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THE INTERSECTING  
Realities and Fictions  
OF  
*Virginia Woolf and  
Colette*

HELEN SOUTHWORTH



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For Caleb

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# Introduction

## The Bluestocking and the Schoolgirl

THE FRENCH WRITER and portrait painter Jacques-Émile Blanche, a renowned Anglophile, painted portraits of both Colette and Virginia Woolf. His 1905 portrait of Colette at twenty, entitled *La Bourguignonne au sein bruni* (figure 1), painted at his Paris studio, portrays her in a classical full-length pose, in the style of nineteenth-century portraiture, reclining on a chaise longue, vulnerable, her eyes cast down, her shoulders bare. The dark interior, weighed down by the browns of the painting, oppresses the painting's subject, the author, most recently, of the *Claudine* series, who, according to Blanche, spent much of the sitting in tears over the most recent indiscretions of her first husband, Henry Gauthier-Villars, better known as Willy.<sup>1</sup>

Blanche's 1927 portrait of Woolf offers just head and shoulders of his model (figure 2). The portrait, it appears, was painted either from a sketch made in Normandy where Woolf and Blanche met briefly at Château d'Auppegard, the home of American artist Nan Hudson, just subsequent to the publication of *To the Lighthouse*, or from a photograph exchanged by mail at a later date (Collet 73). The light pinks and blues and the soft brushstrokes of this less traditional portrait, the more forthright pose of the subject, who looks forward, into the eyes of the artist and viewer, and the informal jacket—her pose leads the viewer to imagine she has her hands in her pockets—suggest progress and modernity. Blanche's portraits capture both authors at pivotal moments in their writing careers; and we detect in his work an effort to transfer a sense of each writer's work to the canvas.

I begin this book with Blanche and with these two portraits for several reasons. First, Blanche's encounters with Colette and Woolf, and



**Figure 1**

*La Bourguignonne au sein bruni, Jacques-Émile Blanche's portrait of Colette.*

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the very different work that was produced as a result, are informative in terms of conventional conceptions of these two writers. Colette has never completely escaped her association with the saucy schoolgirl Claudine, heroine of her first (coauthored) novels; Woolf is still largely conceived of even today in her role of plain, pale bluestocking.<sup>2</sup> Just as the paintings appear initially to have nothing in common, so Colette and Woolf are considered to be diametrically opposed the one to the other. What could the two writers have possibly had in common?

While they set the two writers apart, these two paintings and Blanche's involvement with both writers remind us that these two



Figure 2

*Jacques-Émile Blanche's portrait of Woolf. Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design; Museum Works of Art Fund.*

women were contemporaries. Woolf (1882–1941) and Colette (1873–1954) lived and wrote at approximately the same time: Colette's first novel, *Claudine à l'école*, was published under her first husband's name, Willy, in 1900, and her last, *Le fanal bleu*, appeared in 1949; Woolf's first novel, *The Voyage Out*, appeared in 1915, and her last, *Between the Acts*, was published posthumously by her husband, Leonard Woolf, in 1941. These portraits also remind us that the two writers were connected via a complex network of mutual friends both in England and in France. Indeed, Blanche was just one of a number of artists/photographers who captured images of both women.<sup>3</sup>

Woolf met Blanche via Hudson, who was a friend of her sister, the artist Vanessa Bell, and other Bloomsbury artists. Many of these figures lived in France, including painter Duncan Grant (the father of Vanessa's daughter Angelica Bell), who trained at one point under Blanche.<sup>4</sup> Blanche was the son of a highly educated and well-connected doctor with a taste for the company of artists and writers. As a child and, subsequently, of his own choice as an adult, Blanche divided his time between England and France. While he is known primarily for his portraits of writers and artists, ranging from Thomas Hardy to Walter Sickert, Marcel Proust, Henry James, André Gide, Woolf, and Colette, he was also a prolific writer of novels, memoirs, including *souvenirs littéraires*, and art criticism. Subsequent to their meeting, Woolf corresponded with and solicited a memoir from Blanche, whose talk of the many French and English artists and writers he had met and painted (most notably for Woolf, Marcel Proust) fascinated her.<sup>5</sup> Her plan to publish the memoir at the Hogarth Press never came to fruition and it appeared with J. M. Dent.

Blanche, for his part, did much to promote Woolf's work in France. Among his articles is a profile of Woolf that appeared in the French literary paper *Les nouvelles littéraires* in August 1927, concerning *To the Lighthouse*. The interview is accompanied by several passages from *To the Lighthouse* and Woolf's short story "Kew Gardens," both translated by Blanche.<sup>6</sup> A couple of years later, in February 1929, Blanche wrote an article on Woolf's *Orlando* for the same publication. Blanche also included tributes to Woolf in the second volume of his memoirs, *More Portraits of a Lifetime*, and in *La pêche aux souvenirs*.

Familial ties link Blanche and Colette: Blanche's wife was a cousin of Colette's first husband. He painted Colette, and Willy, several times; a painting of husband and wife made in 1898 was later destroyed (it is reproduced in Pichois and Brunet).<sup>7</sup> Both Blanche and Colette were part of a dense network of artists and writers living in Paris, many of whom Blanche painted, among them Proust, poet Anna de Noailles, Singer sewing machine heiress and promoter of the arts Winnie de Polignac, and writer André Gide, who confessed that he liked Colette's *Chéri* despite himself. Blanche includes a portrait of Colette in his *La pêche aux souvenirs*. He describes his first meeting with Willy's new wife and his intrigue as to who might be "la n-ième victime du bouffeur d'âmes et de chair féminines" (238) ("the umpteenth victim of the gobler up of feminine souls and flesh"). Blanche's account of his subsequent encounters with Colette suggests the longevity of their acquaintance and at once reminds us of the scope of Colette's career: he

remembers her as the shepherd girl in the fluted schoolgirl collar of their first meeting, naked, an animal skin flung over her arm, knelt before Willy in a top hat on the stage of the Folies Bergère, and as the woman of letters, in sandals, honored at the Académie royale belge de langue et de littérature françaises with the red ribbon and the commander's cross, which she received in 1936 (289). Colette refers to Blanche numerous times in her work: in *Mes apprentissages* (1025), in *De ma fenêtre/Looking Backwards* (199), in her portrait of Proust, and again in *Le pur et l'impur* (144). As my first chapter demonstrates, these represent only a few of the many links—familial, social, and literary—connecting Woolf and Colette.

One notes a faint smile lingering around Woolf's lips in Blanche's painting and a subtle coyness lifting the downcast eyes of Colette. What would Colette and Woolf have said to each other had they had an opportunity to meet? While no record exists of a meeting of the two writers, they did exchange several letters, none of which appear to have survived. In 1936, in a letter to Jane Bussy thanking her for sending on Colette's *Mes apprentissages*, Woolf refers to a cryptic note that she had received from Colette with a copy of one of her books (she is unclear when), and in another letter in the same year she tells Ethel Smyth that she has dispatched a response to Colette and sent it via a mutual friend, Winnie de Polignac. In characteristic fashion, Colette makes no mention of Woolf or Woolf's work in letters or diaries—she was famous for her reticence when asked to evaluate the work of her contemporaries; however, Woolf does describe her impressions of Colette's work. Woolf read at least three of Colette's works, *Mes apprentissages*, *Sido*, and *Duo* (a copy of the latter remains in the Woolfs' library housed at Washington State University, along with an early critical text, Jean Larnac's *Colette* [1927]). A great admirer of French language and literature, an admiration she explains in some detail in her essay "On Not Knowing French," Woolf is carried away by Colette's prose, finding in it "a new combination" and a "dexterity insight and beauty" of which she is envious (*Letters* 6: 301).<sup>8</sup>

Critics have connected Woolf and Colette in their work. Among the best-known treatments are Jane Marcus's all too brief exploration of the ties linking the two writers at the level of the sentence, in terms of biographical detail, and via an exploration of literary influences in the introduction to her *Virginia Woolf and the Languages of Patriarchy*, Nancy K. Miller's reading of Colette's *La vagabonde* via Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*, and Margaret Crosland's numerous references to Woolf in her groundbreaking work on Colette.<sup>9</sup> Several doctoral dissertations have

addressed the question of ties between the two writers—in terms of “the female presence” in the works of Woolf and Colette (Bonne 1978), women and middle age (Booth 1996), spatial form (Franks [Southworth] 1999) and marriage (Tucker 1995). Minor references include Rachel Bowlby’s linking of Colette’s treatment of the mother-daughter relationship to that of Woolf and American writer Willa Cather (*Virginia Woolf*, 1992, 80). Anne Ottavi also addresses similarities in the treatment of the mother figure in a short essay focusing on Colette’s *La maison de Claudine* and *Sido* and Woolf’s *To the Lighthouse*, while adding, however, that everything else related to Woolf and Colette seems to be in opposition: “tradition nationale, milieu culturel, problématique personnelle, projet esthétique” (181) (“national tradition, cultural milieu, personal problematics, aesthetic project”). In *Writing of Women: Essays in a Renaissance* (1985), Phyllis Rose describes how reading Woolf led her to Colette among other women writers: “Jean Rhys, Edith Wharton, Kate Chopin, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Anaïs Nin” (9).<sup>10</sup> Discussing the grouping together of the trio of Woolf, Colette, and Djuna Barnes, proposed by Andrew Field, author of *Djuna: The Life and Times of Djuna Barnes*, Rose recognizes the compatibility of Woolf and Colette, but she throws out Barnes in favor of Gertrude Stein: “Field offers us another trio as incongruous as Eliot, Joyce, Barnes. ‘Colette, Woolf, Barnes,’ he tells us, ‘might in time sit more comfortably on the Parnassus of their time with Proust, Eliot and Joyce, than many writers of the time whose work already shows clear signs of becoming period pieces.’ For the resolution of a chord beginning with Colette and Woolf, my own choice would be Gertrude Stein” (29). Bethany Ladimer briefly compares the detachment of the older Eleanor Pargiter in Woolf’s *The Years* and that of “the aged Colette, self-assured, writing with ease in her new name at the end of her life, [gazing] at others and at ‘youth’” (“Colette: Rewriting the Script” 245). Hermione Lee makes just one reference to Colette in her Woolf biography—Colette shares a sentence with Vita Sackville-West. In 1936 “[Woolf] had read an essay by Colette, quite unknown to her, whose writing she at once liked enormously; and she read Vita’s book on St Joan, which she did not like” (672).<sup>11</sup>

Despite this recognition of ties, parallels, and overlaps, a comprehensive study has yet to appear. The reasons for this omission are numerous and merit a brief review.

1. Literary inheritance, social class, and education have separated the two writers. Woolf is of literary stock, classically educated, extraor-

dinarily well read, and engaged in a vital intellectual culture both at home and abroad. By contrast, Colette is a writer by accident, by her own admission, without literary entitlement. Like the protagonist of her first novels, Claudine, she is somewhat haphazardly educated, her work is provincial, and she belongs to no single school of writing, as Jean Cocteau remarked. Nicole Houssa's careful cataloguing of literary allusions affirms the narrower focus of Colette's work: "Colette pays more attention to the present than the past, more attention to French literature than foreign literature; the man interests her as much as, if not more than, the work, or even the writer; she often made of the literary work a concrete vision, and she rarely takes the time to show off what she knows" ("Citations, références et allusions" 24).<sup>12</sup>

2. In terms of narrative style and content Woolf and Colette are judged by critics to have little in common. The literary theoretical establishment, even once it acquired more of an international bent, has always regarded the work of Woolf as more worthy of critical attention than that of her French contemporary. Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane do include Colette in the chronology of their book *Modernism*. However, they incorrectly attribute Georges Bernanos's 1926 *Sous le soleil de Satan* to her. As Bonnie Kime Scott suggests in *Refiguring Modernism*, "Woolf is the token woman [among Modernists], acceptable because most comparable in her experiments to the men" (xxii). The theoretically sophisticated Modernist style, "high aesthetic self-consciousness and non-representationalism" (Bradbury and McFarlane 25), of Woolf's prose is judged as at odds with what is seen as Colette's naturalist/realist fictional form—a form that Modernists, like Woolf, deemed an inadequate response to the chaos of the age of modernization.
3. While Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* is considered by many to mark the birth of the modern literary feminist movement (for Marcus, "our literary feminist bible" [1987:5]), the themes addressed by her contemporary appear light and trivial: actresses' love affairs (*La vagabonde* and *Chéri*) and schoolgirls' indiscretions (the *Claudine* series). In her study of its complexity, Mieke Bal labels Colette's *La chatte* "un roman populaire" ("a popular novel"). Like her female protagonists, Colette's work lacks the breeding and respectability of Woolf's. Colette's antifeminist comments did little to improve her ratings among feminist readers.<sup>13</sup>

4. Perhaps in an effort not to see Colette subordinated to Woolf, several Colette critics have underscored the differences between the two writers. Thus, in her book on Colette, Nicole Ward Jouve asserts: “The two women did not know each other: would they have seen the point of each other’s book, and form?” (Jouve, *Colette* 168); and in her biography of Colette, Judith Thurman echoes Jouve:

It is not hard to see why Colette always felt more of an affinity with the courtesans, actresses and artistes she had frequented in her youth than she did with the bluestockings, the militants for women’s rights, or the gentlewomen of letters living on their allowances. She respected those ambitious entrepreneurs of her own sex whose notion of a bottom line would never be Virginia Woolf’s five hundred a year and a room of one’s own, but fifty thousand a year and a villa of one’s own, with a great chef, a big garden, and a pretty boy. (Thurman xiv)

And perhaps most emphatically, in her book on Colette, Elaine Marks argues that the heterogeneity of Colette’s work prevents a comparative perspective:

One approach [to Colette’s work] might be sought in such words as heterogeneity, hybrid, or mongrel. There is a crossing, a mixing in all Colette’s texts of genders (male and female), of social classes (the demi-monde, the marginals, and the bourgeoisie), of cultures (learned and popular) and most importantly of genres (narrative and dramatic fiction, autobiography, biography). Attempts to situate Colette in relation to the women authors of the turn of the century whom she frequented (Renée Vivien, Natalie Clifford-Barney, Lucie Delarue-Mardrus, Anna de Noailles) or to women authors of other cultural traditions (Gertrude Stein, Virginia Woolf), or attempts to relate her to the “classical generation of 1870” (Marcel Proust, André Gide, Charles Péguy, Paul Valéry, Alain) fail and for the same reasons. *Neither sexual identity nor contemporaneity can cope with the difference between the texts of the best-known French woman writer of the first half of the twentieth century and those of other writers.* Their texts function within the protocol of a group and hers do not. Where then is she located, and how does this peripheral location account for the heterogeneity within her texts? (my emphasis; Marks, “Foreword: Celebrating Colette” x).

Reading at once with and against these assessments, I want to argue that these very objections in fact provide the ground for a comparative study. The apparent differences, social and educational, geographic and linguistic, that have separated these two writers are indeed concepts addressed, frequently in some detail, in the writing of both, and they provide the foundation for a study of the two writers and their work.

Difference is key to my analysis. Thus, Clarissa Dalloway's exclamation in Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* as she watches her elderly female neighbor move about her house, from a window on the stairs in her own house, is instructive: "And the supreme mystery [ . . . ] was simply this: here was one room; there another" (127). It is at those moments where the two bodies of work, the two agendas, the two writing styles come momentarily together and then veer off in different directions that provide the most fruitful insights. It is in those places where the work of the one bridges the gaps in the work of the other that connections might be made. Such an approach enables a redrawing of the map on which the literary and biographical voyages of Woolf and Colette have been traced. Rather than locate each writer simply within her particular national, cultural, and geographical setting, this study resituates the writer and in so doing raises questions about style, themes, and influence that have yet to be explored.

Thus, in the first chapter, I establish a biographical connection between Woolf and Colette via an exploration of the social ties the two women shared. Here I set out to establish the likelihood of a shared set of concerns and ideas based on relationships formed by both women with a specific set of writers, artists, and intellectuals. In the second chapter, I demonstrate how biographical ties such as those explored in chapter I provide the basis for close textual analysis of the literary works of Woolf and Colette. Thus, Radclyffe Hall's involvement with both Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* and Colette's *Le pur et l'impur* suggests a significant connection that is borne out by a close reading of the two works, the latter of which I read as a response to, and an inversion of, the former.

In the third chapter I take stylistic and textual ties a step further, reading three of Colette's novels, *La vagabonde*, *Duo*, and *Le toutounier*, in terms of Woolf's projection of the shape of women's writing in *A Room of One's Own*. I tie Woolf's use of space in her novels to Colette's. In the fourth and fifth chapters, I explore diachronic connections, first textually with an exploration of fathers in the first fictions of both writers—Woolf's *The Voyage Out*, Colette's *Claudines*—and then biographically

and anecdotally, looking at how women writers, English and French, have received the work of both.

In the concluding chapter, I examine the themes of food and sex in the works of both writers. Issues considered central and natural to Colette's work, these are items Woolf is conventionally thought to handle with difficulty. The juxtaposition of the treatment of food and sex in a range of texts by both writers serves to suggest the lighter side of Woolf's work and her enjoyment of these Colettian vices, and to emphasize the sophisticated way in which Colette deals with questions of food and sex. As in the earlier analyses, this last chapter complicates conceptions of the two writers as diametrically opposed one to the other, breaking down borders between the bluestocking and the schoolgirl, the literary elite and the music hall performer, "the worldly intellectual" and the "sensual,"<sup>14</sup> the entitled writer and the reluctant writer, the hot and the cold, the English and the French . . .

