949, p.528). Meg resists Willie’s attempt to become independent when he asserts his

intention of working on the boats. She confides in Lavinia, stating that “we’ll let him be for the summer, but when fall comes I’ll see to it that he settles down to it” (p.110). The extent of her challenge and her inevitable failure comes in Chapter Ten when, fed up with Meg’s constant pressuring, Willie threatens to “run away to Labrador if ye crowd keeps on with school stuff” (Morgan 1992, p.127). Willie does not follow the path planned for him by Meg; instead he prefers the prospect of making his living through fishing and sealing. Willie’s rejection of Meg’s attempt to achieve transcendence through him exemplifies de Beauvoir’s theory that each individual will live “his life on his own account” thus causing “trouble” between mothers and their children (p.531). Willie’s resistance towards education and the path Meg has chosen for him further exemplifies de Beauvoir’s theory that, as children grow up, they develop interests “from which [their] mother is often excluded” (1949, p.531), and subsequently pursue their own ambitions. This in turn exemplifies how, while woman extends her legacy through bearing children, these children do “not take her out of her immanence” (p.539).

Through her portrayal of Meg as the ideal mother and her contentment in this position, Morgan also arguably challenges de Beauvoir’s theories. De Beauvoir notes that while the woman’s work within the home provides her with “an occupation, an activity”, it “provides no escape from immanence and little affirmation of individuality” (1949, p.470). Tasks that originally offer the woman a means of justification, become monotonous and dull with repetition until each task becomes another component of the “household drudgery” (p.509). From this position it would appear that Meg’s partial transcendence is ultimately unproductive as, in the end, it holds “no significance” (de Beauvoir 1949, p.472). However, as highlighted by Strickling (1988), de Beauvoir does not consider that exercising immanence can be just as rewarding as exercising transcendence (p.40). While Meg’s work “does not take her out of her situation” (de Beauvoir 1949, p.476), as evident through her unchanging position regardless of Willie’s accomplishments, Morgan’s focus on the trials of everyday life uncover a power that can be found in the daily tasks carried out within the home. These tasks highlight that Meg’s efforts are no less of an essential part in the role of helping to create a sustainable life on the Cape. Meg’s devotion to the home and family enables her to sustain a level of comfort and security for her family despite the harsh living conditions in the early Outports, in addition to her efforts to ensure her children have opportunities for a better future. Strickling argues the value attached to the pleasures

that accompany carrying out domestic duties; commenting on tasks such as housework and tending to a garden, she acknowledges that while these tasks “demand...a great deal of effort of the same dull sort” (1988, p.41), there is pleasure in the result and in the process itself, found within “the sense of having contributed to the development of something” (p.41). The fruits of Meg’s labour, including the nice house, plenty of food, and children with prospects for a decent future, arguably highlight not only the reward that these duties can offer, which prompts individuals to strive to maintain this situation, but also the contribution she makes to the Cape community. Thus, Meg’s experience of partial transcendence challenges de Beauvoir’s theories through calling into consideration the value of her role in society. As portrayed by Morgan, Meg’s devotion to this role ensures that her duties are ultimately productive as a means to an end, which in this instance is a sustainable life.

Through her portrayal of Meg, Morgan explores the possibility of partial transcendence. Meg represents the ideal of motherhood extensively perpetuated throughout the 19th century: she is house-proud and pious; her life is devoted to her husband and raising their children and in these duties, she achieves moments of complete happiness and contentment which can be construed as transcendence. While the mores of 19th century society restricted woman’s ability to escape confinement within the domestic space in terms of her legacy and her impact, the happiness and fulfilment Meg experiences within motherhood does enable her to achieve moments of transcendence. Furthermore, through her portrayal of Meg’s experience of partial transcendence and her happiness in her situation, Morgan also subsequently challenges the idea that the women who conform to the ideals are ultimately confined to immanence, by presenting an experience omitted from de Beauvoir’s observations which highlights the possibility of a woman content in her role, and whose duties are both productive and rewarding in their contributions towards an end in light of the circumstances of their situation.

