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FEMINIST ADVOCACY IN THE NOVELS OF GEORGE SAND

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ABSTRACT

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George Sand has been considered by many critics as a pioneer in feminist thought. Two of her novels best known to critics, Indiana (1832) and Lélia (1833 and 1839) contain strident condemnation of women's subordinate, dependent role in society. George Sand continued her advocacy for women's rights in the majority of her other novels, yet these novels remain mostly unknown to critics.

Of George Sand's sixty-five full-length novels, the sixty-two that feature a female protagonist constitute the corpus of this study. Each novel is analyzed for its representation of women, their role in society, the possibilities and restrictions they face, and their own views concerning their lives. Sand's feminist advocacy is seen to be both prescient and persistent. Her message is consistent throughout her career; it is not limited to a particular time in her life, nor to the political atmosphere in which she was writing. The approaches presented here reveal a previously unseen agenda for feminist advocacy, one that spans Sand's vast corpus of novels. The majority of them communicate Sand's beliefs and message, yet she used various methods to present her point of view. It is hoped that this study will encourage others to (re)-read Sand's lesser-known novels, which reveal her all-encompassing, never-ceasing advocacy for women.

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Introduction

George Sand, one of the most prolific nineteenth-century French women authors, has been considered by most critics as a pioneer of feminist thought. She incorporated her philosophy of equality for women into her many novels, plays, and essays. Her characters expound upon the virtues of equal education, equal rights under the law, and the misogynist nature of arranged marriages. Her pastoral novels paint the portrait of an idealistic society, where women quietly maneuver and control the destinies of their families, and in the majority of her novels the female protagonist marries for love. Because of her obvious interest in women's role in society, and because she was a woman author, any study of her work must address the feminist issues inherent in it. There are many schools of thought among feminist critics, each bringing its own background, agenda, and interpretation to its study.

Feminist criticism of Sand, however, raises several problems. Feminist critics differ in their evaluation of Sand, they focus on only selected portions of her work, and they either overlook her shifting positions or do not evaluate them dispassionately. No overview of Sand's fiction from a feminist perspective has yet been attempted.[1] Such a survey will reveal the full significance of her challenge to culturally conditioned gender roles, and the persistent restrictive effect of such stereotypes.

Some of the major schools of feminist criticism that have been applied to Sand's novels include "l'écriture féminine" (Cixous), psycholanalytic criticism (Chodorow et al), and cultural feminism (Donovan). All these approaches can be fruitfully applied to Sand, and in the last two decades they have formed the bulk of Sandian scholarship.

The concept that best applies to the majority of Sand's female protagonists is androgyny, as defined by Carolyn Heilbrun. She calls it a "condition under which the characteristics of the sexes, and the human impulses expressed by men and women, are not rigidly assigned. Androgyny seeks to liberate the individual from the confines of the appropriate" (x). George Sand's society expected women to behave in certain ways; they were to be passive, dependent, and obedient; they were supposed to accept their life and not complain; they were to accept the double sexual standards without challenging them. When they defied those gender-restricted expectations they were seen to transgress. Many of Sand's heroines transgress and her novels explore the possible outcomes. George Sand was such an all-encompassing author that it is difficult to determine one approach that invariably works. When her work is studied comprehensively, it becomes evident that she used many different means to achieve her end. Portions of her work fit into each of the major schools of feminist criticism; her novels, when seen as a whole, demonstrate that George Sand saw the problems inherent in her society. She not only addressed those problems, she suggested solutions to them as well as alternative ways of seeing the world and women.

Three recurring themes, evident across all five decades of her writing, lend themselves particularly well to feminist interpretation. Most prominent of these is a woman's need to maintain a good reputation. Each of Sand's female characters lives with constant reminders of the fragility of her reputation. Another key theme is that arranged marriages based on money, social status, and birth are usually inimical to a woman's happiness and result in what she termed legalized prostitution or slavery. The third major theme in Sand is her assertion that women should be educated in the same way as men; the traditional education given to women is seen as inadequate and tending toward

keeping women in a child-like state.[2] Most of Sand's heroines either have an unusual, masculine education or else they decry their lack of it.