# Appendix

## (1) A Comparative Chronology of the Works of Woolf and Colette

Figure A.1

YEAR	COLETTE	WOOLF	OTHER RELEVANT EVENTS AND PUBLICATIONS
1900	<i>Claudine à l'école</i>		Freud's <i>On Psychoanalysis</i>
1901	<i>Claudine à Paris</i>		
1902	<i>Claudine en ménage</i>		Conrad's <i>Heart of Darkness</i>
1903	<i>Claudine s'en va</i>		
1904	<i>Minne, Dialogues de bêtes</i>		Blanche paints Colette
1905	<i>Les égarement de Minne, Sept dialogues de bêtes</i>		Willy's <i>Maugis amoureux</i>
1906			
1907	<i>La retraite sentimentale</i>		
1908	<i>Les vrilles de la vigne</i>		
1909	<i>L'ingénue libertine</i>		
1910			
1911	<i>La vagabonde</i>		Willy's <i>Lélie fumeuse d'opium</i>
1912			
1913	<i>L'envers du music hall, L'entrave, Prrou, Poucette et quelques autres</i>		
1914			
1915		<i>The Voyage Out</i>	

Figure A.1 (continued)

YEAR	COLETTE	WOOLF	OTHER RELEVANT EVENTS AND PUBLICATIONS
1916	<i>La paix chez les bêtes</i>		
1917	<i>Les heures longues, Les enfants dans les ruines</i>		
1918	<i>Dans la foule</i>		
1919	<i>Mitsou</i>	<i>Night and Day</i>	
1920	<i>Chéri, La chambre éclairée</i>		
1921		<i>Monday or Tuesday</i>	
1922	<i>La maison de Claudine, Le voyage égoïste</i>	<i>Jacob's Room</i>	Woolf is reading Proust; Joyce's <i>Ulysses</i> ; West's <i>The Judge</i>
1923	<i>Le blé en herbe</i>		Vita Sackville-West's <i>Challenge</i> appears
1924	<i>La femme cachée, Aventures quotidiennes</i>		
1925	<i>Enfants et les sortilèges</i>	<i>The Common Reader, Mrs Dalloway</i>	
1926	<i>La fin de Chéri</i>		
1927		<i>To the Lighthouse</i>	Blanche paints Woolf; publishes article in <i>Nouvelles littéraires</i> on Woolf; Jean Larnac publishes <i>Colette</i>
1928	<i>La naissance du jour</i>	<i>Orlando: A Biography</i>	Hall's <i>Well of Loneliness</i> trial; West's "The Strange Necessity"; Woolf visits Burgundy with Vita; Woolf is awarded the Prix Femina Vie Heureuse-Bookman prize for <i>To the Lighthouse</i>
1929	<i>La seconde, Sido</i>	<i>A Room of One's Own; "On Not Knowing French"</i>	<i>A Room</i> on sale at Sylvia Beach's Shakespeare and Company; West's "Virginia Woolf and Autumn"; Yourcenar's <i>Alexis</i>

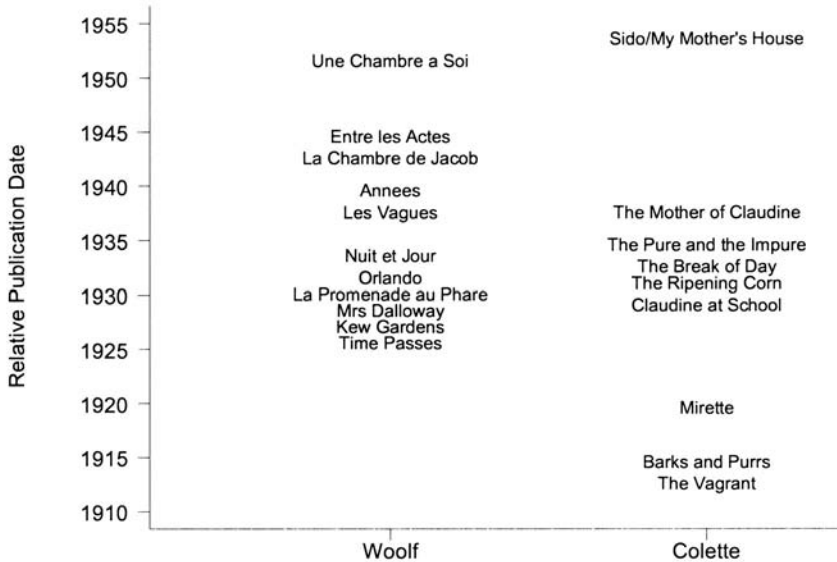
Figure A.1 (continued)

YEAR	COLETTE	WOOLF	OTHER RELEVANT EVENTS AND PUBLICATIONS
1930	<i>Histoires pour Bel-Gazou, Douze dialogues des bêtes</i>		Smyth first contacts Woolf; <i>Hamwood Papers</i> published
1931		<i>The Waves</i>	
1932	<i>Paradis terrestres, La treille muscate, Prisons et paradis, Ces plaisirs (Le pur et l'impur)</i>	<i>The Common Reader II</i>	Colette reads D. H. Lawrence's <i>Lady Chatterley's Lover</i>
1933	<i>La chatte</i>	<i>Flush: A Biography</i>	Trefusis's <i>Tandem</i> ; White's <i>Frost in May</i>
1934	<i>Duo, La jumelle noire</i>		
1935	<i>Cahier de Colette</i>		Trefusis's <i>Broderie anglaise</i>
1936	<i>Mes apprentissages, Chats</i>		Mary Gordon's <i>Chase of the Wild Goose</i> (published by Hogarth)
1937	<i>Bella-Vista</i>	<i>The Years</i>	Woolf is reading <i>Mes apprentissages</i> sent to her the year before by Janie Bussy; appearance of <i>Les vagues</i> , Yourcenar's translation of <i>The Waves</i>
1938		<i>Three Guineas</i>	Woolf is reading <i>Sido</i> .
1939	<i>Le Toutounier</i>		Woolf is reading <i>Duo</i> in France; Freund photographs both Woolf and Colette; Sarraute's <i>Tropisme</i>
1940	<i>Chambre d'hôtel</i>	<i>Roger Fry: A Biography</i>	
1941	<i>Journal à rebours, Julie de Carneilhan</i>	<i>Between the Acts</i>	Woolf commits suicide
1942	<i>De ma fenêtre</i>		
1943	<i>Le Képi, Flore et Pomone</i>		
1944	<i>Gigi, Trois... Six... Neuf</i>		
1945	<i>Belles saisons</i>		
1946	<i>L'étoile vespér</i>		
1948	<i>Pour un herbier</i>		
1949	<i>Trait pour trait, Journal intermittent, Le fanal bleu, En pays connu</i>		Beauvoir's <i>Le deuxième sexe</i>

(2) *Publication Dates of Translations*

Figure A.2 shows the dates of the first publications of the works of Woolf and Colette in French and English, respectively. Works appearing at the same time, such as *Mrs Dalloway* and *La promenade au phare*, which both appeared in French in 1929, are placed on separate lines for clarity. The precise dates of publication are given in Figure A.1.

Figure A.2



# Notes

*Author's note:* Translations from the French are the author's unless otherwise noted.

## *Notes to Introduction*

1. In *La pêche aux souvenirs* Blanche writes: “Ma bonne, très fidèle amie Colette, j’avais connu la misérable créature que vous étiez, quand vous sautiez du banc où vous posiez, pour voir si le coupé du Jockey-Club arrivait. Willy serait-il avec la comtesse de Guimont Fautru? S’embrasseraient-ils? / Suffocante, baignée de larmes comme un bébé, vous alliez vous étendre sur le canapé de chinz. Ma femme entra à l’atelier. Elle vous emmenait en bas, boire de l’eau de mélisse des Carmes, tamponner votre front d’ouate trempée dans du vinaigre de Bully. Rose délaçait votre corset, puis vous calait sur son lit avec une boule chaude et des oreillers” (289–90) (“My good, very faithful friend Colette, I knew you as the unhappy creature that you were, when you jumped up from the bench where you were posing, to see if the Jockey Club coupe was pulling up. Would Willy be with the Countess Guimont Fautru? Would they be in an embrace? Suffocating, your face bathed in tears like a baby, you threw yourself down on the chintz divan. My wife came into the studio. She took you downstairs to drink tonic water from Carmes, to mop your forehead with cotton wool soaked in Bully vinegar. Rose loosened your corset, and then tucked you up in her bed with a hot water bottle and pillows”). Colette also provides an account of her sittings for Blanche. While drawn to his portrait of Proust, Colette felt that Blanche never achieved the tone of abandonment, the familiarity of model and painter, painter and model. “Je crois qu’il n’aima ni ma jeunesse, ni la tristesse qu’il y pressentait et que peut-être il lui est advenu de plaindre” (“I believe that he liked neither my youth nor the sadness that he detected there and that he perhaps came to pity it”; quoted in Pichois and Brunet 81).

2. Reviewing an exhibition of Blanche’s work at the Hôtel Charpentier in Paris, American journalist Janet Flanner (also known as Genêt) makes reference to this painting. She says that Blanche “[comes] a cropper only in ‘An Imaginary Portrait of Virginia Woolf’—whom his imagination led him to believe looked like Queen Mary” (54). The title Flanner gives the portrait appears to be her own.

3. Other artists and photographers of the period created ties between Woolf

and Colette. German photographer Gisèle Freund photographed both writers in 1939. Cecil Beaton took Colette's photograph (see Mitchell's *Colette: A Taste for Life*). Woolf refused him. However, Beaton went ahead and, much to Woolf's consternation, included her in his book, *The Book of Beauty* (see 566–67), along with two sketches taken from other people's photographs of Woolf. American photographer Man Ray photographed Woolf for *Vogue* magazine in 1934 (Hermione Lee writes that "the photographs he took of Virginia Woolf, made up, hair shining and smoothly centre-parted, elegantly dressed, have become part of her legend. American photographer Man Ray placed her in cool, contained attitudes, in one with her right hand raised, looking aside, and in another with hands loosely crossed in front of her, looking up quizzically at the lens. If you didn't know who she was, you would see, from these pictures, a woman of great powers, formidable intelligence and humour, and a daunting social presence" [659]); American photographer Lee Miller, Man Ray's lover and student, photographed Colette, also for *Vogue*, in 1944.

4. For connections between Bloomsbury artists and their French contemporaries, see Caws and Wright's *Bloomsbury and France*.

5. Woolf was a great admirer of Marcel Proust, a portion of whose work at least she read in translation (by C. K. Scott-Moncrieff). In a 1922 letter to Roger Fry, she describes the intense pleasure she experiences reading Proust's work: "But Proust so titillates my own desire for expression that I can hardly set out the sentence. Oh if I could write like that! I cry. And at the moment such is the astonishing vibration and saturation and intensification that he procures—theres something sexual in it—that I feel I *can* write like that, and seize my pen and then I *can't* write like that. Scarcely anyone so stimulates the nerves of language in me" (*Letters* 2: 525). And, again to Fry: "[M]y great adventure is really Proust. Well—what remains to be written after that? I'm only in the first volume, and there are, I suppose, faults to be found, but I am in a state of amazement; as if a miracle were being done before my eyes. How, at last, has someone solidified what has always escaped—and made it into this beautiful and perfectly enduring substance? One has to put the book down and gasp. The pleasure becomes physical—like sun and wine and grapes and perfect serenity and intense vitality combined" (*Letters* 2: 565–66). Colette refers to Blanche's portrait of Proust in her description of the writer in *Mes cahiers*: "Quand j'étais une très jeune femme, il était un bien joli jeune homme. Fiez-vous au portrait que peignit de lui Jacques-Émile Blanche. Cette étroite bouche, cette brume autour des yeux, cette fraîcheur fatiguée, les traits et l'expression appartiennent vraiment à Marcel Proust jeune. [ . . . ] Sur la toile de Jacques Blanche et dans mon souvenir, les yeux de Marcel Proust sont bien pareils, ouverts en hauteur, plus anxieux qu'étonnés, et d'une naïveté trompeuse" (*Œuvres complètes* [hereafter *OC*] 14: 144) ("When I was a very young woman, he was a very pretty young man. Look at Jacques-Émile Blanche's portrait of Proust. That narrow mouth, that shadow around the eyes, that wearied freshness, the traits and expressions really belong to the young Marcel Proust. [ . . . ] On the canvas of Jacques Blanche and in my memory, the eyes of Marcel Proust are the same, open looking upwards, more anxious than astonished, and possessing a feigned naïveté").

6. Reinforcing the contemporaneity of Woolf and Colette, the *To the Lighthouse* article is, interestingly, flanked by a news item about Colette and contemporary

writer Francis Carco. An interview with Colette by Francis Ambrière, entitled “Chez Colette,” appeared in *Les nouvelles littéraires* on November 16, 1929.

7. Blanche had used an old canvas for the painting of Willy and Colette, and, rather symbolically, as the summer wore on the old portrait (of Mlle Marie de Heredia in a white dress) appeared through the as yet incomplete new one, like “Ophélie immergée et visible” (*Œuvres* 3:1025) (“a pale Ophelia submerged but visible” [62]). Blanche painted Colette’s portrait in 1902 and also provided a frontispiece of Colette for her *Sept dialogues de bêtes*, which was published in 1905.

8. “French literature,” Woolf wrote in a letter to Gerald Brennan, “falls like a blue tint over the landscape” (*Letters* 2: 599). In “On Not Knowing French,” Woolf writes: “It is a delight, after mumbling over the old stories of our old memoirs in the familiar English atmosphere of joints and butlers and port and Parliament and Queen Victoria on the throne, to flash instantly into the brilliance of Mérimée and the court of Napoleon and the Empress Eugénie. After trudging through muddy lanes and damp shrubberies we seem to tiptoe a little self-consciously upon polished floors under crystal chandeliers. And all our ramblings round and about this figure and that, as we pick our way through the ramifications of French memoirs, are full of surprises and excitements—of terrifying encounters with great ladies more severe than our own, of interviews with dukes and diplomats who seem (such is the prestige of the French) more pompous, more polite than our local nobility” (348).

9. For example: “When [Colette] is working she does not see people. When people are there she likes to make them talk or else talk to them about something more interesting than work, and for her everything is interesting. The story has been told about an earnest girl undergraduate who went to see Virginia Woolf with the hope, of course, of talking about books. But Virginia Woolf, perversely enough, wanted to talk about gas ovens instead, whether they were worth while, would the price come down, and wasn’t a coal range perhaps better? *Colette would have understood*” (my emphasis; Crosland, *Colette* 210).

10. Rose compares Jean Rhys and Colette: “The young Jean Rhys was a chorus girl in London and a demimondaine in 1920s Paris. The story of her life in her twenties and thirties as revealed in the autobiographical novels bears a remote resemblance to Colette’s. The locales were similar. Rhys, too, lived on the other side of respectability, and she struggled, less successfully than Colette, for independence from men” (104–5).

11. Critics have also noted similarities in the lives of the two writers: “[B]oth came from large families, both loved the capital cities where they lived for part of their lives, both had a circle of friends that included the gifted writers and artists of their time, and each, in her own way, rejected conventional standards of behavior. Both were married to Jewish husbands [Leonard Woolf and Maurice Goudekot] during World War II” (Bonne 23). I would add a few other details: both recognized the value of work to the emancipation of women. Both worked in a professional capacity as a writer. Both loved France and French literature.

12. “Colette est plus attentive au présent qu’au passé, aux lettres françaises qu’aux lettres étrangères; l’homme l’intéresse autant, sinon plus, que l’œuvre, ou même que l’écrivain; elle se fait souvent de la chose littéraire une vision concrète, et elle n’a guère souci de se piquer d’érudition” (24). In terms of Colette’s knowledge of English literature, we know that she read Shakespeare. A copy of D. H.

Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* was provided by Una Troubridge. In *Mes apprentissages*, Marcel Schwob reads to the ailing Colette, "Mark Twain, Jerome K. Jerome, Dickens or Moll Flanders—which he had not translated at the time" (38). Colette's admission that she read the diaries of the Ladies of Llangollen in the original in *Le pur et l'impur* suggests she at least had a reading knowledge of English.

13. When asked in an interview by French writer Maurice Dekobra if she was a feminist, shortly after having written *La vagabonde* (1910)—a novel about an independent and powerful woman, a novel that I believe falls quite squarely into the category of feminist novels—Colette responded with an emphatic no: "Ah non!" Suffragettes, she told Dekobra, disgusted her, and if any of her compatriots were to try to imitate them, she would be made to understand that her behavior was not acceptable in France. "Savez-vous ce qu'elles méritent, les suffragettes?" she asked Dekobra. "Le fouet et le harem . . ." (quoted in Pichois and Brunet 188) ("Do you know what they deserve, the suffragettes? [ . . . ] The whip and the harem"). While Colette's comments were undoubtedly deliberately inflammatory, as Pichois and Brunet suggest (188), they did not lack conviction. Colette did not concern herself in any direct way with the improvement of the condition of women. However, as biographer Michèle Sarde points out, this does not mean that Colette was not concerned with the fate of women. Citing Karl Marx's preference for the works of Honoré de Balzac, monarchist and reactionary, over those of Émile Zola, a socialist, for the reason that in Balzac he found material that fed, without dogmatic distortion, his reflection on French history, she suggests that "L'œuvre de Colette, qui n'a jamais eu de préoccupation idéologique, passe incomparablement mieux la rampe que les écrits féministes de son époque, et prête à une méditation sur la femme et son histoire" (464) ("Colette's work, devoid of any ideological slant, comes across to the audience with far greater clarity than does the feminist writing of her day, and it is an invaluable aid in the consideration of women and history" [8]), a view with which Colette biographer Judith Thurman concurs: "[S]he defines the second sex as the strong one; she challenges the received ideas about the incapacity of females for work, pleasure, autonomy, and aggression; she rises to the challenge of becoming both a person and a woman" (251). While neither Sido, Colette's real and fictional mother, nor Colette considered themselves feminists, according to Sarde, both asserted their independence as women: Sido, within her own domestic domain, and Colette, within the parameters of the written text.

14. I borrow terms here from Ottavi. She footnotes a reference to J. J. Mayoux, who, she notes, in his *Vivants piliers* (213) "signale [ . . . ] une parenté entre 'l'intellectuelle mondaine' et la 'sensuelle' (181 n.)" ("signals [ . . . ] a relationship between 'the worldly intellectual' and the 'sensual'").

### *Notes to Chapter 1*

1. As I note in the introduction and chap. 3, Woolf makes numerous references to her reading of Colette in her letters: "Ethel [Smyth] had sent Virginia an article on Anna de Noailles by the French fiction writer Sidonie-Gabrielle Colette (1873–1954). Virginia read at least three of Colette's books, two of autobiography (*Mes apprentissages*, 1934, *Sido*, 1929) and one of fiction (*Duo*, 1934), and the

two writers sent each other messages through mutual friends” (*Congenial Spirits* n. 375).

2. I will refer to all of these women by their last names, with the exception of Vita and Violet. The two writers shared other friends and acquaintances; however, for the purpose of this chapter, I have limited my focus. Other shared female acquaintances include Rebecca West, Katherine Mansfield, and Victoria Ocampo.

3. This type of biographical project falls in line with a number of other studies undertaken by Modernist scholars, for example Shari Benstock’s *Women of the Left Bank* (1986), Bonnie Kime Scott’s *The Gender of Modernism* (1990) and *Refiguring Modernism* (1995), and, most recently, Caws and Wright’s *Bloomsbury and France* (2000). While the last of these does not focus specifically on women, the prevalence of women-centered collective biography, especially covering the Modernist period, is worth noting. This results in part from feminist critics’ efforts to promote the work of women writers and artists who have not received the recognition accorded to their male counterparts. These studies draw on previously unpublished archival material only recently available, following the deaths of many figures of this generation. These women-centered biographical studies grow out of the work of early feminist critics, more general in terms of period, such as Gilbert and Gubar’s *Madwoman in the Attic* (1979) and Louise Bernikow’s *Among Women* (1980), which attempted a recuperation of women’s voices. They in turn took their cue from pivotal texts such as Harold Bloom’s *Anxiety of Influence*. Scott diagrammatically maps connections among writers in a fashion similar to that undertaken here.

4. In 1939 Colette and Maurice Goudekot spent part of the summer in Dieppe. It appears, however, that they arrived after Woolf had already returned home. Goudekot references Bloomsbury: “[L]e mois d’août 1939 nous trouva pour la première fois hésitants sur le lieu de nos vacances. Nos amis Léopold Marchand nous persuadèrent de les passer avec eux à Dieppe. Climat frais, lumière pâle, mer grise, le contraste avec nos heures méridionales était complet. Mais Dieppe et son air vieillot, son bord de la mer conventionnel, ses villas dont certaines datent de Charles X, ne manquait pas de charme. La duchesse de Berry, Madame Récamier, les Anglais de l’époque victorienne, les blondes misses à crinoline, *la bohème de Bloomsbury* la hantaient encore un peu” (my emphasis; 173) (“In August 1939 we hesitated for the first time on our holiday destination. The Marchands persuaded us to stay with them in Dieppe. The moderate climate, the pale light, the grey sea, the contrast with our time in the South was complete. But Dieppe with its quaintness, its typical seaside, its houses, some of which date from the time of Charles X, had a certain charm. The duchess of Berry, Madame Récamier, the Victorian-era English people, the blond ladies in crinolines, the Bloomsbury bohemians could still sometimes be found there”). American artist Ethel Sands lived in Dieppe.

5. The ice metaphor recalls the “nice names” Ethel Smyth had for Woolf, among them the “frozen falcon,” a name used by “someone at a concert [who] said she looked like that—so still, so alert,” and “‘4d. for 9d.’ because,” writes Ethel, “she asks a lot, and gives little—in quantity at least” (quoted in St John 223–24). It echoes Gisèle Freund’s description of Woolf as “frail and luminous, [...] the embodiment of her prose” (*The World* 130). The bicolored ice metaphor also resonates with Maurice Goudekot’s description of his wife, Colette, as “[u]n produit de la plus pure terre française, française jusqu’au bout des ongles” (17) (“a

product of the most pure French earth, French to very the tips of her fingernails”). According to Noailles, Colette has a “beau visage aigu de renard” (97) (“a beautiful face sharp as a fox”); Trefusis describes how her “foxy face looked up at me through a fuzz of hair that might have been undergrowth” (*Don’t Look Round* 90); and according to Rebecca West, Colette has the air of a Spanish fighting bull: “[West] first saw Colette at the railway station at St.-Raphaël, waiting ‘with the stance of a Spanish fighting bull’ and holding her bulldog by a wine-coloured *crepe de Chine* scarf twisted through its lead. She admired Colette as a writer for putting ‘into infallible artistic form her gross, wise, limited, eternal views about life’” (Glendinning 151–52). Here Glendinning quotes from West’s *Ending in Earnest* (see chapter 4).

6. While Woolf envied Colette’s writing style and that of Proust, Phyllis Rose contends that she really felt no threat: “Contemporaries, moreover, provoked an unhealthy sort of rivalry. They were doing the same things she was, but—as she put it—on a different railway track. It was distracting. She had to remind herself that ‘East Coker’ could be good and her own work, different as it was, could also be good. With French writers, she was on safer ground. They were from a different country, wrote in a different tradition. So she could read Colette and Proust with pleasure, while Mansfield and Joyce produced anxiety and irritation” (*Woman of Letters* 262).