6.2 Fanny

Morgan’s depiction of Fanny’s experiences of motherhood in Chapter Thirteen represents an example of the situation of unmarried mothers throughout the 19th century. De Beauvoir acknowledges the negative attitudes surrounding unmarried mothers, claiming that women who bore children outside marriage presented “an offence to public opinion” (1949, p.451). Such attitudes are expressed with regard to Fanny’s

situation when Mary Bundle asks Lavinia “in a grating whisper”, “do you know about Fanny?” (Morgan 1992, p.179). The manner in which Mary poses the question reflects the stigma attached to unmarried pregnant women, whose pregnancy was “regarded as a source of shame” (Richardson 2014). Sally Mitchell emphasises the intensity of such attitudes noting that “a woman who falls from purity can never return to ordinary society” (1981, p.x). Mary’s whispering of Fanny’s pregnancy underlines how Fanny’s pregnancy results in her becoming an object of social shame and exclusion, which the community attempts to lessen through an arranged marriage to Thomas Hutchings, the putative father of the child (Morgan 1992, p.179).

De Beauvoir describes the “distressful situation” of unmarried pregnant women (1949, p.505), alluding to the severity of the consequences of motherhood outside marriage stating that it “is still so frightful a fault that many women prefer suicide or infanticide to the status of unmarried mother (1949, p.505). These attitudes are critiqued through the incidence of Fanny’s death following the birth of her son Toma in Chapter Fourteen. Nina Auerbach discusses the use of death as a symbol of the consequences and punishment that befell women who bore children out of wedlock (1980, p.198), claiming that “conventionally, the fallen woman must die at the end of her story” (p.35), arguably as “death...is the one implacable human change” (p.35). Fanny’s death is brought about through the process of childbirth, as was common during the 19th century (Richardson 2014; Worsley 2011). Her death occurs on the beach and, therefore, is symbolic as being outside the boundaries of civilised society. In selecting this location, a public place visible and often frequented by the community, Morgan combines childbirth, death and places them within the public arena to critique the values of a moralistic society that imposed secrecy, shame, suffering and punishment on unmarried mothers. The situation of Fanny Bundle offers a stark contrast to that of Meg Andrews, whose contented and successful fertility embodies the ideals surrounding motherhood.

Fanny Bundle’s experience of pregnancy and her own subsequent death following the child’s birth offers a stark contrast to the happiness enjoyed by Meg. Fanny’s arranged marriage to Thomas, and her subsequent misery in her situation illustrates the severity of the restrictions placed on women who defy conventions and have children out of wedlock, and their complete passivity in their situation. Through Fanny’s situation, from Mary’s attitude to her daughter’s pregnancy, up to Fanny’s death on the beach

following the birth of Toma, Morgan explores the attitudes towards unmarried mothers in the 19th century. Using these events following Mary's revelation about Fanny, Morgan presents Fanny's experiences as an example of contemporary moral values and provides a critique of the ways in which women who did not maintain these values were perceived. By offering contrasting experiences of motherhood Morgan recognises, retrieves, and preserves the experiences of those women whose narratives were marginalised.

6.3 Charlotte

Morgan's portrayal of Charlotte, Lav's mother, in *Waiting for Time* offers an alternative example of motherhood. Unlike Meg in *Random Passage*, Charlotte does not devote her life to Lav who appears to simply be an element in Charlotte's life rather than the sole justification for her existence. Morgan details Lav's reaction to Charlotte's treatment of her, when Lav describes how Charlotte often refers to her as "the child" (Morgan 1994, p.10), and "scrap" (pp.11-12). Even as Lav describes this memory, which "is more than thirty years old" (Morgan 1994, p.12), she dislikes the feeling that accompanies it (p.12). In particular, Lav identifies feelings of maternal disconnection and detachment, as 'the child' sounds "as if I belong to someone else" (p.10). These feelings suggest that unlike Meg's experience, Charlotte is not transformed by her role as mother.

Lav's perception of disconnection from Charlotte is emphasised in Chapter Five when Lav recalls Charlotte's "coolness, her self-possession", and how "she's never tried to make a home, never loved her" (Morgan 1994, p.70). Lav fails to appreciate that Charlotte fled the Cape taking Lav "before it owned [Lav]", as it owned "the four or five crazy families living on it" (p.20). Nor does Lav appreciate Charlotte's effort to secure a room in the Petrassi house near Charlotte's place of employment and the trouble Charlotte takes to ensure that Lav is safe and has an experience of family life while Charlotte is at work. As illustrated in Chapter One, Charlotte arranges for Lav to be cared for by Mrs Petrassi and play with Audrey Petrassi, allowing Lav to pretend that she and Audrey "are sisters" (p.10). Lav describes her hope when Charlotte moves to an apartment near to Lav's workplace in her adulthood, that "this was an offer of friendship" (Morgan 1994, p.13). However, Morgan emphasises Lav's disappointment in the line "there has been no casual visiting, they never drop in on each other, never shop together as Lav has seen other mothers and daughters do" (Morgan 1994, p.13).