Despite a few major, well-known feminist novels, the majority of Sand's narrative fiction does not meet obvious, all-encompassing feminist standards.[3] Most Sandian critics agree that George Sand's feminism can be debated. Those who call her anti-feminist refer to what she said and did or did not do in the political arena of nineteenth-century France.[4] Those critics who study her fiction see a more clearly defined, albeit limited feminism in her works.[5] Claudine Chonez explains, "la liberté que défend George Sand se limite généralement à celle de la femme vis-à-vis de l'amour, vis-à-vis du mariage où elle est presque toujours exploitée . . . elle se contente de protester contre l'oppression ou la brutalité maritales" (77). [All ellipses are mine unless otherwise noted.]

Instead of the expected liberal use of female narration and perspective, the majority of Sand's novels are written from the male protagonist's perspective and voice. Only five novels consistently adopt the first-person female voice: Flavie (1859), La Confession d'une jeune fille (1864), Césarine Dietrich (1870), Malgrétout (1870), and Nanon (1872); all of these novels are either letters, personal journals, or memoirs intended for the fictive writer's family members. Other novels include but are not dominated by a female voice: Jacques (1834) is an epistolary novel where the female protagonist's letters are included; Leone Leoni (1834), while framed by a third-person narrator, has as its core the first-person narration of the female protagonist. All the other novels are either third-person narration or told from a male perspective and with a male voice.

The repertory of female characters in her novels illuminate Sand's sociopolitical agenda. For this study I have emphasized sixty-two novels, most

of which have not received much critical attention, particulary in the area of feminist criticism. I have chosen not to treat Indiana (1832), Lélia (1833/1839), La Petite Fadette (1849), Consuelo (1842), and La Comtesse de Rudolstadt (1843) as extensively as the others, since each has already been thoroughly analyzed and labeled feminist. Instead, I have included a brief synopsis of the major feminist criticism for each of them. I have omitted Les Maîtres mosaïstes (1837), Spiridion (1838), and Un Hiver à Majorque (1841), because they contain no female protagonists. My desire is to highlight the feminist advocacy in Sand's lesser-known body of work, as well as in those novels which, while known to the public, have received relatively less attention from feminist critics.

I have approached each novel with the following questions:

1) With which characters does the reader identify?

2) What roles do the female characters play in the novel?

3) Do the female characters have any power, i.e., do they effect change in their own lives or in the lives of their community?

4) How do the female characters conceive their place and role?

5) How are the female characters' issues resolved at the end of the novel?

In addition to my own comments regarding these questions I have cited pertinent criticism concerning feminist aspects of each work. I have chosen not to discuss any in-depth psychoanalytical or biographical aspects of Sand's fiction in the body of this dissertation; that has been ably done by many critics, whose works are noted in the bibliography. I wished instead to focus on the texts themselves. I have arranged this study into five chapters, each treating one approach utilized by Sand to communicate her message of the unfair practices of her society toward women. Advocacy of the rights of women forms the basis of my definition of feminism as it pertains to George Sand's fiction. The categories I have created reflect the various tools and methods I believe

she used to communicate her message. The aspects of Sand's feminism discussed here include neither "écriture féminine" nor separatist feminism; Sand's feminism corresponds most closely with today's equity feminism, aothough it is not entirely identical. Because of her society's lack of vision and understanding, Sand used her fiction to encourage others to see the inequities that she did. She made feminist statements throughout her career in both negative descriptive ways, showing how unfair society can be to some women and how unbearable their lives are, and in idealistically prescriptive ways, showing how different women's lives could be if they were allowed to act on their ideas and emotions, and if they were to fight against society's restrictions on them. Despite a few questionable circumstances and situations in some of them, the body of Sand's novels as a whole can be seen as advocating her particular brand of equity feminism. As Françoise Massardier-Kenney states, "Sand's literary critique of patriarchal culture, specifically of marriage, sex, and family structure, is accompanied by the need to change the subject, the female subject as well as the male subject" (12). Carolyn Heilbrun states that "the great novel," (or in this case, I believe, novelist), "beyond convention, anticipates undreamed of complexities and becomes symbolic in a universe unknown to its author " (or, in Sand's case, her society), "and (the novelist's) intentions" (57).