7. Woolf loved France. In 1923 she wrote to her friend the French painter Jacques Raverat, “I felt a kind of levity and civility and frivolity and congeniality upon me with the first sight of Dieppe [cf. Colette and Dieppe]. How much more enjoyable in some queer way France is than England” (quoted in Caws and Wright 3). Caws and Wright contend that what attracted Woolf to France was “the intensity and kind of thought she believed was, in some sense, dependent on the language” (14). In her diary on October 30, 1930, Woolf writes: “I say ‘I will cut adrift—I will go to Roger in France—I will sit on pavements and drink coffee—I will see the Southern hills [. . .] I need solitude. I need space. I need air. I need the empty fields round me; & my legs pounding along roads; & sleep; & animal existence’” (*Diary* 3 323). Colette is also known for her passion for travel literature: “Voyages, ah! voyages! Les soixante-huit volumes de la collection du *Tour du Monde*, lus d’un bout à l’autre plusieurs fois. Livingstone, Stanley, Huc, Landon, Arago, Comte de Beauvoir, Schweinfurth, Madame Ida Pfeifer, tant d’autres . . .” (Goudekot 149) (“Travel, ah! Travel! The sixty-eight volumes of the Around the World collection, read from cover to cover several times. Livingstone, Stanley, Huc, Landon, Arago, Comte de Beauvoir, Schweinfurth, Madame Ida Pfeifer, and so many others”).

8. For a discussion of Freund’s photographic methodology, see Nicola Luckhurst’s “Photoportraits: Gisèle Freund and Virginia Woolf.” Luckhurst is currently at work on a biography of Freund.

9. “The umbilical cord which had bound *Roger Fry: A Biography* to Virginia’s brain for two years was, as I said, finally cut when she returned the proofs to the printer on May 13, 1940; 319 days later on March 28, 1941, she committed suicide by drowning herself in the River Ouse” (L. Woolf, *The Journey* 44).

10. “[J]e n’aurais jamais cru que le genre humain en viendrait là encore une fois.” Colette writes from Dieppe (where she has been staying August 12–28) to Mme Léopold Marchand, “Maurice a vu une arrivée de train, bondé d’Anglais qui

quittaient la Côte, qui n'est plus d'Azur, mais de m . . . , et regagnaient leur Angleterre" (*Lettres de la vagabonde*, 265) ("Maurice saw the arrival of a train, packed full of English people who were leaving the coast, which is no longer of Azure, but sh . . . , in order to get back to their England").

11. See Freund's *Three Days with Joyce*, originally published as *Trois jours avec Joyce* (1982). The photographs were taken in the late 1930s.

12. Ocampo authored a number of pieces about Woolf, including *Virginia Woolf en su diario* (1954), and did much to promote her work in the Spanish-speaking world. She arranged for Jorge Luis Borges to translate *Orlando* and *A Room of One's Own* into Spanish and published both at *Sur*.

13. Indeed, in 1939 Woolf wrote to Vita that she was in a rage over Freund's plan to show the photographs she had taken of Woolf: "That devil woman Giselle [*sic*] Freund calmly tells me she's showing those d\_\_d photographs—and I made it a condition she shouldn't. Don't you think it damnable?—considering how they [Ocampo and Freund] filched and pilfered and gate crashed—the treacherous vermin. Do give her a piece of my mind if you see her. I loathe being hoisted about on top of a stick for any one to stare at" (*Letters* 6: 351). In 1946, when she returned to London, Freund showed the photographs she had taken to Leonard Woolf. On subsequent visits Freund returned to see Leonard, who helped her select other writers for her collection. She photographed Leonard: "He himself visibly enjoyed posing. I could not help but think that his wife's death had freed him of the dreadful apprehensions that had weighed on his life for so many years" (*The World* 137).

14. See Adrienne Monnier's "The Country of Faces" on Freund (in *The Very Rich Hours* 231–33).

15. Leonard Woolf makes reference to the proposed publication of *Ulysses* in his letters. In 1957 he thanks John McCallum of Harcourt, Brace and Company for a copy of Beach's *Ulysses in Paris*. "It recalls the moment," he writes, "when Miss Harriet Weaver brought us the MS of *Ulysses* and we tried without success to get an English printer to print it" (501).

16. See Wickes's *The Amazon of Letters* and Beach's *Shakespeare and Company* for more on Beach and Monnier's relationship with Natalie Barney. Wickes suggests that Barney did not know Woolf, although she did correspond with Vita Sackville-West (177). Barney read Woolf's work and discussed it with, among others, Dolly Wilde (Wickes 185). Radclyffe Hall, Wickes hypothesizes, associated Barney and Woolf, and he cites as evidence Hall's description in *The Well of Loneliness* of Valérie Seymour (based on Barney), which reminds him of passages from *Mrs Dalloway* (177–78).

17. Monnier published Valery Larbaud's French translation of *Ulysses*.

18. Vita's account of her affair with Violet appears in *Portrait of a Marriage*, published posthumously by her son Nigel Nicolson, and in her novel *Challenge*, the publication of which was delayed at the request of Vita's mother until 1923, when it appeared in the United States. In *Challenge* Vita is "the erotic Julian" and Violet, his cousin, the "erratic Eve" (*Violet to Vita* 21).

19. In her letters Violet called herself Lushka (Alyosha) (perhaps explaining Woolf's choice of Russian as a nationality; Violet is Sasha in *Orlando*), and Vita either Mitya (Dmitri) or Julian (*Violet to Vita* 21). In *Portrait of a Marriage*, Nicolson writes that "their very names must be changed to something more suited to their rebellion" (149).

20. “I have seen [Violet] and Colette together and one can hardly imagine two more different women—one of them earthy, always in direct contact with everything; the other ethereal, seeing everything as if through a prism. Yet they understood each other in certain deep-seated essentials of which they alone were conscious” (Goudekot quoted in *Violet to Vita*, n. 255).

21. “Vita Sackville-West was also in Florence in 1950, where she met Philippe Jullian to discuss a biography of Violet Trefusis, but it seems unlikely that Una met her other than by accident, as they had never been in the same ‘set,’ despite Vita’s willingness to speak on behalf of *The Well* at its trial twenty-two years earlier. Vita, Violet and Virginia Woolf had all been ‘closet’ invert, lacking the courage and honesty of Una and John [Radclyffe Hall]” (Ormrod 297).

22. “Although Hall and the Bloomsbury writers believed in many of the same principles, their methods of dealing with them, even of thinking about them, were diametrically opposed. Bloomsbury’s writers and philosophers held most things at bay with an amused and abstract detachment. They liked spinning ideas, juggling truths, catching evasions, netting improprieties, ridiculing the establishment. Hall, though a complex creature herself, was by comparison simplistic and straightforward. The notion of overlapping truths did not interest her. The barbarity of suppressing ‘the Truth’ did. [ . . . ] Hall’s unambiguous stance on lesbianism, both in personal terms and as a literary theme, conflicted with the intellectual complexity of Bloomsbury’s multi-layered sexualities. Secondly, Hall’s openness rattled both Forster and Woolf. Forster was a discreet homosexual and an indiscreet misogynist, while Virginia Woolf was a ‘married lesbian’ whose marriage protected her public image, despite the important love affair she was conducting at that very time with Vita Sackville-West, also married” (Cline 250).

23. In a letter to Woolf, Vita writes: “I feel very violently about *The Well of Loneliness*. Not on account of what you call my proclivities; not because I think it is a good book; but really on principle [ . . . ]. Because, you see, even if the *W. of L.* had been a good book,—even if it had been a great book, a real masterpiece,—the result would have been the same. And that is intolerable. I really have no words to say how indignant I am” (*Letters of Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf*, 279–80).

24. “‘Mais il y a un point où je suis anti-John, parce que, sans doute, je suis une créature assez grossière: c’est l’impression chez Stephen [c’est le nom pris par l’héroïne] d’anormalité. Or, je dis que, si un ‘anormal’ se sent anormal, il n’est pas anormal. Attendez, je vais dire mieux: un ou une anormal ne doit jamais avoir une sensation d’anormalité, au contraire, une femme aimant une femme (ou un homme aimant un homme), pense: ‘Qu’est-ce qu’un univers rempli de cochons monstrueux qui sont différents de moi?’ Voilà une partie de ce que je souhaite tant vous dire au sujet du livre” (quoted in Pichois and Brunet 384).

25. “‘Elle est un constructeur paisible de grands édifices, et moi je ne bâtis jamais que des bungalows’” (quoted in Pichois and Brunet 385).

26. “‘Son souvenir m’est vif, et très physique, la belle forme de sa tête, l’argent doré de ses cheveux, et ses beaux traits, et ce sombrero espagnol qu’elle portait volontiers . . . Certains êtres ne devraient pas mourir’” (quoted in Pichois and Brunet 385).

27. In *Shakespeare and Company* Sylvia Beach expresses regret that she did not have an opportunity to meet Hall at Barney’s salon: “Unfortunately, I missed the

chance to make the acquaintance at [Barney's] *salon* of the authoress of *The Well of Loneliness*, in which she concluded that if inverted couples could be united at the altar, all their problems would be solved" (115).

28. "Most of our visits to Paris were punctuated by the gift of another of [Colette's] books. I have them all with those witty dedications for which she seemed never to lack inspiration . . . Yes; Paris was always beloved and always new, always a signal for carefree enjoyment. It became 'ours' and until the summer of 1926, when she was actually beginning to write the book, nobody was less aware than John that she was absorbing copy for *The Well of Loneliness*" (Troubridge 83–84).

29. For more information about Hall's relationship with Souline, see Glasgow (1997).

30. "Colette rapproche le couple Una-John de celui que formaient les dames de Llangollen, qu'on rencontre dans *Le Pur et l'impur*" ["Colette compares the couple Una and John with that of the Ladies of Llangollen, whom one encounters in *Le pur et l'impur*"]. This quotation comes from a letter at the Bibliothèque Nationale that was part of a Colette exhibition (catalogue no. 561) (quoted in Pichois and Brunet 385 and n. 544).

31. At Polignac's house, British novelist and Bloomsbury associate Rosamund Lehmann met not only Colette but also, among others, Jean Cocteau and dramatist Edouard Bourdet (de Cossart 202–3). Conspicuous absences from Polignac's *salon* are American writer Gertrude Stein and her lover Alice Toklas. Claude Francis and Fernande Gontier note that despite Cocteau's pleas, Stein was never invited to Polignac's *salon*. While the majority of Polignac's guests were homosexual, Stein was considered, according to Francis and Gontier, too bohemian, too grotesquely masculine (*Colette* 329). Stein did belong to Natalie Barney's Académie des Femmes, as did Colette. Her work, pieces of which were translated by Barney, was presented at one of Barney's Fridays (Wickes 167).

32. "She also found Winnaretta fascinating because of her association with Proust, although there was no secret about how strained their relations had been at times. Virginia was far from discouraged. She pressed Winnaretta to tell her more about him and was delighted when Winnaretta sent her one of Proust's letters, which she recently rediscovered among her papers. A present of gramophone records of Beethoven's Quartet opus 130, accompanied it. At first sight, the friendship of these two women was surprising: they were both quite dominating characters but, on the other hand, they both had very gentle, shy sides to their natures, which they seemed to bring out in each other" (de Cossart 201–2).

33. When Colette traveled to Belgium to deliver an address in honor of Anna de Noailles and to accept her own nomination to the Académie royale belge de langue et de littérature française, Polignac accompanied her (Cossart 196). Smyth corresponded with Noailles and her sister Hélène. Her letters were mainly concerned with her infatuation with Polignac.

34. "Je distribuerai le rôle du soleil à Madame Colette et à Madame de Noailles le rôle de la lune qui est le soleil des statues et, en quelque sorte, ce pâle et froid soleil des morts dont La Rochefoucauld nous affirme qu'il est la gloire" (46–47) ("I will give the role of the sun to Madame Colette and to Madame de Noailles the role of the moon, which is the sun of statues, in a way, this pale and cold sun of the dead, the glory of which La Rochefoucauld affirms for us.")

35. “lasse de dissimulation, provocante, effrontée, sûre de soi, paisible aussi comme Cybèle, énigmatique comme la déesse africaine, chatte et tigre” (Noailles 97).

36. “Je ne décrirai pas ici le génie de Colette; autorisez-la à faire usage d’un dictionnaire entier, elle y creusera son gîte, produira par jaillissement et avec labeur, dit-elle, une œuvre succulente, sanguine, végétale, où tous les vocables sembleront avoir été raflés et distribués sans pourtant que nulle adjonction vienne alourdir un récit qui se réclame de la vie et de la nécessité” (Noailles 98).

37. Woolf received the prize at the Institut Français in South Kensington. The award was founded in 1904 by twenty-two female collaborators on a magazine called *Vie heureuse* as an alternative to the Académie Goncourt, where all the judges were men. Ironically, two thirds of the recipients were men. Radclyffe Hall won the Prix Femina Vie Heureuse–Bookman Prize for her novel *Adam’s Breed* in 1927 (Cline 218).

38. Woolf would also have been familiar with Noailles via Polignac, and from reading Colette’s speech honoring Noailles, which was sent to her by Smyth. A further link exists as a result of Noailles’s friendship with Ocampo, the editor of *Sur*, who also corresponded regularly with Woolf.

39. Woolf appears to be recounting what Victoria Ocampo had told her at the Man Ray photography exhibition where they first met in November 1934: “And so to Me de Noailles, dying of extinguished vanity in a small flat. She lay in bed, bedizened, covered with dozens & dozens of veils &c: began plucking them off; was never still a moment, lighting lamps & putting them out; demanded worship; was not old, but had outlived her fame. Nothing wrong with her but the death of her great fame. And she left letters to Barrès wh. his widow holds; & the doctor is piecing the story together” (*Diary* 4: 263–64).

40. The passages from *A Room of One’s Own* are the following: “The woman composer stands where the actress stood in the time of Shakespeare” and “One can only repeat Dr. Johnson’s dictum concerning a woman preacher, transposed into terms of music. ‘Sir, a woman’s composing is like a dog’s walking on his hind legs. It is not well done, but you are surprised to find it done at all’” (*A Room*, quoted in Collis 175).

41. Woolf’s letters reveal her ambivalent feelings about Ethel. She writes to Quentin Bell: “The reason why Ethel Smyth is so repulsive, tell Nessa, is her table manners. She oozes; she chortles; and she half blew her rather red nose on her table napkin. Then she poured the cream—oh the blackberries were divine—into her beer; and I had rather dine with a dog [ . . . ]. She was however full—after dinner—of vigorous charm; she walked four miles; she sang Brahms; the sheep looked up and were not fed. And we packed her off before midnight” (*Letters* 5: 226–27).

### *Notes to Chapter 2*

1. Dusinberre goes on to suggest that Woolf did, however, maintain her interest in the topic, citing comments made to Ethel Smyth in 1941 about her plans to write an autobiography: “there’s never been a womans [*sic*] autobiography. Nothing to compare with Rousseau. Chastity and modesty I suppose have been the

reason [ . . . ] I should like an analysis of your sex life. As Rousseau did his" (*Letters* 6: 453, quoted in Dusinberre 203).

2. In this essay, based on a lecture given to the London/National Society for Women's Service on January 21, 1931, Woolf loosely recounts her trajectory as a writer, then describes the angel in the house and her killing of the angel. She somewhat comically suggests that having earned enough money to buy a Persian cat with her first writer's revenue, she then, desiring a motorcar, writes a novel in order to secure one. The last segment of the essay and perhaps the one that takes us most closely to the question of the sexual life of women involves a description of a man writing and a woman writing in a trance of sorts, unconsciously. She asks her audience to imagine her as a fisherman engrossed in thought, a fishing rod in her hand. Her mind sweeps freely back and forth across the water, "round every rock and cranny of the world that lies submerged in the depths of our unconscious being" until suddenly the line "raced through her fingers" (61). "Her imagination had rushed away" (61). There is a smash, and confusion ensues. "To speak without figure," writes Woolf, "she had thought of something, something about the body, about the passions which it was unfitting for her as a woman to say. Men, her reason told her, would be shocked" (61). In summing up, she writes that while the first experience involving the angel in the house was one she could deal with, the second, "telling the truth about my own experiences as a body," is not something she feels she has solved (62). This question is also raised in *A Room*.

3. In *The Years* the subject of sex—for example, the rumor of Eugénie Pargiter's infidelity, and the extramarital affair of the patriarch Abel Pargiter with his mistress Mira (one thinks particularly of the interrupted neck-touching scene early in the novel)—is broached but again in a veiled fashion.

4. For a discussion of the ellipses in Woolf's *Three Guineas*, see Shari Benstock's "Ellipses: Figuring Feminisms in *Three Guineas*" in *Textualizing the Feminine*.

5. Adrienne Monnier, proprietor of a bookstore called La Maison des Amies des Livres, which sat opposite Beach's on the rue de l'Odéon, confirms that Woolf's work was available in Beach's bookstore (6).

6. See my chapter 1 and Jones (1993) on Woolf's knowledge and use of the Ladies of Llangollen for *Orlando*. Woolf's failure to use the story in an explicit way perhaps also results from the reticence about sex that in part prevented the writing of a sequel to *A Room*.

7. George Borrow, author of *Lavrenço* and *The Bible in Spain*, figures in the relationship of Vita Sackville-West and Violet Trefusis. Critics suggest that Vita based aspects of her novel *Challenge* on Borrow's work. Vita and Violet also adopted Romany phrases from Borrow's work in their correspondence.

8. "Une bibliothèque nombreuse et bien fournie, une vue et une situation délicieuse . . . Une vie égale, paisible, une parfaite amitié" (126). In some senses, *Le pur* is Colette's most English book, in part perhaps because of her collaboration with Hall and Troubridge. Thus, in the first part of the book, a young man smiles with "une bouche anglaise" (9); here also English people frequent the opium den (21/16). In the third section of *Le pur*, a curtain is fastened with "une épingle anglaise" ("a safety pin") (36); when Colette's narrator leaves Boldini's studio, she adjusts "le nœud d'une régate qui venait de Londres" (74) ("the knot of a manish necktie that had been imported from London" [67]); Colette paints a portrait

of the half British and half American Renée Vivien (“so typically English” [80]), using her British name Pauline Tarn first; and Vivien wants to go to a fancy-dress ball as Jane Grey, who became Queen of England for nine days in 1553 before being executed. In the seventh part, Colette describes the English couple, the Ladies of Llangollen. In the eighth part, the workers in Willy’s “‘atelier de littérature’” whom Colette befriends are for the most part English (145/133); one among them receives a long letter from London and they curse in English (153/141); another speaks to Colette in “his French, which was correct but accented” (150). Finally, in the ninth part, Colette’s friend “appuyait sa tête au dossier d’un gros fauteuil imité de l’anglais, affreux et vert” (169) (“sink[s] into a deep English armchair, green and hideous” [156]).

9. For the judgment against *The Well*, and contemporary and recent commentary on the text, see Doan and Prosser’s *Palatable Poison*.

10. Like the Ladies, Hall and Troubridge were exiles of sorts, preferring the openness of France and Italy to the restrictedness of their home country. Hall’s link to the two works is significant in the sense that it reminds the reader of the differences in attitudes toward issues such as homosexuality, or Sapphism, an issue treated in both *A Room* and *Le pur*, in Paris and London, in France and England at this period. Hall’s portrayal of a liberal France, where her work and her lifestyle were better received, and a more repressed England (in *The Well*, for example) anticipates the focus of the two works under analysis here. While questions of homosexuality and female sexuality are buried or veiled in Woolf’s *A Room*, in Colette’s *Le pur* these same issues take center stage.

11. This lapse in time merits questions—in part because Woolf’s novels were translated very quickly after their initial appearance in English. *Le pur* was first translated into English in 1966. It appears that Colette read *The Well of Loneliness* in English.

12. “Ce qui me manque, c’est le ‘Journal’ où se fût révélée la cadette, Sarah Ponsonby, la proie [ . . . ] La secrète, c’est cette Sarah qui se tait et qui brode. Un Journal de Sarah Ponsonby, quelle lumière!” (137).

13. It is important to note that the part of *Le pur* that deals with Don Juan began as a contribution to a series of supplements to great works.

14. “[A]tteignent le refuge du sommeil à deux, de la veille à deux, de la nocturne angoisse à deux” (139). These everyday things include: “Amour, travaux ménagers, soins du jardin, lectures à la veillée, visites reçues, rendues, longue, mondaine et minutieuse correspondance; gourmandise anglaise, répartie tant sur le mouton froid que sur le ‘fruit de la Passiflore accommodé au sucre et au vin de Madère’” (139) (“Love, housework, gardening; in the evening, reading; visits received and paid back; long, worldly and detailed correspondence; English gourmandizing—cold mutton being favored equally with ‘the fruit of the Passiflora served with sugar and Madeira wine’” [127]).