Lav's description of how she and Charlotte never partake in typical mother/daughter activities emphasises the unconventional and strained nature of their relationship. Lav's perspective is that Charlotte has failed in her role of mother, and Charlotte's apparent indifference and emotional coldness suggests that motherhood does not automatically confer the positive emotional and financial security and transcendence as highlighted by Meg's experience of motherhood. Thus, it contrasts with the ideal of motherhood as exemplified by Meg. Charlotte is a lone parent who cannot afford, nor appears willing, to allow motherhood to "[anchor] her...to the home" (Welter 1966, p.171). Charlotte must work and raise Lav without any emotional or financial support and this presents difficulties which are both hers and Lav's. In depicting the fissures within these characters' relationship, Morgan demonstrates how daughters impose ideals of motherhood onto their own mothers, and are unable or unwilling to appreciate the challenges their mothers faced in opposing or resisting the stereotypes ingrained within these roles. Historian Joy Parr discusses these attitudes, noting that "working mothers with young children were often judged to be less than ideal mothers" (1995, p.98). She notes that despite this situation being "far from unusual" (p.98), there was "little ideological support" for working mothers, due to the "image of the 'proper' mother, at home with her child, rather than out working" (p.119). In light of this, Parr states that those who opposed mothers in the workforce claimed that this situation would result in "neglected children" (p.104). However, this view failed to incorporate the realities faced by working mothers, as illustrated in Lav's opinion of Charlotte.

Charlotte negotiates motherhood in a way that ensures she retains her autonomy and her identity. Morgan's portrayal of Charlotte subverts the traditional image of motherhood, as described by de Beauvoir (1949), who describes mothers who coddle their children, allowing them to "cling to their mother's skirts" (p.298), entertaining "the idea that her child will be a hero" (p.514). Charlotte's distant attitude towards her daughter reads as an implicit critique of the prevailing attitudes surrounding mothers who could not or chose not to devote their lives exclusively to their children. In Charlotte, Morgan creates a character who fails to conform to the maternal ideal of total emotional availability and subservience. This presents a challenge to both Charlotte and Lav who are without role models in this type of relationship. Lav's struggle to understand and accept Charlotte's emotional independence and seeming coldness is a detailed portrait of a general incomprehension and rejection of mothers who do not, or cannot conform to the stay-at-

home and constantly emotionally available and effusive ideal of motherhood. Thus, Lav's account of her difficult relationship with Charlotte articulates the complexities of challenging mid-20th century motherhood ideals, which damage women's interfamilial relationships. By choosing to retain her independence and identity, often sacrificed during motherhood, Charlotte presents as an example of a mid-20th century woman who must renegotiate the role and responsibilities of motherhood and struggle in different ways to transcend their facticity. Meanwhile, her daughter Lav must come to terms with the fact that the very aspects of the relationship that has modelled independence and autonomy has resulted in her unwitting perpetuation of impossible ideals of motherhood.

6.4 Lav

Like Charlotte, Lav, her daughter, also becomes a lone parent, but unlike Charlotte, Lav remains unmarried. Throughout the 19th century up to the mid-20th century, motherhood was only appropriate within the confines of marriage, as "maternity...is respectable only for a married woman" (de Beauvoir 1949, p.451). Women who bore children out of wedlock suffered social condemnation and rejection, as "the infant at her breast was her stigma, her burden, her curse" (*The Magdalen's Friend*, quoted in Higginbotham 1989, pp.321-322). Unmarried mothers were shamed and ostracized, with little chance or opportunity for redemption; as Sally Mitchell attests, "when a woman falls from purity there is no return for her – as well may one attempt to wash the stain from the sullied snow" (1981, p.x).

