"She Is Not All There":
Performative Language, Gender, & Psychology in the Fiction of Jean Rhys

by

Annie Dade
Class of 2016

A thesis submitted to the
faculty of Wesleyan University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Degree of Bachelor of Arts
with Departmental Honors in English

For my Dad

who shared with me his lifelong love of learning

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

The Lost Thought

I felt a cleaving in my mind
As if my brain had split–
I tried to match it– seam by seam–
But could not make them fit.

The thought behind, I strove to join
Unto the thought before,
But sequence ravelled out of Sound
Like balls– upon a floor.

Emily Dickinson

Dickinson's poem[1] captures a moment of failure: an inability to integrate

thoughts and words. The mental fracturing and the resultant failure of language stands in

delicate tension with the poetic mode, as if the only way to articulate this moment when

language fails is by way of creative means. Perhaps the fragmented self must turn to non-

conventional language in order to find a voice. But how does one write from this place

of resistance to convention? How does one write as an outsider for whom linguistic and

social conventions are violently normalizing forces? It is a place of ambiguity, a place of

non-normativity, a place of nonsense, perhaps a place of passivity or of resistance; it is a

place of madness. Moreover, can psychology, in particular the clinical understanding of

abnormal psychological types, be performative, just as gender and language can be? I set

out to explore the interplay between these three categories that constitute our self-

knowledge and our self-expression to one another.

Shoshana Felman's analysis of literary female madness provides an answer to the

critical question: why are more female-identified than male-identified patients diagnosed,

---

[1] Dickenson wrote this poem in a manuscript around 1864; it was published in 1896 in *Poems*.

1

prescribed medication, and institutionalized for a category of symptoms that are understood in terms of mental illness? Felman writes in *What Does a Woman Want?*

> "'Mental illness' is a *request for help*, a manifestation both of cultural impotence and of political castration. This socially defined help-needing and help-seeking behavior is itself part of female conditioning, ideologically inherent in the behavioral pattern and in the dependent and helpless role assigned to the woman as such" (Felman 21-22).

Just as male and female exist in a binary of contrasting definition, so too do sanity and insanity, reason and emotion. Felman struggles to find a way to define femaleness and madness outside of binary oppositions, but in doing so she perpetuates the existing system of norms that link femaleness, helplessness, and mental illness.

In 1967, two American psychologists, Seligman and Overmier, stumbled upon a psychological concept which they termed Learned Helplessness. They found that a dog that had been strapped into a harness and subjected to inescapable electric shocks would not attempt to avoid the shock once released from the harness; "it seems to give up and passively accepts the shock" (Seligman 1972). After continued work with this phenomenon, Seligman found that rats that had undergone similar treatment became less aggressive towards competitors, slower to learn new tasks, and worse at food-seeking behaviors even when very hungry. These rats also experienced physiological changes such as weight loss and neurological changes such as norepinephrine depletion (Seligman 1972). This model was applied to a working understanding of Major Depressive Disorder in humans. The findings corroborate a biological basis for depression by linking the norepinephrine depletion in the animal study to the catecholamine hypothesis of affective disorders, which holds norepinephrine depletion

to be responsible for human Depression (Seligman, 1972). However, the very terminology *Learned Helplessness* suggests the capacity for an environmental conditioning of the disorder. Seligman's work has been adapted to understand environmental influences that lead to depression such as prejudice (racism, sexism etc.). In a 2012 paper, William T. L. Cox et al. argues that schemas about the self that induce depression and prejudicial schemas towards others operate using the same cognitive structures. In this model, the source holds prejudices towards a target, whether it is oneself or another person. Cox describes, "the source exhibits emotions such as disdain, disgust, hate, and anger and behaviors like disdainful avoidance of and aggression toward the target […] Targets often experience despair, sadness, anhedonia, depletion, stigma, and hopelessness and exhibit behaviors like social withdrawal, shameful avoidance, and even catatonia. In other words, targets often experience depression" (Cox 431). Cox viewed Seligman's work on Learned Helplessness as a microcosm for Jewish prisoners in a concentration camp during the Holocaust. Continuing that analogy, Cox likened the person who holds prejudice and negative cognitive associations about the self as the target to "a Nazi handcuffed to a Jew within one person- the hater and the hated, unable to escape one another" (Cox 433). This model addresses the internalization of negative cognitions towards the self and the way in which perception of the environment and sense of self inform one another.

The etiologies of most mental illnesses are contested and working understandings of them constantly adapt to new scientific findings. Psychologists and doctors find themselves debating the relative influence of genetic, neurobiological, and social influences. What exactly is a mental illness if these clinical categories are constantly in flux? For the purpose of this thesis, I will define mental illness as a mental condition

comprised of a set of undesirable symptoms that manifest over a period of time and disrupt mood, relationships, and daily function. Already there is a problem presented in the subjective nature of "undesirable" that relies on what is normal to produce standards of desirable, but I will keep that tension to problematize overly broad applications of medicalized "mental illness". I affirm the very real suffering of those who live with mental illness, either their own or a loved one's, and their right to conceive of the condition in medical terms. In my analysis I make space for unpacking the environmental bases of mental illness. In other words, I examine the harness in Seligman's study and the internalization of cultural stereotypes in the model of Cox et al. Furthermore, I examine the way that linguistic categories shape human experience of mental illness and the way that expressive language can articulate the experience of one who resists categorization. This is not intended to be a generalized approach to mental illness, but rather a way of expanding the discussion on mental illness to include historical and social currents, as well as literature as a site of experimental expression for abnormal psychological experiences.

From T. S. Eliot's *The Wasteland* to Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, the European modernist literary moment deeply concerned itself with melancholy and the mind, with the demons that dwell within and their expression in a modern European society. Literary modernism asked questions about authenticity and identity, in particular of those identities that fell behind or fell short of standards in the modernist Anglo-European context. Heather Love writes in *Feeling Backwards* that the modernist attention to the non-modern, the *other*, infuses their texts with negative affect by writing from a position of behind or *backwardness*:

If modernization in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century aimed to move humanity forward it did so in part by perfecting techniques for mapping and disciplining subjects considered to be lagging behind– and so seriously compromised the ability of these others ever to catch up. Not only sexual and gender deviants but also women, colonized people, the nonwhite, the disabled, the poor, and criminals were marked as inferior by means of the allegation of backwardness. (Love 6)

Anglo-European modernist writers paid attention to those people who did not function in the burgeoning capitalist society with its expanding economic and sexual horizons for heterosexual, white European males. Modernists illustrated the ways in which cultural norms shape or obstruct voice thereby complicating the authenticity of the speaker (or writer). In her own work, Love pays attention in modernist texts to feelings of nostalgia, regret, shame, despair, passivity, escapism, self-hatred, withdrawal, bitterness, and loneliness: feelings tied to the experience of social exclusion and to the historical "impossibility" of same-sex desire (Love 4). As she notes, the passive or inactive voice communicates a lack of voice (Love 12) and this cry for attention is just as political as a demonstrative action. Just as Love delves through the text to find moments of negative affect, I look through the texts of the writer Jean Rhys (1890-1979) to find therein her representations of a dysfunctional subjectivity, searching for a voice or for the language that expresses her heroines' suffering. Whether we ascribe a clinical category of mental illness (problematic in its own right), or we use the historically imbued term melancholia or the gendered term, hysteria, or we use Love's diagnostic of negative affects, it is inarguable that Rhys's heroines suffer. Thus Rhys's novels offer a rich platform for the discussion of representations of mental malady, anguish, and traumatic loss in

conjunction with questions of gender, voice, language, and agency within the European

society of the modernist moment.

Modernist writers famously played with the musicality of words, the rupture of

literary conventions, the slippery multi-faceted meanings of words, and the unraveling of

meaning. Modernists simultaneously relied on the creative use of language to transmit

their artistic vision and societal critique, and revealed the limits of language. Such stylistic

choices are applicable to the writing of illness, to triumph over the "poverty of language"

that, Virginia Woolf writes, hinders "the description of illness in literature". Woolf writes

in her essay, *On Being Ill,*

> In illness, words seem to possess a mystic quality. We grasp what is beyond their
>
> surface meaning, gather instinctively this, that, and the other- a sound, a colour,
>
> here a stress, there a pause- which the poet, knowing words to be meager in
>
> comparison with ideas, has strewn about his page to evoke, when collected, a
>
> state of mind which neither words can express nor the reason explain. (Woolf
>
> 200)

Illness and mental malady haunt the pages of Jean Rhys's work thematically. Stylistically,

her words transcend their literal meaning to take on a *sound* and a *colour*, as Woolf puts it.

Rhys's writing plays with non-conventional syntax, repetition, gaps, and metaphor in

order to construct a deeper representation of living with consistently negative affect and

"disordered" behavior.

In my first chapter, I give a brief critical overview of European-American

Psychiatric development from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century. I

interrogate the role of language in diagnosing and expressing medicalized psychological

states, particularly in the case of female-identified patients. The second chapter

introduces Jean Rhys and the central concerns of her work through a reading of her memoir, *Smile Please* (1979). Then, I turn to three of Rhys's novels and her representations of mental illness within the context of early twentieth century psychoanalytic and psychiatric thought. The first section of literary analysis unpacks stylistic choices in Rhys's novel *Voyage in the Dark* (1934); this is a study of language as an implicit theme, as a vehicle for representing a disordered experience to the reader. I analyze the elliptical quality of Rhys's writing that performs a repressive function, as well as the alternation in point of view that destabilizes the first person narrative and the heroine's subjectivity. The second and third sections analyze language as an explicit theme, as a shaping force that constitutes identities. In an analysis of *Good Morning, Midnight* (1939), I examine the role of language in the production and expression of identity and the problems that a destabilized subjectivity presents to the social and cultural transmission of identity. In my analysis of *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966), I offer a post-colonial feminist reading of dynamic nominalism in psychiatry, drawing upon the work of Ian Hacking, Gayatri Spivak, and Judith Butler. I aim to elucidate Rhys's portrayal of the violent enactment of erotic and imperial power through language and the creative linguistic means that she employs to represent the psychological experience– the "madness"– which these power structures can produce.

THE FUNCTIONS OF LANGUAGE AND WESTERN CULTURAL CURRENTS IN 19TH & 20TH CENTURY PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCES

This chapter outlines the history of dominant ideas and practices in Western psychological sciences[2] from the late nineteenth to the first half of the twentieth centuries. I pay particular attention to discussions of gender and women's sexuality in psychiatric thought, and I interrogate the role that language plays in understanding pathologies and their treatments. I analyze the role of language along two axes: language as a productive agent that participates in the constitution of certain types of subjectivity and language as it is used to represent or express the subjective experience. The former, which I call constitutive language, is a matter of power dynamics. The latter, which I call representational language, is a matter of subjective expression. How does constitutive language form and sustain categories of normal and abnormal psychological states? How does representational language function within changing paradigms of mental illness as a symptom, consequence, or form of treatment? I will address how representational language fails in incidences of silence and obstruction of voice, and how it becomes central to a diagnosis in the form of a patient's articulation of a psychological state. First, I chart the turn from physiological to psychological origins of illness that motivated the production of new concepts in turn-of-the-century medicine. Then I explore the relationship between Western psychiatric practices and conventional understandings of female gender and sexuality. Finally, I demonstrate that certain scientific categories often perceived to be static are in fact dynamic and reflective of cultural norms and stereotypes. This chapter will act as a springboard for the literary analysis portion of this essay. Ultimately, I assert that constitutive and representational modes of language are

---

[2] I will be drawing upon thinkers, authors, and clinicians who self-identify with a wide range of terms such as psychologists, psychiatrists, neurologists, philosophers, social theorists, and historians.

not distinct, but rather feed into each other, and that this complicated feedback loop of subjectivity formation lies at the heart of Jean Rhys's novels.

The Turn Inwards: Finding the Unconscious

The inward attention in modernist literature paralleled the developing interest in interior psychological states in science and medicine. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, European and American psychology and medicine changed radically with the creation and acceptance of a theory of the unconscious. Doctors and psychologists became interested in illness that existed in the absence of physical injury, and they created theories about hidden psychological forces to explain them. This interest in psychical symptoms and mental origins of illness necessitated subjective reporting on the patient's part. This meant a growing interest in the patient's representational language. However, the subjective nature of representational language rendered patients vulnerable to accusations of malingering, feigning, and suggestibility. These accusations surrounding patients with mental illness perpetuated the victimization of patients and created a stigma of weakness around their suffering that was often attributed to a supposedly feminine lack of mental force.

Theories of the unconscious are often traced to Sigmund Freud's work. Freud developed and disseminated his well-known theories of libidinal repression and the unconscious around the turn of the century and brought them to the United States in 1909. In *Mind Games: American Culture and the Birth of Psychotherapy* Eric Caplan points to a historical antecedent that led to theories of the unconscious. Prior to Freud's popularization of the unconscious, accidents on rail tracks in the 1850s and 1860s prompted medical inquiries into psychological illness. Railway Spine became a medically

recognized condition for a victim of a train accident, either as a passenger or railway

worker. Doctors were surprised, though, when patients continued to have symptoms

long after their physical injuries had been treated. Thus the first notion of a

psychologically born illness came from Railway Spine. The British surgeon, John

Erichsen, played a key role in the clinical and legal adoption of this term with his book,

On Railway and Other Injuries of the Nervous System, which was published in Britain in 1867.

Erichsen's book appeared in courtrooms in order to support patients who made claims

for medical leave based on their condition[3]. It became in the Railway Surgeons'[4] best

interests to back the idea of psychological symptoms and believe their patients, because

it was simpler to diagnose a patient as ill and profit from their treatment then to enter

into a legal battle and attempt to expose fraudulent cases. According to Caplan, doctors

began to understand trauma in psychological terms largely for medico-legal reasons, but

this development lent weight to the subjective reporting by patients of symptoms in the

absence of physical evidence of an injury. In her genealogy of the term, *Trauma*, Ruth

Leys begins with Railway Spine in the 1860s and John Erichsen's book in Britain. She

charts the evolution of the term through post-World War I shell shock, the development

of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder after the Vietnam War, Post-Holocaust searches for

reparations and therapy for survivors, and the second-wave feminists who fought for the

rights of survivors of sexual trauma. I return to the evolving concept of trauma in a later

discussion of the malleability of clinical concepts and Leys' deft treatment of the tensions

at play within modern conceptualizations of trauma.

---

3 "In the first decade following the publication of [Erichsen's] book, the English railway companies paid
over $11 million in damages. Similar figures were cited for the United States."(Caplan 26); "Prior to the
publication of Erichsen's lectures an accident victim who failed to display any clearly discernible
anatomical or physiological symptoms was not likely to fare well in a court of law. Erichsen's book forever
altered this situation. It lent a hitherto absent credibility to the plaintiff's claims and greatly enhanced the
prospects of financial compensation." (Caplan 28).
4 NARS: the National Association of Railway Surgeons (Caplan 31)

The turn in the late nineteenth century to psychological origins of illness turned medicine both inwards to develop a theory of the "hidden mind" or unconscious, and outwards to look for cultural or societal influence on inner psychology. Aspects of modern industrialized society were often designated as stimuli of mental illness. George Beard, an American psychologist, wrote about a phenomenon he termed neurasthenia in his 1881 essay "American Nervousness", which he defined as "a deficiency or lack of nerve-force"[5]. The primary cause of this disease, according to Beard, was modern civilization, "distinguished from the ancient by these five characteristics: steam-power, the periodical press, the telegraph, the sciences, and the mental activity of women" (Beard 6). Beard posited that modern Americans overexerted their mental capacities, thus exhausting their "nerve force". For women, Beard viewed this as all the more dangerous.