15. When the appearance of the work was broken off abruptly just weeks after it began—in mid-sentence, according to Janet Flanner (*The Pure and the Impure*, “Translator’s Introduction”)—the editor wrote to Colette that protests from all sides had forced him to stop publishing her work. The serialization of Colette’s *Le blé en herbe*, this time in *Le matin* in 1922, was also suspended midstream due to its portrayal of a fifteen-year-old boy’s sexual initiation at the hands of an older woman (Sarde 404–5).

16. “Il agite de vieilles choses d’amour, se mêle des amours unisexuelles—enfin il fait ce qu’il peut” (quoted in Pichois and Brunet 322).

17. “[C]e livre qui n’est qu’une galerie de vieux péchés” (to Hélène Picard, quoted in *Œuvres* 3: 1514).

18. Marcus argues that “The brilliance of *A Room of One’s Own* lies in its invention of a female language to subvert the languages of the patriarchy. Like her novels, it is about reading and it trains us to read as women. Its tropes figure new reading and writing strategies, enlisting punctuation in the service of feminism with the use of ellipses for encoding female desire, the use of initials and dashes to make absent figures more present and transforming interruption, the condition of woman’s writing.” She adds that Woolf renders interruption “a positive female form” (*Languages* 187). In *Œuvres* 3, Jacques Dupont suggests that the apparent diversity of *Le pur* has an aesthetic function, at the same time as and because it involves a reflexive process. By juxtaposing diverse episodes, he suggests, one is able to draw through the work “the red thread of a continuous and intense meditation, which adds another layer to these anecdotes and portraits that sparkle in their own right. The discontinuity of the episodes, their frequently dramatic alternation [ . . . ], is the premium of pleasure offered to the reader so he or she can follow without reticence the meanderings of an inquiry—a quest—that proceeds oftentimes obliquely and in a biased fashion” (my translation 1508).

19. In *Le pur* characters from different episodes in the book are brought together, such as Charlotte and Damien. Colette returns to the Ladies of Llangollen in the closing pages of the work. In *A Room* Woolf returns to Judith Shakespeare at the end of her text; she also makes a second reference to the *Well of Loneliness* trial (mentioning Bodkin). The name of Mary Carmichael is one among possible identities for herself as narrator early on in the text (5); the name reappears later as that of the fictional novelist whose work Woolf examines.

20. “Bannie et présente, témoin translucide, [le narrateur] goûtai[t] une paix indéfinissable, qui n’allait pas sans une certaine vanité d’affiliée” (151).

21. “La figure voilée d’une femme fine, désabusée, savante en tromperie, en délicatesse, convient au seuil de ce livre qui tristement parlera du plaisir” (31).

22. “[C]otonneuse, rêche et douce comme sont les pêches dures à gros velours” (10).

23. “Mais du sein de ce silence même un son naquit imperceptiblement dans une gorge de femme, un son qui s’essaya rauque, s’éclaircit, prit sa fermeté et son ampleur en se répétant, comme les notes pleines que le rossignol redit et accumule jusqu’à ce qu’elles s’écroulent en roulade . . .” (12).

24. “Le son charmant de sa voix, l’attaque râpeuse de certaines syllables, une manière vaincue et suave de laisser tomber dans le registre grave la fin des phrases . . . Quelle séduction” (15).

25. “[L]’idée de mystère que nous attachons aux êtres dont nous ne connaissons que la simplicité” (19–20).

26. “Tête nue, bien prise et un peu ronde dans sa robe noire, elle n’avait pas endossé le kimono rituel” (21).

27. “[N]otes pleines, réitérées, identiques, l’une par l’autre prolongées, précipitées jusqu’à la rupture de leur tremblant équilibre au sommet d’un sanglot torrentiel” (23).

28. “Un génie femelle, occupé de tendre imposture, de ménagement, d’abnégation, habitait donc cette tangible Charlotte, rassurante amie des hommes . . . Assise et les jambes étendues, elle attendait oisive, à mon côté, de reprendre la tâche dévolue à celui qui aime le mieux: la fourberie quotidienne” (23).

29. “Le seul bruit de maître qu’un homme fasse dans une maison, c’est, quand il est encore sur le palier, le tâtonnement de sa clef à l’entrée de la serrure” (31).

30. “Je m’embarque, quand je pense à Charlotte, sur un vogueant souvenir de nuits que ni le sommeil, ni la certitude n’ont couronnées” (31).

31. “Me verrais-je amenée, aux premières pages d’un livre, à déclarer que l’homme est moins destiné à la femme que la femme n’est faite pour l’homme? Nous verrons bien” (33).

32. “[U]n lé de Paris mouvant et silencieux, un vol de mouches de feu sur un lac d’asphalte. Une facile illusion, de nuit dangereuse, au dehors, de sécurité sous des vieux murs, chauds de secrets, m’enveloppe” (34). In her biography, Lee asserts that *A Room* “was as much about London as about the history, education and writing of women” (553). In the same way, Colette’s *Le pur* might be read as a book about Paris.

33. “Je n’ai pas à savoir [ . . . ] s’il comporte un boudoir à glaces, et des appareils de lupanar . . .” (42).

34. “Je me plaisais à sa présence, comme je me plais à celle des animaux véloces qui, dans le repos, sont immobiles. Il parlait peu, et je crois qu’il était médiocre en tout, sauf en sa mission” (50).

35. “L’obsession de la puissance égalerait-elle, pour un amant, l’obsession de l’impuissance?” (65).

36. “C’est entre nous un usage nonchalant que de suspendre la phrase en son beau milieu, dès que celle qui écoute a compris celle qui parle [ . . . ] On n’imagine pas le nombre de sujets et de mots que bannissent de leur conversation deux femmes qui peuvent se dire tout. Elle s’offrent le luxe de choisir [ . . . ] J’éclatai de rire,—il fait bon mesurer et narguer, d’un peu loin, les griffes des vieux dangers aussi grimaçants et vifs . . .” (68–70).

37. “Elle ressemblait, en dormant, un peu au Dante, un peu à un hidalgo fin, un peu au saint Jean-Baptiste vu par Léonardo de Vinci” (71).

38. “Puis j’allai reprendre mon poste au bord d’une table-bureau, d’où mes yeux de femme suivirent, sur le vélin turquoise, une courte et dure main de jardinier, qui écrivait” (72).

39. It is thought that Woolf borrowed her fictional author’s name and book title from Mary Stopes, who wrote a novel called *Love’s Creation* using the pen name Mary Carmichael in 1928.

40. Woolf’s question recalls Colette’s narrator’s conversation with Marguerite Moreno in *Le pur*: “We had the comfortable habit of leaving a sentence hanging midway as soon as one of us had grasped the point” (68).

41. Woolf uses the same words, “new combination,” several years later to describe Colette’s work, specifically her novel *Sido* (*Letters* 6: 301). See chapter 3.

42. “[U]ne compagnie étrange, qui ne vivait plus que d’un reste de vie craintive et de son snobisme épuisé” (74–75).

43. “Anxieux et voilé, jamais nu, l’androgyné erre, s’étonne, mendie tout bas . . .” (84).

44. “[Her sensibility] feasted like a plant newly stood in the air on every sight

and sound that came its way. It ranged, too, very subtly and curiously, among almost unknown or unrecorded things; it lighted on small things and showed that perhaps they were not small after all" (92–93).

45. "On sent qu'une imagination féminine, captive sous le front découvert du faux homme, regrette de n'avoir pu se dépenser en jabots, en rubans, en étoffe soyeuse . . ." (110).

46. "Une femme qui reste une femme, c'est un être complet" (112).

47. "La pudeur qui sépare deux amants, pendant des heures de repos, d'ablutions, de maladie, ne se glisse guère entre deux corps jumeaux, pareillement affligés, voués aux mêmes soins, aux mêmes chastetés fatidiques" (120–21).

48. "J'étais fidèle à mon rôle de meuble agréable, et je les écoutais d'un air expert" (151).

49. "Une espèce d'austérité la couvrait, austérité nécessaire et que, pourtant, je ne puis comparer à nulle autre, car elle n'était pas de parade ni de précaution, ni engendrée par la peur morbide qui galvanise, plus souvent qu'elle ne les bride, tant de pourchassés" (160).

50. "Personne ne m'a parlé comme lui de la couleur bleue, ni du copeau de cheveux d'or tourné autour d'une oreille sanguine" (163).

51. The ambiguity of this reference is captured in French in the opening sentence, which is cleverly without gender: "Auprès de leur art de feindre, tout semble imparfait" (168).

52. "Ménagez, dans le dernier tiers de ma vie, une place nette, pour que j'y pose ma crudité de prédilection, l'amour. Rien que de la tenir devant moi et de sagement la respirer, la tâter de la main et de la dent, elle me garde le teint frais" (177).

53. "Une sorte de purgatoire gymnique, où s'entraînent tour à tour tous les sens" (180).

54. "Inévitable, mais élastiquement retenu, puis lâché un moment, repris encore, il a presque les vertus de l'*exerciser*" (181).

55. "J'ai cessé d'échanger, je n'échangerai plus jamais, par-dessus un homme, à travers un homme, cette vive menace [ . . . ]" (185).

### *Notes to Chapter 3*

1. Studies of space and gender in Woolf's work include Abel (1989), Beer (1990), Benstock (1991), Bowlby (1988), Kamuf (1988), Smith (1993), and Solomon (1989).

2. One of a number of grammatical figures adopted by Woolf to create an impression of temporal simultaneity was the parenthesis. Thus, in 1926, again in relation to the "Time Passes" section of *To the Lighthouse*, Woolf writes: "Could I do it in parenthesis? so that one had the sense of reading the two things at the same time?" (*Diary* 3: 106). Rather than fulfilling its common function of connoting an interval or interlude or simply containing a passage that is grammatically inessential to the sentence, the parenthesis serves for Woolf as a method of juxtaposing two events, thoughts, or ideas taking place at the same moment, while retaining their separateness, the one laid alongside, superimposed on, or overlapping with the other.

3. Mrs Ramsay redefines space as she crosses from one room to another: "It was necessary now to carry everything a step further. With her foot on the threshold she waited a moment longer in a scene which was vanishing even as she looked, and then, as she moved and took Minta's arm and left the room, it changed, it shaped itself differently; it had become, she knew, giving one last glance over her shoulder, already the past" (*To the Lighthouse* 111).

4. Studies of space in Colette's work include Resch's discussion of rooms and windows in *Corps féminin, corps textuel* (1973) and Berthu-Courtivron's analysis of the childhood home in *Espace, demeure, écriture* (1992).

5. This was an ease to which Colette aspired throughout her career but which, to her own mind, she was never able to attain. She was "the only [girl] brought into the world not to write" (*Looking Backwards* 16). See chapter 4.

6. Anna de Noailles (a lesser-known French poet, whose place Colette would take at the Académie royale de langue et de littérature française in 1936 at her death) describes Colette's relationship to the dictionary in terms that are remarkably similar to those of Woolf. "Je ne décrirai pas ici le génie de Colette; autorisez-la à faire usage d'un dictionnaire entier, elle y creusera son gîte, produira par jallissement et avec labeur, dit-elle, une œuvre succulente, sanguine, végétale, où tous les vocables sembleront avoir été raflés et distribués sans pourtant que nulle adjonction vienne alourdir un récit qui se réclame de la vie et de la nécessité. Ne lui accordez plus que l'emploi des adjectifs, Colette les disposera d'une main si habile à construire, que le monde viendra se refléter en eux, y installer avec une loyale astuce ses opulents bagages immenses et réduits. Colette, dès qu'elle écrit, penchant sur son travail [ . . . ] sait fonder une contrée, élever des villes, susciter la mer et le ciel variés. A l'égal du Nil deifié, elle rend fertile et vivace le feuillet aride, fait croître des récits envahissants, tentateurs et redoutables par leur active présence" (Noailles, *Le livre de ma vie*, quoted in Colette, *Lettres à ses pairs* 60) ("I will not describe Colette's genius here; let her use an entire dictionary, she will hollow out a home for herself there; she will produce in spurts and with labor, she says, a succulent, fiery, organic work, in which all the terms will appear to have been rifled and distributed without, however, any addition that might weigh down a story that takes as its authority life and necessity. Don't let her use anything but a few adjectives, Colette will dispose of them with a hand so skilled at building that the world will come to be reflected in them and will install there with a loyal astuteness its opulent possessions immense and reduced. Colette, as soon as she starts writing, bent over her work [ . . . ] knows how to found a country, raise up towns, bring to life the sea and the varied sky. Like the deified Nile, she gives life and fertility to the dry leaf, cultivates stories that insinuate themselves, their presence tempting and frightening"). For Noailles's relationship with Woolf and Colette, see chapter 1.

7. "Je me logeais en boule entre deux tomes du Larousse comme un chien dans sa niche" (32).

8. "Musset, Voltaire, et Les Quatre Évangiles brillaient sous la basane feuille-morte. Littré, Larousse et Becquerel bombaient des dos de tortues noires [ . . . ] D'Orbigny [ . . . ] Camille Flammarion [ . . . ] Élisée Reclus, Voltaire jaspés, Balzac noir et Shakespeare olive" (31).

9. "Beaux livres que je lisais, beaux livres que je ne lisais pas, chaud revêtement des murs du logis natal, tapisserie dont mes yeux initiés flattaient la bigarrure cachée . . ." (33).

10. “. . . Les plus hermétiques ne m'étaient-ils pas les plus chers? Voilà longtemps que j'ai oublié l'auteur d'une Encyclopédie habillée de rouge, mais les références alphabétiques indiquées sur chaque tome composent indélébilement un mot magique: Aphbicécladiggalthymaroidphorebstevanzy” (32–33).

11. “Je ne prenais pas de lampe pour choisir l'un d'eux, le soir, il me suffisait de pianoter le long des rayons” (31).

12. Jane Marcus describes Colette's creation of a “new female alphabet” in *Virginia Woolf and the Language of Patriarchy* (5–17). See chapter 5 for a discussion of Julia Kristeva's discussion of Colette's “alphabet of feminine pleasure” (24).

13. “A son âge—pas tout à fait huit ans—j'étais curé sur le mur. Le mur, épais et haut, qui séparait le jardin de la basse-cour, et dont le faite, large comme un trottoir, dallé à plat, me servait de piste et de terrasse, inaccessible au commun des mortels. Eh oui, curé sur un mur. Qu'y a-t-il d'incroyable? J'étais curé sans obligation liturgique ni prêche, sans travestissement irrévérencieux, mais, à l'insu de tous, curé. Curé comme vous êtes chauve, monsieur, ou vous, madame, arthritique” (29).

14. “Loin de moi l'idée de demander à l'un de mes parents: ‘Qu'est-ce que c'est, un presbytère?’ J'avais recueilli en moi le mot mystérieux, comme brodé d'un relief rêche en son commencement, achevé en une longue et rêveuse syllabe . . . Enrichie d'un secret et d'un doute, je dormais avec le *mot* et je l'emportais sur mon mur” (29).

15. “‘Presbytère!’ Je le jetais, par-dessus le toit du poulailler et le jardin de Miton, vers l'horizon toujours brumeux de Moutiers. Du haut de mon mur, le mot sonnait en anathème: ‘Allez! vous êtes tous des presbytères!’ criais-je à des bannis invisibles. Un peu plus tard, le mot perdit de son venin, et je m'avisai que ‘presbytère’ pouvait bien être le nom scientifique du petit escargot rayé jaune et noir . . .” (29).

16. “Elle admire les pétales de nacre, puis les laisse tomber et les écrase sous son espadrille” (157).

17. “Où s'en vont, plus tard, cette volonté énorme d'ignorer, cette force tranquille employée à bannir et à s'écarter?” (32).

18. “J'essayai encore de réagir . . . Je luttai contre l'effraction, je serrai contre moi les lambeaux de mon extravagance, je voulus obliger M. Millot à habiter, le temps qu'il me plairait, dans la coquille vide du petit escargot nommé ‘presbytère’ . . .” (30).

19. “Colette wrote *My Mother's House* because Bertrand had asked her to show him the house and the village of Saint-Sauveur, because she kept telling him stories about her childhood [ . . . ] It is as if Bertrand had given Colette the imaginatively satisfying motherhood that she wanted [ . . . ] She had become the mother, where it mattered, for her, as a writer” (Jouve, *Colette* 114–15).

20. “Une femme de lettres qui a mal tourné: voilà ce que je dois, pour tous, demeurer, moi qui n'écris plus, moi qui me refuse le plaisir, le luxe d'écrire . . .” (15).

21. “Vous voulez que je fasse comme tout le monde? que je me décide? Celui-là ou un autre, après tout! . . . Vous voulez troubler ma paix reconquise, orienter ma vie vers un autre souci que celui, âpre, fortifiant, naturel, d'assurer moi-même ma subsistance? Ou bien vous me conseillez un amant, par hygiène, comme un

dépuratif? Pour quoi faire? je me porte bien, et, Dieu merci! je n'aime pas, je n'aime pas, je n'aimerai plus personne, personne, personne!" (97).

22. "Je pars, chaque tour de roue m'éloigne de Paris, je pars, un printemps glacé perle en durs bourgeons à la pointe des chênes, tout est froid, humide d'un brouillard qui sent encore l'hiver, je pars, quand je pourrais, à cette heure, m'épanouir de plaisir encore contre le flanc chaud d'un amant!" (196).

23. "Ecrire! plaisir et souffrance d'oisifs! Ecrire! . . . J'éprouve bien, de loin en loin, le besoin, vif comme la soif en été, de noter, de peindre . . . Je prends encore la plume, pour commencer le jeu périlleux et décevant, pour saisir et fixer, sous la pointe double et ployante, le chatoyant, le fugace, le passionnant adjectif . . . Ce n'est qu'une courte crise,—la démangeaison d'une cicatrice . . . Il faut trop de temps pour écrire! Et puis je ne suis pas Balzac, moi . . . Le conte fragile que j'édifie s'émiette quand le fournisser sonne, quand le bottier présente sa facture, quand l'avoué téléphone, et l'avocat, quand l'agent théâtral me mande à son bureau [ . . . ]" (16).

24. "[C]ette conseillère maquillée qui me regarde, de l'autre coté de la glace [ . . . ] Elle me regarde longtemps, et je sais qu'elle va me parler . . . Elle va me dire:—Est-ce toi qui est là? . . . [ . . . ] Pourquoi es-tu là, toute seule? et pourquoi pas ailleurs? . . ." (5-6).

25. "Décide-toi ou ne te décide pas, voyons. Ça te va ou ça ne te va pas?" (107).

26. "Vous partez, chérie? Qui donc a décidé ça? [ . . . ] Mais je n'ai pas encore donné mon consentement" (158).

27. "J'ai l'air de réfléchir, mais je ne réfléchis pas. Hésiter, ce n'est pas réfléchir . . ." (107).

28. "Pouah! tout ce manège, cette cuisine autour de l'amour,—autour d'un but qu'on ne peut même pas nommer l'amour,—je les favoriserais, je les imiterais, moi? Pauvre Dufferein-Chaute! Il me semble parfois que c'est vous qu'on trompe, ici, et je devrais vous dire . . . vous dire quoi? Que je suis redevenue une vieille fille, sans tentation, et cloîtrée, à ma manière, entre les quatre murs d'une loge de music-hall? Non, je ne vous le dirai pas, car nous ne savons échanger, comme à la dixième leçon de la Berlitz School, que des phrases élémentaires, où les mots pain, sel, fenêtre, température, théâtre, famille, tiennent beaucoup de place . . . Vous êtes *un homme*, tant pis pour vous! Chacun dans ma maison semble s'en souvenir, non comme moi, mais pour vous féliciter, depuis Blandine, qui vous contemple avec une satisfaction jamais lassée, jusqu'à Fossette, dont le large sourcil canin dit pareillement: 'Enfin! voilà dans la maison *un homme*—voilà L'HOMME!' Je ne sais pas vous parler, pauvre Dufferein-Chaute! J'hésite—entre mon langage *à moi*, un peu brusque, qui ne daigne pas toujours finir les phrases, mais chérit la précision d'un terme technique,—mon langage d'ex-bas-bleu,—et l'idiome veule et vif, grossier, imagé, qu'on apprend au music-hall, émaillé de 'Tu parles!' de 'Ta gueule!' . . . 'J'les mets!' . . . 'Très peu pour moi!' . . . A force d'hésiter, je choisis le silence . . ." (92-93).