Lav, whose son David Saul is born in the late 20th century, is not subjected to such judgement from society. In Chapter Five, Lav recognises the fact that judgement on unmarried mothers exists, but feels no guilt, remorse or shame at "having gone, so pliantly, so passively to bed with Wayne Drover" (Morgan 1994, p.71). Reflecting on the possible consequences of her choices, which include "embarrassment, heartache, infection, pregnancy, even death" (p.71), Lav recognises that rearing a child without a father no longer bears social stigma or shame, and that the physical dangers of childbirth are now "highly unlikely" (p.71). Morgan illustrates this change in attitudes in Chapter Seventeen, through Zinnie's reaction to Lav's pregnancy, when Zinnie claims that she "considers Lav mad, but very brave, to bring a child into the world" (Morgan 1994, p.217). The 'madness' that Zinnie implies is not caused by any

perceptions surrounding unmarried mothers, as she is “delighted to act as David Saul’s honorary aunt” (p.217), but rather the result of Zinnie’s personal experience of motherhood when “her own children...caused her endless anxiety” (p.217). Similarly, Charlotte does not judge Lav but instead relishes the role of grandmother sending “many baby gifts” (p.217). As outlined through the support and encouragement offered to Lav, her experience of motherhood is positive, thus reflecting Crawford’s assertion that attitudes towards unmarried mothers in Canadian society have progressed from ‘moral lawbreaker’, to a ‘social problem’ (1997, p. 110), to an acceptance of the economically independent woman who has chosen motherhood (1997, p.111). This progression in social attitudes is exemplified by Morgan in Lav’s experiences as it is Lav’s economic independence that enables her to avoid the stigma associated with welfare-dependent mothers. Crawford reinforces this change in attitudes stating that:

for the educated and economically independent woman who chooses to have a child on her own, there is very little if any stigma attached. Certainly there is no sense of moral outrage, just a musing on the effects of raising a child without a father (1997, p.125).

Thus, while a degree of negativity continued to accompany certain situations of single motherhood, as exemplified through the perception of welfare-dependent teen mothers outlined by Crawford (1997), Lav’s situation enables her to avoid these perceptions. Instead, her status as a financially independent woman positively impacts upon her experiences as mother in that her independence allows her autonomy and independence.

However, Morgan also complicates the portrayal of Lav’s experience of motherhood suggesting that the perpetuation of perceptions and ideals surrounding motherhood continued to confine a woman to facticity in the late 20th century. Although Lav’s experience of motherhood is represented as a positive choice, she nonetheless continues to be confined by persisting stereotypes and ideals that surround motherhood, which she cannot overcome. As outlined by de Beauvoir, and echoed by Friedan and Welter, the idealised image of the mother was one who became a mother following marriage, and remained in the home, devoting her life to taking care of her children (de Beauvoir 1949; Friedan 1963, pp.24,30,42; Welter 1966, pp.162,171). Friedan (1963), and Davis *et al* (1982) restate the particularities of the role of mother, in their assertion that fathers are “more occupied than mothers in the ‘real’ world” and mothers as “more...occupied than fathers with the world of the family” (1982, p.262).

Media publications such as newspapers and periodicals during the mid-20th century to the present day further reinforce these stereotypes. Firstly, as noted by Crawford (1997), in the mid-20th century, the “Canadian popular press did not [represent single mothers] at all” (p.111), and secondly, the media perpetuated the ideal of mothers as the primary carers of children. For example, *Woman’s Companion* magazine, and *Woman’s Illustrated*, promoted the child as the responsibility of the mother advertising ‘Fenning’s Children’s Cooling Powders’ (*Woman’s Companion* 1951, p.35), and ‘Vinolia Baby Soap and Powders’ (*Woman’s Illustrated* 1952, p.25).¹⁷ Both advertisements portray a mother and a child and advertise products concerned with the wellbeing of the child. The Vinolia advert appeals to women to “give *your* baby blissful bath-times with Vinolia” (*Women’s Illustrated* 1952, p.25, original emphasis), thus explicitly emphasising the prominence of the mother as primary carer of children. Fenning’s advertisement similarly stresses the role of the mother as caregiver, by stating that the product is endorsed by mothers “for 90 years and more”, and that having a packet readily available at home, would make a woman “mother-wise” (*Woman’s Companion* 1951, p.35). The messages explicit in both advertisements aim to perpetuate and promote images of women as the sole caregiver to children, by marketing the products specifically towards women. Crawford’s study into public attitudes towards motherhood (1997) provides evidential support for the persistence of attitudes that regard mothers as the primary and oftentimes sole caregivers to children, and indeed contemporary advertisements continue to promote ideals and attitudes similar to those outlined in *Woman’s Companion* (1951), and *Women’s Illustrated* (1952).¹⁸ Adrienne Rich alludes to these continuing ideals when she references Virginia Woolf and acknowledges her awareness of women who were not present because they are at home “washing the