While Railway Spine prompted American interest in psychogenic nervousness, French psychologists developed new theories of memory[6] and trauma by observing the well-documented phenomenon known as hysteria. In France in the second half of the nineteenth century, Jean-Martin Charcot and Pierre Janet among others worked with hysterical women- a quintessential example of psychosomatic illness that reflected and dramatically perpetuated stereotypes of the over-emotional woman and the woman as object of observation. Hysteria offers a rich platform for my interrogation of language, because doctors frequently observed aphasia (loss of language) and aphonia (loss of voice) in hysterical women.

---

[5] He makes a clear distinction between neurasthenia and "a simple excess of emotion", which can be read as a distinction from hysteria. Hysteria, at this time, was attributed to female sexual dysfunction and excessive emotion.

[6] Hacking refers to this development as "memoropolitics". In *Rewriting the Soul,* he tracks the development of this science in relationship to the clinical phenomenon of Multiple Personality Disorder. The early French academy's interest in the unconscious led to hypnosis as a mode of scientific inquiry integral to the development of the science of memory and retrieving memories.

According to Freud's theory of hysteria– from which he elaborated a theory of the unconscious– the patient's verbal expressive language would always be compromised, because the unconscious is by definition in-articulable. In the absence of verbal expression, the hysteric's body expresses her illness. Somatic symptoms of hysteria included convulsions, choking, screaming, laughing, fits, fainting, sobbing, vomiting, and partial paralysis or tingling. Freud understood these as non-verbal representations of psychological distress. As mentioned above, this sparked an interest in the patient's subjective reporting as a way to access the non-verbal, the unconscious, and the root of the illness. The interest in representational language is exemplified in Freud and Breuer's psychoanalytic "talking cure". Freud states in his 1909 lecture "The Origin and Development of Psychoanalysis[7]" that Breuer first performed this treatment on a hysterical girl in 1880. Freud outlines his own psychoanalytic treatment using the talking cure and other modes of representational language to translate his patient's unconscious. His model of the unconscious is a model of opposing forces: the ego represses forgotten or unwanted memories and libidinal impetuses. Existing beyond articulation, these repressed thoughts and desires come through by way of "indirect terms". Freud's analytical tactics attempt to access the patient's unconscious via these indirect terms– in other words, using representational language to access the unconscious indirectly. In this essay, he describes his three evaluative practices: free association, the interpretation of dreams, and the evaluation of acts that the patient "bungles or does without intending to", referred to colloquially as a Freudian slip (Freud 200). Regarding dream interpretation, he writes: "you must abstract entirely from the apparent connection of

---

[7] This lecture was given in September 1909 at Clark University upon the invitation of notable American psychologist, G. Stanley Hall. *The American Journal of Psychology* published the lecture in April 1910 (vol. XXI, No. 2).

the elements in the manifest dream and seek for the irruptive ideas which arise through free association, according to the psychoanalytic laws" (202). The "you" he addresses is crucial. Freud speaks to the doctors and future psychoanalysts whose job it will be to decode or abstract meaning from the representative language of their patients. In his own words, Freud had the ability to "translate the language of dreams into forms of expression of our own thought– language which can be understood with further help" (Freud 177). This is the constitutive side of psychoanalysis– the powerful, productive, and patriarchal side.

Pathologizing the Modern Woman

I now examine Western psychiatry along lines of gender and sexuality, because gendered power dynamics infiltrated psychoanalytic practices and defined patients through the constitutive side of the psychological sciences. Traditional taxonomies of Western psychiatry pathologized the identity and sexuality of the female patient who broke from her normative gender role. Consider Beard's claim that increased mental work done by women caused in part the epidemic of American nervousness[8]; nervous diseases and diseases of the mind were so strongly associated with women's mental faculties that men with similar nervous diseases were considered effeminate.[9] As Elaine Showalter explicates in *The Female Malady*, this association within psychiatry is rooted in Darwinian concepts of evolved sexual difference from Darwin's *The Descent of Man* (1871). British philosopher, biologist, and evolutionary sociologist Herbert Spencer

---

[8] Silas Weir Mitchell's Rest Cure for neurasthenics involved isolating the patient, depriving them of all intellectual or social stimuli, and subjecting them to electric shocks and a strict diet (Showalter 138).
[9] One psychotherapist Paul-Charles Dubois identified men suffering from shell shock as "army stragglers". He believed that psychoanalytic therapy would only exacerbate the patient's childish and "effeminate" passivity and automatic obedience. Instead, he urged "physicians to increase the soldier's virile self-discipline and autonomy by strengthening his rational and critical powers," thus restoring him to masculinity (Leys 87).

furthered Darwinian psychiatry by arguing that human development relied on a fixed

supply of energy, and since women used up a large amount of their energy in

reproductive processes they were intellectually and developmentally arrested as

compared to the man. Within this paradigm, a woman who strayed too far from her

reproductive role would tax her mental capacities to the point of illness.

Gender bias and patriarchal power dynamics influenced psychoanalytic methods,

in particular those that utilized suggestibility and translation. Freud's conception of

trauma motivated a growing interest in hypnosis as a mode of treatment and scientific

inquiry. Freud defined trauma "as a situation of unconscious identification with, or

'primary repression' of, the traumatic scene or person that occurs in a state akin to the

trance state" (Leys 36). Thus, as Ruth Leys points out, hypnotic suggestibility was the key

to unlocking the traumatic experience. Freud's peers, Jean-Martin Charcot, Pierre Janet,

and Morton Prince considered hypnosis a legitimate field of inquiry and a valid form of

treatment. However, the suggestibility within hypnosis produced a tension between what

Ruth Leys refers to as the mimetic and the anti-mimetic[10]. Trauma was taken to be a

representation of a real event, a *true* memory– an impossilbity, since a simulation or

recovered memory can never be ontologically equivalent to the original event. Leys

illustrates the problem of imitation or hypnotic imitation– the problem of mimesis– in

trauma studies. This controversy plagued the term trauma throughout the 20th century:

people wondered if trauma was representational of a past experience or a newly created

experience under a psychotherapeutic setting? If trauma is produced within the

psychotherapeutic setting, then the analyst is implicated in the creation of an iatrogenic

condition. Leys writes, "did hypnosis heal the patient by soliciting the subject's

---

[10] I owe much of my ideas and terminology surrounding constitutive and representational language to
Ruth Leys' analysis of the tension between the anti-mimetic and mimetic within conceptions of trauma.

participation? Or did a suggestive therapeutic achieve its effects by encouraging the patient's subjection to the authoritative command of the hypnotist that by-passed the consent and as it were the collaboration of the self?" (Leys 87)

Freud and Janet's psychoanalytic work demonstrates the potential assumption of power and voice that the analyst has vis-à-vis the patient. Within Freud's psychoanalytic paradigm, the psychological state of the patient is determined by the doctor's translation of the patient's speech. This establishes an unequal power dynamic between doctor and patient– the expert and the ignorant who frequently took the form of the man who fixes and the woman who needs fixing. The patriarchal structure underlying this dynamic is evident in written accounts of female hysterics as "primitive", "childlike", or mentally weak. In evolutionary psychology, there was a tendency to collapse patriarchal constructions of female emotionality and settler-colonial constructions of racial otherness in anthropological studies of "primitive" cultures: In scientific literature, "the portrayal of women's emotional and intellectual limitations resembled to a remarkable degree the childish and childlike character attributed to aboriginal peoples" (Shields 15). Feminist critics[11] have raised concerns about patriarchal constructions of illness that reflect gender bias in relation to Freud's case study of one patient, "Dora". In his essay, "Fragment of an Analysis of Hysteria" (Gay 172-239), Freud recounts the conversations he had with Dora during eleven weeks of treatment he conducted in 1900. The most notable symptom of Dora's hysteria was aphonia– the loss of the ability to speak. This would strike her in episodes, along with other typical hysterical symptoms, and after her

---

[11] Hélène Cixous and Catherine Clément explore the political potential of hysteria as a "silent revolt against male power" in their book *La Jeune Née* (Cixous and Clément, 1975). They posit that Dora's hysteria developed as a form of protest. Cixous's work in particular focused on empowering women to use their bodies as a creative means of expression to escape being trapped in a body and a language that incapacitates their ability to communicate.

parents found a suicide note they brought her to Freud for treatment. Freud's diagnosis

stemmed from the interpretation of two of her dreams. The dreams led him to diagnose

what he believed to be a situation of repressed jealousy towards her father's mistress and

sexual desire towards the mistress's husband, who had made unwanted advances on her.

Ultimately, Dora would end the treatment, and Freud would chalk it up to a failure on

his part to recognize that his patient had developed feelings of desire towards him, a

process he termed "transference"[12]. This patriarchal administration of psychoanalysis is

what feminist critic Toril Moi called "phallocentrism[13]". Showalter writes: "Freud failed

Dora because he was too quick to impose his own language on her mute

communications. His insistence on the sexual origins of hysteria blinded him to the

social factors contributing to it" (Showalter 160). Ignoring the social dynamic that

accompanies being a young girl in Vienna in 1900, he assumed power over her language.

Freud wrote in "Fragment" his thoughts on reversing the meaning in his patient's words:

"'No' uttered by a patient after a repressed thought has been presented to his conscious

perception for the first time does no more than register the existence of a repression and

its severity" (Freud Reader 203). Freud interpreted Dora's denial of an accusation that

she loved Herr K, the man who made unwanted advances on her, as a signification for a

repressed desire for him: "in such a case, 'No' signifies the desired 'Yes'" (Freud Reader

203). Here, the patient is in a linguistic trap. Regardless of what she says, her language

proves futile against the patriarchal language of diagnosis.

     French psychologist Pierre Janet developed a hypnotic treatment that also

perpetuated power dynamics inherent in the constitutive doctor-patient relationship. As

---

[12] "Freud's theory of the unconscious may thus be seen as an attempt to solve the problem of the hypnotic rapport by transforming suggestion [of another– the hypnotist or, in psychoanalytic practice, the analyst] into desire" (Leys 36).

[13] Moi, Toril. "Representation of Patriarchy: Sexuality and Epistemology in Freud's Dora"

Eric Caplan writes in regard to Janet's work, "the significance of rapport [between doctor and patient] lay not solely in its capacity to inspire submission but also in its potential to affect the patient's mental state" (Caplan 45). Pierre Janet manipulated Hysteric women under hypnosis and convinced them of the alleviation of their symptoms. Janet's theory of trauma and dissociation in hysterical patients relied not on the total loss of speech, but on the patient's incapacity to integrate disparate self-knowledge and memories. This was the loss of what he called "presentification", which was "the victim's capacity for narrative self-reflection and self-knowledge" (Leys 262). His treatment included hypnotizing his patients and re-integrating their experience by suggesting to them under hypnosis that they cease their symptomatic disobedience or suggesting to them that their unwanted memory never happened. He learned this technique from working with Charcot and Binet, other French psychologists interested in hysterics, multiple personalities, and hypnosis. William James, the American pragmatist philosopher, describes admiringly how M. Janet would "order" the patient under hypnosis to stop such perverse jokes and upon waking her, find that the somatic symptoms had disappeared and the patient had no recollection of being under hypnosis[14]. James lauds this as a deft and successful treatment in returning this woman back to "normal." However, Janet's hypnotic treatment inadvertently fashioned a kind of subjectivity– a submissive female patient and a "normal" standard of compliance as perceived by the male doctor.

American and English psychiatry continued to be defined by patriarchal manipulation of clinical cases throughout the twentieth century. Phyllis Chesler's exposé

---

[14] "'Cessez cette mauvaise plaisanterie,' he said to the secondary self, and the latter obeyed." (James 370). English translation: "Stop this sick joke." In *The Hidden Self*, James professes a deep interest in "unconscious mental life" and surveys contemporaneous "psychical research", such as hypnosis, which he thinks should be brought to the forefront of psychological science.

of misogyny and unequal power dynamics in American psychiatry in the mid-twentieth century was originally published in 1972. In the introduction to a 2005 reprint of *Women and Madness*, Chesler relates that in the 1950s and 1960s:

> Clinicians were still being taught that women suffer from penis envy, are morally inferior to men, and are innately masochistic, dependent, passive, heterosexual and monogamous […] that it was the mothers– not the fathers, genetic predisposition, accidents, and/or poverty – who caused neurosis and psychosis. […] I still think of this as psychiatric imperialism.

So too in Britain in the 1990s as reported by Psychologist Jane Usshe, who writes in her book, *Women's Madness: Misogyny or Mental Illness*:

> In Britain, women are still more likely than men to be diagnosed and treated as mad. Sexual abuse of women still abounds – both inside and outside psychiatric institutions. There may now be more women working as clinical psychologists but the professional discourse (still) reifies psychiatric taxonomies through diagnoses and categorization of female 'symptoms' (Qtd. From Chesler 13).

These feminist critics of psychiatry illustrate how patriarchal forces in psychiatric institutions constituted gender differences through their prescriptive power and authority.

Within the turn-of-the-century psychoanalytic practices, the psychotherapist emerges as the imperial colonizer who imposes his rightful vision and improves the native land or mind. The use of constitutive language in psychotherapy produced certain psychological kinds by perpetuating gender norms and standards of submission for the patient. The potential for iatrogenic illness derived from suggestibility in the doctor-

patient rapport and internalized power dynamics originated in turn-of-the-century

psychoanalytic practices.

Changes in the Twentieth Century: Trauma, Schizophrenia, & Protest

Phyllis Chesler asks in *Woman and Madness*: "Perhaps what we consider 'madness',

whether it appears in women or in men, is either the acting out of the devalued female

role or the total or partial rejection of one's sex-role stereotype" (Chesler 116). These

stereotyped roles can change with cultural shifts, and so too, do clinical categories of

illness that function in relation to them. Over the course of the twentieth century

everything from the catastrophe of global and technologically advanced warfare, the

growing interwar and postwar consumerist society, and the Civil Rights Movement

shaped Western understandings of abnormal psychological states. I demonstrate the

dynamicity of clinical categories by charting changes within two key concepts of mental

illness: trauma and schizophrenia. These are also two clinical categories frequently

represented in modernist literature, so their history will support a reading of Jean Rhys's

novels.

After railway spine and hysteria engendered theories of psychological origins of

illness, the word trauma came to be understood not just as a physical lesion or wound,

but also as a psychological lesion. Leys summarizes:

> The term trauma acquired a more psychological meaning when it was employed
>
> by J.M. Charcot, Pierre Janet, Alfred Binet, Morton Prince, Josef Breuer,
>
> Sigmund Freud, and other turn-of-the-century figures to describe the wounding
>
> of the *mind* brought about by sudden, unexpected shock. The emphasis began to

fall on the hysterical shattering of the personality consequent on a situation of

extreme terror or fright (Leys 4).

This connection between an emotional experience and "hysterical shattering" allowed

for certain illnesses, which had historically been applied to one type of person, to expand

to include other types of people who had similar emotional experiences. Originally

hysterical shattering was applied to white, middle-class European women, but when

British soldiers returned from battle in World War I with similar symptoms, the

phenomenon shell shock came to be clinically categorized. This disrupted the tight hold

of hysteria on sexual traumatogenic origins of madness and the largely female population

of patients. Many social historians have designated shell shock as the male equivalent to

the female hysteria, asserting that both are unspeakable conflicts of emotion that lie

beyond representative language and that manifest in somatic symptoms. As Showalter

writes,

When all signs of physical fear were judged as weakness and when alternatives to

combat- pacifism, conscientious objection, desertion, even suicide- were viewed

as unmanly, men were silenced and immobilized and forced, like women, to

express their conflicts through the body (Showalter 171).

If hysteria had been a form of protest against a patriarchal society and the expected

passivity and obedience of the female subject, then shell shock embodied the failure to

meet the wartime-heightened expectation of Victorian masculinity. Those who suffered

from shell shock were described as feminine or were thought to have discovered their

homosexuality while in close quarters with other men in the trenches. Among these

patients, mutism occurred frequently; Showalter points out that the shell shock patient

was "reduced to a feminine state of powerlessness, frustration, and dependency [which]

led to a deprivation of speech, just as it had for Anna O" (175), one of Freud's famous case studies. Since war is evidently not a biological cause for illness, shell shock furthered psychological science's interest in traumatogenic sources of illness.