Indeed, Sand's works did influence her society and the world. She has been praised as "the most important writer of the epic age in terms of worldwide effect" (Moers 31). George Henry Lewes called her "a poet . . . uttering the collective voice of her epoch" (quoted in Moers 31). Among the intellectuals of her time she influenced and impressed Walt Whitman, Turgenev, Dostoevsky, Marx, Taine, Ruskin, Mary Gaskell and George Eliot, among others. Elizabeth Barrett Browning wrote two poems about her, and both Flaubert and Hugo counted among her many correspondents. She was active in the politics of her

time, particularly in the revolutionary government of 1848. Her participation was, according to Ellen Moers, "a first for women's history" (30). She received both criticism and acclaim for her novels: some dismiss them as sentimental love stories; others commend them as didactic, socialist, and revolutionary. In her day she was ranked with Balzac and Eugène Sue as "one of the most popular authors in France" (Laird 8). She baffled her male contemporaries and inspired her female contemporaries. Unlike the mediocre novelist some called her, Sand created energy, positive and negative, in her readers; most often in correlation with their gender.[6]

The British reactions to her work have been well-documented by Patricia Thomson. They range from "admiration" to "moral outrage" (Thomson 11). Some critics called her "a woman of genius," others labeled her "the anti-matrimonial novelist" (Thomson 13). After a series of scathing reviews which, according to Thomson, "did George Sand's reputation in England much damage," (15) critics nevertheless began to understand the true message of her novels: "It is against, and not for, license, that Sand is contending; for the right of a woman to belong to the man she deems worthy, and while she deems him worthy" (Francis Burdett, quoted in Thomson 17). In the 1850's Henry Lewes wrote, "For eloquence and depth of feeling, no man approaches George Sand" (quoted in Thomson 27). George Sand impressed her contemporaries; both in the convictions expressed in her novels and in her ability as a writer. One critic claimed: "never, surely, was style carried to a greater perfection . . . so clear, pure, keen, we seem to breathe some mountain air, first delightful, then almost trying to our organs" (Francis Burdett, quoted in Thomson 17). Male and female British writers were influenced by her style and ideas; comparative studies show how many of their novels, and how many different types of writers, reflected this influence.[7] Sand also strongly influenced the Russians. Dawn Eidelman has

studied the importance of Sand's works to both male and female nineteenth-century Russian writers. There was "a veritable cult in appreciation of the fiction of George Sand . . . so pervasively did Sand's work influence Tsarist Russia that a special term was coined to describe the literary phenomenon: zhorzhzandism" (21). While the official Russian government press labeled her "shameless, immoral, immodest, indecent, insidious and machiavellian," the people eagerly read her works (quoted in Eidelman 20). Pauline Viardot wrote to Sand, "là-bas tous vos ouvrages sont traduits à mesure qu'ils paraissent, tout le monde les lit du haut en bas de l'échelle, les hommes vous adorent, les femmes vous idolâtrent et vous régnez sur la Russie plus souverainement que le Tzar" (quoted in Karp 151). The intellectuals read her works as well, and she is credited as being the "mother of Russian realism" (Mirsky, quoted in Karp 153).[8] Sand's influence on Italian writers has been ably documented by Annarosa Poli; Hugh Harter has studied her reception and influence in Spain. Her influence was also felt in America: according to Leland Person, "reading and writing about Sand compelled [Henry] James to reexamine gender questions" (516). James was intrigued by Sand's "ease of living by improvisation--most compellingly the ease of constructing one's gender" (Person 516). Sand's revolutionary ideas concerning gender roles and personalities made an impact on James' personal life as well as his writings. She was an international figure: not only a recorder of her time, but a prophet, philosopher and leader. She has been called the "greatest feminine genius known to literature" (Howe xiii). She is one of only three women listed in most histories of French literature published between 1848 and 1968; Colette and de Beauvoir are the others. (Holmes xi).