¹⁷ Both of which were available in Canada in the 1950s and held international recognition, thus implying the universality of the content and discourses they perpetuated.

¹⁸ An example of this is arguably Proctor and Gamble’s 2012 advertisement leading up to the 2012 Olympic Games. The advertisement, which contained the slogan ‘Thank You Mom’ (ThankYouMamaSA 2012), was launched to coincide with the Olympics to recognise and acknowledge the roles of mothers in raising athletes of such high standards. Throughout its duration, the advertisement, which was circulated via television, showcased clips of women across the world partaking in various activities that support and lead the child to become an Olympic athlete (ThankYouMamaSA 2012, 00.00.12). Thus, by aiming their advertisement specifically towards mothers, Proctor and Gamble perpetuate a narrative similar to that contained in the advertisements for ‘Fenning’s Children’s Cooling Powders’ (*Woman’s Companion* 1951, p.35) and ‘Vinolia Baby Soap and Powders’ (*Woman’s Illustrated* 1952, p.25), which promoted the ideal mother as being a ‘stay-at-home’ mother.

dishes and looking after the children” (1972, p.20). She claims that “nearly fifty years after [Woolf] spoke, that fact remains largely unchanged” (p.20). Although these particular advertisements are outside the timeframe in which Lav was raising David Saul, from the similarities in their content, it emerges that while the stigma surrounding unmarried mothers in Canada relaxed over time, and that the prospect of single motherhood was increasingly normalised, myths and ideals surrounding the mother as a selfless, stay-at-home figure continued to exist. Such myths create, and continue to create, barriers that hinder single mothers’ opportunities for transcendence, as the idealised discourses around motherhood fail to reflect the realities and challenges experienced by lone parents.

Morgan portrays Lav’s challenges as a lone parent in Chapter Thirteen when Lav notes that things that once concerned her, the “battle against sagging breasts, greying hair, against inclinations toward sloth” are now “mere background to the business of earning a living, of building a life for herself and the boy” (Morgan 1994, p.216). Unlike the mothers observed by de Beauvoir and Friedan, who do not have to contend with responsibilities outside the home, Lav must support and build a life for her son. Because her circumstances do not permit her to stay at home, Lav must move between Ottawa and Davisporte in Newfoundland in order to provide for them, which she does by working in various short-term contract jobs, including a fish breeding project (p.216), university lab work (p.217), and “half-day jobs” in the art gallery where she formerly volunteered (p.217). When she decides to return to Davisporte permanently (p.218), her main concern is “how [to] make a life for herself and her son in such a place” (p.218).

Through Lav’s experiences as a working mother juggling constant geographical relocation and precarious employment, Morgan highlights the continued challenges experienced by women who lone parent, which place them in liminal positions. While Morgan demonstrates that Lav has avoided the social stigma that once surrounded unmarried mothers, she remains subject to unattainable ideals of motherhood and increased financial responsibilities due to her status as a lone parent. Morgan’s portrayal of Lav’s situation thus explores alternative experiences of motherhood and the extraordinary challenges experienced by those women to negotiate boundaries of immanence. While Lav has challenging experiences of motherhood as a child through her desire that her own mother align more with certain ideals of motherhood, she also is

challenged by her own experiences of motherhood in which her freedom, financial independence and autonomy is limited, thus restricting her own potential and ability to transcend her facticity.