Showalter states that during the interwar period the malady most often ascribed to female patients shifted from hysteria to a new clinical form: schizophrenia. Schizophrenia is another fascinating platform for a discussion of language in mental illness. Though the diagnosis has changed over the past century since its conception in 1907 by Swiss psychiatrist Eugen Bleuler[15], the condition is continually characterized by a "split in personality". This describes dissociation between a person's thoughts and emotions, and their physical reaction to them. Schizophrenics are often characterized as socially bizarre, suffering from a large range of auditory and visual hallucinations, delusions of grandeur or persecution, and preferring fantasy to reality. The condition remains controversial within the world of psychiatry due to the varied and changing diagnosis and the lack of consensus on appropriate treatment. A 2011 contemporary psychology textbook begins its chapter on schizophrenia with the acknowledgement that it is "one of the most controversial psychiatric diagnoses. Over time, debates have addressed whether a distinct state of schizophrenia actually exists…" (*Abnormal and Clinical Psychology* 157). Because it is recognized as such a malleable category by clinicians today, it is perhaps easier to see retrospectively how schizophrenia absorbed different historical and social currents over the past century.

When Bleuler began categorizing his patients as schizophrenics, they were mostly white females from middle to upper class. He identified a split between thoughts and

---

[15] Bleuler first introduced this term in a lecture in Berlin in 1908, but it was seen as an expansion to the clinical category *dementia praecox* that his colleague Emil Kraeplin created to describe adolescent onset depression and senility (Hacking, *Rewriting the Soul*).

emotions as well as four observable symptoms: lack of affect, disturbed associations, autism, and ambivalence (Showalter 204). Here autism referred to traits maladaptive to socialization[16]. The schizophrenic's perceived break from reality made subjective reporting less important. This treatment bypassed representative language and the talking cure in favor of somatic forms of treatment such as hydrotherapy, ECT, and lobotomies. These cruel and unsolicited treatments silenced the patients. Showalter notes the gender discrepancy of diagnoses and suggests that the schizophrenic condition came to represent the psychological state of women as a form of subjectivity. She considers the schizophrenic's body and mind split as an exaggeration of a woman's state of always watching herself. At once a subject and a bodily object, women's psyche is split in two by awareness of herself as a visual object. The idea that psychological splits, dissociation, and abnormality constitute the experience of womanhood was taken up by modernist literature as a symbol of sexual and linguistic rebellion. A classic example is Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar* (1963); Plath gave voice to the mentally ill and institutionalized woman as the symbol of female oppression and victimhood. Showalter believes that symptoms of schizophrenia reflect "the perfect literary metaphor for the female condition, expressive of women's lack of confidence, dependency on external often masculine definitions of self, split between the body as sexual object and the mind as subject, and vulnerability to conflicting social messages about femininity and maturity" (Showalter 213). Jean Rhys wrote many of her novels during the inter-war period in Europe. The dissociative tone of her writing and the integration of persecutory voices into the inner dialogue of her heroines can be read as a nod towards this condition.

---

[16] Austrian-American psychiatrist, Leo Kanner took up the term in 1943 and applied it to infantile developmental and social dysfunction, which evolved into the clinical term we recognize today.

Jonathan Metzl plots the changes in clinical categorizations of schizophrenia over the last century in America. He compares the inter-war period and the post-war Civil Rights era to locate the historical and political undercurrents of the shifted diagnosable demographic. Using Ionia Hospital in Michigan as a model, he notes how in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s the schizophrenics were ninety-five percent white and thirty to forty percent women. By the 1960s and 1970s, eighty percent of the sample charts of schizophrenics that he pulled from the archives were African-American men. Women in the hospital who had previously been diagnosed as schizophrenics were re-diagnosed with depression or anxiety disorder by this time. Metzl emphasizes the shift in the clinical diagnosis from the stereotypical, docile white woman who experienced a split between her domestic roles and other expectations to the black man characterized as crazed and violent. Metzl refers to this changing form of schizophrenia as a "protest identity". Black men participating in Civil Rights work were at the highest risk of being diagnosed at this time. The second Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders[17] in 1968 added new criteria such as hostile and aggressive attitudes and persecutory delusions to the definition of schizophrenia. The "split in consciousness" also became a metaphor for the split controversy in America over desegregation and Metzl sees this as applicable to the fear, anger, and range of emotions accompanying the experience of racism. Metzl concludes his analysis with sobering statistics: by the 1970s Ionia hospital housed seventy percent African American patients and in 1977 it became a medium security prison. Metzl uses this one case study to model the evolution of schizophrenia as a psychological state of protest. To think about this model in terms of

---

[17] Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM): the prescriptive manual used by clinicians, doctors, health insurance companies, researchers, pharmaceutical companies and published by the American Psychiatric Institute. It is now in it's fifth edition since the original edition in 1952.

my axes of analysis, a protest requires representational language to articulate the experience of the oppressed, to garner sympathy from potential allies, and to sway public opinion in order to effect change. Yet this historical model reveals how the constitutive power of psychiatry could identify problematic or protesting subjectivities– those that do not behave according to standards of gender or race– and could clinically categorize and institutionalize them. It is worth noting that Bleuler, the creator of this specific clinical category, advocated for the eugenic sterilization of those diagnosed with schizophrenia (Bleuler 214).

The Feedback Loop of Representational Language & Constitutive Language in Subjectivity Formation

With this history in mind, it is clear how the seemingly distinct categories of the constitutive and the representational break down. In his essay, *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses* (1971*)*, Louis Althusser outlines his theory of subjectivity formation in twentieth century Europe. Simply put, he describes the way that institutionalized modes of power (such as the Church or the state) produce subjectivities that perpetuate the conditions of reproduction, ensuring that the dominant ideology remains dominant. He writes that the dominant ideology "interpellates" individuals as subjects. To interpellate is to summon or call up; Althusser draws on the power of constitutive language to create the thing it names by virtue of calling upon it. Similarly, Michel Foucault describes the internalization of power in order to ensure its reproduction in his essay *The Subject and Power*. In Foucault's model, the power of authoritarian categorization creates subjects in the dual sense of a subject to control and a self-identified consciousness. The cultivated subjectivity has internalized the submission to the authority and the assigned

categorization. Foucault calls this "a kind of political 'double bind', which is the simultaneous individualization and totalization of modern power structures" (Foucault 785). In this paradigm, an individual's mode of expression reflects totalizing power structures. These analyses of power and subjectivity formation are structurally similar to the way in which the institution of psychology brings new types of psychological states into being by categorizing them. With his analytical roots in Foucault, Ian Hacking developed an analytic model for dynamic nominalism[18] within the psychological sciences.

Writing specifically about psychiatry, Ian Hacking created the term the "looping effect" to describe "the way in which a classification may interact with the people classified" (Hacking, *Kinds of People* 285). By telling the history of autism as a clinical category and a "way of being", Hacking highlights how a "new scientific classification may bring into being a new kind of person, conceived of and experienced as a way to be a person" (Hacking, *Kinds of People* 285). Hacking seems to also agree with Althusser's theory of ideology reproduction and the underlying power dynamics; he writes that "classifying kinds of subject people is an imperial imperative" (Hacking, *Kinds of People* 287). Hacking's theory of dynamic nominalism refers to the power of constitutive language to produce ways to self-conceptualize. His work does not deny the existence of suffering or the existence of disease entities, but rather it offers an analysis of historical, political, and cultural influences on psychological science, and opens the gates for a critique of iatrogenic psychological illness. I revisit this in an analysis of Rhys's novel, *Wide Sargasso Sea.*

If the constitutive and the representational are all mixed up, how may we conceive of an authentic self or subjectivity? How may we understand the "I" in a first

---

[18] He utilizes this term in both his essay "Kinds of People" and his book*, Rewriting the Soul.*

person narrative? The feedback loop of constitutive and representational language is the foundation of Jean Rhys's portrayal of her protagonists' subjectivities. Ann Simpson writes a beautifully succinct analysis of the way that Rhys works through the feedback loop of self and other, of representational and constitutive:

> The line between self and others is indistinct, as throughout much of Rhys's fiction, alerting readers to the collaborative processes that ensure that an outsider remain in the margins not only because of her own "oddness" in the eyes of the group but because of her expectation of mistreatment by them and her projection of disavowed anger. In a vicious cycle, those others then proceed to confirm her grim suspicions of the self-serving brutality of human nature (Simpson 10).

Rhys's interest in power relations and the re-working of language are rooted in ideas about normal and abnormal, self and other, the internalization of power structures, and the wide range of human emotional experience that exists beyond normative frameworks of language.

JEAN RHYS: AN INTRODUCTION TO HER LIFE AND CRITICAL
PERSPECTIVE

Rhys's unfinished autobiography *Smile Please*, published posthumously in 1979,

remembers difficult emotional experiences that she referenced and reworked in her

earlier novels. In *Smile Please,* Rhys recalls her first lover who left her, having an abortion

at a young age, an affair with her literary patron Ford Maddox Ford, her marriage to Jean

Lenglet, and the early death of her son. These experiences appear in fictionalized form in

Quartet, *After Leaving Mr. Mackenzie,* and *Voyage in the Dark.* As she describes in her

memoir, Rhys's initial turn to writing was motivated by emotional need. Yet the

meticulous reworking of her experiences and editing of her prose reveals that she was

also a disciplined artist, committed to realizing her formal, stylistic goals, and an

impassioned social critic. Rhys saw representational and constitutive language as

indistinct; in exposing their enmeshed relationship she revealed systems of power and

oppression. Literary critic and biographer Helen Carr posits that Jean Rhys wrote for the

"homeless", the marginalized, and those that find themselves floating between linguistic,

political, and social categories. Rhys did not merely write confessional fiction as a form

of catharsis or a call for pity. She carefully contrived an unedited feel to her prose,

painstakingly editing out extraneous words[19], in order to authentically narrate the

immediacy of her protagonist's experience. This reflects a linguistic intervention mapped

on to her personal perspective. But what exactly is this critical perspective? It is attention

to the subjectivity (constitutive production and first person representation) of the *other*–

the abnormal, the less-than, the have-nots. Her interest lies in gray areas, undefined

areas, and experiences beyond scientific or political language that seeks to define and

---

[19] Diana Athill, Rhys's editor of *Wide Sargasso Sea* and *Smile Please,* remembers how "Rhys allowed no piece of writing to leave her hands until it was finished except for the very smallest detail". She was committed to "perfectionism". Foreward to *Smile Please* (8).

divide. Rhys's autobiography demonstrates how her childhood and adolescence influenced her interest in "othered" positions and her investment in critiquing static European cultural roles that produced them. In *Smile Please,* one can see her growing interest in using racial oppression as a figure for gendered oppression– a problematic metaphor that reflects the tension of privilege and prejudice within her own racial identity.

Jean Rhys was born in Dominica to a Welsh father and a Scottish-Hispanic mother. Her Scottish maternal grandfather owned a large estate in Dominica that was burned down by men and women who had been recently emancipated by the 1834 abolition of slavery. The French colonizers of Dominica transferred the island to British rule in 1763, and the country was not granted independence from the United Kingdom until 1978. Colonial rule and the legacy of slavery sustained the racially stratified society into which Jean Rhys was born. She would have been classified as Creole: of European descent but born in a colonized land. This classification is complicated, and Rhys found herself very much in between categories: neither fully European nor seen as fully native to Dominica. Creoles were considered technically white yet racially tainted by both the sexual intermingling that happened under the coercion of slavery and by their cultural difference from more recent visitors and emigrants. Curiously then, Creoles found themselves rendered racially suspect as the products of miscegenation during their rule as slave-owners. Creoles thus occupied an ambiguous position. To the formerly enslaved people of the island, Creoles were a despised ruling class, yet their economic decline since Emancipation made them objects of both fascination and suspicion to more recent white settlers. Rhys undoubtedly understood the cultural, racial and economic ambiguity of her class.

At age sixteen Rhys relocated to England, and her sense of being an outsider began to grow. She did not feel at home in this country and longed for her Caribbean childhood. She describes her first walk down a London street as "long, straight, grey, a bit disappointing" (*Smile Please* 98). After a brief stint at the Perse School for Girls in Cambridge, she stayed for two terms at the Royal Academy for Dramatic Art in London. Her father's death in 1910 prompted Rhys to leave school to find work as a chorus girl. She describes this period of her life retrospectively:

> Going from room to room in this cold dark country, England, I never knew
> what it was that spurred me on and gave me an absolute certainty that there
> would be something else for me before long. Now I think the 'something else'
> was something small and limited (*Smile Please* 111-112).

Rhys's aimless time in England continued through bouts of depressive moods, a failed love affair with an older man, and a dangerous abortion, until WWI when she volunteered for various military aid positions. Anna's narrative in *Voyage in the Dark* is similar: an unfulfilled chorus girl, relocated to England from her childhood home in the West Indies, who drifts through a string of jobs, cold streets, bad relationships, and a distressing abortion. After the war, Rhys married Jean Lenglet and they moved throughout continental Europe. She and Lenglet lost a son at an early age, an event that shapes Sasha's narrative in *Good Morning, Midnight*. In Paris in the 1920s, Rhys fell under the patronage of Ford Maddox Ford, an English writer and prominent publisher in the modernist scene. Their fraught working and social relationship is thought to have been the primary source material for her portrayal of the affair between Marya and a married couple in *Quartet*. Rhys ultimately returned to Britain with her third husband to Britain:

to Cornwall and then later to Devon where she spent her days drinking and perfecting

her novel, *Wide Sargasso Sea,* published in 1966.

Rhys consistently and empathetically gives attention and voice to marginalized

women in her fiction. She relates in *Smile Please* that she had compassionate interest in

the *other* as a child, as well as a growing awareness of her own position of *in between* as a

Creole woman. The titles of the chapters mark this increasing consciousness of

injustices: "The Doll", "Black/White", "The Facts of Life", "The Religious Fit", and so

forth. These titles enumerate the political, personal, social, and racial situations that she

engaged with as a young girl and later on as an author. She writes:

> "The older I grew the more things there were to worry about. Religion was then
>
> as important as politics are now. Would I insist on knowing more about
>
> Catholicism or would I stick to the English church? There was the business of
>
> black, white, not to say coloured. Had I ever really thought about it? Was my
>
> wariness justified? Or was my feeling 'this is not fair, not fair' nearer the truth?
>
> There was also the business about ladies and gentlemen and that was terribly
>
> complicated and very important" (*Smile Please* 62).

Rhys grew more aware of the pressures and expectations for a young woman in a

colonial society that imported various European cultural norms. As a child, she once

found a photograph of her mother on horseback. She writes of the photograph: "young,

slim, pretty. I hated it" (*Smile Please* 42). Rhys opens the chapter on her mother with this

story, showing how a confrontation with a representation of normative female beauty

made her angry and anxious. Rhys had anxieties about her physicality in regards to race,

as well as normative beauty. With regards to winning her mother's approval, Rhys offers

up with self-aware candor her insecurity in, quite literally, her own skin:

"[Rhys's mother] loved babies, any babies. Once I heard her say that black babies
were prettier than white ones. Was this the reason why I prayed so ardently to be
black and would run to the looking-glass in the morning to see if the miracle had
happened? And though it never had, I tried again. Dear God, let me be black"
(*Smile Please* 42).