She did not receive acclaim from everyone, however; her male contemporaries criticized her because she broke the tradition of "women's

writing," such as it was in the nineteenth century. Yet Lucy Schwartz maintains that Sand was a part of the tradition of women's literature, although she changed it significantly and permanently. The catalogue of Sand's library includes almost 150 titles of novels, letters, and "memoirs written by women and biographies of famous women" (Schwartz, "Roman," 220). Sand read the works of Mme de Sévigné, Mme de Lafayette, Mme de Staël, and Mme de Genlis, among others (OA 1: 627-629). The "roman intime" as defined by Sainte-Beuve is a love story, composed of emotions. The majority of these novels, according to Schwartz, "include love triangles" and "obstacles," and typically "end tragically as society triumphs over love" ("Roman" 221) They are usually written "by upper class women for other women to entertain, while preaching traditional virtue, respect of the status quo and the dangers of passion" (Schwartz, "Roman," 222). Sand's innovations are obvious when compared to this type of novel: she writes that passion is important, and should overcome socity's barriers; most of her heroines do accomplish their goals despite society's restrictions. Sand's break with tradition is clear in her heroines' outlook on their expected roles: whereas women in the traditional roman intime "never question the value system of the prevailing society (Schwartz, "Roman," 225), Sand's characters openly challenge it. This is why her novels caused such conflicting emotions in her readers, and why she is considered a pioneer in so many ways.

Sand broke with the literary tradition of Romantic male authors also. Peter Dayan has convincingly argued that in Flaubert and other Romantic novelists, "the heroine falls in love with a man who cannot satisfy her inner longings," which results in "the kind of tragedy that fuels the Romantic feeling that nothing ideal can be found in life." Sand's heroines, however, "fight off that

feeling; they acquiesce in change," which demonstrates "George Sand's anti-Romantic willingness to accept love without barriers." (Dayan 418). Dayan notes that, by creating heroines who refuse to accept the limitations placed on them by society, Sand shows "an acceptance of change, an espousal of the natural flow of time, . . . a refusal of absolutism and a valorization of positive actions, positive choice, and co-operation with other people" (419). Jean Larnac's 1929 study of women's fiction in France offers a completely different interpretation and view of Sand's writing. In an interesting combination of admiration and misogyny, Larnac calls Sand "incapable de reproduire la vie telle qu'elle est," which, in his opinion, explains her success (213). He saw her fiction as "l'illusion de vivre ses désirs et ses rêves, de même elle donnait à [ses] lectrices surtout l'illusion de la vie qu'[elles] eussent désirée" (213). Sand accomplishes this new world view by giving to her female protagonists "qualities of intelligence, initiative and integrity [that] refuse to fit into a subservient plot" (Holmes 36).

These contrasting arguments apply not only to her fiction; even Sand's own words concerning her works and her motivations and intentions can lead to differing opinions. Her letters, journals, essays, and prefaces contain many statements that have been considered contradictory, as have been her novels. Whether she changed opinions, copied the ideas of her lovers, or wrote what was necessary according to her intended audience and current situation, Sand was as complex, and her ideas as richly varied, as her novels. Michelle Perrot calls Sand's feminine identity "subie, assumée, revendiquée ou contestée; les masques de Sand sont multiples, elle en change selon les époques et les circonstances" (41). Sand's seemingly contradictory statements can be reconciled, however, when they are taken as a whole, in the context of her entire life and body of writing, just as her novels serve together to form a unified