Conclusion

This chapter has considered Morgan's exploration of women who conform to ideals of motherhood alongside characters who deviate from the accepted mother archetype, and critiqued how these experiences relate to the social and cultural mores of the 19th and 20th centuries. Through her portrayal of her characters' experiences of motherhood, Bernice Morgan explores how women negotiate the boundaries of transcendence and immanence, often occupying liminal spaces of simultaneous partial transcendence and immanence. By depicting various experiences of motherhood, Morgan challenges the transcendence/immanence dichotomy through her characters' attempts and partial success in extending their legacies beyond the domestic space. Considering de Beauvoir's contention that individuals can be both transcendent and immanent simultaneously, in contrast to the dichotomic nature of Sartre's interpretation, Morgan's characters demonstrate the possibility for partial transcendence. Their choices, when contextualised within the limits imposed on women by prevailing cultural and social ideology and convention, position these characters within liminal spaces, wherein a negotiation of the boundaries of transcendence and immanence is challenging but possible.

7 Conclusion

This thesis set out to provide a critical analysis of Bernice Morgan's portrayal of her female characters and their experiences. Informed by the contextual information outlined within the literature review, Morgan's novels are situated within the sub-genre of Newfoundland women's writing. In this genre, Morgan's novels offer a dual contribution; firstly, considering the lack of scholarly attention afforded to Atlantic Canadian women's writing by the male-dominated wider literary canon (Fuller 2004), Morgan's literary output has challenged the prioritisation and placement of women-centred narratives within the accepted canon of Canadian literature. She achieved this through her fictionalising of woman-centred narratives and in her illustration of a variety of perspectives and experiences of womanhood. Through her delineation of these experiences, Morgan's novels highlight the importance of narratives which challenge the ways in which the lives and experiences of Canadian women have been traditionally dismissed as mundane or less important, and illustrate the value these narratives have in relation to their contribution and the preservation of records relating to life in rural Newfoundland outports.

Secondly, in recognising the subjectivity of these experiences, and acknowledging the value that emerges from differing perspectives, Morgan's novels give a voice to those individuals who experienced additional marginalisation in an already marginalised community. While depicting characters who conform to the expectations of their respective societies, Morgan also explores the experiences of characters who chose alternative paths. In so doing, Morgan ensures that women who diverge from normative orders and challenge conventional or stereotypical female roles are represented and that such perspectives and stories are preserved and equal in importance. By including these accounts Morgan creates a more encompassing representation of life experience in rural Canadian outports.

In terms of the limitations of this study, as outlined in the Introductory chapter, Bernice Morgan's novels *Random Passage* and *Waiting for Time* can be classified as part of a settler literature. Thus, while the experiences of the female characters within these novels can be used to portray the experiences of settlers and their descendants to Newfoundland, these situations and narratives do not speak for all women. For example,

Morgan's characters are of British descent, which immediately narrows the scope of the experiences recorded. They do not include the narratives of French settlers, or the experiences of the Indigenous peoples, suggesting the potential for further research. Also, future research may usefully and productively apply a Post-Colonial lens to further develop and understand the different experiences of Morgan's characters. The similarities outlined in the Methodology between the theory of partial transcendence and Bhabha's theory regarding the 'Third Space', further recognises the potential that the application of Post-Colonial theory could provide for further research within this area. Furthermore, a Post-Colonial lens, alongside the application of theories around memory and migrancy could prove valuable in analysing the various perspectives that would arise through the different experiences of a situation or event.

In addition, as highlighted through the close reading in 'The Married and Unmarried Woman: Womanhood, Independence and Partial Transcendence' and 'The Mother: The Image of the Mother, Limitations and Partial Transcendence', there are elements of subversion in the actions and experiences of the characters, invoked by the power of choice. Morgan's characters negotiate the boundaries through their experiences of their situations, as they constantly engage and make choices that impact on their legacies and ability to transcend. Through this concept of choice, Morgan's female characters have the freedom to accept their relegation to the domestic sphere and embrace immanence, which they do not. Instead, they exercise their power to embrace their freedom and extend their legacies. Thus, these elements of power and subversion provide scope for further research, in which theories around power could be applied in a close reading to offer a differing perspective on the positions of liminality inhabited by the female characters within Morgan's novels, and by extension, the women who lived in the Newfoundland Outports during the eras of the novels.

Since the late 20th century, cultural and social developments relating to de-colonisation allow for other readings of Canadian literature. This development is visible through the emergence of a Canadian avant garde and, within recent and emerging literature and art Canada's Indigenous peoples have contributed to what has become known as Canada's Indigenous renaissance. This renaissance provides artists and cultural activists with a platform from which to resist euro-centric norms, reclaim their culture and champion the 'Other', within a revised and more inclusive cultural canon. With regard to this

process, and considering that Morgan's *Random Passage* and *Waiting for Time* are regarded as settler literature, scope for further research exists in this area also.