29. "Laissez-moi attendre, parée, oisive, seule dans ma chambre close, la venue de celui qui m'a choisie pour harem" (167).

30. "le couple amoureux, prisonnier d'une chambre tiède, isolé par quatre murs du reste de la terre . . . c'est le rêve familial d'une jeune fille très ignorante de la vie" (168).

31. “L’avenir, pour moi, ici ou là . . . Mon goût tardif,—acquis, un peu artificiel,—des déplacements et du voyage fait bon ménage avec un fatalisme foncier et paisible de petite bourgeoise. Bohème désormais, oui, et que les tournées ont menée de ville en ville, mais bohème ordonnée, attentive à recoudre elle-même ses nippes bien brossées; bohème qui porte presque toujours sur elle [sa mince fortune, mais dans] le petit sac en peau de daim, les sous sont d’un côté, l’argent blanc de l’autre, l’or caché précieusement dans une pochette à secret . . . Vagabonde, soit, mais qui se résigne à tourner en rond, sur place, comme ceux-ci, mes compagnons, mes frères . . . Les départs m’attristent et m’envivent, c’est vrai, et quelque chose de moi se suspend à tout ce que je traverse,—pays nouveaux, ciels purs ou nuageux, mers sous la pluie couleur de perle grise,—s’y accroche si passionnément qu’il me semble laisser derrière moi mille et mille petits fantômes à ma ressemblance, roulés dans le flot, bercés sur la feuille, dispersés dans le nuage . . . Mais un dernier petit fantôme, le plus pareil de tous à moi-même, ne demeure-t-il pas assis au coin de ma cheminée, rêveur et sage, penché sur un livre qu’il oublie de lire? . . .” (83–84).

32. “Non, rien ne me retient ici, ni ailleurs. Aucun cher visage ne surgira du brouillard, comme une fleur claire émerge de l’eau obscure, pour crier tendrement ‘Ne t’en va pas!’ [ . . . ] c’est comme si j’étais déjà partie” (112).

33. “Mon rire brusque, au lieu de le détromper, l’égare davantage, mais je me sens, ce soir, si taquine et si gaie, légère, déjà presque en voyage . . . Oh! oui, partir, repartir, oublier qui je suis et le nom de la ville qui m’abrita hier, penser à peine, ne refléter et retenir que le beau paysage qui tourne et change au flanc du train, l’étang plombé où le ciel bleu se mire vert, la flèche ajourée d’un clocher cerné d’hirondelles . . .” (102).

34. “Comme je suis loin! déjà partie, dispersée, réfugiée, dans le voyage . . . Leurs voix s’étouffent, s’éloignent, mêlées à des grondements de trains, des sifflements, à la houle berceuse d’un orchestre imaginaire . . . Ah! le doux départ, le doux sommeil, qui m’emporte vers un rive qu’on ne revoit pas! . . .” (115).

35. “Vous avez l’air d’avoir fermé les yeux pour cacher une joie plus forte que vous! Parfaitement! vous n’avez pas un visage de femme endormie . . .” (117).

36. “[M]on langage *à moi*, un peu brusque, qui ne daigne pas toujours finir les phrases” (93).

37. “A quoi bon écrire, et plaider, et discuter? . . . Mon voluptueux ami ne comprend que l’amour . . .” (212).

38. “[I]l écrit simplement, mais, cela se devine, sans facilité. Sa belle écriture fleurie retarde l’élan de sa main” (202).

39. “Pense-t-il? lit-il? travaille-t-il? [ . . . ] Point d’esprit, une certaine rapidité de compréhension, un vocabulaire très suffisant que rehausse une belle voix étouffée, cette facilité au rire, à la gaieté enfantine qu’on peut remarquer chez tant d’hommes, voilà mon amoureux. [ . . . ] un regard parfois absent, chercheur [ . . . ] Il a voyagé, mais comme tout le monde: pas très loin, pas souvent. Il a lu ce que tout le monde lit, il connaît ‘pas mal de gens’ et n’arrive pas à nommer, en dehors de son frère aîné, trois amis intimes” (88–89).

40. “Écrire, écrire, lancer à travers des pages blanches l’écriture rapide, inégale, qu’il compare à mon visage mobile, surmené par l’excès d’expression. Ecrire sincèrement, presque sincèrement” (222).

41. “Cela sent l’indifférence, l’abandon, l’‘à quoi bon?’, presque le départ . . .” (86).

42. “Je soigne seulement, pour moi plus que pour eux, le décor menteur et sommaire où je vis si peu” (87).

43. “Un abri, et non un *home*, c’est tout ce que je laisse derrière moi”; hotels are “plus familiers, plus tutélaires” (193).

44. “[J]e viens de traverser, sans m’y arrêter, un pays qui est le mien, celui de mon enfance [ . . . ] Peut-être n’est-il beau que parce que je l’ai perdu . . .” (199–200).

45. “Sans défense, perméable à cet excès, pourtant prévu, de parfums, de couleur, de chaleur, je me laisse surprendre, emporter, convaincre” (211).

46. “D’où vient que je me balance ce soir sur une houle invisible, comme un navire que renfloue la mer? C’est un soir à voguer jusqu’à l’autre côté du monde” (207–8).

47. “Je me suspends, encore un instant, encore un instant, à la plus grande folie, à l’irréparable malheur du reste de mon existence. Accrochée et penchante comme l’arbre qui a grandi au-dessus du gouffre, et que son épanouissement incline vers sa perte, je résiste encore, et qui peut dire si je réussirai? . . .” (221).

48. “Vous êtes le meilleur des hommes, et vous méritiez la meilleure des femmes. Ne regretterez-vous pas d’avoir choisi seulement [ . . . ]” (219).

49. “Mais, signée, datée, et close enfin, c’est quand-même une lettre inachevée . . . La rouvrirai-je? . . .” (246).

50. This refusal is temporary: “At the end of *The Vagabond*, Renée chooses freedom, an unmediated relation to the world. She renounces the man she loves not to lose that freedom. But in the sequel, *The Shackle*, she falls a fascinated prey to powerful and wayward Jean, ends the novel trapped, waiting, indoors . . .” (Jouve, *Colette* 99).

51. “[L]es plus beaux pays de la terre, je refuse de les contempler, tout petits, au miroir amoureux de ton regard . . .” (247).

52. “Tu me voulais illuminer de cette banale aurore, car tu me plainais obscure. Obscure, si tu veux: comme une chambre vue du dehors. Sombre, et non obscure. Sombre, et parée par les soins d’une vigilante tristesse, argentée et crépusculaire comme l’effraie, comme la souris soyeuse, comme l’aile de la mite” (248).

53. “‘Quelle vie,’ pensa-t-il, vindicatif, ‘s’il faut toujours buter à toute parole, à tout geste contre quelque chose de caché, de vibrant, de saignant’” (50).

54. “Les mots feu, fin, flammes, riaient à son imagination, avec leurs *f* qui soufflaient l’incendie et sa fumée . . .” (106).

55. “Il lui lança, à travers ses lunettes, un regard si vif et si illisible qu’elle s’interrompit” (105).

56. “[L]e bloc-notes qu’Alice couvrait de son écriture élastique et variable, fine dans les marges, grosse en tête des pages vierges” (58).

57. “‘Mon courrier est en panne, et le geste d’écrire, que je déteste, va me remettre les nerfs en place, et me donner sommeil’” (105).

58. “Les éléments épars d’un rêve mêlant l’image des tours basses de Cransac, la silhouette de Chevestre haut et noir—‘comme un curé, comme un curé,’ chantonnait-elle—un essaim de papiers multicolores, et diluant le tout dans l’ombre massive qui stagnait entre deux bibliothèques escarpées et impassibles, elle crut en songe qu’elle se levait, rassemblait les papiers et fuyait” (91).

59. “Le toutounier . . . La gîte, la caverne, ses marques humaines, ses traces

humbles contre les murs, son incurie qui n'est pas sale . . . Personne n'y a été heureux, mais personne ne veut le quitter . . ." (150).

60. "[L]a convention de légèreté, de silence et d'ironie qui régissait leurs rapports" (124).

61. "Elle s'abandonna enfin au 'toutounier natal,' vaste canapé d'origine anglaise, indestructible, défoncé autant qu'une route forestière dans la saison des pluies. Un coussin vint à la rencontre de la nuque d'Alice. Son cuir était froid et doux comme une joue. Elle flaira le vieux maroquin tout imprégné de tabac et d'un parfum de chevelures et lui donne un petit baiser" (117).

62. "[E]lle fit 'ventre creux' pour passer entre la demi-queue du piano et le mur, et elle reprit contact d'une manière originelle avec le grand canapé, c'est à dire qu'elle s'assit en amazone sur le dossier capitonné, bascula et se laissa rouler sur le siège" (115).

63. "Paragraphe VII du code toutounier . . . '—'ce qui est à toi est à moi, ce qui est à moi est à toi" (176).

### Notes to Chapter 4

1. Colette biographer Michèle Sarde writes that "the only thing—in the arts at any rate—in France) that enabled [women] to overcome the blemish of being women were either nobility or social status, and this is why, in France, the gallery of women writers extends from Marie de France to Simone de Beauvoir, and includes Marguerite de Navarre, Mme de Lafayette, Mlle de Scudéry, Mme de Sévigné, Mme de Staël, George Sand, who was the Baronne Dudevant, and all of Colette's contemporaries, from Anna de Noailles to the Princesse Bibesco. Colette does not fall into this tradition. She is neither what a mot vaguely reminiscent of Restif de la Bretonne has called her, a 'perverted peasant,' nor was she a noble: she is a pure product of the middle class" (66–67). George Sand, in many senses an early Colette, was writing novels in nineteenth-century France. However, Sand's transgressions (her love affairs, her cross-dressing), unlike Colette's, were authorized by her affiliation with the aristocracy, a privilege not available to Colette (Crosland, *Colette* 171).

2. Like Woolf, these eighteenth- and nineteenth-century women writers were part of middle-class families, many the children of clergymen. They were preceded by Aphra Behn, Dorothy Osborne, and Lady Winchelsea (see *A Room* 58–78).

3. Much of the scholarship on fathers and mothers in the writings of Woolf and Colette has focused on the semi-autobiographical works, such as *To the Lighthouse* (1929) in Woolf's case and *La maison de Claudine* (1922), *Sido* (1928), and *La naissance du jour* (1929) in Colette's. See Flieger (1992), Ottavi (1974), Marcus (1987), Bowlby (1992), and Bonne (1978). Readers of the father figure in Woolf's work have tended to paint him as a one-dimensional figure. Woolf's fathers are generally considered to be "oppressive or ineffectual," managing, in either case, "to burden, demean or disappoint their women" ("Fathers in General," Schlack 53). Lisa Tyler contends that "all of the fathers represented in *The Voyage Out* are either negligent or abusive" (27). Further casting fathers (and some mothers) in an aggressive role, Louise DeSalvo argues: "Every one of [Woolf's] novels describes a child abandoned, a child ignored, a child at risk, a child abused,

a child betrayed" (14). Readings of fathers in Colette's work are overshadowed by readings of the part real, part fictional mother, Sido. The importance of the father in the daughter's achievements has been "underestimated," as Nicole Ward Jouve contends (*Colette* 52). The father in Colette's work is read as "hardly a father-figure, [ . . . ] a mere *figurant* in the tales of childhood [ . . . ] relegated to the sidelines, glimpsed only in fleeting asides to the mother-daughter love story" (*Colette and the Fantom Subject*, Flieger 67). Flieger uses psychoanalysis to read what she terms "the paternal intertext in Colette's writing. "When considered in oedipal terms, to be sure, the familial nest is not a haven, an 'Earthly Paradise' (to cite Richard Phelps's collection of Colette's autobiographical writings): it is rather a ménage à trois, an arena of competition, staging a struggle for independence and for access to subjectivity" ("Colette and the Captain" 23).

4. Countering Colette's take on her own work, Joan Hinde Stewart suggests that the *Claudines* represent a "a unique response to an extraordinary demand [ . . . ] What is extraordinary is not that [Colette] should have so easily acceded to [Willy's] requiring her to write, but that she should have created an enduring comic heroine and at the same time turned out so original and so sustained a portrait of female strength, sexuality and lust" (23).

5. Both novels base characters on real-life writers. St John Hirst of *The Voyage Out* is Lytton Strachey. A young writer whom Colette encounters in *Claudine en ménage* is Marcel Proust, and Flossie of *Claudine s'en va* is Natalie Barney.

6. "Many have noted that [*The Voyage Out*] is 'an unusual bildungsroman' (Susan Dick, "Tunneling")" (quoted in Hussey 341). "Reversing the usual format of the *Bildungsroman*, Woolf offers a heroine who will not grow into the world as it is constituted. If Rachel learns anything in the course of a short life-time, it is the art of disengagement" (Ruotolo 21).

7. This is more so the case with Mr Ramsay of *To the Lighthouse*, of whom Woolf wrote: "I suppose that I did for myself what psychoanalysts do for their patients. I expressed some very long felt and very deeply felt emotion. And in expressing it I explained it and then laid it to rest" (*Moments of Being* 81). In a letter to Jacques-Émile Blanche, Woolf insists that she did not mean to create an exact portrait of her father in Mr Ramsay—but that "a book makes everything into itself, and the portrait became changed to fit as I wrote" (*Letters* 6: 517).

8. "Mon père, né pour écrire, laissa peu de pages. Au moment d'écrire, il émettait son envie en soins matériels, disposait autour de lui le nécessaire et le superflu de l'écrivain" (*Le Képi*, OC 9: 433).

9. Nancy K. Miller refers to Colette as "the daughter of the mother—and mother of a daughter—[who] chooses to write of and from the garden rather than the library" ("The Anamnesis of a Female 'I'" 173), and Jane Marcus, referencing Colette's semi-autobiographical *La naissance du jour*, suggests that Colette "is content to write the mother's body, the arrows, rays, 'yes, yeses,' strokes, and 'plant-like convolutions' in her female alphabet" (*Languages* 13). Michèle Sarde calls Sido a "beneficent goddess" (22), and Judith Thurman adds that "the flash of defiance Colette saw in Sido's garden face became the light she wrote by" (26).

10. "La trentaine, donc, et une exceptionnelle disette d'amitiés féminines, de complicités, d'appuis féminins. La complice idéale, l'appui véritable, je les avais tous deux dans Sido, lointaine et proche, Sido à qui j'écrivais chaque semaine deux

lettres, trois lettres, bourrées de nouvelles vraies et fausses, de descriptions, de vantardises, de riens, de moi, d'elle . . . Elle est morte en 1912. Après vingt-trois ans, un réflexe, qui ne veut pas mourir, m'attable à mon bureau, ou à un guéridon d'hôtel si je voyage, et je jette mes gants, et je demande 'des cartes postales avec des vues du pays,' comme elle les aimait . . . Et pourquoi cesser de lui écrire? M'arrêter à un obstacle aussi futile, aussi vainement interrogé que la mort?' (*Mes apprentissages*, *Ceuvres* 3: 1054).

11. "Vocation, signes sacrés, poésie enfantine, prédestination? . . . Je ne retrouve rien de tel dans ma mémoire. [ . . . ] Non, je ne voulais pas écrire. Quand on peut pénétrer dans la royaume enchantée de la lecture, pourquoi écrire? [ . . . ] Mais dans ma jeunesse, je n'ai jamais, *jamais* désiré écrire. Non, je ne me suis pas levée la nuit en cachette pour écrire des vers au crayon sur le couvercle d'une boîte à chaussures! Non, je n'ai pas jeté au vent d'ouest et au clair de lune des paroles inspirées! Non, je n'ai pas eu de 19 ou 20 pour un devoir de style, entre douze et quinze ans! Car je sentais, chaque jour mieux, je sentais que j'étais justement faite pour ne *pas* écrire" ("La Chauferette," *Journal à rebours*, *OC* 9: 311–13). Other comments include: "Quelle douceur j'ai pu goûter à une telle absence de vocation littéraire! Mon enfance, ma libre et solitaire adolescence, toutes deux préservées du souci de m'exprimer, furent toutes deux occupées uniquement de diriger leurs subtiles antennes vers ce qui contemple, s'écoute, se palpe et se respire" (*Journal à rebours*: 313) ("What calm I tasted in the absence of literary vocation! My childhood, my free and solitary adolescence, both free from the concern of expressing myself, were both occupied uniquely in directing their subtle antennae toward what one sees, hears, feels and breathes").

12. "Je suis devenue écrivain sans m'en apercevoir, et sans que personne s'en doutât. Sortie d'une ombre anonyme, auteur de plusieurs livres dont quelques-uns étaient signés de mon nom, je m'étonnais encore que l'on m'appelât écrivain [ . . . ] et j'attribuais ces coïncidences renouvelées à un hasard complaisant, hasard qui de palier en palier, de rencontre en prodige, m'a amenée jusqu'ici" ("Discours de réception," *OC* 14: 69).

13. See *Letters* (1: 123–24, 133–34) on Leslie Stephen's death.

14. Balzac's novel is also about broken families. In the novel there is a regret for loss of social order (at the dissolution of the Empire in 1839). Characters include the father, Hulot, a slave to his sexual appetite, and his wife's cousin Bette, "Lisbeth Fischer, whose physical and moral ugliness is the antithesis to the saintly grace and beauty of her cousin Adeline, [and who] concentrates all her talents and energies onto the secret vengeance of the Hulot family" (introduction to the Penguin Classics edition). French novels recur in *To the Lighthouse*.

15. For example, Edward Pargiter has translated Sophocles' *Antigone* for his cousin Sara in *The Years* (51, 135). For further references see Hussey (1995) and Schlack (1979).

16. "There are however these two marriages; and they show that she was capable of falling in love with two very different men; one, to put it in a nutshell, the pink of propriety; the other, the pink of intellectuality. She could span them both" ("Sketch of the Past" 85).

17. A later version of Lytton Strachey is Neville in *The Waves* (Lee 256–58).

18. Schlack remarks that "on the matter of Rachel's death, critics have generally been in a quandary. 'It is typical of Mrs Woolf's indifference to plot that the

reason Rachel fell victim to the fever . . . is never made clear,' says one. In their search for clear reasons, itself an unproductive approach to Woolf's characteristic evasion of clear reasons, critics are likely to complain of the suddenness of Rachel's death, calling it a failure of aesthetic vision and design that leads to an improbable, arbitrary, unmotivated death" (*Continuing Presences* 19).

19. According to Lee, Woolf played the Lady Sabrina in Milton's *Comus* as part of Clive Bell's play-reading society, which he began at the end of 1907: "(the song summoning 'Sabrina fair' would haunt her, and she would put it into *The Voyage Out*)" (252).

20. See Schlack (*Continuing Presences*, 19–27) for a detailed, alternative reading of the significance of *Comus*.

21. These words also tie Rachel to another literary forefather, Shakespeare. *The Tragedy of Locrine* was a play attributed to Shakespeare. Furthermore, in *The Merchant of Venice*, where Portia is tied to her father's will via the three caskets between which potential suitors must choose in order to win her hand, the words "Brutus" and "curb" appear within a few pages of each other in the opening act: "Her name is Portia, nothing undervalued To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia" (74), and "I may neither choose who I would nor refuse who I dislike, so is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father" (76).

22. Lisa Low reevaluates Woolf's choice of *Comus* for *The Voyage Out* in her essay "Listen and Save." While Milton is conventionally cast in the role of "father of modern female doom" (117), Low highlights the fact that *Comus*, unlike *Paradise Lost*, is empowering for women. The heroine of *Comus*, Low argues, is "no shrinking violet [ . . . ]. On the contrary, she is a powerful and speaking heroine who resists her suitor and slays her enemies single-handedly" (119).

23. This follows on after a mention of a man with mules and has been read as a reference to Richard Dalloway. Early in the novel we learn that "In Spain he and Mrs. Dalloway had mounted mules, for they wished to understand how the peasants live" (31). Hewet misses this reference and is appalled to think that Rachel is referring to "the little dirty man downstairs" and that he might have some connection to her illness.

24. Ruotolo suggests that Rachel's death came as a relief to Terence Hewet. During her confinement he suffers as much as Rachel does (45). "Only through dying does she sustain the illusion he requires. No longer free to question—Rachel's final 'perplexity' dissolves once her eyes close for the last time—she affords in death a foundation for Hewet's peace of mind that she could not give him so long as he lived" (46).