While keenly aware of the antagonistic relations and potential for violence between racial
groups in Dominica– she writes of riots and of feeling isolated and hated as the only
white girl at her convent school– Rhys also fantasized that she empathized with her
black counterparts whom she considered to be more "free" and "more alive, more part
of the place than we were" (50). She remembers, "when I used to long so fiercely to be
black and to dance, too, in the sun, to that music" (*Smile Please* 53). Rhys imagined the
Dominican blacks to be more "free", at once fetishizing them even as she acknowledges,
ambivalently, her relative privilege in relation to them. She romanticized *belonging* and the
richness of life that comes with having a culture of one's own while forgetting her
relative racial privilege in the romance. Her enthrallment with black experience shows
the beginnings of her linking of female and racial abjection later seen in her novels.

Carr writes that "with the growth of interest in a psychoanalytic understanding of
how femininity is formed and of how women become locked into patterns of desire and
entrapment, the exasperated question so often asked of Rhys's heroines, 'why don't they
do something?' has turned into a genuinely interested enquiry" (Carr 16). Weighing in on
this, Rhys's work interrogates the autonomy and psychological condition of subjects who
fall outside of the norm, in her case women. Rhys gives a voice to those women in her
fiction. Though I am not explicitly analyzing her novels regarding race relations, her
work suggests that the alliance between racial and gendered oppression can be cultivated

through a shared experience: negative affect and an internalization of societal prejudice. Rhys collapses the experience of sexual or gendered oppression as a female into forms of racial and economic oppression, exemplified in her novels' embedded stories of bereft Caribbean 'madwomen' or women in the poorhouse whom her characters observe empathetically. This attention to the imperially oppressed other is most evident in *Wide Sargasso Sea,* the previously untold narrative of Bertha Mason, the Creole "madwoman" who haunts the pages of Bronte's *Jane Eyre.* It is also present in *Voyage in the Dark*, as Anna, a white woman transplanted from her home in the West Indies to London, remembers Maillotte Boyd, an 18 year old mulatto house servant whose name she found on an old slave list at her grandfather's estate. Anna invokes Maillotte Boyd's name during a sexual interaction with the older man with whom she has a love affair, the same older man who leaves her money after visiting her in her hotel room and who will drop the affair shortly thereafter, sending Anna into an emotional tailspin. By linking different forms of oppression, Rhys critiques the way in which hegemonic power objectifies certain bodies. Yet, her protagonists are also emotionally invested in and complicit in their own objectification. She taps into the depth of emotion tied to sexual interactions, as well as the anxiety surrounding financial insecurity and the isolation of poverty. Love and sex can be both economic transactions and strong affective experiences. She writes:

> "It seems to me now that the whole business of money and sex is mixed up with something very primitive and deep. When you take money directly from someone you love it becomes not money but a symbol. The bond is there" (*Smile Please* 121)

She describes this bond as a feeling of belonging that is at once humiliating and exciting. It is the emotional need to belong, yet also the objectifying feeling of being someone's

possession. This complication, or complicity, reinforces the abjection of the *other*: they self-conceptualize as *other*. One doesn't just think about one's position as an object in a sexual economy. One *feels* marginalized; it is a psychological and affective state linked to one's social abjection. Her use of the word "primitive" is reminiscent of European colonial terminology for indigenous peoples in colonized lands. To apply this term to the binding sexual and economic relationship between the modern European female and her male lover and benefactor is, again, problematic. It fetishizes the colonized indigenous person's experience, repurposes it for critical means, and creates historical elisions by making sympathetic but naïve assumptions about the workings of power dynamics across time, space, and cultures that are not logically sustained. Rhys is deeply attuned to the negative affective experience of the oppressed, but her interest in forging intersectional sympathies has willful blindspots and makes complicated assumptions.

For Rhys, this marginalized negative affect is intertwined with imposing categorical language and the inability to communicate to the people around her. Rhys writes, "I would never really belong anywhere, and I knew it, and all my life would be the same, trying to belong, and failing […] I am a stranger and I always will be, and after all I didn't really care […] for I don't speak their language and I never will" (*Smile Please* 124). Language is a barrier that perpetuates her isolation. However, towards the end of her memoir, she remembers how journaling became an outlet for her post-abortion depression. She speaks of her "hunger" for writing. These notebooks later became the foundations for *Voyage in the Dark*. Here, language in the form of writing is redeemed, because it abreacted her unwanted emotion and finally gave her a way to articulate her experience. In this way language can be both a harmful agent of power and a repurposed tool to render suffering intelligible.

In her novels, Rhys artistically repurposed language to express an abnormal or outsider experience. Rhys's representation of the disordered woman marked by the alternating point of view and the occasional eradication of a grammatical subject is inextricably linked to self-perception, lack of agency, and internalized societal expectations. Carr calls Rhys a "deeply disturbing social critic, who radically questions European society's values and assumptions, and a subtle and unsettling delineator of modern subjectivity" (Carr 19). My analysis examines the "delineated subject" and how it is created in Rhys's stylistic use of language. I assume, moreover, that Rhys's literary devices express symptoms and feelings of suffering and dissociation, indicative of psychological disorders on behalf of her first-person protagonists. When I say psychological disorder, I mean a mental condition that affects mood, relationships, and functioning in daily life. The use of the word "disorder" serves the dual purpose of highlighting the dysfunctional or unlivable aspect of this condition, as well as calling attention to the implications of the taxonomy of such a condition. The very term "disorder" contains the implication of non-normativity as held up to the standard of normal or an "order". An "other" is inherently disordered due to their non-normativity. Whether or not culture or conditioning prescribes that "illness" is yet another level of entrapment and powerlessness in a matrix of patriarchal assumptions and terminology, and guides a later discussion of iatrogenic illness and Hacking's feedback loop in regards to *Wide Sargasso Sea.*

The next portion of the essay analyzes modes of expression, literary devices, and thematic concerns that Rhys employs in her novels *Voyage in the Dark, Good Morning, Midnight,* and *Wide Sargasso Sea.* I unpack stylistic elements of her writing as well as reoccurring motifs and symbols that intimate to the reader a set of disordered symptoms

and feelings. The symptoms and feelings of the three female protagonists, Anna, Sasha, and Antoinette, are varied but overlapping. They communicate suffering, anguish, loss, anger, fatigue, and the experience of traumatic events and painful memories—often without explicitly addressing those experiences. Rhys's stylistic choices create a powerful mood that I argue is a dysfunctional or disordered mood, because the protagonists struggle to live and love in their societal and cultural positions. Rhys reworks a patriarchal, normative language to serve her purposes of authentically representing the experience of a dispossessed, disordered woman "at the end of everything". [20]

---

[20] *Good Morning, Midnight*, 95

VOYAGE IN THE DARK: WHAT IS NOT BEING SAID…

"The print was very small, and the endless procession of words gave me a curious feeling- sad, excited and frightened. It wasn't what I was reading, it was the look of the dark blurred words going on endlessly that gave me that feeling."

(*Voyage in the Dark* 9)

In the opening scene of *Voyage in the Dark*, the protagonist, Anna Morgan, describes her emotive reactions to the words and images found in a "paper-covered book with a coloured picture of a stout dark woman brandishing a wine-glass" (9). As a reader, Anna distinguishes between words' literal purpose and their symbolic impressions on the reader. Similarly, in *Voyage in the Dark* it is the *look* and the *feel* of the words, more than literal words themselves, that indicate suffering or a past trauma. Rhys represents a suffering or psychologically impaired subjectivity through symbols, images, and dreams, as well as creative syntactic and grammatical structure.

This novel is written from the first person perspective of Anna, a young woman in England who has been displaced from her home in the West Indies. She is financially insecure, cut off from her late father's estate by her stepmother, Hester. Anna drifts around British urban centers, beginning in Southsea, a port city south of London. In London she pursues a career as a chorus girl, but quickly attracts the eye of a wealthy older man, Walter Jeffries. What follows is a descent into prostitution, destitution, and an abortion, tracked by the unraveling of Anna's subjective voice. This unraveling is marked by a multiplication of points of view– mostly from the first to the second person– word repetition, ellipses and brackets, and a loss of coherency evident in the thematic mashing up of reality, dreams, and memories. Anna's symptoms and feelings articulated through these linguistic devices correspond to a dysfunctional or "abnormal"

state of mind and behavior. Rhys's stylistics choices employ creative means of representative language.

At times, *Voyage in the Dark* represents Anna's dysfunctional mental state explicitly. There are moments in the novel when Anna specifically states a symptom of a mental disorder or expresses a suicidal wish. In these moments Rhys uses direct expression rather than creative devices to convey Anna's illness and suffering. The week after Jeffries leaves her, Anna reports staying in bed very late, feeling "tired all the time," eating meals in bed and putting her "head under the water and listen[ing] to the noise of the tap running" (90). Later she stops wanting to go out, instead preferring to stay in bed: "Really all you want is night, and to lie in the dark and pull the sheet over your head and sleep" (141)[21]. Anna sometimes self-identifies her depressive state, but she can never identify her disorder in a language that helps her to process it in a therapeutic way. She thought, "I wish I were old and the whole damned thing were finished; then I shouldn't get this depressed feeling for nothing at all" (91). This is an alarming yet passive wish for death embedded in a defeated acknowledgement of her depressive state. Her depression and suicidal thoughts continue in the following chapters: "I sleep as if I were dead" (113). She frequently finds herself crying after conversations with others but does not express a reason for it: "Something came out from my heart into my throat and then into my eyes" (127). Anna's friends notice, using their own language to constitute her mental state. Maudie calls her "potty" (46), Laurie wonders why she always looks "half-asleep" (129), and Ethel, who hires Anna to work in her shady massage parlor, calls her a "half potty bastard" who is "not all there" (145). The explicit statements and constitutive

---

[21] In contemporary psychiatric diagnostics fatigue, disinterest in activities that previously brought joy, and a disinterest in personal wellbeing and hygiene all signal a depressive mood disorder. That being said, I do not wish to anachronistically diagnose Anna, merely to point to her evident suffering and abnormal social functioning.

language surrounding Anna's disordered mood are defeatist and accusatory. They feed into Anna's experience of a suffering and traumatized subjectivity, but do not suffice as an understanding of Rhys's representation of the "delineated" subjectivity. Rhys creates a fleshed out and textured experience of Anna's suffering through creative literary devices such as the ellipsis.

…

The ellipsis marks the omission of one or more words and an implied meaning. The omission of the words often leaves a grammatically incorrect sentence in its incompletion. Disregard for grammatical conventions is common to modernist writing and is one of the ways in which Rhys breaks from a normative linguistic framework. Plot or context can create an ellipsis, as in the ellipsis of time in the narrative of Virginia Woolf's *To The Lighthouse*. Ellipses can also be signaled locally within a sentence by the use of the three dots. Rhys utilizes both types. *Voyage in the Dark* is divided into four unequal parts, the spaces between which signify large gaps in time and space. On a micro level, Rhys's sentences are fraught with ellipses, as she frequently ends a sentence or a thought pattern before it is conventionally completed. This enhances the immediacy of the predominantly first person narrative. A jump in thoughts or a termination of a thought only brings the reader closer to Anna's experience of her thoughts. The ellipsis indicates the associative pathways of the subject's mind as well as the repressive acts of the subject's consciousness, and a jumble of associated thoughts, feelings, memories and dreams. Anna's intimate psychology is rendered immediate, and the reader feels that they can trust the closeness of Anna's words, because she is not self-editing. Her words are raw and seemingly more authentic in their incoherence. Indeed, Anna's entire narrative revolves around the structure of an ellipsis. The reader gradually fills in Anna's past and

the traumatic events that befall her in England by piecing together her experience– the scraps of memories, dreams, and the numb reporting of dialogue and action. Finally, the novel ends with an ellipsis; an un-articulated yet dramatically intimated communication of inevitability and hopelessness.

Voyage in the Dark is written in the past tense, yet it feels like the narrative is unfolding in the present due to the immediacy of the first person narration. Anna's mind frequently jumps back to memories, often indicated by ellipses. Both the memory and the present moment of the real time of the narrative are written in the past tense, thus Rhys complicates the experience of memory by transposing the past into the present. Ellipses often mark the slippery transition from present narrative to memory. Anna experiences a flashback to her arrival in England: "…This is England Hester said and I watched it through the train-window […] as your poor father used to say you'll get used to it… Maudie said, 'Let's finish the port'" (17). The ellipses mark the seamless mental transitions from memory to present, and how an audio cue, in this case Maudie's speech, brings Anna back to the present. They also produce simultaneity, as if the scene in the cheap room on Maple Street and the memory of Aunt Hester co-occur. The ellipses offer an aside to the progression of the narrative, an alternate reality to the one that is occurring in the room with Maudie. This contributes to an interior/exterior duality found in all of Rhys's novels. The interior life of her heroines starkly contrasts with their exterior, their speech, and their superficial appearance. This duality in present time (between what Anna does and what Anna thinks) supports other dualities such as the split consciousness seen in the second person point of view and the reflections that haunt the pages of the novel: "I watched myself in the glass over the mantelpiece, laughing" (13). Anna is both within and outside of herself, living and remembering, and

the ellipsis facilitates the narrative as it dances between both planes of consciousness and temporality.

Pierre Janet identified a process of "presentification" as "an operation of self-observation and self-representation" that coherently organizes new experiences and memories. According to Janet, hysterics, similarly to children, struggle with presentification, because they are incapable of self-knowledge owing to their undeveloped, degenerate, and weakened mental condition. They lack mental synthesis and have difficulty paying attention to present reality (Leys 112). Bleuler also identified a preference for fantasy over reality that he observed in schizophrenics in 1908. With Anna's narrative, Rhys challenges this notion of the weakened female mind that is incapable of living in the present moment and synthesizing self-representations. Rhys illustrates Anna's wit and sharp observational powers, as well as the way in which the ellipsis may occur as a protective device. In that sense, it could in fact be a quite "normal" reaction in the event of an unpleasant experience.

One such moment conveyed through the use of an ellipsis occurs when Anna experiences a flashback before she receives a letter from Mr. Jeffries' cousin. The moment is preceded by an ellipsis. Anna remembers, "…I was walking along the verandah which ran the length of the house in town" (92), recalling the reader to her home in West Indies. She then recounts a horrifying dream-like memory from twelve years ago of her Uncle Bo with "long yellow tusks like fangs" (92). Her memory of Uncle Bo's false teeth transitions, after an ellipsis, to the letter. The letter informs Anna that Walter no longer loves her and that she should return her love letters. "What's this letter got to do with false teeth?" Anna thinks. "Write and let him know that you

understand," instructs the letter. Right after the letter, no doubt upsetting to Anna, she thought,

> "What the hell's the matter with me? I must be crazy. This letter has nothing to do with false teeth. But I went on thinking about false teeth, and then about piano-keys and about that time the blind man from Martinique came to tune the piano and then he played and we listened to him sitting in the dark with the jalousies shut because it was pouring with rain and my father said, 'You are a real musician'" (94).

This litany of associative memories brings Anna further from the harsh reality of the letter. The reader is keenly aware of what is not being said: Anna's emotional reaction to the letter. The grammatical use of the ellipsis mars the temporal gap between memory and reality, and through that slippage, allows Anna to repress the onslaught of incoming painful emotions by living in an alternate narrative of distracting memories. This creates another level of ellipsis, a gap that the reader fills. Anna's unstated pain is obvious in her frantic distracting memories. The reader feels it burgeoning up in her expressions of loss in her memories ("The welsh word for grief is Hiraeth. Hiraeth") and the references to her uncle and her father, male figures she has lost. The lengths Anna goes to ignore the letter are represented temporally by the length of time this memory tangent takes. "When I looked at the clock it was a quarter-past five. I had been sitting there like that for two hours" (95).