As discussed within the methodology chapter, this study adopts a subjective, interpretivist epistemology, utilising a critical analysis of both literary and non-literary works through an existentialist feminist lens. In particular, using the theoretical framework of Simone de Beauvoir, and incorporating the theories of Jean-Paul Sartre as an enabling methodology, the thesis has firstly explored how the characters' situations reflect the social and cultural ideologies and circumstances of 19th and 20th century patriarchal society in Britain and Canada. The inclusion of socio-cultural material has informed this exploration and added a socio-cultural and historical element to the study. Secondly, the research has investigated how the characters' experiences have enabled them to negotiate the boundaries of their situations in relation to these ideologies and circumstances. Morgan's characters have, as this study has demonstrated, extended their legacies beyond the domestic sphere enabling them to progress and occupy liminal spaces wherein they have achieved partial transcendence.

The analysis of the experiences of Morgan's female characters during the stage of the 'Young Girl', using the characters of Lavinia Andrews and Lav Andrews illustrates the possibility for partial transcendence through education and employment. As marriage and motherhood are considered the woman's destiny, and the adolescent girl is too young for these stages, she is permitted to pursue other occupations to fill the idle time. Lavinia and Lav chose occupations surrounding education and employment. The skills and freedom these occupations offer enables Lavinia and Lav to surpass limits of education and expectation and achievement that continued to be imposed on young women, despite the 150-year gap and progression between the 19th and 20th centuries. Furthermore, such skillsets afforded them as young women the confidence and competence within the professional sphere which was not only useful but essential for their survival in the harsh rural landscape. However, despite the levels of independence their professional occupations afforded, their independence was limited, as Morgan illustrates, these accomplishments could not always combat the limits imposed on young girls by societal expectations and accepted myths around female roles, responsibilities and duties. Regardless of their success within their professional occupations, Lavinia and Lav remain confined by cultural and social mores which

dictate that, firstly, these pursuits were temporary and were considered as a means of passing the idle time until they could marry and, secondly, that woman requires a man to liberate her from the confines of girlhood and cross the threshold into womanhood.

‘The Married and Unmarried Woman: Womanhood, Independence and Partial Transcendence’ chapter analyses the experiences of women who married and those women who remained unmarried. Morgan’s portrayal of the experiences of secondary characters Mary Bundle and Jennie Andrews, when examined through the lens of de Beauvoir’s theories, explores the restrictions imposed on married women in terms of their duties and in terms of the importance bestowed upon marriage by society. The analysis reveals that Morgan’s characters may experience partial transcendence and by remaining unmarried may retain a degree of agency unavailable to married women.

However, despite Lavinia and Lav, as unmarried women, securing freedoms unavailable to married women, such choices potentially leave these women at an emotional disadvantage. Lavinia’s unconventional choices and unwillingness to renounce her independence have resulted in her losing Thomas to Fanny, consequently reducing her autonomy. Despite the 150 year gap, Lav also suffered from these conditions: following the breakdown of her career, which she prioritised over marriage, her inability to have a career, a child and a partner leaves her vulnerable to economic hardship and loneliness. Consequently, while such women have impact and legacy beyond the confines of the domestic space, thus transcending the boundaries restricting married women, the conditions attached to such choices, as with married women, result in a partial or precarious transcendence.

The final chapter focused on four experiences of motherhood, as presented through the experiences of Meg, Fanny, Charlotte and Lav. De Beauvoir claims the transcendence these women attained did not constitute real transcendence, as, while they could enjoy the benefits of their children’s transcendence, their own situation remained unchanged. However, Meg exemplifies an experience that is not included in de Beauvoir’s observations, which is the example of a woman who succeeds in finding fulfilment through her home and family. Her devotion to her husband and children and her pride in her home grants her moments of complete happiness and fulfilment thus progressing her beyond the confines of passivity but, in line with de Beauvoir’s theories, Meg cannot achieve transcendence through her son Willie, as he demonstrates his independence and

acts contrary to her aspirations for him. On the other hand, the experiences of Fanny Bundle illustrate the strict social conventions surrounding motherhood, highlighting the plight and suffering of unmarried mothers. These experiences offer a contrast to Meg's situation: rather than experiencing happiness and fulfilment, Fanny experiences suffering and misery, from her arranged marriage to Thomas, up until her death in childbirth. In her portrayal of Fanny's experiences, Morgan reflects 19th century attitudes and the consequences, as experienced by women who deviated from these moral values and attitudes.