25. In her book *Their Fathers' Daughters*, Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace uses a mixture of fictional, biographical, and autobiographical writing to explore the contradictions inherent in the identification of two lesser-known nineteenth-century writers, Hannah More and Maria Edgeworth, with their fathers. In their work she detects anger against patriarchy, coupled with a simultaneous desire for that which patriarchy provides. Identification with the father often figures in the works of nineteenth-century women writers, contends Kowaleski-Wallace (and she cites Frances Burney's *Evelina* [9]), as an essential step in the process of differentiation from the mother and from the negatives associated with her role. Further, identification with the father, she suggests, provides access to a literary tradition not available via the mother.

26. I do not include a discussion of the fifth book in the series, entitled *La retraite sentimentale*, here. A gap of several years separates *Claudine s'en va* from *La retraite sentimentale*, published in 1907, following *Minne*, *Les égarements de Minne*, and *Dialogues de bêtes*. In *La retraite* Renaud is exiled to a sanatorium, where he is recovering from neurasthenia. His jealousy at having to leave Claudine in Paris has sent her, ever devoted to her "invalid" husband—although now wielding the upper hand in the marriage—to Casamène, to the house of Annie. Here they are joined, against Claudine's will, by Marcel, Renaud's son. Across the length of the work, Annie, who has now taken the young Claudine's place in a number of ways—a development anticipated by *Claudine s'en va*—makes a series of confessions regarding her sexual exploits to a somewhat shocked Claudine. Claudine's brief attempt to console Annie for her solitude by asking Marcel, who likes men, not women, to sleep with Annie backfires on Claudine. Renaud, whose return is anticipated throughout the novel by a devoted Claudine, does make it back to Casamène; however, he is now an old man, more like a grandfather than a father (in this way Claudine retains his influence—he is a forebear but at an even greater distance), and no longer at ease with Claudine. We see no interaction between Renaud and Claudine in the book. When Renaud's death is announced to the reader, almost eighteen months after it occurred, when Annie, her sister-in-law and brother, Marthe and Léon, and Maugis, the theatre critic who appeared in earlier *Claudines*, come to pay their condolences, Claudine does not mourn. Preferring her memories to the slab of white stone that marks his grave, Claudine continues to sleep in the same bed where Renaud died. As Margaret Crosland suggests in the introduction to her English translation of this book, we find in this work (the burgeoning of) Colette's fascination with the natural world. The novel ends with Claudine in the provinces among the flora and fauna that are so prominent in her later work, contemplating a new turn in her physical and emotional life, one anticipated by Annie, that is, desire without love.

27. In September 1897 Willy, tidying his desk, comes across Colette's manuscript. He starts reading: "Nice . . ." He opened a second notebook, said not another word, a third, a fourth . . . 'Christ,' he grumbled. 'I'm an ass . . .' He shuffled the notebooks together, threw on his top hat, and ran to a publisher . . . And that is how I became a writer" (*Mes apprentissages*, quoted in Thurman 106).

28. Colette's fellow writer Rachilde, the author of *Monsieur Vénus*, attributed the *Claudines* to Willy: "*Claudine à l'école* n'est ni un roman, ni une thèse, ni un manuscrit, ni quoi que ce soit de convenu ou d'attendu, c'est une personne vivante et debout, terrible [ . . . ] De Willy le livre est un chef-d'œuvre. De Claudine, le même livre est l'œuvre la plus extraordinaire qui puisse éclore sous la plume d'une débutante, elle promet un peu plus que la gloire à l'auteur: le martyre, car il n'y aura jamais assez de pierres et de couronnes de ronces à lui jeter" (quoted in *Œuvres* 3: 1249). ("*Claudine at School* is neither a novel, nor a thesis, nor a journal, nor a manuscript, nor is it anything conventional or expected, it is a living, upright, formidable person [ . . . ] By Willy, the book is a masterpiece. By Claudine, the same book is the most extraordinary work to flourish under the pen of a novice, and it promises a little more than glory to its author: martyrdom, for there will never be enough stones or crowns of thorns to throw at her" [partial translation and longer extract in Thurman 115–16].)

29. See D'Hollander. In her short story "Le Miroir" (*Les vrilles de la vigne*), Colette suggests that Claudine is her double.

30. "Captain Jules Colette, dreamer and author of unwritten books, has merged with [Colette's] scientific elder brother Achilles to become a distracted father, preoccupied with his experiments in malacology and composing a treatise on slugs" (Stewart 15). "Le père de Claudine, rêveur tout occupé de 'malacologie' fait songer au capitaine Colette. On a dit aussi que c'était le docteur Robineau-Desvoidy, pittoresque figure de Saint-Sauveur, 'le dernier des dip-téristes.' En fait, le personnage doit être un amalgame: aux manies du savant s'ajoutent des traits de caractère du capitaine, tel du moins que sa fille le voyait en 1900" (Abastado 31).

31. "Si j'avais une maman, je sais bien qu'elle ne me laisserait pas vingt-quatre heures ici, mais papa, lui, ne voit rien, ne s'occupe pas de moi, tout à ses travaux, et ne s'imagine pas que je pourrais être plus convenablement élevée dans un couvent ou dans un lycée quelconque. Pas de danger que je lui ouvre les yeux!" (*Claudine à l'école* 8–9).

32. "Je suis souris dans la bibliothèque de papa" (*Claudine à l'école* 182).

33. "Cette pièce [the father's library] apparaît donc d'emblée comme l'espace privilégié de toutes les transgressions" (27). Berthu-Courtivron suggests that the father's library is a temporary refuge. She detects a shift from the daughter's initial association of books with the father's library to one linking them to the maternal house: "En effet, dans le premier roman (*Claudine à l'école*) les livres appartiennent explicitement à la bibliothèque paternelle, alors que vingt ans plus tard, ils font partie intégrante de la maison maternelle recréée (la nouvelle elle-même s'intitule: 'Ma mère et les livres') et forment le 'chaud revêtement des murs du logis natal' (MCI, Pl II 989 [*Maison de Claudine* in the Pléiade edition, Volume II, of Colette's work]). A leur chaleur toute imaginaire s'ajoute une ascendance maternelle, autre produit de l'écriture: 'Presque tous m'avaient vue naître,' (MCI, Pl II 988), comme dans les premiers romans les bois avaient vu naître Claudine. C'est aussi au milieu des livres que Minet-Chéri se niche. C'est enfin par rapport au jugement critique de la mère qu'ils sont évoqués dans le reste de la nouvelle. Cette deuxième version donne l'image d'une maison une et indivisible, sous l'égide de la mère" (Berthu-Courtivron 28) ("In effect, in the first novel (*Claudine at School*), books belong explicitly to the paternal library, although twenty years later, they form an integral part of the recreated maternal house (the short story itself is called 'My Mother and Books') and constitute the 'warm covering of the walls of the house where I was born.' To their imaginary warmth is added a maternal ascendance, another product of writing: "Almost all of them witnessed my birth," like in the first novels the woods saw Claudine being born. It is also in the midst of the books that Minet-Chéri curls up. It is then in terms of the mother's critical judgment that they are mentioned in the rest of the short story. This second image gives the impression of a singular and unified house, under the aegis of the mother").

34. "Je lis, je lis, je lis. Tout. N'importe quoi" (*Claudine à Paris* 180).

35. "Qu'est-ce que tu lis? Tout ce que tu trouves? Toute la bibliothèque de ton père?" (*Claudine à l'école* 25).

36. Daudet was an associate of Willy. Louÿs was a friend of both Willy and Colette. Colette frequented the salon of Lucien and Jeanne Muhlfield. Lucien was

a fellow writer of Willy's at *L'Écho de Paris* (Thurman 125).

37. In his preface to *Aphrodite*, Louÿs, who says he wishes to exalt love (not condemn it), writes of his Egyptian heroine Chrysis: "As courtesan, she will play her part with the frankness, the ardour, and also the pride of every being who had a vocation and occupies a freely elected place in society. She will possess the ambition to rise to the highest seat of honour; and it will not even occur to her that her life might have need of excuse or dissimulation" (ix). This description highlights the similarities between Chrysis and Claudine. One critic, François Coppée, describes *Aphrodite* as "un beau livre, mais un livre très impur" (Clive 220) ("a beautiful but very impure book"). In a 1914 review of the play based on the novel, Alphonse Brissson wrote that *Aphrodite* had replaced the work of Longus and Boccaccio in the high school student's desk (Clive 131).

38. For a discussion of Adam's works, see J. An Duncan's "The Early Novels of Paul Adam."

39. "I was born in Balzac," [Colette] told an interviewer as an old lady. 'He was my cradle, my forest, my travels.' And she called herself 'one of those people who, from childhood, devote themselves to a single author.' But she also reads Alphonse Daudet, Hugo, Merimée, Labiche, Zola, Taine, Voltaire, the tales of H. C. Andersen—and Shakespeare in translation" (Thurman 41).

40. "Votre Zola n'y entend rien de rien, à la campagne. Je n'aime pas beaucoup ce qu'il fait, en général . . ." (*Claudine à Paris* 64).

41. Régnier was an associate of Pierre Louÿs. The two men are linked via their relationships with the same woman. Régnier and Louÿs both loved Marie de Heredia, who became Régnier's wife in the early 1890s and Louÿs's lover in the late 1890s.

42. "Ah! voilà . . . vous n'avez pas lu, parce qu'il ne sera jamais terminé, son grand travail sur la *Malacologie de Fresnois*" (*Claudine à l'école* 28).

43. "Comment voulez-vous que l'espoir naissant de pareilles constatations laisse à un passionné malacologiste le sentiment de la paternité, de sept heures du matin à neuf heures du soir? C'est le meilleur homme et le plus tendre, entre deux repas de limaces" (*Claudine à l'école* 29).

44. "Papa est une force de la Nature; il sert l'obscur Destin. Sans le savoir, il est venu ici, pour que je pusse rencontrer Renaud; il s'en va, ayant rempli sa mission de père irresponsable . . ." (*Claudine en ménage* 79).

45. "C'est un père comme lui [Renaud] qui me manque. Oh! Je ne veux pas dire du mal du mien; ce n'est pas de sa faute s'il est un peu spécial" (*Claudine à Paris* 123).

46. "À cause de ce noble père, plutôt lunatique, qui est le mien, j'ai besoin d'un papa, j'ai besoin d'un ami, d'un amant . . ." (*Claudine à Paris* 227).

47. "Mais c'est rasant comme tout! [ . . . ] je veux dire que ce sont des articles très sérieux . . ." (*Claudine à Paris* 122).

48. "Ma liberté me pèse, mon indépendance m'excède; ce que je cherche depuis des mois—depuis plus longtemps—c'était, sans m'en douter, un maître. Les femmes libres ne sont pas des femmes" (*Claudine à Paris* 229–30).

49. "Mon journal est sans avenir. Je l'ai quitté voilà cinq mois sur une impression triste, et je lui en veux. D'ailleurs je n'ai pas le temps de le tenir au courant" (*Claudine en ménage* 71).

### Notes to Chapter 5

1. Showalter asserts that “The harsh criticism of Bloomsbury, of female aestheticism, and especially of Virginia Woolf by writers for *Scrutiny* in the 1930s had pointed out the problems of disengagement. In her late writings, *The Years* (1937) and *Three Guineas* (1938), Woolf herself had tried to move in the direction of social realism. During the 1940s and 1950s, however, women writers, many of an older generation, continued to work in conservative modes untouched by either modernism or a sense of personal experience” (34).

2. We might add to this list another one compiled by Isobel Armstrong: Elizabeth Taylor, Elizabeth Bowen, Rosamund Lehmann, and Rose Macaulay. According to Armstrong, “Virginia Woolf did not immediately become a model for subsequent women writers. Elizabeth Taylor, Elizabeth Bowen, Rosamund Lehmann and Rose Macaulay, for instance—to name a few of the novelists writing between the wars who would have certainly been able to read Virginia Woolf’s texts—appear to be almost impervious to the experimental aspects of her work. And certainly, for whatever reasons, it is later feminist theorists rather than women writers who have taken her work up” (“Woolf by the Lake” 259).

3. In *Près de Colette*, Maurice Goudekot explains the initially negative reception of Colette’s work in France in this way: the war, he suggests, had set the stage for “a literature of despair”: “Une sorte de nihilisme prévalait dans les idées et les attitudes, un réalisme noir qui tournait le dos à la réalité, faite d’un jeu d’ombre et de lumière” (“A sort of nihilism prevailed in ideas and attitudes, a black realism that turned its back on reality, made up of a game of shadow and light”). But a climate in which nihilism reigns, Goudekot adds, is not easy to maintain among the young. Young people, he says, soon discovered Colette’s work “comme un appel d’air frais” (“like a breath of fresh air”). “Par elle ils retrouvaient des sources profondes qu’on leur avait dit taries, une représentation du monde qui n’en cachait ni les déficiences ni les beautés, une quête de l’authentique qui est en soi une raison de vivre” (246–47) (“Via her work they rediscovered profound sources that people said had dried up, a representation of the world that hid neither its beauties nor its deficiencies, a search for the authentic, which is in itself a reason for living”). In her biography of Colette, Margaret Crosland cites Louis Bromfield’s exploration of Colette’s popularity in the United States and England (originally cited in Chauvière’s *Colette*). Bromfield and Crosland agree that the fact that Colette was a personality meant that she prospered in the United States and France, where “writers are allowed and are encouraged to be personalities, even though the type of appreciation given them is different. England,” Crosland suggests, “has always been suspicious of writers, artists and musicians” (134).

4. In *The Anxiety of Influence* Bloom argues that the successor’s reaction to his precursor is, at least at first, an act of rebellion. “Strong poets make [poetic] history by misreading one another, so as to clear imaginative space for themselves” (5).

5. For a thorough overview of the way in which Woolf’s work has been read by French critics, see Pierre-Eric Villeneuve’s “Virginia Woolf and the French Reader.” Caws and Luckhurst’s book *The Reception of Virginia Woolf in Europe* includes four chapters on the reception of Woolf’s work in France.

6. Joyce Carol Oates writes that English women writers *were encouraged* to be

Woolfian (Showalter 265): “For the past fifty years, Virginia Woolf has dominated the imaginative territory of the English woman novelist, just as George Eliot dominated it the century before. ‘The woman writer is urged to be as Woolfian as possible,’ according to Joyce Carol Oates [*New York Times Book Review*, April 15, 1973]—that is, to be subjective, and yet to transcend her femaleness, to write exquisitely about inner space and leave the big messy brawling novels to her men” (Showalter 265).

7. “Si l’on s’arrête à considérer la profondeur scintillante de l’œuvre de Mrs. Woolf, sa légèreté, sa densité claire, et jusqu’aux pulsations irisées d’un style qui fait penser tour à tour à ce qui traverse et à ce qui est traversé, à la lumière et au cristal, on en vient à se dire que cette femme si subtilement singulière naquit peut-être à la minute précise où une étoile se prenait à penser.”

8. A link between Colette, Woolf, and Yourcenar is provided by the American poet Frederic Prokosch, some of whose work Yourcenar also translated (although her translations were lost when the Germans invaded Paris). In his *Voices: A Memoir* he describes encounters with both Colette and Woolf. His responses to the two already well-known writers are very similar. Of Colette (234–38) he writes, “And there she was herself, strangely solemn among her cushions, not in the least what I expected: sad and lean and very wrinkled, with bags under eyes that were the color of violets.” Colette wears a maroon silk scarf thrown over what appear to Prokosch to be bony shoulders, and a grey blanket covers her “wasted knees.” She mocks Prokosch for his Americanness (“I’m convinced there is nothing truly decadent in the Americans,” she tells him) and talks to him about food, suggesting, “I always think of a novel as a finely done soufflé, underdone it is clammy, overdone it is desiccated. I think of Adolphe and La Princesse de Clèves . . .” (quoted in Prokosch 237). Of Woolf (87–90), whom a friend had described to him as looking like “an exposed nerve,” he writes, “she looked profoundly vulnerable and painfully frail, but also rather dowdy and faded and foxy,” untidy but heartbreakingly beautiful. She, too, muses over the nature of the novel; “what is a novel, my dear boy?” she asks him.

9. “[I]l ne reste plus ‘dans ce pâle visage de jeune Parque à peine vieilli mais délicatement marqué des signes de la pensée et de la lassitude’ qu’une bouche qui ne semble n’avoir jamais su sourire et un regard désolé.”

10. “L’idéal du traducteur tel qu’elle l’affirmera plus tard à sa traductrice italienne dans une lettre de 1962, est de donner ‘l’impression que l’ouvrage a été composé dans la langue dans laquelle on le traduit.’”

11. Woolf boasts of her descent from a suitor of Marie Antoinette. Lee explains the link: “James Pattle of Calcutta made a romantic marriage to a French aristocrat, Adeline de L’Etang, the daughter of the Chevalier del’Etang, who had been a page—possibly a lover—to Marie-Antoinette and an officer of the Garde du Corps of Louis XVI, and had married the Indian-born Thérèse Blin de Grincourt (not, as the family legend had it, one of the Queen’s maids of honour)” (88). See my conclusion for more on Woolf’s love of France.

12. “[C]herche à créer pour le lecteur cible un nouveau poème qui rentre dans le système littéraire de ce lecteur.” This conforms with Woolf’s ideas about translation. In a letter she advises Roger Fry, who has been translating Pierre-Jean Jouve’s poems from French into English, “you might perhaps get greater richness of language if you were less literal.” She praises Fry’s talent and laments that so

often “translators are apt to be so entirely wrong in feeling” (*Letters* 2: 73). Fry’s translation of several of Jouve’s poems from *Vous êtes hommes* appeared under the title *Men of Europe* in 1916. Woolf remarks on translations in letters to Jacques-Émile Blanche (December 1927, *Letters* 6: 519).

13. Somewhat ironically (and at odds with these last comments about Colette), on the first page of his biography of Colette, *L'éternelle apprentie*, Jean Chalon quotes Yourcenar’s praise of Natalie Barney, suggesting that it applies equally to Colette: “[Colette] aurait pu faire sien l’hommage que Marguerite Yourcenar avait adressé à Natalie Barney. ‘Je vous ai particulièrement su gré d’avoir échappé aux gripes intellectuelles de ce demi-siècle, d’en avoir été ni psychanalysée, ni existentialiste, ni occupée d’accomplir des actes gratuits, mais d’être au contraire restée fidèle à l’évidence de votre esprit, de vos sens, voire de votre bon sens’” (13). (“[Colette] could have made her own the homage that Marguerite Yourcenar had addressed to Natalie Barney. ‘I was particularly grateful to you for having escaped from the intellectual grips of this half century, for having been neither psychoanalyst, nor existentialist, nor occupied with accomplishing gratuitous acts, but for remaining, on the contrary, faithful to the evidence of your spirit, of your sense, yes and even your good sense’”).

14. “[L]a troupe invisible de femmes qui auraient dû, peut-être, recevoir beaucoup plus tôt cet honneur.”

15. “Mme de Staël eût été inéligible de par son ascendance suisse et son mariage suédois: elle se contentait d’être un des meilleurs esprits du siècle. George Sand eût fait scandale par la turbulence de sa vie, par la générosité même de ses émotions qui font d’elle une femme si admirablement femme; la personne encore plus que l’écrivain devançait son temps. Colette elle-même pensait qu’une femme ne rend pas visite à des hommes pour solliciter leur voix, et je ne puis qu’être de son avis, ne l’ayant pas fait moi-même.”

16. The text to which Yourcenar refers is unclear. The recording perhaps included both Colette’s novel *Gigi* and her novel *Chéri*.

17. Elsewhere, Sarraute repeats this same response to Joyce and Woolf: “Une voie nouvelle s’est alors ouverte pour moi. Il me semblait qu’à partir de ce moment, l’on ne pouvait plus écrire comme on avait écrit auparavant” (quoted in Rykner 164). (“A new channel thus opened up for me. It seemed as if from this moment on, one could no longer work as one had before.”)