Anna's mind operates a strong repressive system. Her language surrounding her interactions with others and her day-to-day life is often devoid of emotion and consists of declarative statements. The emotion is conveyed in other forms. On the day after her first sexual encounter with Jeffries, Anna remembers, "I felt ill when I woke up. I had

pains all over me" (26). After receiving a letter with money from Jeffries, symbolically prostituting her, she starts to fantasize about what clothes she will buy. "I didn't think about anything else at all, and I forgot about feeling ill. Outside it smelt of melted snow"(27). What first manifested as a somatic pain is replaced with the singular obsession for shopping. This desire represents her financial insecurity and imminent dependence on Jeffries as well as her need to distract herself. Her repressive and distractive tactics are a function of the societal position she now finds herself in as Jeffries' dependent. The smell of snow brings her sensory experience to the forefront and creates closeness to her experience that contrasts with the numbness of forgetting and distraction.

Here I adopt the Freudian concept of repression in regards to the unconscious hampering of an unwanted cognitive experience of an emotion, memory, or self-representation. The repressive arm of Anna's consciousness (super-ego to use Freudian terminology) quells the unwanted elements of her sub-conscious (or the Id). The ellipsis performs this at points by curbing an unwanted memory or thought, forcing it to trail off and leaving a gap. The reader understands that such gaps indicate that the thought is too painful for Anna to continue. Before having an abortion, Anna is told by Jeffries' cousin to make up her mind and forget all about it, that it is "nothing much, nothing to make a fuss about" (172-3). Her response reflects the internalized repression that Jeffries' cousin pushes her to feel: "It's not that that I make a fuss about. It's that sometimes I want to have it and then I think that if I had it, it would be a … It would have something the matter with it. And I think about that all the time, and that's what I mind" (173). This moment reveals an anxiety of Anna's that she had never before iterated, mentally or verbally, and so her "thinking about it all the time" was latent in other thoughts. She also

struggles to name her anxiety; the fear that her substance abuse (mostly alcohol and quinine) damaged the baby. Here, she acts out what is expected of her by Jeffries' cousin: the repression of her fear, and the future repression of her loss. The ellipsis connotes her inability to confront or name that fear fully.

Part three ends with Anna's abortion after which she returns to the flat in Hingham Street with her friend, Laurie. The chapter ends with Anna's haunted musings on the repetitive nature of her life in London: relocating homes, passed from man to man. She says, "everything was always so exactly alike- that was what I could never get used to […] and the streets going north, south, east, west, all exactly alike" (179). Anna imparts directionless repetition and a feeling of inevitability, an image that suggests the loss, anguish, and "cold" of the past will re-occur in the future. If all the directions look the same, then progress or recovery is impossible.

The fourth and final part of *Voyage in the Dark* opens in a dark room. This is a temporal ellipsis as the reader is not quite certain how long after the abortion Anna finds herself here. The reader soon learns that her abortion "programme" has concluded, the fetus aborted; Anna thinks, "'I'm glad it happened when nobody was here because I hate people'. I thought, 'Pain…' but it was so long ago that I had forgotten what it had been like" (183). The traumatic moment when Anna lost her baby is a tremendous gap, marked by the blank page between parts three and four. The ellipsis in Anna's memory stops her from fully remembering ("'Pain…' but") and the conjunction distracts her with reasons why she should not remember. This syntactical structure of Freudian repression in language is representative of Anna's complex psyche: her trauma is replaced with three little dots. The entrance of the reader in the re-imagining of Anna's trauma is similar to the analyst performing translation on the representative language of the patient. The

reader becomes complicit in the creation of Anna's experience, which further unravels her autonomous subjectivity. Rhys plays with the multi-faceted creation of Anna's subjectivity within the elliptical gaps.

A gap concludes the novel. A doctor concludes that Anna will be "ready to start all over again in no time" (188). This prognosis for her return to livable life is ironically cold and dismissive of the trauma that she just underwent. Moreover, life for Anna was already bleak and self-destructive, and this cycle will restart "in no time". Progress does not exist in a world where all the streets look the same. Anna thinks "about starting over again. And about being new and fresh. And about mornings, and misty days, when anything might happen. And about starting all over again, all over again…" (188). This final ellipsis marks the ultimate act of repression. It suggests the ability and the expectation for Anna to forget the recent trauma and return to a semblance of a life, yet the repetition in the last sentence suggests she will be doomed to repeat the same cycle. The newness she looks forward to brings up connotations of a new dress one can buy, a new layer to throw on over the body that has suffered. The future is a gap, but the tired repetition shows Anna imagines it as a return to the same oppressive, financially insecure, anxiety-producing, alcohol-fueled position that she found herself in in the opening scenes when she first met Walter Jeffries– walking without direction in the cold streets of London.

I/You

In *Voyage in the Dark*, Anna's first person narrative strikes a chord of dissonance between her actions and her feelings. Rhys also integrates an observant narration that finds–or perhaps pretends to find–humor in that dissonance. In her first interactions

with Jeffries, Anna witnesses herself flirting with him with seeming detachment from her own disinterest: "We went out into the street to say good-bye to them. I was thinking it was funny I could giggle like that because in my heart I was always sad, with the same sort of hurt that the cold gave me in my chest. We went back into the sitting-room" (15). Her matter-of-fact, uncomplicated sentences contrast with the jarring and complicated revelation that she suffers deeply. The multiplicity of the "I" creates the dissociation of her subject. The "I" that finds a twisted humor in the situation seems to be removed from the "I" that giggles and the "I" that feels such internal pain. They all exist on different and discordant emotional planes, and the "we" who undertakes the action does so on a place devoid of emotion. Anna watches and judges the way that she feels and the way that she acts, creating a disjointed subjectivity. Sometimes alcohol induces this dissociation in Anna's subjectivity: "We had another bottle of wine and I felt it warm and happy in my stomach. I heard my voice going on and on, answering his questions […]" (21). She hears herself talking and is once again within and outside of herself. Anna notes that she feels the positive effect of being drunk, however it is located in the wine in her stomach not an affective experience throughout her entire person. She never says, for instance "I felt warm and happy", but rather "it felt warm and happy in [her] stomach". Anna rarely actively feels or expresses positive emotions; rather she describes them via another medium such as the wine in her stomach. The passivity of her emotions prompts the reader to question her agency over her body and voice.

The most horrifying moments of first person dissociation occur after Anna has sex with Mr. Jeffries for the first time, another moment when her agency is called into question. Anna remembers, "It was as if I were looking at somebody else […] I sat down on the pillow and listened, then I lay down. The bed was soft; the pillow was as cold as

ice. I felt as if I had gone out of myself, as if I were in a dream" (23). The dissociation of self and body is alarming especially after an event that pertains so heavily to the body. The sensory qualities of the bed and the pillow lack a subject to sense them, yet Anna reports them. In those small details, Anna loses her first person perspective representing linguistically her somatic numbness. Anna's entire narrative is in the past tense, therefore, *Voyage in the Dark* could be a memory; the conflation of dream, memory, and reality inspires the feeling of an original trauma that is still being processed in the present moment.

This split in Anna's subjectivity stemmed from a multi-layered first person, but her fractured mind becomes more pronounced when she starts narrating in the second person. The second person narration also demonstrates her self-reproach, and at times the internalization of societal expectations. As with the first person dissociation, the second person perspective enters in conjunction with sexual intercourse. Though Anna instigates this encounter by telling Jeffries to return to the hotel with her, the switch to second person for the description of the sexual intercourse questions her agency in the matter. The encounter follows:

> "(You shut the door and you pull the curtains over the windows and then it's as long as a thousand years and yet so soon ended. Laurie saying, 'Some women don't start liking it till they are getting old; that's a bit of bad luck if you like. I'd rather wear myself out while I'm young.')" (79).

Rhys employs a complicated structure for narrating a sex scene. The parentheses connote shame or an inability to fully confront the encounter. The second person dissociates Anna from the encounter. It also has the power to provide a list of instructions that would guide an automaton or a subject who lacks agency. Anna does

not describe the actual act, another gap in her narrative that the reader must imagine. Finally, the introduction of Laurie's voice complicates the time scale as it brings the reader to a later moment of two friends discussing sex and judging their experiences. Anna does not have an explicit voice here, as she only reports Laurie's take on female pleasure, yet she has an implied voice, a question hanging in the air that warranted Laurie's response. Anna seems to be asking, "Why do I not enjoy it?" "Is it abnormal that I do not enjoy sex?". Social anxiety underlies Anna's interaction with sex and with Jeffries, which is certainly no healthy foundation for consent or pleasure. Sexual consent lies in a nuanced and grey area of cognition and agency. By fracturing her subjectivity and narrating her dissociation of self and body, Rhys complicates Anna's ability to consent and gives roots to Anna's suffering and her anxiety surrounding her relationship with Jeffries. The linguistic split in point of view marks Anna's descent into an unraveling of self that obliterates the subject, not unlike a grammatical suicide wish.

In Part three, before having the abortion, when Anna works for Ethel in her massage parlor, her narrative becomes less and less coherent. She tells Laurie that she once refused a client and Laurie comments that she bets "the old girl wasn't pleased". Laurie insinuates that Ethel's clients come seeking more than a massage, and as her employee, Anna's body becomes commoditized–an added form of dissociation as the mind considers the bodily object. The themes of Rhys's plot further split Anna's subjectivity. After her tragic interaction and destructive relationship with Jeffries, Anna is in a fragile emotional state, frequently crying and sleeping to a point where these activities preclude her normal social activity. Her narrative continues to lose agency and singular subjectivity. It is fragmented and disjointed:

The long shadows of the trees, like skeletons, and others like spiders, and others

like octopuses. 'I'm quite all right; I'm quite all right. Of course, everything will

be all right. I've only got to pull myself together and make a plan.' ('Have you

heard the one about…') It was one of those days when you can see the ghosts

of all the other lovely days. You drink a bit and watch the ghosts of all the lovely

days that have ever been from behind a glad. ('Yes, that's not a bad one, but have

you heard the one…'). (142)

The lack of verb in the impressionist description of her ghoulish landscape represents

Anna's increased passivity and numbness. Her inner voice tries to tamp down her

emotional instability, repeatedly telling herself that she is "quite all right", but the

insistence has the opposite effect and destabilizes the mood of the passage by protesting

too much. The interspersing of dialogue with a friend, perhaps Laurie, about tragic

stories swapped in a gossipy matter implies that her story matters little to Laurie or

anyone who would care to listen, because it is one of many.

Anna's conveys her numbness, detachment, and depression through the second

person: "you pull the sheet over your head and think, 'He got sick of me,' […] and then

you go to sleep. You sleep very quickly when you are like that and you don't dream

either. It's as if you were dead" (141). She makes her own story a template for another

person to feel, which universalizes her narrative, belittles her personal suffering, and

removes herself from feeling her own pain. Linguistically, Anna tries to escape the "I".

As the narrative progresses, Anna finds ways to escape subjectivity fully. Rhys constructs

sentences with an absent subject: "Sometimes not being able to get over the feeling that

it was a dream" (157). Just as Anna could not be present in the ellipses surrounding her

relationship to Jeffries and her abortion, she uses a shift in point of view to sidestep the

emotional burden of the traumatic sexual encounters with Jeffries and of potential encounters with other men. Rhys ultimately questions Anna's agency and sense of self by eradicating any stable notion of the first person in a narrative that is supposed to be told from one woman's perspective.

In *Voyage in the Dark*, Rhys's representation of the disordered woman marked by the alternating point of view and the occasional eradication of a grammatical subject is inextricably linked to self-perception and a lack of agency. This is problematic for her heroine as a woman in a modern urban society where encounters of a sexual nature are both prevalent means of socialization and economic survival. If one separates oneself from one's body, routinely keeps silent or feels dissociated from one's voice, and internalizes norms of passivity, then how can consent operate? However, in this landscape, sexual encounters drive social and financial power dynamics. Anna needs Walter Jeffries to subsidize her life. When that relationship falls through, she works in a massage parlor. Anna's means for existence are metaphorical prostitutions, and serve Rhys's critique of modern European consumerist society. The disturbing psychological effects on Anna of living in these conditions are embedded in Rhys's linguistic choices that represent repression and dissociation. In this way, Rhys's representation of Anna's delineated subjectivity transcends the scope of one fictional woman's experience and becomes a critique of modern European societal values.

THE DESTABILIZING OF VOICE AND SELF-ERADICATION IN GOOD
MORNING, MIDNIGHT

In *Good Morning, Midnight*, as in *Voyage in the Dark*, Rhys employs a predominantly first person narrative to bring the reader close to the heroine's subjectivity. The texture of her writing with its tangents and raw emotional disclosure draws the reader into the seemingly unedited mind of the protagonist, Sasha Jansen. Unlike *Voyage in the Dark*, this novel is written in the present tense, but the time frame is similarly complex. After trying to drink herself to death in London, Sasha returns to Paris for a brief time and in doing so relives the experience of her past in Paris, her failed marriage, and the death of her baby. She meets René, a gigolo of unclear origin who attempts to pick her up on the streets after mistaking her warm fur coat for a mark of wealth. The novel concludes with a horrifying and deliberately confusing series of sexual encounters between René and Sasha and then between Sasha and the old man who lives next door.

Good Morning, Midnight is a fleshed out representation of how it feels to be Sasha; her memories and emotive reactions to events and interactions largely drive the plot. Rhys writes consciously of the role that language, its absence or its novel application, plays in generating Sasha's experience. Sasha expresses her frustration with the futility and weight of language; she describes her embodied experience of words:

> Every word I say has chains round its ankles; every thought I think is weighted
> with heavy weights. Since I was born, hasn't every word I've said, every thought
> I've thought, everything I've done, been tied up, weighted, chained? (107)

Sasha assigns a similar significance to speech, thought, and action. The weight on all of them could be the weight of her depressive affect or it could be the weight of trying to ascertain if a subjective experience is authentic in a framework that ascribes weight for

her. Rhys repeatedly questions the capacity for language to articulate identity and experience. She raises the issue of intersubjectivity, the predicament of identity cultivation and transmission within a society fraught with power structures and symbolic relationships. This is the problem of the complication and complicity between representational and constitutive language. What constitutes the authentic self and authentic speech? As in *Voyage in the Dark*, *Good Morning, Midnight* presents the problem of consent in sexual encounters. It also depicts the internalization of external voices and the construction of identity based on expectations and relations. This theme evokes contemporary symptoms of auditory hallucinations and dissociation associated with schizophrenia and its predominantly European female demographic at this time. Here I shift away from an analysis of linguistic and grammatical elements and towards the role that both constitutive and representational languages play in generating Sasha's inner psychology.

French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan developed his theory of *the mirror stage* of identity formation during child development in his work *Écrits*, published in 1936. This theory outlines the moment when a child first recognizes itself in a mirror and conceives of a mental construct of the self. Lacan maintains that this idea of the self is an illusion facilitated by the symbolic order of language. Lacanian translator and theorist, Jacqueline Rose writes that, "the idea of the mirror should be understood as an object which reflects— not just the visible, but also what is heard, touched and willed by the child" (Lacan (1949) 567; qtd. from Rose 30). Therefore surrounding language, gestures, and cultural signals all reflect back to the developing identity that which it should assume as its own. Once the subject assumes itself, through the language of the first person

pronoun, it needs an "other", as Lacan terms it, as a site of address for language. Rose paraphrases:

> For Lacan, the subject is constituted through language– the mirror image represents the moment when the subject is located in an order outside itself to which it will henceforth refer. The subject is the subject of speech (Lacan's 'parle-être'), and subject to that order. But if there is division in the image, and instability in the pronoun, there is equally loss, and difficulty, in the word. Language can only operate by designating an object in its absence. Lacan takes this further, and states that symbolization turns on the object as absence.
>
> (Rose 31)

For Lacan, this transpires in a single childhood moment, however, internalized voices function throughout Sasha's whole narrative. The modernist project of discovering authenticity within a pre-defined system[22] of language becomes tied up in Rhys's work with the project of representing a disordered subjectivity– one such as Sasha who is arrested at "the mirror stage" of identity formation.