statement. One example of a reconcilable contradiction is her belief about male and female characteristics. In a letter to Edouard de Pompéry on December 23, 1864, Sand writes: "la femme peut bien, à un moment donné, remplir d'inspiration un rôle social et politique, mais non une fonction qui la prive de sa mission naturelle: l'amour de la famille" (Corr. 18: 629). She continues, "le coeur est-il destiné à changer? Je ne le crois pas, et je vois la femme à jamais esclave de son propre coeur et de ses entrailles. J'ai écrit cela maintes fois et je le pense toujours" (Corr. 18: 629). Three years later in a letter to Flaubert she writes this seemingly contradictory statement in reaction to his use of the term "vieil hystérique" for himself in a letter dated January 12, 1867:

> pourquoi une telle maladie aurait-elle un sexe? Et puis encore, il y a ceci pour les gens forts en anatomie: il n'y a qu'un sexe. Un homme et une femme c'est si bien la même chose que l'on ne comprend guère les tas de distinctions et de raisonnements subtils dont se sont nourries les sociétés sur ce chapitre-là. (Corr. 20: 297)

One can interpret all these statements as expressing Sand's belief that women are naturally inclined to care for their families; that does not preclude their working, they will merely "do it all." Women are no more prone to hysteria then men--it is an individual characteristic; the supposedly separate, definable character traits that society has predetermined for men and women do not exist in reality. Concerning Sand's statement that "les sexes n'expriment qu'un emboîtement d'organes nécessaires à la jonction fécondante, (Impressions 261) Alison Guidette-Georis states that "par contre à la voix populaire au dix-neuvième siècle, Sand, du moins dans le monde fictif de ses romans, n'admet aucune autre différence réelle entre l'homme et la femme" (48). All of Sand's statements concerning the differences or lack thereof between males and

females coincide with and support her novels; androgyny is part of everyone; men and women share common characteristics that really should not be separated by sex. In her letter to the Central Committee, Sand writes: "Il ne m'a jamais semblé possible que l'homme et la femme fussent deux êtres absolument distincts. Il y a diversité d'organisation et non pas différence. Il y 'a donc égalité et non point similitude" ("A propos" 20). Toril Moi writes of the "destructive nature of a metaphysical belief in strong, immutably fixed gender identities" in the nineteenth century. In a statement that could be made about Sand, Moi describes Virginia Woolf as "reject[ing] such gender identities because she has seen them for what they are. She has understood that the goal of her feminist struggle must precisely be to deconstruct the death-dealing binary opposition of masculinity and femininity" (13). George Sand (also) did much to aid in the deconstruction of these set personality traits, both in her life and in her works. Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Guber claim that Sand attempted to "solve the literary problem of being female by presenting [herself] as male." They also believe that she and George Eliot "most famously used a kind of male-impersonation to gain male acceptance of their intellectual seriousness" (65). By choosing a male name, "a woman writer could move vigorously away from the "lesser subjects and lesser lives [that] had constrained her foremothers" (Gilbert 65). This advantage is considerably diminished once the true identity of the writer is known. George Sand was identified as a female soon after the publication of Indiana; the name was not an effective mask.[9] Instead it was a rejection of her husband's name, a self-chosen identity based on another male name, her lover Jules Sandeau, yet with her own personal twist. Throughout her life, Sand never rejected (enlightened) men; she simply wished to be allowed her own identity and to do as she pleased.