Charlotte and Lav's situations saw them becoming lone parents who had to work to support themselves and their children, thus subverting the traditional image of motherhood in the 20th century. Their experiences provide Morgan with a fictional case study to explore and critique the attitudes towards and experiences of working mothers and their children, and again the analysis here reveals that women who worked professionally and were mothers experienced other obstructions in their pursuit of transcendence, consequently relegating their efforts to what can again be described as partial transcendence.

In conclusion, this thesis contends that Bernice Morgan challenges the concept of transcendence and immanence as diametrically opposed in her portrayal of female characters, whose choices and experiences demonstrate the possibility of a partial transcendence. In this, Morgan can be said to represent Simone de Beauvoir's interpretation of existentialist philosophy which asserts that transcendence and immanence exist simultaneously, and that there are multiple factors that potentially inhibit full transcendence. However, while the experiences outlined within the novels endorse de Beauvoir's interpretations, the inclusion of experiences in Morgan's novels that are not considered by de Beauvoir also challenge aspects of her theory. Over the course of the novels, Morgan's characters have demonstrated that the limits imposed on young girls are not necessarily confined to that stage; Lav, whose current situation as an adult in the novel can be attributed to her choices as a young girl, remains confined to waiting for validation from men despite having aged beyond this stage. Thus, her situation challenges de Beauvoir's ideas regarding female experience by highlighting that experience is not restricted to within the boundaries of an established timeframe,

but rather can transcend these categories and continue to impose limits on women who deviate from societal expectation.

Within 'The Married and Unmarried Woman: Womanhood, Independence and Partial Transcendence', Meg and Lavinia's moment of compromise in running the school extends thought around the transcendence/immanence paradigm with regard to women's opportunities for transcendence, by highlighting how women can achieve transcendence through solidarity with other women. While this is not an option in partnerships between men and women due to the idea of male superiority creating a presupposed hierarchy in the relationship, collaborations between women do not have these restrictions. Thus, when both women are equally free to make decisions, and exercise their autonomy, it suggests the possibility of whether their combined actions as a team can strengthen their individual claims for transcendence by extending their legacies and impact through their project. Finally, Morgan's portrayal of Meg as the ideal mother who is also content in her situation challenges de Beauvoir's observations around the experiences of motherhood by offering evidence that Meg's decision to conform and adhere to the ideals can be equally as rewarding as exercising one's transcendence. While de Beauvoir asserts that the duties of a woman within the domestic sphere are unproductive in that they do not contribute to wider society, Morgan's focus on the everyday allows her to extend this thinking. Through Meg's devotion to her duties, Morgan highlights the productive nature of her work in the context of their environment, as Meg's role is no less essential than that of the men in creating a sustainable life on the Cape.

In challenging de Beauvoir's theories, Morgan's novels subsequently also offer the opportunity to extend thoughts around female experience. Her inclusion of a variety of situations exemplifies the subjectivity and viability of each individual's experience. In demonstrating how these individuals can achieve partial transcendence through their choices and actions within the context of their personal situations, and including experiences not recorded by de Beauvoir of power, solidarity and subversion, Morgan's portrayal of her female characters subverts the transcendence/immanence paradigm, thus prompting opportunities to extend thinking around de Beauvoir's theory of partial transcendence.

As this thesis illustrates, Morgan's characters' choices and their attempts to extend their legacies ultimately propel them into liminal spaces in relation to other women and society more generally. Using the seminal theories of Simone de Beauvoir and her observations of women during a variety of life stages, and applying her Western philosophies to novels within Canada's Settler literature, this thesis has undertaken an intensive engagement between sociological documents, literary theory and Newfoundland women's literature. Through this engagement, this research ultimately contributes both to the wider area of Newfoundland and Canadian literary studies, and also to the discussion around literature and marginalised communities.

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