18. These comments led to some confusion, expressed in a *Times Literary Supplement* article, over the relationship of her work to that of Woolf, Joyce, and Proust. In an attempt to rectify the misunderstanding, she responded to the *Times Literary Supplement* article by affirming her tie and her commitment to the work of these same writers: “Il s’agit donc pour moi non d’attaquer les auteurs que j’ai cités, mais de suivre leur voie et de m’efforcer de faire après eux ne serait-ce qu’un pas de plus dans la recherche” (quoted in Minogue 193) (“It’s a matter then for me not to attack the authors that I cited, but to follow their lead and to force myself to do after them what might very well be nothing more than one more step into the unknown”). Indeed, Sarraute names Woolf, along with Joyce, Proust, and Flaubert, as “precursors.” Other influences cited by Sarraute include British Modernists Ivy Compton Burnett and Henry Green. Villeneuve (2002) opens his section on Sarraute in his essay on the reception of Woolf in France with Sarraute’s disavowal of Woolf: “I believe that our sensibilities are very much opposed. For

Virginia Woolf, her entire universe, stirred up by time, rolls along through the consciousness of her characters, who are passive by nature, carried from side to side by the uninterrupted currents of moments. With me, characters are always in a state of hyperactivity: a dramatic action plays itself out at the level of their ‘tropisms,’ these movements being very quick at the edges of consciousness. This is where our different styles come from” (quoted in Villeneuve 29).

19. “Des romanciers comme Henry James, Proust, Virginia Woolf n’ont pas craint—conforme en cela à l’esprit de l’art moderne—de faire un effort d’élucidation, d’essayer d’éclairer certains aspects de leur travail” (OC 1661) (“Novelists such as Henry James, Proust, Virginia Woolf were not afraid—conforming in this to the spirit of modern art—to attempt to elucidate, to try to shed light on certain aspects of their work”).

20. Sarraute was also involved in a staging of Woolf’s play *Freshwater*.

21. Beauvoir’s childhood reading of Colette would have a profound impact on the rest of her life, according to Claude Francis and Fernand Gontier, biographers of both Beauvoir and Colette: “On the sly she secretly read Paul Bourget, Alphonse Daudet, Marcel Prévost, Maupassant, and Pierre Loti. She hid *Les Demi-Vierges* and *La Femme et le Pantin* under her mattress and was thrilled by the homosexual characters of Colette’s “Claudine” books and Claude Farrère’s *Made-moiselle Dax*. This violent sensuality sent prohibitions, proprieties, and soon religion itself flying to pieces in her head” (*Simone de Beauvoir* 43). Francis and Gontier also liken Beauvoir’s father, George, to Colette’s father, Jules Colette, another *auteur manqué*: “[George de Beauvoir] had brought back from the front a number of interesting stories but, using his distaste for malicious and imbecilic critics as a pretext, never did anything with them—and thereby took after another would-be author, Colette’s father, who had lined his library with blank notebooks destined to receive future works that never existed beyond their titles” (25).

22. “A Colette si semblable à ses livres que j’aime tant avec l’admiration et si je puis me le permettre l’amitié de J.-P. Sartre” (quoted in Pichois and Brunet 475).

23. Berriau, the hostess, described the meeting of this mismatched crowd as a success: “On ne pouvait imaginer personnages plus dissemblables, mais ils ont interminablement parlé du théâtre, de ce qu’ils aimaient, et se sont visiblement plu mutuellement. Cocteau, il faut le dire, menait la conversation avec tout son charme et tout son lyrisme, jonglant avec les mots et les images; Colette, toujours vive et savoureuse, était subjuguée par l’intelligence et la passion froide de Sartre. Le déjeuner a duré jusqu’à sept heures du soir” (quoted in Pichois and Brunet 475) (“One could not imagine people more dissimilar, but they talked interminably about the theatre, what they liked, and really appeared to enjoy each other’s company. Cocteau, it has to be said, led the conversation with all of his usual charm and lyricism, juggling with words and images; Colette, still lively and spicy, was transfixed by Sartre’s intelligence and his cold passion. The lunch lasted until seven o’clock in the evening”). British writer Angela Carter explains Colette’s failure to acknowledge Beauvoir at a dinner party she attended with Sartre (recounted in Beauvoir’s memoirs) by suggesting that Colette was busy wondering what on earth Beauvoir was doing with “a boring old fart like J. P.” (*Shaking a Leg* 525).

24. In *The Second Sex* Beauvoir says that there have been no great women thinkers, writers, or other artists (306–14)—a comment somewhat at odds with the space she accords Colette in *The Second Sex*. Neither of two recent compara-

tive studies involving Colette and Beauvoir, Bethany Ladimer's book on aging in the works of Colette, Beauvoir, and Duras (1999), or Laurie Corbin's *The Mother Mirror* (1996) on the same trio, comments on Beauvoir's reading of Colette in *Le deuxième sexe*.

25. In another work, *La vieillesse* (*The Coming of Age*), Beauvoir refers to both Woolf and Colette. She mentions the crippling rheumatism that stalked Colette in her later years. She also refers to Woolf's suicide and the role the outbreak of war played in it (*Coming of Age* 16). She cites Woolf quoting Matthew Arnold's comments on old age: "I loathe the hardness of old age. I feel it coming. I creak. I am embittered. 'The foot less quick to tread the dew, The heart less feeling to emotions now, Crushed hope less quick to rise again' I have just opened Matthew Arnold and I have copied out these lines" (quoted in *Coming of Age* 688).

26. "La chambre," says Beauvoir, "est en même temps une réalité et un symbole. Pour pouvoir écrire, pour pouvoir accomplir quelque chose, il faut d'abord s'appartenir."

27. "Elle serait restée à la maison, elle aurait fait de la cuisine, de la couture."

28. "J'ai tenté moi-même dans *Le Deuxième Sexe* une analyse analogue à propos de Van Gogh. J'ai essayé de montrer qu'une fille née à la place de Van Gogh n'aurait pas eu les chances qu'il a eues." The passage in *Le deuxième sexe* to which Beauvoir refers is the following: "How could Van Gogh have been born a woman? A woman would not have been sent on a mission to the Belgian coal mines in Borinage, she would not have felt the misery of the miners as her own crime, she would have not have sought redemption; she would not have painted Van Gogh's sunflowers. Not to mention that the mode of life of the painter—his solitude at Arles, his frequentation of cafés and brothels, all that nourished Van Gogh's art in nourishing his sensitivity—would have been forbidden her. A woman could never have become Kafka: in her doubts and her anxiety she would never have recognized the anguish of Man driven from paradise" (793–94).

29. According to Francis and Gontier, between 1929 and 1931 Beauvoir worked on a novel "inspired by Alain Fournier, Virginia Woolf and Rosamund Lehmann" (*Simone de Beauvoir* 118). They suggest that "Virginia Woolf, in her reflections on language and the novel, paralleled de Beauvoir's occupations. Like Woolf, de Beauvoir sought a way to reduce the distance between words and reality" (113). Colette's work is also compared on occasion to Beauvoir's. Elaine Marks cites Jean Cocteau's "amusing" remark from his *Colette: Discours de réception* (quoted in Dupont 184) that Beauvoir's novel *L'invitée* is a "kind of existentialist paraphrase of *Claudine en Ménage*." Marks adds that another of Colette's novels, *Minne*, written subsequently to the first four *Claudines*, is even closer to *L'invitée* (243 n. 10).

30. "For if Chloe likes Olivia and Mary Carmichael knows how to express it she will light a torch in that vast chamber where no one has yet been. It is all half lights and profound shadows like those serpentine caves where one goes with a candle peering up and down, not knowing where one is stepping" (*A Room of One's Own* 84).

31. This is an extract from an interview with Susan Husserl-Kapit in *Signs*, Winter 1975. This distinction made by Duras is picked up by a critic, who sends the reader who cannot stomach the violence of Duras's work to Colette or Simone de Beauvoir: "Plusieurs scènes illustrent ce qu'Isabelle lit dans les yeux de Nathalie

Granger: "Tous les possibles futurs de la violence, tous ses modes" (p. 74). Que ces modes outrepassent largement ceux de la sensualité pacifique ne devrait pas surprendre. Et s'ils surprennent, autant rêver à d'autres fêtes, autant lire Colette ou Simone de Beauvoir, autant refermer les livres de Marguerite Duras où, explicitement, la violence du désir appelle la seule violence et la mort" (Blot-Labarrère 104) ("Several scenes illustrate what Isabelle reads in the eyes of Nathalie Granger: 'All the possible futures of violence, all its modes' (p. 74). The fact that these modes largely surpass those of peaceful sensuality should not be a surprise. And if they do surprise, better to dream of other festivals, better to read Colette or Simone de Beauvoir, better to shut Marguerite Duras's books in which, explicitly, the violence of desire leads to the only violence and death").

32. In French, *L'Arc* 61 (1975): 39–54 (42 n.).

33. Duras's list runs as follows: "Les grandes lectures de ma vie, celles de moi seule, c'est celles écrites par des hommes. C'est Michelet. Michelet et encore Michelet, jusqu'aux larmes. Les textes politiques aussi, mais déjà moins. C'est Saint-Just, Stendhal, et bizarrement ce n'est pas Balzac. Le Texte des textes, c'est l'Ancien Testament" (*Écrire* 43) ("The great readings of my life, those all my own, are those written by men. I read and read and read Michelet, to the point of tears. Political texts also, but already less. I liked Saint-Just and Stendhal, but oddly enough not Balzac. The Text of all texts for me is the Old Testament").

34. "[O]n ne peut plus parler d'influence, mais d'intertextualité ou, pourquoi pas? de culture. Marguerite Duras 'écrit avec,' puisque, aussi bien, nul écrivain n'avance en terrain découvert [. . .] Très loin d'elle, Balzac, tout près, Virginia Woolf ou Louise Labbé [*sic*] évoquée dans *L'Amant de la Chine du nord*" (Blot-Labarrère 233–34).

35. Anais Nin compared Woolf and West: Nin thought Woolf "'over-intellectual' and indistinguishable from Rebecca West: 'each write[s] like a man and I don't like it.' She thought that either woman could have written *A Room of One's Own*" (Bair 102). Nin also read Colette and "credited [Colette] with 'the most powerful descriptive style of all the women in literature'" (Bair 110, 542). Nin, according to Bair, made Colette's novels her life. She "cast herself in the role of Colette's Léa instructing whichever youth was her Chéri of the moment" (Bair 314).

36. For West's review of *Orlando*, see "High Fountain of Genius" in Bonnie Kime Scott, *The Gender of Modernism*, 592–96.

37. Another article by West on Colette appeared in *Le figaro littéraire*, January 24, 1953, 5.

38. These were not the first translations of Colette's work. *Claudine at School* was originally translated by Janet Flanner in 1930.

39. In a letter Richardson suggests that the only thing Woolf and Jane Austen share is their snobbishness (43).

40. Richardson's assessment is echoed by French writer Hélène Cixous: "I was in the world of men almost exclusively. I worked on Shakespeare, Joyce, Kafka, on an amazing number of texts. But women? I did work on Virginia Woolf; in a sense I taught everyone, Marguerite Duras, Virginia Woolf, all the great writers. But Virginia Woolf, who is a great writer, isn't someone who satisfies me because she is slanted toward pain, which I understand very well, but I love life too much to content myself with such a morbid rapport to a form of death in women or death inflicted on women" (unpublished notes, quoted in Penrod 11). "Woolf was cut

off from an understanding of the day-to-day life of the women whom she wished to inspire; characteristically, she rebelled against aspects of female experience that she had never personally known and avoided describing her own experience" (Showalter quoted in Moi 4).

41. Kingsley Amis responded to Woolf's work in a similar way. "Of Woolf he said he found her created world wholly contrived: when reading her he found that he kept interpolating hostile negatives, murmuring 'Oh no she didn't' or 'Oh no he hadn't' or 'Oh no it wasn't' after each and every authorial proposition" (Martin Amis 31).

42. The interview "Doris Lessing: Hot Dawns" by Harvey Blume was originally published in 1962 in the *Boston Book Review*. Lessing's first novel, *The Rain Is Singing*, which is set in Africa, was published in 1950, a year after she arrived in England.

43. See Woolf's essay "The Russian Point of View," in her *Common Reader*.

44. Despite Lessing's disavowal of Woolf, Brewster and other critics have speculated about Woolf's influence on Lessing. Brewster links the female friendships in Lessing's work, such as that shared by Molly and Anna in *The Golden Notebook*, to Woolf's comments in *A Room of One's Own* about Chloe and Olivia: "'When women are alone, [ . . . ] unlit by the capricious and coloured light of the other sex,' what are their gestures, their half-said words?" (138). Further, she asks whether Lessing and Woolf have created a true picture of man, Lessing in *The Golden Notebook* and Woolf in *Orlando* or with Mr Ramsay in *To the Lighthouse*. Attention to rooms also ties the two writers together, according to Brewster: "Doris Lessing's marked interest in rooms is not just the novelist's usual concern with background [ . . . ] that fascinating room of her childhood; the big living room in 'Winter in July,' with the African night outside; the cramped, shabby, suffocating little bedroom in *The Grass Is Singing* where Mary Turner slowly decays; the blitzed but cosy basement which Rose in *The Other Woman* hated to leave; *Room Nineteen*, where Susan drifts off down the dark river of her suicide; the swaying tower room of 'Dialogue'; the spacious workroom where Anna's four notebooks—black, blue, red and yellow—are spread out upon the long trestle table" (138–39). Michael Cunningham's recent novel *The Hours* makes an implicit connection between Woolf and Lessing as he blends a rewriting of Lessing's story, "To Room Nineteen," into his Woolf novel.

45. Echoing Byatt's contention that her work is in some senses a reaction against that of Woolf, one critic is adamant about Woolf's absence from the work of another British writer, Muriel Spark (1918–), author of *The Bachelors* (1960) and *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* (1961): "The writer who is constantly falling, because she is pushing herself off her perch, calls no place her own. That means, among other things, that every word, every page Spark ever wrote simply loathes each beautifully phrased tittle and jot in Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*. I can go even further than that. Her entire career insists that a room of one's own can never be a room with a view worth savoring. What 'One' really needs—if one is a writer—is a room of somebody else's, a room that one might rent for a while with ease, and then just as easily abandon, divorce. A room, unburdened by one's past, in which a writer can always begin again. (I point this out here, in this collection of essays, merely as a kindness. The reader who believes that all worthwhile twentieth-century fiction by women must somehow affiliate to Woolf, and to

Woolf's own room, will give this chapter a pass.) No room of one's own, and no time of one's own" (Glavin 294).

46. Byatt insists: "Of course I am a feminist. But I don't want to be required to write to a feminist programme, and I feel uneasy when this seems to be asked of me. I am a bit too old to be a naturally political animal [ . . . ] I held a full-time university reading post for eleven years and now feel entirely happy, for the first time in my life, at the prospect of writing full time, thinking things out from beginning to end, and reading for my own purposes. I enjoyed teaching John Donne, Robert Browning, George Eliot, Charles Dickens, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, John Keats, Wallace Stevens, Emily Dickinson, and Henry James. But now reading is even more exciting. The novelist I love most is Marcel Proust. After him Balzac, Dickens, Eliot, Thomas Mann and James, Iris Murdoch, Ford Maddox Ford, and Willa Cather. And Leo Tolstoy and Fyodor Dostoevsky" ([www.asbyatt.com](http://www.asbyatt.com)).

47. See also "Virginia Woolf: A Personal Debt" (*Harper's Bazaar and Queen* [September 1972], 90–91, 128). Drabble is A. S. Byatt's sister.

48. In *Nights at the Circus* Lizzie says of Walser to Fevvers, recalling Max of *La vagabonde*: "He's too *young* for you, my girl. He's living proof that travel don't broaden the mind; instead, it renders a man *banal*." To which Fevvers responds: "Not his mind as interests me [ . . . ] Not his *face* as interests me" (172). Like Colette's Renée Néré in *La vagabonde*, and Colette herself, Fevvers is a transient stage performer with a somewhat witless male in tow. Jouve finds other evidence of Colette among the pages of Carter's stories: "In the first, the Bluebeard story that gives its name to the collection, I recognised a canny reader of Colette. It shimmered with skillfully modified bits from the *Claudine* novels, from *My Apprenticeships*, *My Mother's House*—and put to impertinent use a wonderfully intimate knowledge of the art and life of *fin-de-siècle* French decadence" (quoted in Jouve, "Mother Is a Figure of Speech" 144). She adds that Carter had "unnervingly and irreverently explored the alienating figures of romance, the rebellious Heathcliff-type hero (Jewel in *Heroes and Villains*), then the Wild Older Man (de Sade, Bluebeard, Mr Rochester, Colette's first husband, Willy) and disposed of them [ . . . ] Fear had to be conquered. Nothing sacred. Fear it is that makes predators of our wolves and tigers. 'If Little Red Riding Hood had laughed at the wolf and passed on, the wolf could never have eaten her' said Colette [ . . . ] 'The tiger will never lie down with the lamb; he acknowledges no pact that is not reciprocal. The lamb must learn to run with the tigers' [writes Carter in *The Bloody Chamber*]. Girls' fearlessness delivers man from his beastliness" (145). In Carter's rewriting of the Little Red Riding Hood story, "The Company of Wolves," Little Red Riding Hood indeed laughs at the Wolf, a gesture interpreted by Colette: "Note that it was Little Red Riding Hood who was the first to speak to the Wolf. If, seeing a Wolf in place of Grandmother, she had gone on her way, the Wolf would have never existed" (Colette, *Looking Backwards* 99). When Jouve sent Angela Carter her book about Colette, "she sent back a Christmas card with fat puddings on it. Inside it said: 'Read it at one gulp. Mmmm'" ("Mother Is a Figure" 150).

49. In the course of her article, Carter compares Colette and Willy to Virginia and Leonard Woolf. A loving relationship, Carter suggests, does nothing to improve a writer's output. After she met Goudekot, Carter reminds us, Colette wrote very little fiction; Leonard Woolf, she suggests, did not do "his wife a favour by mothering her . . ." (524).

50. In “Wrapped in the Stars and Stripes: Virginia Woolf in the U.S.A.,” Jane Marcus addresses the American cooption and fetishization of Virginia Woolf and advocates that Woolf be returned home. Marcus considers that the English are wrong, and she cites Angela Carter and Terry Eagleton (strange bedfellows, she contends) as holding this view, to cast Woolf as a class enemy. “The reader from outside this culture,” suggests Marcus, “often has been attracted to Virginia Woolf for precisely the expression of radical social ideas and critiques of class patriarchy and state institutions which her novels and essays provide. It seems to me possible to maintain views abusing Virginia Woolf as a figure of dread only if (as I also believe is true) she is widely unread, unread certainly by those who edit the literary journals and the review columns in newspapers and probably by those who teach Joyce, Yeats and T. S. Eliot” (21).

51. In an article entitled “Woolf by the Lake, Woolf at the Circus: Carter and Tradition,” Isobel Armstrong argues that Anita Brookner and Angela Carter have a common precursor in Virginia Woolf: “Carter’s work comes out of the possibilities for bravura fantasies in *Orlando* (1928) and the surreal critique of *Between the Acts* (1941). Brookner’s work comes out of the lyric novels, *Mrs Dalloway* (1925) and *To the Lighthouse* (1927) in particular. [ . . . ] It is not surprising,” suggests Armstrong, “to find out that Carter had worked on a libretto of *Orlando*” (258). Armstrong likens *Orlando* to Fevvers (271). Brookner’s *Hotel du lac*, suggests Armstrong, explores desire issuing from lack, in a desiccated middle-class world. In *Hotel du lac* Edith, who looks like Virginia Woolf, has a pseudonym. It is Vanessa Wilde. In the novel Edith is given the task of coming to terms with contemporary sexual decadence (Fullbrook 97). “Carter’s *Nights at the Circus* is concerned with the assertive desire issuing from the desire to make demands on life, and with redefining desire itself with the farce, cunning and high spirits of Benjamin’s storyteller” (Armstrong, “Woolf by the Lake” 271).

52. This volume is the last of Kristeva’s three-volume work entitled *Le génie féminin*, the first two volumes of which cover Hannah Arendt and Melanie Klein. While Arendt and Klein offer a picture of the political and psychic climate of the twentieth century, respectively, Colette, as Kristeva states in a 1999 interview, provides another face to the century, that of pleasure: “Tout en étant celui du totalitarisme thématisé par Hannah Arendt et celui de la folie traité par Melanie Klein, notre siècle est aussi un siècle de plaisirs, de joies, de bien-être. A côté de ces deux juives dramatiques que sont Arendt et Klein, *il me fallait une paysanne française, charnelle, paienne et jubilante*. Colette s’est imposée.” (my emphasis; “Interview”) (“While being one of totalitarianism thematized by Hannah Arendt and one of madness treated by Melanie Klein, our century is also a century of pleasures, joys, well-being. Alongside these two dramatic Jewesses, Arendt and Klein, I needed a French peasant, carnal, pagan, and jubilant. Colette was just what I was looking for”). (Kristeva also asserts, “Lorsque j’écris des romans, j’aime la lire. Ses écrits sont *une sorte de bain de langue* qui me ressourcent” [my emphasis; “Interview”] [“I like to read her books while I’m writing. Her books are like a sort of bath of language that restores me”].)