As Sasha's narrative continues, Rhys deconstructs her use of language and dissociates herself from her spoken voice. A man in the street asks her why she is sad (*triste*). She thinks:

> Yes, I am sad, sad as a circus-lioness, sad as an eagle without wings, sad as a violin with only one string and that one broken, sad as a woman who is growing old. Sad, sad, sad…. Or perhaps if I just said 'merde' it would do as well.

---

[22] I think of this system alongside Saussure who described language in *Course in General Linguistics* as a system predicated on the relation between signifier and signified with an emphasis on signifier as a cultural artifact.

I don't speak and we walk along in silence. Then I say: 'but I'm not sad. Why should you think I'm sad?' Is it a ritual? Am I bound to answer the same questions in the same words?" […The] usual conversation… I say that I am not sad. I tell them that I am very happy, very comfortable, quite rich enough, and that I am over here for two weeks to buy a lot clothes to startle my friends- my many friends" (46-47).

This dichotomy of the inner and the outer is characteristic of Rhys's heroines. The dissonance between what Sasha speaks and what she thinks to herself implies the inability of conversational language to communicate her inner experience. The outer self can buy a new dress or put on a "tortured and tormented mask" by lying about being happy, while the inner self suffers without language to express itself. By giving the reader access to the full range of Sasha's voice(s) Rhys attributes a schizophrenic experience– the dual experience of inner and outer realities– to a failure of representational language.

Rhys indicates that the use of spoken language is gendered. If, as Lacan proffered, men and woman only ever exist in language[23], then perhaps Sasha's inability to find an adequate expressive language has more to do with her audience than with her articulatory ability. Sasha remembers during her first childbirth in a poorhouse that the midwife "comes and wipes my forehead. She speaks to me in a language that is no language. But I understand it"(58). This is the language of female compassion and a physical intimacy that does not contain lust or aggression. The woman says, "'Courage, courage,' speaking her old, old language of words that are not words" (58). Sasha yearns for a pre-modern form of communication, as well as for communication to transcend words themselves, to be "words that are not words". Sasha finds remnants of that form

---

[23] 'Men and women are signifiers bound to the common usage of language' (Seminar XX, Rose 36)

of transmission in the hands and sparse words of the midwife. As Rose states regarding Lacan's work, if the phallus represents the law or the prohibition of female desire, then it is "a refusal of division, which gives the woman access to a different strata of language, where words and things are not differentiated, and the real of the maternal body threatens or holds off woman's access to prohibition and the law" (Rose 55). Communication that defies identity construction must transcend language and become "words that are not words", refusing the authority of the phallus, and refusing, as Rose describes it, the authoritative impossibility that it represents. Sasha finds comfort in this symbolic exchange between herself and the midwife, a moment of relief in a set of signifiers that transcend the gendering construction of restrictive or authoritarian language.

Rhys's use of the second person and imperatives further dissociates Sasha from herself, similar to the process of Anna's dissociation in *Voyage In The Dark*. Sasha tends to use the imperative and the second person in two ways: to internalize social pressures and expectations and as a means to dissociate herself from her experience, both of which undermine the consistency of her voice and her agency as a character. When the constitutive voices of societal expectation become confused with her own representational voice, the reader can not be certain which voice is the authentic Sasha, or if such a thing exists.

"Come on, stand straight, keep your head up, smile…." (24).

"Get up, get up, eat, drink, walk, march… Pourquoi êtres-vous triste[24]?" (56).

"In the middle of the night you wake up. You start to cry. What's happening to me? Oh, my life, oh, my youth…. There's some wine left in the bottle. You drink it. The clock ticks. Sleep…" (90).

---

[24] French to English trans: "Why are you sick?"

"You mustn't talk, you mustn't talk, you must stop thinking. Of course it is like that. You must let go of everything else, stop thinking…." (117).

Sasha's self-admonishing inner voice tells her that her emotions and thoughts are inappropriate and that she should bury her suffering deeper beneath sleep, alcohol, or automaton-like actions. This repressive voice represents the internalization of her husband, Enno's, words: ("'Love, Enno says, 'you mustn't talk about love. Don't talk…'") and the words of other people she encounters. In one scene in a café, Sasha obsesses over what she imagines other women are saying about her: "That's the way they look, when they are saying: 'why didn't you drown yourself in the Seine? […] 'Quest-ce qu'elle fout ice, la vielle[25]?'" (92). This judgmental speech reflects Sasha's social anxiety about being in the café subject to the scathing eyes of her peers, as an aging single woman without children and left by her husband. The internalization of such hateful language manifests itself in the remembrance of her multiple suicide attempts and feelings of worthlessness. These are all moments of rupture from the self produced by a linguistic dissociation. As Rose noted, "if there is division in the image, and instability in the pronoun, there is equally loss, and difficulty, in the word". The word on the page that constitutes Sasha's experience and the words in her head, a mashup of other people's derogatory speech, her memories, dreams, even snippets of song lyrics, become a pastiche of questionable authenticity. There is loss in that alone, as Sasha struggles to find herself amongst disparate voices. The search for self-recognition proves futile as Sasha searches for herself in a smashed mirror.

The smashed mirror could reflect the fragmented European society of the late 1930's. For Helen Carr, the politics of *Good Morning, Midnight* comments on a Pre-World War II European moment of cosmopolitan mixing and distrustful, xenophobic politics,

---

[25] French to English trans: "What is the old woman doing here?"

what Rhys describes as a "whirlpool" of identity formation. Carr writes that Rhys describes "the febrile nightmarish world of Europe on the eve of the Second World War, with its anti-Semitism, its racism, its class machinery, its nationalistic posturing" (Carr 48). Sasha's worries about her identity can be situated in this politically divisive and growing nationalistic context:

> "I have no pride- no pride, no name, no face, no country. I don't belong anywhere. Too sad, too sad… It doesn't matter, there I am, like one of those straws which floats round the edge of a whirlpool and is gradually sucked into the centre, the dead centre, where everything is stagnant, everything is calm" (44).

The political anxiety surrounding national identity at this moment in European history encourages Sasha to seek solace, a "calm". The second person as a dissociative technique helps to distance Sasha from herself, achieving a 'nothing matters' attitude. It is easier for Sasha to believe nothing matters when she live likes an automaton at the whim of larger shaping forces that terrify and frustrate her.

French author Georges Perec utilizes the second person perspective as a tool for dissociating the self a couple decades later in *Un Homme Qui Dort* (A man who Sleeps) published in 1967. He wrote this novella entirely in the second person and executed an experiment in indifference. The protagonist wanders the streets of Paris and leads a gloomy, monotonous life narrated in the second person. The voice of the writing is unclear: is there a split in the protagonist's mind? Is the author God-like, dictating the character's every move ("thou shalt get out of bed")? Or does the text address the reader, drawing the reader directly into the experience of the protagonist? This

experimental piece of writing succeeds in dissociating voice from self on many levels and forces the reader to question their own agency within the text.

The "you" in *Good Morning, Midnight* also involves the reader in producing Sasha's experience. The reader mirrors Sasha's experience by mentally performing the undertaking of the imperative actions. The reader plays a role in that construction, by becoming the Lacanian "Other", a sounding board for language and yet another piece of the smashed mirror that attempts to make sense of Sasha. The second person keeps Sasha in a continual moment of rupture from self as she creates an illusory identity and also puts her at the hands of the authority of both the author and the reader. Ultimately, she is under the authority of the creation and transmission of language.

Second person narration engenders similar effects in Perec's novel and in *Good Morning, Midnight*. Sasha uses alcohol and quinine to reach a "heaven of indifference" (91), but sadly for her it cannot be maintained. In a moment that brings both methods of dissociation– language and drugs– together she thinks: "You are pulled out of it [drunkenness]. From heaven you have to go back to hell. When you are dead to the world, the world often rescues you, if only to make a figure of fun out of you"(91). Sasha uses dissociation as she does superficial distractions to escape from her hellish reality.

Rhys employs other literary devices to unravel authority in Sasha's words and voice. Her highly repetitive style subtly reworks the meanings of language. It indicates Sasha's cyclical experience of unhealthy communication and abandonment at the hands of men. As seen in her conversation with the two men in the street, Sasha is doomed to repeat "the usual conversation" with the "same words." Rhys, accordingly, frequently uses the same word or variations of the same phrasing. Similarly, repetition plays a significant role in Sasha's remembering of traumatic events. Sasha remembers her first

birth and subsequent loss of her son "back, back, back …This has happened many times"(61) she recalls. Five weeks after his birth, she remembers, "There I am, with not one line, not one wrinkle, not one crease. And there he is, lying with a ticket tied round his wrist because he died in a hospital. And there I am looking down at him, without one line, without one wrinkle, without one crease…" (61). The lack of wrinkles and creases could be solely attributed to Sasha, or they could qualify the corpse of her son as he lies there. At first there is "not one wrinkle" and then it is "without one wrinkle". This repetition with slight variance creates an ambiguity of meaning. Does Sasha lack the physical signs of life and the marks of a recent childbirth such as stretched and marked skin, or does she equate her skin to her son's, and his death to her own spiritual death? The ellipsis cuts the memory off and Sasha jumps to a scene in which a hairdresser dyes her hair: "a very good blond cendré. A success." (62) This is Sasha's favorite distraction from her painful memories, "the transformation act" (63) of buying a new hat or getting her hair dyed. This is repetition with variance: it is the same Sasha with a different hair color who is doomed to still be "triste".

There are grave consequences for Sasha's ruptured self: passive attempts at suicide, submission to the unhealthy power dynamic in her marriage, and finally the confusing and horrific conclusion to the novel. Before returning to Paris from London, Sasha "had the bright idea of drinking [herself] to death", because she " had enough of these streets that sweat a cold, yellow slime, of hostile people, of crying myself to sleep every night" (43). Sasha's suicide wish speaks to the ideas of intersubjectivity and identity construction at the hands of an overwhelmingly hostile "other".

If the public space of urban Europe presents problems of identity and communication for Sasha, then so too does the private. During her marriage to Enno,

Sasha experiences a silencing or loss of voice within the power dynamics of their relationship. On one occasion, Enno leaves her for a few days because she is "too passive", "lazy" and boring (128). Upon returning, he swiftly makes a simple demand of her: "Peel me an orange". Sasha thinks,

> "Now is the time to say 'Peel it yourself', now is the time to say 'Go to hell', now is the time to say 'I won't be treated like this'. But much too strong – the room, the street, the thing in myself, oh, much too strong…. I peel the orange, put it on a plate and give it to him." (129).

Sasha acts out her dissent internally, but outwardly she complies silently with Enno's request. Her lack of confidence in her voice is reinforced by "the room, the street, the thing in myself"– a fractured source of loss that is embedded simultaneously in her identity and in her surrounding environment. Her voice, or lack thereof, is inextricably tied to her societal position as an obedient wife.

In the final scene of *Good Morning, Midnight,* René and Sasha have a confusing sexual encounter. This commences as a "game" of switching power dynamics, but quickly spirals into a loss of control on Sasha's part. Her loss of voice is central to this decisive power shift. When she learns that René partook in a gang rape while serving his military term in Morocco, she begins to cry and can't speak (183). She starts to respond to his demands with supplicating "ritual answer[s]" in a dissociated voice: "I lie there, thinking 'Yes, I understand'. Thinking 'For the last time'. Thinking nothing. Listening to a high clear, cold voice. My voice…"(183). She tries to calm René and get him to take her money, but thinks, "Don't listen, that's not me speaking. Don't listen. Nothing to do with me –I swear it" (183). The jarring dissociation is complete when René leaves and Rhys implements the third person.

> When he has gone I turn over on my side and huddle up, making myself as small as possible, my knees almost touching my chin. I cry in the way that hurts right down, that hurts your heart and your stomach. Who is this crying? The same one who laughed on the landing, kissed him and was happy. This is me, this is myself, who is crying. The other- how do I know who the other is? She isn't me. **(**184)

This moment calls into question the agency of Sasha's own performance of desire when she kissed René and, according to him, symbolically invited him to her bed. Rhys narrates the rest of the passage from the third person, marking a complete fragmentation of self and voice. The multiplicity of voices weaves together condemning reaction to Sasha's behavior and a mocking tone that chides Sasha for crying. Frustrated with this complex experience, Sasha tries to self-medicate: "I have another drink. Damned voice in my head, I'll stop you talking" (187). Once she is drunk, the inner third person subsides, "she has gone. I am alone" yet the dissociation between thought and action persists. In a horrifying scene that toes the line of nightmare and reality, Sasha imagines René returning to her room while observing a figure in a white nightgown coming to her bed. The nightgown identifies him as her creepy old neighbor who watched her in the beginning of the novel. She narrates:

> I look straight into his eyes and despise another poor devil of a human being for the last time. For the last time… Then I put my arms round him and pull him down on to the bed, saying: 'Yes- yes- yes…. (189)

The novel ends with verbal consent, but the unraveling of Sasha's voice and discrediting of her agency in the performance of desire and sexuality, compromises this "yes", similar to the problem of consent in *Voyage in the Dark*. Ultimately, Rhys problematizes the roles of representational and constitutive language in developing relational identities. Gender,

desire, and sexuality are some of the many factors that define human interaction. The inability to successfully and faithfully communicate these aspects of an identity produces problematic encounters and negative affective experiences, as seen in Sasha's narrative.

POST-COLONIAL FEMINIST CRITIQUE OF PSYCHIATRIC IMPERIALISM IN WIDE SARGASSO SEA

This chapter will deal with constitutive language, in particular the process of naming a person or thing and the damaging and silencing effects of speaking for another person. In *Wide Sargasso Sea* when Antoinette Cosway realizes that her stepfather is marrying her away to a British man she thinks: "Say nothing and it might not be true"(54). This is wishful avoidance, but if Antoinette says something and a person with authority deems it madness, then the condition of madness would become a reality for her to perform. She is stuck in a catch twenty-two of language and power dynamics, and such linguistic coercion often produces the very condition that it asserts.

Jean Rhys grapples with this problem in *Wide Sargasso Sea,* published in 1966. The novel is split between the narratives of Antoinette Cosway, her new husband, Mr. Rochester, and briefly Grace Poole, the servant assigned to care for her when she is brought to England. Mr. Rochester travels to the West Indies and takes a wife, Antoinette Mason, and upon learning of her mother's "madness", he renames her Bertha. She becomes Bertha Mason, well known as the mad woman in the attic in Charlotte Bronte's novel, *Jane Eyre*. Ian Hacking's model of dynamic nominalism– the feedback loop between clinical psychological categories and different ways of being human– is useful here. Hacking identifies five key players in the creation of categories of human experience: classification, people, institution, knowledge, and experts. Regarding *Wide Sargasso Sea*, the classification is the "mad woman". The person is Antoinette.

Marriage and the colonial relations between Britain and the West Indies function as the institutions. Knowledge takes the form of Antoinette's family history and gossip within her community about her mental state. The experts are Mr. Rochester and the doctor he hires to corroborate his diagnosis of Antoinette. Thinking through Hacking's model, *Wide Sargasso Sea* addresses the function of linguistic cooption in psychiatric, political, and cultural imperialism. Gayatri Spivak's post-colonial feminist work and Judith Butler's post-modern gender studies will inform my investigation into the representation of madness in this novel.

Linguistic categories, including names, are problematic for people who exist outside of or at intersections of categories. Antoinette Mason's mother is from Martinique and her maternal grand father had been a white slave owner. Antoinette grows up in Coulibri, Jamaica and later on her Grandfather's estate in Granbois, Dominica. Antoinette is neither British nor Jamaican; her family recently lost money but still owns an estate with black servants. Throughout her childhood, Antoinette is derided for her family's history and identity. She is called: "white cockroach", "white nigger", and "crazy like her mother" who is a "sans culottes"[26]. Her family's identity is situated at an intersection of race and class in post-slavery Dominican society. They retain white privilege, yet have experienced a steady descent into the lower class since the Emancipation Act. This identity is a source of anxiety and grief for Antoinette and causes her to question her worth. After Amelie, a darker skinned servant in Antoinette's house, calls her "white cockroach", Antoinette explains to Mr. Rochester:

> That's what they call all of us who were here before their own people in Africa
>
> sold them to the slave traders. And I've heard English women call us white

---

[26] French to English trans: "Without underpants". This is a French term referring to a person of the lower, working class, originally used during Revolutionary Era France.

niggers. So between you I often wonder who I am and where is my country and where do I belong and why was I ever born at all. (93)

In his essay "Metaphor and Madness as Postcolonial Sites in novels by Jean Rhys and Tayeb Salih", Paul Huebener addresses this precarious racial and social perspective: "The eventual disastrous fate of the disenfranchised Creole woman born on an estate built by slave labour can be read either as poetic justice or as the plight of yet another victim of the imperial drive to appropriate wealth (Huebener 32). Huebener argues that Antoinette's confusing and fervent struggle to place herself, to locate her identity within a geography of warring racial labels and assumptions, triggers her descent into madness. The experience of being in between racial categories, signified by language ("white nigger") is, as Huebener argues, the process of metaphor and ultimately madness:

> Madness, in this sense, is metaphor taken to the extreme; if metaphor is the process of experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another, madness is what happens when the boundary between things disappears altogether, leaving no coherent "essences" in place. (Huebener 21)

Being in between linguistic categories produces a disenfranchised and delineated subject, or one who has gone "mad".

When Mr. Rochester marries Antoinette, he does not know much about her or her family situation, aside from her large dowry– a product of her mother's recent marriage to Mr. Mason. Mr. Rochester acknowledges that on their wedding day, she meant nothing to him. Just before the wedding, Antoinette has doubts and tries to break it off, but Mr. Rochester and Mr. Mason convince her otherwise. She nods her agreement but does not verbalize her assent. Mr. Rochester recognizes her silence, but is content to have won her submission: "In any case she had given way, but coldly,

unwillingly, trying to protect herself with silence and a blank face" (82-82). He attributes her behavior to her being "not a stupid child but an obstinate one" (85). Antoinette's silence is first taken as assent and then as a form of protection. In both cases, Rochester infantilizes her and assumes he knows what she tries to accomplish with her silence.

Antoinette's colored half-brother, William writes a letter to Mr. Rochester warning him "there is madness in the family" (87). He urges Mr. Rochester to ask himself, "Is your wife herself going the same way as her mother and all knowing it? […] Money is good but no money can pay for a crazy wife in your bed. Crazy and worse besides" (90). By insinuating a genetic transmission of madness through the female line, William absolves Mr. Rochester and the community of any responsibility for the condition of Antoinette or her mother. However, Christophine, the motherly figure from Martinique who cares for and serves Antoinette's family, counters this accusation and emphasizes the injustice of this assumption:

> They drive her to it. When she [Antoinette's mother] lose her son she lose herself for a while and they shut her away. They tell her she is mad, they act like she is mad. Question, question. But no kind word, no friends, and her husban' he go off, he leave her. […] That man who is in charge of her he take her whenever he want and his woman talk. That man and other. Then they have her. (143)

Christophine stresses that societal forces controlled Antoinette's mother, isolated and raped her: "They have her". Others labeled her as "mad" when she grieved for her son. Being "mad" instigated a particular treatment for poor Mrs. Mason and left nothing but fulfillment of its own diagnosis. As for Antoinette's diagnosis, Christophine places the authority and the blame at Mr. Rochester's feet: "You want her money but you don't want her. It is in your mind to pretend she is mad. I know it. The doctors say what you

will tell them to say" (145). Mr. Rochester rejects this altogether. He ignores

Christophine, reasoning, "she's as mad as the others" (146). His use of the word

"others" strikes the register of his authority– there are others just like Christophine and

these people are representative of the "other", unlike him. He is comfortable in the

dichotomy of his normality (the dominant, white man) as opposed to a dangerous and

dysfunctional "other" to whom he refuses to listen. For Rochester, the others could be

all women, all women from Martinique, or all natives of these islands to which he comes

as a guest and in some senses a colonizer to take his perceived share of wealth (a wife

with a dowry) and leave. He rejects Christophine by deeming her "crazy", thereby

avoiding any confrontation with his own culpability.

The crucial moment of linguistic cooption in *Wide Sargasso Sea* occurs when Mr.

Rochester renames his wife Bertha. After finding out about his mother-in-law's story and

his wife's inherited name, he renames Antoinette as Bertha. He re-labels his wife so he

can separate her from associations with her "crazy" mother, so he can feel ownership

over her, and so he can understand her on his terms. Antoinette confronts him: "Bertha

is not my name. You are trying to make me into someone else, calling me by another

name" (133). She endeavors to equalize herself to Mr. Rochester, but eventually slips

into silence: "She was silence itself" (152). Mr. Rochester mourns for her former lively

self, "you must laugh and chatter as you used to do- telling me about […] (153). His

imperative seems well intended to restore her good spirits, but only so that she is

pleasant to be around rather than for her intrinsic wellbeing. Before leaving the islands

for England, Mr. Rochester wins out over Antoinette, ultimately silencing her and sealing

her fate as a madwoman; Rhys writes Mr. Rochester's construction of a madwoman:

> I saw the hate go out of her eyes. I forced it out. And with the hate her beauty.
> She was only a ghost […] Nothing left but hopelessness […] She lifted her eyes.
> Blank lovely eyes. Mad eyes. A mad girl. (154)

He imagines her joining the ranks of institutionalized madwomen, "locked away" and surveyed:

> Very soon she'll join all the others who know the secret and will not tell it. Or
> cannot. Or try and fail because they do now know enough. They can be
> recognized. White faces, dazed eyes, aimless gestures, high-pitched laugher. The
> way they walk and talk and scream or try to kill (themselves or you) if you laugh
> back at them. Yes, they've got to be watched. (156)

Mr. Rochester recognizes the futility of language for these women, and the way that they, these "*others*" like Antoinette, are "recognized" and categorized. In imagining this future for his wife, Rochester creates the inevitability of her condition. This language foreshadows the last chapter in which Antoinette performs the final stages of her madness.

Rhys further demonstrates the assumption of voice through the assignment of pages, a physical inequity in the book. *Wide Sargasso Sea* opens with Antoinette's narration of her childhood and early adolescence. Mr. Rochester narrates the marriage in the longest section (Part 2, 59-156, barring 98-107). Mr. Rochester has eighty-eight pages; Antoinette has eighty-two; Grace Poole[27] has one. The immediacy and availability of the "mad" female subjectivity is compromised here as her narrative is often expressed through Mr. Rochester's perspective. The final chapter returns to Antoinette's narration. Relocated to England, Antoinette briefly and dramatically narrates her captivity in the

---

[27] Grace Poole is the servant assigned to take care of Antoinette Mason once she is back in England at Thornfield Hall.

attic of Thornfield Hall, alluding through dream sequences to the final scene in *Jane Eyre* in which she burns down the estate and takes her own life in the process. Thus Rhys concludes with Antoinette and an ending of her own making. Her life was linguistically, metaphorically, and geographically coopted, but Rhys gives Antoinette the final word. The attention to the "other" and to coopted or previously untold narratives is what makes this *Wide Sargasso Sea* a post-colonial response to second-wave feminist reverence for the novel, *Jane Eyre*.

In their seminal work, *Madwoman in The Attic,* Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar analyze *Jane Eyre*, lending feminist importance to Eyre's progression. They focus on Jane's Bildungsroman: her confrontation with male sexuality, her expressions of anger and resentment towards Victorian-era expectations, and her final confrontation with Bertha Mason. Gilbert and Gubar argue that Bertha Mason represents Jane's repressed rage and desire, Jane's primal tendencies that she cannot express as a Victorian white woman: "Bertha in other words, is Jane's truest and darkest double" (Gilbert & Gubar, 360). In order to culminate her bildungsroman and become the rightful partner for Mr. Rochester, Jane must, for both legal and emotional reasons, vanquish her dark "other" side. Bertha burns down Rochester's house, a symbol of his power, and then kills herself, thus allowing Jane to repudiate such unattractive or uncivilized thoughts and rise to be Rochester's bride. Jean Rhys's novel responds to this narrowing feminist analysis by recognizing the narrative of Bertha Mason, the "darkest double"; by allowing her to be an individual– complex in her own right and owner of a painful past.

Gilbert and Gubar offer a feminist approach typical of second-wave feminists that burgeoned in Anglo-American theory in the 1960's. Gayatri Spivak presents a different reading of *Jane Eyre* to that of Gilbert and Gubar. In her essay "Three Women's

Texts and a Critique of Imperialism", Spivak reads *Jane Eyre* "as the orchestration and staging of the self-immolation of Bertha Mason as 'good wife'" (Spivak 259). Bronte's narrative has been appropriated by a certain school of feminism to mark the coming-of-age of the heroine, Jane, so Spivak directs attention to a counter-narrative, the descent of Bertha Mason, whose suicide as both woman and racial *other* leads Spivak to ironically call her "the good wife". Spivak emphasizes the latent imperialist project in nineteenth-century British literature. She reminds us, "the role of literature in the production of cultural representation should not be ignored" (Spivak 243). Literature acts as a significant source of identity formation and identity politics. In the case of *Jane Eyre,* the success of the contemporaneous imperialist project allows for a self-congratulatory feminist reading of Jane's individualization that purposefully forgets the narrative of Bertha Mason, a victim of colonial and patriarchal subjugation. Spivak discusses how the German philosopher Immanuel Kant's categorical imperative– make people a means to an end– becomes the basis for the western imperialist agenda: "make the heathen into a human so that he can be treated as an end in himself" (Spivak 248). The distortion of the Kantian imperative within a moralistic Christian framework becomes the basis for missionaries and colonialist structures in so-called developing countries. Similarly, some early feminists called for education and rights for women so that women could better perform their pre-determined societal roles and be better companions for men. Spivak analogizes the women to the colonized state whose colonization is justified for reasons of "improvement", "progress", and increased value in the eyes of the colonizer.

Spivak finds that Rhys's treatment of these themes, caught between the narratives of Antoinette and Rochester, becomes a critique of traditional feminism and imperialism:

In the figure of Antoinette, whom in *Wide Sargasso Sea,* Rochester violently renames Bertha, Rhys suggests that so intimate a thing as personal and human identity might be determined by the politics of imperialism. (250)

Furthermore, Spivak highlights that Jane's story arc is complete only when Antoinette acts out the role of madwoman and kills herself, thus making way for Jane.

In this fictive England, she [Antoinette/Bertha] must play out her role, act out the transformation of her "self" into that fictive Other, set fire to the house and kill herself, so that Jane Eyre can become the feminist individualist heroine of British fiction. I must read this as an allegory of the general epistemic violence of imperialism, the construction of a self-immolating colonial subject for the glorification of the social mission of the colonizer. (251)

Bertha must die in order for Jane to succeed. In killing herself, she becomes a good wife and a loyal subject to the colonizing oppressor. For Spivak, Bertha's madness does not represent Jane's repressed desires of rebellion; rather it is the ultimate form of submission. *Wide Sargasso Sea* charts the construction of Antoinette's madness within the power dynamics of an imperial agenda.

In *Wide Sargasso Sea* when the Masons' Coulibri estate is set on fire by a mob of black workers and island residents, their pet green parrot Coco plummets through the air aflame. The bird's self-sacrifice drives away the angry "others", the rebellious subjects, so that the Mason family may continue to live– another allegory for racial power dynamics and loyal submission to the colonizer, only this time Antoinette plays the role of colonizer. Antoinette remembers the bird's sacrifice: "Coco on the glacis railings with his feathers alight. He made an effort to fly down but his clipped wings failed him and he fell screeching. He was all on fire" (39). Antoinette remembers the bird for being able to

say, "*qui est là*?"[28]. This memory, along with other strains of the fire scene at Coulibri, comes up in the dream sequence that forewarns her suicide:

> I heard the parrot call as he did when he saw a stranger, *Qui est là? Qui est là?* And the man who hated me was calling too, Bertha! Bertha! The wind caught my hair and it streamed out like wings. It might bear me up, I thought, if I jumped to those hard stones […] And the sky so red. Someone screamed and I thought, *Why did I scream?* I called 'Tia[29]!' and jumped and woke. (171)

Rhys builds a symbolic parallel between the actions of the parrot and Antoinette, reminding the reader of Antoinette's tragic fate as madwoman, her self-sacrifice as subject to Rochester, and also her confused, disenfranchised identity. If these are all products of linguistic cooption– translation driven by power dynamics or imperialist coercion– then what might be a solution for the problems language presents in Rhys's novel?

In her essay "Beside Oneself: On the Limits of Sexual Autonomy", Judith Butler addresses the emotional and political problems of living in-between linguistic categories that prescribe gender and sexuality and demarcate normal and deviant. Her writing draws on Foucault's ideas about the co-dependent relationship between knowledge and power and his theory that constructions of illness, much like the constructions of identities, are culturally and temporally created relative to an episteme. This is to say that the madwoman does not live only in an attic. She has a history and a community and her condition– the origin and labeling– is inextricably linked to them through language. Much like Coco asking "qui est là?" Butler writes: "the question we pose to the Other is simple and unanswerable: 'who are you?' The violent response is the one that does not

---

[28] French to English trans: "Who is there?"
[29] Her Jamaican childhood friend from Coulibri who broke their friendship after the fire

ask, and does not seek to know" (Butler 35). The violent response is rather like

Rochester taking a nod to mean that his bride assents to marrying him, without seeking

to understand what she actually wants, and then proceeding to rename her so he can

understand her identity on his own terms. Because, as in the case of *Wide Sargasso Sea,*

assumption of language is violent, what does nonviolent communication look like?

Butler proposes a form of cultural translation, in which neither language acts as static,

unyielding, or positioned above the other.

> Cultural translation is also a process of yielding our most fundamental categories,
>
> that is, seeing how and why they break up, require resignification when they
>
> encounter the limits of an available episteme: what is unknown or not yet known.
>
> It is crucial to recognize that the notion of the human will only be built over time
>
> in and by the process of cultural translation, where it is not a translation between
>
> two languages that stay enclosed, distinct, unified. But rather, translation will
>
> compel each language to change in order to apprehend the other, and this
>
> apprehension, at the limit of what is familiar, and parochial, and already known,
>
> will be the occasion for both an ethical and social transformation. (38-39)

Butler asserts that psychoanalytical techniques and communication surrounding identity

politics can be redeemed through her concept of cultural translation. She attributes an

experience of "hollowness" to those who are fundamentally unintelligible by pre-existing

norms or words. Such hollowness is what Antoinette feels about language, in particular

the word "justice": "'I've heard that word, it's a cold word. I tried it out,' she said, still

speaking in a low voice. 'I wrote it down. I wrote it down several times and always it

looked like a damn cold lie to me. There is not justice'" (132). The word is hollow,

because it signifies an idea that is unintelligible in Antoinette's lived experience. Rhys's

treatment of language in *Wide Sargasso Sea* may be a literary corroboration for Butler's political work and an entreaty for cultural translation in identity politics and in psychiatric diagnoses that depend upon equally weighted linguistic reporting and understanding.

CONCLUSION: BUTLER'S CULTURAL TRANSLATION AT WORK IN
FEMINIST LITERATURE AND HOLISTIC PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC
TREATMENT

Jean Rhys's fiction reveals the need for Butler's concept of cultural translation in the treatment of women, of different racial identities, and of the psychologically abnormal. Although Rhys's work demonstrates the fallibility of language– the gaps and the silences– she presents a reworking of language and an attempt to give voice to the psychologically marginalized. Her work prompts a set of questions: can one who straddles cultural categories write an authentic first person narrative that is both socially intelligible and uncompromising of the writer's personhood? Can psychotherapy address the personhood of the patient and view their subjectivity as worthy of representation outside of mere clinical categories? What form would the practical application of Butler's concept of cultural translation take in literature and in psychiatric practice? What challenges might arise in the implementation of this practice? By way of conclusion, I think through possible answers to these questions by examining two seemingly disparate methodologies: Gloria Anzaldùa's theoretical writing on Mexican-American Queer identity and clinical practices of Open Dialogue in therapeutic communities.