53. Other contemporary British writers have acknowledged their debt to Colette, as well as to Woolf. Novelists Emma Tennant and Sue Roe in conversation discuss their debts to Woolf and Colette: “ET: your writing has very strong colour and sensuality, as indeed had Colette. SR: Colette was very formative, as

was Virginia Woolf, of course” (Monteith 126). Critics have noted Woolf’s place in Tennant’s work: “[I]n *Alice Fell* (Tennant) Virginia Woolf seems to animate the vision of the particularities of family life as set against the larger world. I was reminded of the ‘Times Passes’ section of *To the Lighthouse*, in which small moments and details of life in a country house [ . . . ] are suddenly reimagined in terms of the impinging forces of time and politics: ‘What people had shed and left—a pair of shoes, a shooting cap, some faded skirts and coats in wardrobes—those alone kept the human shape and the emptiness indicated how once they were filled and animated; how once hands were busy with hooks and buttons; how once the looking-glass had held a face; had held a world hollowed out in which a figure turned, a hand flashed, the door opened, in came children rushing and tumbling, and went out again’” (Wesley 185). Writer Michèle Roberts, who is half French and half English, suggests that Colette is loved by women for her brazen disregard for patriarchy. “Colette (1873–1954) [ . . . ] is beloved of women, particularly, for her courage in raising two fingers to the moral and literary establishments of her time” (11). A novel based on Colette, entitled *After Colette* (1993), by a Scottish writer, Joan Lingard, further attests to the interest of English authors in their French literary foremother. The Woolfian counterparts to this novel are the Pulitzer Prize winner *The Hours* (1998) by Michael Cunningham, Robin Lippincott’s novella *Mr. Dalloway* (1999), and, in French, Jacqueline Harpman’s *Orlanda* (1996).

54. Winterson echoes Toril Moi. Moi criticizes Showalter for “[defining] effective feminist writing as work that offers a powerful expression of personal experience in a social framework” (4). Moi questions Showalter’s criticism of Woolf for her detachment from her narrative. Further, she takes issue with Showalter’s suggestion that Woolf’s famous statements regarding the androgynous mind of the writer mark a “flight away from a ‘troubled feminism’” (2), the elusiveness of her perspective in the text, and a failure to produce a committed feminist text. Moi cites the following passage from Showalter’s *A Literature of Our Own*: “Woolf was cut off from an understanding of the day-to-day life of the women whom she wished to inspire; characteristically, she rebelled against aspects of female experience that she had never personally known and avoided describing her own experience” (quoted in Moi 4). Moi contends that Showalter is wrong to advocate a reading that does not take into account the narrative strategies of the text. Moi also dislikes the way in which Jane Marcus (who calls Woolf a “guerilla fighter in a Victorian skirt”) relies on biographical information to support her assertions about Woolf’s writing (Moi 17). “Implicit,” Moi writes, in Showalter’s and others’ work is “the assumption that good feminist fiction would present truthful images of strong women with which the reader may identify” (7).

55. Sido and the narrator’s mother in *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* have an almost exclusive relationship with their daughter; in each case the father is almost nonexistent. Winterson’s characterization of herself as collector and hoarder recalls Colette’s characterization of Sido in *La naissance du jour* (and elsewhere, herself) as “une thésauriseuse” (52) (“a hoarder”). “I draw on everything I can find for my work—I’m a robber and a hoarder and a pawnbroker and a collector. The trick is to merge all this stuff into my own preoccupations and make new connections and a new whole. What is important though, is that creative work influences theory and not the other way round” (“Interview”). Her presence on the Internet, available at [www.jeanettewinterson.com](http://www.jeanettewinterson.com), the brashness with which she has promoted

herself, and her openness with regard to her personal life might all have appealed to Colette. According to her Web site, Winterson recently reread Colette's work, rereleased by Vintage Press.

56. "Colette a trouvé un langage pour dire *une étrange osmose entre ses sensations, ses désirs et ses angoisses, ces 'plaisirs qu'on nomme, à la légère, physiques' et l'infini du monde*—éclosions de fleurs, ondoiements de bêtes, apparitions sublimes, monstres contagieux. Ce langage transcende sa présence de femme dans le siècle—vagabonde ou entravée, libre, cruelle ou compatissante. Le style épouse ses racines terriennes et son accent bourguignon, tout en les allégeant dans une alchimie qui nous demeure encore mystérieuse. Elle-même l'appelle un 'alphabet nouveau.' Quel alphabet?" (my emphasis; 13–14).

57. "Provocante, scandaleuse par l'audace de ses mœurs et de son parcours, cette femme attachante refuse de s'enfermer dans un quelconque militantisme et ne prêche aucune transgression" (17).

58. In her book on Colette, Kristeva compares Woolf and Colette: "Alors que les grandes œuvres littéraires de ses consœurs européennes excellent dans la mélancolie—d'Emilie Dickinson à Virginia Woolf en passant par Anna Akhmatova—, Colette la Française, si elle eût pu devenir 'favorite à Versailles, elle eût gouverné le roi et le royaume' (plaisante François Nourissier)" (*Le génie féminin* 24) ("While the great literary works of her European and American female compatriots excel in misery—from Emily Dickinson to Virginia Woolf, passing via Anna Akhmatova—, the French woman Colette, if she had become 'favorite at Versailles, she would have governed the king and the kingdom' (jokes François Nourissier)"). In her novel *Les samouraïs*, suggesting a tribute to Woolf, Kristeva includes a character called Edward Dalloway. "For Dalloway, eroticism was connected with sound: he transformed his perceptions into aural perceptions, traveling among resonances, losing himself in contours of sonority, drowning under the spell of tones" (*Les samouraïs* 269). In *Des Chinoises (About Chinese Women)* Kristeva reflects on Woolf's suicide, comparing it to those of Russian poet Marina Tsvetayeva and American poet Sylvia Plath. "I think of Virginia Woolf, who sank wordlessly into the river, her pockets weighed down with stones. Haunted by voices, waves, lights, in love with colours—blue, green—and seized by a strange gaiety that would bring on the fits of strangled, screeching laughter recalled by Miss Brown" (quoted in *Kristeva Reader* 157). She turns to these suicides in a section entitled "I who want not to be" as part of an exploration of the double bind in which woman finds herself at the present time—defined, according to Moi, by Judeo-Christian culture as "the unconscious of the symbolic order, as a timeless, drive-related *jouissance*, which through its very marginality threatens to break the symbolic chain"—she must neither refuse her role as the unconscious truth about patriarchy, for in so doing she identifies with the father and thus supports the patriarchal order, nor must she refuse to insert herself into the symbolic order, and in so doing embrace the masculine model of femininity (*Kristeva Reader* 139).

59. Cixous notes a similar phenomenon in terms of the reception of her work: "à l'étranger par contre je suis moins menaçante, parce que je ne suis pas là; c'est toujours pareil: à l'étranger je suis lue et ma force—ce qui vient, si vous voulez, du lecteur et qui est essentiel pour moi comme écrivain—vient d'Angleterre, des Etats-Unis, du Canada etc. Je suis lue et aimée à l'abri de la distance [ . . . ] la France donne une image trompeuse, on pense toujours que c'est un pays éclairé,

révolutionnaire, penseur . . . et c'est vrai, c'est vrai qu'il y a la philosophie, la psychanalyse etc. . . . mais la France est profondément misogyne" (Cremonese 146) ("Abroad on the other hand I am less threatening, because I am not there; it's always the same: abroad I'm read and my force—that which comes, if you like, from the reader, who is essential to me as a writer—comes from England, the United States, Canada, etc. I am read and liked under the shelter of distance [ . . . ] France gives a false image, people always think that it's an enlightened, revolutionary, thoughtful country . . . and it's true that it has philosophy, psychoanalysis, etc. . . . but France is profoundly misogynistic").

### *Notes to Conclusion*

1. Books on Colette and food include Henri Béraud's *Colette gastronome: Le capitole* (cited in Chauvière). *Les recettes de Colette* consists of recipes adapted from Colette's work in collaboration with Pauline, Colette's longtime housekeeper, compiled by Marie Christine and Didier Clément.

2. "jambon de pays, tomates et pêches, fromages, tartes de frangipane [ . . . ]" (*La naissance du jour* 138).

3. One exception is Allie Glenny's *Ravenous Identities: Eating and Eating Distress in the Lives and Works of Virginia Woolf* (1999). Glenny argues for a more careful reading of food in Woolf's work. Starting from the perspective of her own experience as an anorexia sufferer, Glenny addresses Woolf's difficulties with food and then goes on to explore in great depth the centrality of food to her work. She suggests that "dwelling on food was, as Woolf saw it, an act of female liberation. It was part of the process both of seeing the world through our own, female, lenses and, more actively, of righting a skewed world which had purged the sensual and elevated the rational [ . . . ] Writing was for her a pursuit that took place within the context of domesticity, not in monastic seclusion from the activities of the kitchen" (xii).

4. See Quentin Bell's *Virginia Woolf: A Biography* (147).

5. In 1930 Woolf imagines herself at liberty in France with Roger Fry sitting on the pavement drinking coffee (*Diary* 3: 323). In 1929 she writes to Dorothy Bussy, "But what I want to suggest is that we might meet in France—where I suppose you to be. I'm having windows put in a small peasants hut in a wood near Cassis—I hope to be there off and on. Couldn't we postpone our tea till January?—and it would then be better than tea; it would be wine and ices in blazing sun" (*Letters* 4: 86). A little later she writes to Hugh Walpole: "I have a wild desire to rush over to France and furnish my peasants hut—I told you I had three rooms in a wood didn't I, near Cassis?—and live on coffee and macaroni and sit in the sun and drink quantities of Captain Teed's cheap white wine; but I suppose I shant" (*Letters* 4: 91).

6. "Est-ce un privilège de naître un 26 janvier 1882 (*sic*), à Londres, dans une famille bourgeoise et respectable pour qui le bœuf bouilli, les meubles de peluche, la cérémonie du thé, la conversation sont encore des institutions; le système familial une tyrannie; le goût pour la solitude une originalité provocante interprétée comme une preuve de rébellion? La famille est un cercle qui vous protège et qui, si vous n'êtes pas solidement constitué, risque fort de vous détruire."

7. The possibility that Woolf was anorexic has been addressed by many critics. See Lee (175–200) and Glenny's *Ravenous Identities*.

8. In Noble's *Recollections* Louie Mayer describes how Woolf taught her to make bread: "But there was one thing in the kitchen that Mrs Woolf was very good at doing; she could make beautiful bread. The first question she asked me when I went to Monks House was if I knew how to make it. I told her that I had made some for my family, but I was no expert at it. 'I will come into the kitchen Louie' she said, 'and show you how to do it. We have always made our own bread.' I was surprised how complicated the process was and how accurately Mrs Woolf carried it out. She showed me how to make the dough with the right quantities of yeast and flour, and then how to knead it. She returned three or four times during the morning to knead it again. Finally, she made the dough into the shape of a cottage loaf and baked it at just the right temperature" (757). Woolf talks very possessively about "my bread" in a letter to Leonard Woolf (*Letters 2*: 194).

9. "Débordante de vie, d'activité, elle resplendit de joie physique, serrant sur son cœur fort tout ce qui palpite pour l'êtreindre, pour l'écraser, pour en exprimer la moelle substantifique. Puis, les mains en avant, elle va, elle va vers l'univers pour saisir encore et goûter à tout. Entre temps, passive, musarde, gourmette, elle croque des pommes et éventre des éclairs au chocolat" (1).

10. "Quel ancêtre me légua, à travers des parents si frugaux, cette sorte de religion du lapin sauté, du gigot à l'ail, de l'œuf mollet au vin rouge, le tout servi entre des murs de grange nappés de draps écrus où la rose rouge de juin, épinglée, resplendit" (6).

11. "J'ai toujours aimé manger, mais qu'était mon appétit au prix de celui de Lina? Sa majesté fondait, remplacée par une expression de volupté douce et d'innocence. L'éclat des dents, des yeux, de la bouche lustrée était d'une jeune fille. Rares sont les beautés qui peuvent bâfrer sans déchoir! Quand Lina repoussait enfin son assiette, c'est qu'elle l'avait vidée quatre, cinq fois . . ." (*Œuvres 3*: 991).

12. Vivien is also discussed by Colette in her *Aventures quotidiens*. For a portrait of her lover, the American Natalie Clifford Barney, see *Mes apprentissages* (1071/128).

13. "Si je suis farouche sur le point de la littérature, et avare de paroles sauf que volontiers je m'écrie d'admiration, je rencontrai chez Renée une parfaite pudeur de métier, un silence de bonne compagnie" (89) ("I am sparing of words on that subject [literature], except for occasional exclamations of admiration, and in Renée Vivien I found the same diffidence and well-bred restraint" [81]).

14. "[L]es languettes de poisson cru roulées sur des baguettes de verre, le foie gras, les écrevisses, des salades au sucre et au poivre, un Piper-Heidsieck brut très bien choisi et des cocktails—déjà—d'une exceptionnelle roideur" (91).

15. "Ce qu'on appelle la vie de bohème m'a toujours convenu aussi mal que les chapeaux emplumés ou une paire de pendants d'oreille" (1012).

16. See Bettina Knapp's short article on the *bœuf en daube* and French impressionism.

17. Mr Pepper of *The Voyage Out* thinks no private cook can cook vegetables (84). At dinner he toys with fragments of lettuce "with the gesture of a man pronging seaweed, detecting gravel, suspecting germs" (84).

18. Vanessa Bell is also seduced by the beef. On first reading *To the Lighthouse*

in 1927, she asks Virginia for the recipe: “But how do you make Boeuf en Daube? Does it have to be eaten on the moment after cooking 3 days?” (*Letters* 3: 573).

19. The sensual nature of fruit also appears in *The Years*. At Sara’s house, on her way to Delia’s party, Maggie looks at the fruit on the table, her description perhaps doubling as a description of her sister, Sara. “On the dinner table lay the dish of fruit; the heavy sensual apples lay side by side with the yellow spotted bananas. It was an odd combination—the round and the tapering, the rosy and the yellow [and in the dark] ghostly apples, ghostly bananas” (350).

20. In “A Feast of Words in Mrs Dalloway,” Molly Hoff ties Lady Bruton’s lunch to its classical predecessors, arguing that “Lady Bruton’s luncheon truly merits its place among the set pieces of culinary literature like Trimalchio’s hilarious yet profound feast in Petronius’ *Satyricon* V” (91). She argues that “the vocabulary of food and literary style overlap” (95).

21. “La première chose qui saisit, en entrant chez Colette, c’est l’odeur: ça sent bon le chocolat, la cire, la pêche mûre, le pain grillé” (237).

22. “Ses textes sont comme des appels d’offre aux fantasmes de l’oralité [ . . . ] Il faut que les mots prennent la forme de la sensation, la bonne forme, de même que Pati-Pati ouvre une bouche ronde pour manger une fraise ronde” (46). Milner goes on to describe Colette’s response to her friend Marguerite Moreno’s efforts to describe a “charming and delicate” dinner. Colette reproaches Moreno for not only not making anything visual, but also not making anything taste of anything (45).

23. “En les achetant mûres et les laissant pourrir un petit peu, les bananes, c’est le bon Dieu en culotte de velours liberty!” (33).

24. “[L]es bananes trop avancées et des grogs froids avec des gâteaux salés” (130).

25. “Je mange une petite timbale aux truffes qui consolerait une veuve de la veille” (53).

26. “[U]ne admirable glace à la mandarine [qui] me détache d’ailleurs de toute autre préoccupation” (54).

27. “Mon cousin l’Oncle [ . . . ] me demande du thé, exige de la crème, plus que ça, deux sucres, un sandwich, pas celui du dessus parce qu’il a dû sécher, et quoi encore? *Mais nos deux gourmandises se comprennent* et je ne m’impatiente pas” (my emphasis; 87).

28. “[D]es bonbons, des pâtisseries, des petits oiseaux à manger. Et mieux que ça, du champagne à dîner” (160).

29. “Gigi [ . . . ] est si gourmande! Si elle avait la tête aussi active que les mâchoires!” (17).

30. “Les ortolans, coupe-les en deux, d’un coup de couteau bien assuré qui ne fasse pas grincer la lame sur l’assiette. Croque chaque moitié” (37).

31. “Elle savait sa leçon, rompait délicatement son pain, mangeait la bouche close, se gardait, en découpant sa viande, d’avancer l’index sur le dos de lame” (36).

32. “[Elle] déjeuna dans une solitude joyeuse, souriant au Vouvray sec et aux fraises de juin servies avec leurs queues sur un plat de Rubelles, vert comme une rainette mouillée” (17–18).

33. “[D]es bonnes fraises, de la crème fraîche, des tartes, des petits poulets grillés” (34).

34. “Prends le pain le plus cuit . . . Ne mange pas tant de mie fraîche . . . Tu n’as jamais su choisir un fruit” while, “maussade” in secret, she rebuked herself: “elle se gourmandait” (63).

35. “Un poids invisible tirait en bas le menton et les joues, attristait les coins tremblants de la bouche. Dans ce naufrage de la beauté, Chéri retrouvait, intacts, le joli nez dominateur, les prunelles d’un bleu de fleur bleue . . .” (185).

36. “Elle se souvint qu’elle déjeunait seule, et n’eut envie d’aucun restaurant. [ . . . ] elle acheta sur sa route des fenouils frais, une boîte de thon, des œufs à la coque, du fromage blanc et un quart de champagne. Mais la faim impérieuse qui la mordait au creux de l’estomac compromit sa dinette. Pendant qu’un œuf dansait dans l’eau bouillante, Alice mangeait le thon sans pain, le fromage poudré de poivre, et elle croquait les fenouils en guise de dessert lorsqu’elle s’avisait qu’elle n’avait pas débouché la petite bouteille de champagne. Elle la rangea dans ‘le padirac-deux,’ qui était le placard de la cuisine. Sur l’évier, une paire de bas de soie trempait dans une cuvette émaillée” (150).

37. “Un second couvert . . . Cela tient peu de place, maintenant: une assiette verte, un gros verre ancien, un peu trouble. Si je fais signe qu’on l’enlève à jamais, aucun souffle pernicieux, accouru soudain de l’horizon, ne lèvera mes cheveux droits et ne fera tourner—cela s’est vu—ma vie dans un autre sens. Ce couvert ôté de ma table, je mangerai pourtant avec appétit. Il n’y a plus de mystère, plus de serpent lové sous la serviette que pince et marque pour la distinguer de la mienne, la lyre de cuivre qui maintenait, au dessus d’un vieil ophicléide du siècle dernier, les pages désertes d’une partition où l’on ne lisait que des ‘temps forts,’ semés à intervalles égaux comme des larmes . . . Ce couvert est celui de l’ami qui vient et s’en va, ce n’est plus d’un maître du logis qui foule, aux heures nocturnes, le sonore plancher d’une chambre là-haut . . . Les jours où l’assiette, le verre, la lyre manquent en face de moi, je suis simplement seule, et non délaissée” (25–26).

38. “‘Il n’est vendange que d’automne . . .’ Peut-être qu’en amour aussi” (49).

39. “N’importe quel amour, si on se fie à lui, tend à s’organiser à la manière d’un tube digestif” (49).

40. “[U]n déjeuner méridional, salades, rascasse farcie et beignets d’aubergines, ordinaire que je corsais de quelque oiseau rôti” (55).

41. “[Q]uatre petits poulets fendus par moitié, frappés du plat de la hachette, salés, poivrés, bénis d’huile pure, administrée avec un goupillon de *pebreda* dont les folioles et le goût restent sur la chair grillée” (55–56).

42. “Ce n’est pas aujourd’hui, mais c’est bientôt, je pense, que je renoncerai à la chair des bêtes” (56).

43. “Quand certain cannibalisme meurt, tous les autres déménagent d’eux-mêmes, comme les puces d’un hérisson mort” (56).

44. “Il pencha son torse nu, lustré de soleil et de sel, dont la peau mire le jour. Selon qu’il bougeait, il était vert autour des reins, bleu sur les épaules, à l’image des teinturiers de Fez. Quand je commandai ‘stop,’ il coupa le fil d’huile dorée, se redressa, et je reposai ma main un moment sur son poitrail, comme sur un cheval, flatteusement. Il regarda ma main, qui annonce mon âge,—à la vérité, elle porte quelques années de plus—mais je ne retirai pas ma main” (56–57).

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