One way of pursuing Rhys's legacy is through feminist, queer, and post-colonial methodologies for articulating a fluid, authentic language outside of normative linguistic conventions. Such authors allow language to be pliable, like identity. They make space for the individual crafting of language just like the crafting of identity. Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands La Frontera* provides an example of a linguistic reworking of cultural normalization. Anzaldúa's autobiographical exposé rails against the cultural construction of "borders" between Latinas/os and non-Latinas/os, men and women, heterosexuals and homosexuals. For Anzaldúa, these delineated categories are invisible and intangible,

yet they produce violent realities for those who fall outside of reductive norms. Those

who fall outside of the norm are condemned as members of purportedly deviant

categories in relation to cultural values that are patriarchal, heterosexual, and entrenched

in a history of European colonization: "The Chicano, *mexicano*, and some Indian cultures

have no tolerance for deviance. Deviance is whatever is condemned by the community

[…] The queer are the mirror reflecting the heterosexual tribe's fear: being different,

being other, and therefore lesser, therefore sub-human, inhuman, non-human. (Anzaldùa

18)" The experience of being marginalized is psychologically and physically brutal. The

marginal person existing in the borderlands experiences "la Facultad":

> La Facultad is the capacity to see in surface phenomena the meaning of deeper
>
> realities, to see the deep structure below the surface. It is an instant "sensing", a
>
> quick perception arrived at without conscious reasoning. It is an acute awareness
>
> mediated by the part of the psyche that does not speak, that communicates in
>
> images and symbols which are the faces of feelings, that is, behind which feelings
>
> reside/hide. […] Those who are pounced on the most have it the strongest- the
>
> females, the homosexuals of all races, the dark skinned, the outcast, the
>
> persecuted, the marginalized, the foreign. *(*Anzaldùa 39)

The cultural conditioning of abnormality and living in fear create this psychic experience

that exists in an intuitive, perceptive mode of reality– the realm of feelings, images, and

symbols. The intuitive, sensory-laden experience of La Facultad that draws on imagery

and metaphor evokes Rhys's literary portrayal of her heroines' madness.

Anzaldúa describes her queer identity as a way of "balancing, mitigating duality"

(Anzaldùa 19). In order to reflect this resistant balancing act in language, she writes in a

hybrid of Spanish and English. Her text dances between the two languages, inviting the

reader to engage with both and meet that culture on its own terms. She critiques and celebrates both languages, privileging neither. She writes triumphantly, "I will have to stand and claim my space, making a new culture– *una cultura mestiza*– with my own lumber, my own bricks and mortar and my own feminist architecture" (Anzaldùa 22). Anzaldúa's text is thematically and stylistically a feminist reworking of language that is at once creative, authentic, and poignant. In response to the question of how one might conceive of literature that is both authentic and socially intelligible: there often must be sacrifice on one end. For example, a non-Spanish speaker reading Anzaldúa's work must accept that there are aspects of the author's culture and personhood that are linguistically beyond comprehension in order to respect the authenticity of her work. Though Anzaldùa and Rhys write from significantly different temporal, geographical, and cultural positions, they describe a similar psychological experience in La Facultad. Anzaldùa explicitly hones the methodology that Rhys pursues: using literature as a site of resistance against the power of violent cultural institutions.

Engaging in La Facultad means engaging in psychoanalysis of sorts. It means endeavoring by way of language to access a deeper realm of emotions, images, symbols, and dreams that exist beyond the literal and are integral to understanding and communicating human experience. With this in mind, the practice of psychotherapy can be retrieved from the previously discussed historical problems of patriarchal or paternalist administration. How then might Butler's cultural translation be incorporated into the application of psychotherapy and other treatments for mental illness?

The goal of the Recovery Movement is to view recovery from mental illness in terms of holistic quality of life as opposed to mere symptom reduction and to advocate for the inclusion of the patient in the treatment process. The movement became popular

in the 1980s and 90s, driven by American grassroots activism. Open Dialogue, a practice operating within the Recovery Movement, emphasizes listening and collaboration rather than reliance on medication and hospitalization to treat the mentally ill. According to the official website for the Institute of Dialogic Practice founded by Dr. Mary Olsen, one of the few practitioners teaching Open Dialogue in North America:

> "Studies have shown that the Open Dialogue approach leads to a reduction in hospitalization, the use of medication, and recidivism when compared with standard treatments. In one five-year study, for example, 83% of patients had returned to their jobs or studies or were looking for a job (Seikkula et al. 2006)".

Dialogic Practice is the implementation of an Open Dialogue in therapeutic conversation. It is predicated on "with-ness" rather than "about-ness". This treatment paradigm rejects the distinction between expert and patient that externally applies an understanding of mental illness to the studied subject. Within this paradigm, the patient is a validated resource on their own experience and an instrumental part of their recovery, and language is a viable tool for self-expression and for understanding the first person experience of mental illness.

Gould Farm is a residential treatment center in the Berkshires in Massachusetts that implements Open Dialogue with its patients and staff. Gould Farm emphasizes talking "with"– not "about"– people seeking treatment. Since its founding in 1913, Gould Farm has referred to its residents as "guests" rather than "patients". Professor Laurie Heatherington of the Psychology department at Williams College has been running a longitudinal study on the outcomes of treatment at Gould Farm since 1998. The methodology of the study reflects Gould Farm's collaborative and compassionate approach towards its guests. The study considers guests' interviews at various points

during and after their residence as well as joint discussion groups with guests, family

members, and staff. Professor Heatherington aims to determine which aspect of the

treatment center leads to the high efficacy rates of recovery as reported by the guests

themselves. Is it the manual labor and the meaningful work on the farm that the guests

participate in daily? Is it the residential aspect and the introduction of a new

environment? Is it the personalized clinical attention? Based on her qualitative analysis of

interviews with guests, Professor Heatherington attributes the success of the farm's

treatment to the "relationships" forged there and the feeling of being part of a

community. She expressly defines the illnesses of the guests as largely neurologically

based, but asserts that the social isolation they felt due to their illness had exacerbated

their conditions. One could argue that Rhys's characters' suffering stems solely from a

neurochemical imbalance, but her overwhelming attention to erotic and relational power

leads one to conceptualize a sensitized form of "madness". This discussion is

reminiscent of Seligman's Learned Helplessness experiment in which the harness

produces a neurochemical change. Regardless of exact origin of illness, the outcome

research on Gould Farm demonstrates that being in a caring, therapeutic community

with relationships that operate on equal footing yields high rates of recovery.

A therapeutic community that fosters a sense of belonging and communal

recovery is the antithesis to a large, state-run mental health institute that operates under

the assumption that discharge is predicated on symptom reduction. Unfortunately, health

insurance companies rarely offer coverage for residential treatment centers such as

Gould Farm. The typical guest according to Professor Heatherington's 2014

demographic analysis is a twenty-something white male who is well-educated, but

dropped out of college, and suffers from schizophrenia, schizo-affective disorder, or

bipolar disorder. One of the goals of Professor Heatherington's study is to demonstrate the efficacy rates of Gould Farm in order to motivate insurance companies to provide compensation for it. There are obvious problems of accessibility to this type of treatment, yet Heatherington's study of treatment outcomes has found no significant difference amongst guests with differing payment plans. Despite its small size and problems of accessibility, the psychotherapeutic model at Gould Farm and the collaborative scientific model of Heatherington's study represent methodologies for a holistic, compassionate approach to the study and treatment of mental illness. A question for further analysis is how this model of an intentional, caring therapeutic community could be adapted to an urban environment.

The reworking of language in post-colonial, feminist literature such as Gloria Anzaldùa's *Borderlands* is similar to the intention behind the balancing of language in Open Dialogue and to compassionate approaches to mental health care that are not predicated on power dynamics– on expert translation of the abnormal. Jean Rhys's fiction leaves the reader with a powerful illustration of overwhelming psychological suffering and a complicated feedback loop of subjectivity formation. An ethical response lies in compassionate listening and reading *with* –not *about*– a subject. We must understand the formative power of language in identity constitution and provide space for the reworking of language in order to resist normalizing assumptions. The title of this thesis is taken from Ethel's contemptuous comment in *Voyage in the Dark,* describing Anna as "not all there". I reframe this as a moment of defiance and reclamation of Anna's complex personhood. She is not all there because she is *more* than the limited space and label assigned to her. She is not all there because she also exists elsewhere–

inhabiting different spaces, trying to find her voice, and defying those who seek to tell her story for her.

<center>BIBLIOGRAPHY</center>

"About Open Dialogue." *Institute for Dialogic Practice.* N.p. 2014. Web. 4 April 2016.

Althusser, Louis. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards an Investigation)." *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays.* trans. Ben Brewster. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971. 127-186. Print.

Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands La Frontera.* San Francisco: Spinsters/Aunt Lute Book Company, 1987. Print.

Beard, George M. *American Nervousness; Its Causes and Consequences.* New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1881. Print.

Bennett, Paul. *Abnormal and Clinical Psychology: An Introductory Textbook.* 3rd ed. Berkshire, GBR: Open University Press, 2011. 369-376. Web. ProQuest ebrary. 18 February 2016.

Bleuler Eugen. *Textbook of Psychiatry.* New York: Macmillan, 1924. Print. 214.

Butler, Judith. "Subjects of Sex/Gender/Desire." *Gender Trouble.* New York: Routledge, 1990. 3-44. Print.

Butler, Judith. *Undoing Gender.* New York: Routledge, 2004. Print.

Caplan, Eric. *Mind Games; American Culture and the Birth of Psychotherapy.* Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1998. Print.

Carr, Helen. *Jean Rhys.* Plymouth, UK: Northcote House Publishers, 1996. Print.

Chesler, Phyllis. *Women and Madness.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005. Print.

Cixous, Hélène and Catherine Clément. *La Jeune Née.* Paris: Union Générale d'Éditions, 1975. Print.

Cox, William T. L. et al. "Stereotypes, Prejudice, and Depression: The Integrated Perspective." *Perspectives on Psychological Science* (2012). 427- 449. Web. Sagepub. 29 Feb. 2016.

Cushman, Philip. "Why the Self is Empty." *American Psychologist* Vol. 45, No. 5 (May 1990): 599-611. Print.

Dickinson, Emily. *The Poems of Emily Dickinson.* ed. Thomas H. Johnson. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard Univ. Press, 1998. Print.

Felman, Shoshana. *What Does a Woman Want? Reading and Sexual Difference.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1993. Print.

Foucault, Michel. "The Subject and Power." *Critical Inquiry 8* (Summer 1982): 777-795.
    Print.

Freud, Sigmund. "The Origin and Development of Psychoanalsyis." *The American
    Journal of Psychology,* Vol. 21, No. 2 (April, 1910): 181-218. Print.

Gay, Peter. *The Freud Reader.* New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1989. Print.

Gilbert, Sandra & Gubar, Susan. *Madwoman in the Attic.* New Haven, Connecticut: Yale
    Univ. Press, 2000. Print.

Hacking, Ian. "Kinds of People: Moving Targets." *British Academy Lecture 151* (2007).
    285-318. Print.

Hacking, Ian. *Rewriting the Soul.* Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton Univ. Press, 1995.
    Print.

Heatherington, Laurie. Personal Interview. 28 March, 2016.

Huebener, Paul. "Metaphor and Madness as Postcolonial Sites in Novels by Jean Rhys
    and Tayeb Salih." *Mosaic: A Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature* 43:4
    (Dec 2010). 19-34. Web. Proquest Ebrary. 3 April 2016.

James, William. "The Hidden Self." *Scribner's Magazine* (1 Jan. 1890): 361-373. Web.
    Periodicals Index Online. 10 Feb. 2016.

Lacan, Jacques. "The Mirror Stage." *Écrits: A Selection.* New York: Norton, 1977. 1-7.
    Print.

Leys, Ruth. *Trauma: A Genealogy.* Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2000. Print.

Love, Heather. *Feeling Backwards.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard Univ. Press,
    2009. Print.

Metzl, Jonathan. "The Protest Psychosis: How Schizophrenia Became a Black Disease."
    UHI Race and Research Series, Johns Hopkins Urban Health Institute. Lecture,
    6 April 2010. Online Video. *Youtube.* 30 November 2016.

Moi, Toril. "Representation of Patriarchy: Sexuality and Epistemology in Freud's Dora."
    Feminist Review. No. 9 (Oct, 1981): 60-74. Web. *Palgrave Journals.* 29 Feb. 2016.

Perec, Georges. *Un Homme Qui Dort.* Paris: Éditions Denoël, 1967. Print.

Plath, Sylvia. *The Bell Jar.* New York: Harper & Row, Publishers Inc., 1996. Print.

Rose, Jacqueline. *Feminine Sexuality; Jacques Lacan and the École Freudienne.* New York: W.
    W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1982. Print.

Rhys, Jean. *After Leaving Mr. Mackenzie.* New York: Harper & Row, Publishers Inc., 1931. Print.

Rhys, Jean. *Good Morning, Midnight.* New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1986. Print.

Rhys, Jean. *Quartet.* New York: Harper & Row, Publishers Inc., 1929. Print.

Rhys, Jean. *Smile Please.* London: Penguin Books, 1979. Print.

Rhys, Jean. *Voyage in the Dark.* New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1982. Print.

Rhys, Jean. *Wide Sargasso Sea.* New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1996. Print.

Saussure, Ferdinand de. *Course in General Linguistics.* trans. Wade Baskin. New York: Philosophical Library, 1959. Print.

Scull, Andrew. *Hysteria the Biography.* Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2009. Print.

Seikkula, J. et al. (2006). "Five-year experience of first-episode nonaffective psychosis in open-dialogue model". *Psychotherapy Research*, *16*(2). Web. *Univ. Massachusetts Medical School Online.* 4 April 2016.

Seligman, Martin E. P., "Learned Helplessness." *Annual Review of Medicine* 23 (1972). 407-412. *Annual Reviews: Tufts University.* Web. 29 Feb. 2016.

Seligman, Martin E. P., Christopher Peterson, Steven F. Maier. *Learned Helplessness; A Theory for the Age of Personal Control.* New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1993. Print.

Shields, Stephanie A. "Passionate Men, Emotional Women: Psychology Constructs Gender Differences in the Late 19th Century." *History of Psychology,* Vol. 10, No. 2 (2007). *American Psychological Association.* 92-110. Online.

Showalter, Elaine. *The Female Malady.* New York: Random House, 1985. Print.

Simpson, Anne B. *Territories of the Psyche; the Fiction of Jean Rhys.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005. Print.1-21.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism." *Critical Inquiry*: *Race, Writing, and Difference* (Autumn 1985), Vol. 12 No. 1. Chicago, Univ. of Chicago Press. 243-261. Print.

Ussher, Jane. *Women's Madness: Misogyny or Mental Illness?* Amherst, Massachusetts: Univ. of Amherst Press, 1991. Print.

Weinbaum, Alys Eve. "Racial Masquerade: consumption and Contestation of American Modernity." *The Modern Girl Around the World; Consumption, Modernity, and Globalization.* Ed. Alys Eve Weinbaum et al. Durham, North Carolina: Duke Univ. Press, 2008. Print. 120-146.

Woolf, Virginia. A Room of One's Own. London: Penguin Books, 2004. Print.

Woolf, Virginia. "On Being Ill." *Collected Essays Virginia Woolf Vol. IV*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World Inc., 1950. Print. 194-200.

Woolf, Virginia. *To The Lighthouse.* New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Co., Original copyright 1927. Print.