Her fiction is ample proof that she desired equal education, rights, and opportunities for women. Her characters' lifestyles and choices are testimony to that. However, none of her characters does what George Sand did: they do not participate in revolutionary governments, they are not promiscuous, they do not write political pamphlets, letters or articles. Sand's fiction is intended for the average female reader; Sand herself was extraordinary. She was a female writer speaking out against injustice toward women. Her non-fiction is more obvious, emphatic and damning than any of her fiction, yet her fiction served the same purpose, in a less threatening way. Francine Mallet calls her feminism "reflechi." Sand "espère éviter aux femmes moins bien armées qu'elle, les difficultés qu'elle a eus" (188). Society does not help "les opprimés, en particulier les femmes," and Sand "contribuera de toutes ses forces à la changer" (188). Sand has "done it all": she has shown that "une femme pouvait à la fois être amante et mère, jouer un rôle social, gagner sa vie et créer" (Mallet 188). The major areas of Sand's concern were the right to education and divorce for women.[10] She spoke openly on this subject, in her non-fiction and her novels. She told Lamennais that in her writing she wishes to "y faire entrer des questions relatives aux femmes. J'y voudrais parler de tous les devoirs, du mariage, de la maternité, etc." (Corr. 3: 712). She specifically mentions divorce: "pour vous en dire en un mot toutes mes hardiesses, elles tiendraient à reclamer le divorce dans le mariage" (Corr. 3: 713). Her own personal experience, as well as the abuses she sees around her, give her the passion for divorce that men do not have and do not need, due to the sexual double standard of the day. George Sand used her non-fiction writing to highlight the political/legal status of women; she used her fiction to bring her (male) readers insight into how women feel about their situation. André Maurois writes that George Sand "pensait que la servitude où l'homme tient la femme détruit le

bonheur du couple, qui n'est possible que dans la liberté" (362). Concerning women, George Sand wrote: "on les maltraite; . . . en amour on les traite comme des courtisanes; en amitié conjugale, comme des servantes. On ne les aime pas, on s'en sert, on les exploite, et on espère ainsi les assujetter à la loi de fidelité" ("Fauvette," quoted in Maurois 368). George Sand believed strongly in equality in marriage and love, in what Paul Chanson calls "équation conjugale" (222). She stated repeatedly that arranged marriages were wrong: "les mariages de raison sont une erreur où l'on tombe, ou un mensonge qu'on se fait à soi-même" (OA 2: 33). She also clearly stated her purpose for writing:

> j'ai écrit Indiana avec le sentiment profond et légitime de l'injustice et de la barbarie des lois que régissait encore l'existence de la femme dans le mariage, dans la famille et la société. . . je ne suis ni le premier, ni le seul, ni le dernier champion d'une si belle cause, et je la défendrai tant qu'il me restera un souffle de vie. (Preface to Indiana, 1842 edition 46-47)

Her defense of this cause continued in her letters and other writings, as well as most of the rest of her novels. Her most explicit, undeniable explanations of her intentions are found in her letters. In 1837 she writes to a friend:

> le monde trouve fort naturel et fort excusable qu'on se joue avec les femmes de ce qu'il y a de plus sacré: les femmes ne comptent ni dans l'ordre social, ni dans l'ordre moral. Oh! J'en fais le serment, et voici la première lueur de courage et d'ambition de ma vie. Je relèverai la femme de son abjection, et dans ma personne et dans mes écrits. (Corr 4: 18)

She continues, "que l'esclavage féminin ait aussi son Spartacus. Je le serai, ou je mourrai à la peine" (Corr 4: 19). Arlette Michel believes that Sand "va plus loin que Balzac dans sa protestation contre l'institution du mariage et les

mentalités collectives qui en règlent les rites. Non seulement elle critique, mais elle recuse" (36). Her desire to help women in general is clear here; what is not stated specifically here and elsewhere is what exactly she wants other than the right to divorce for women in relationships. Many people think she is claiming the right to the same sexual freedom that men have, and that she wants everyone to live in a state of "free love." Her position on the issue of free love is less clear, and can be debated, especially when her own life is included in the discussion. Simone de Beauvoir believed that George Sand "réclame le droit à l'amour libre" (1: 194). Paul Chanson finds her instead insisting on equal treatment for both sexes, that they both need "équation prénuptial, équation conjugal, [et] équation héroique" (222). He has argued against Sand's belief in "l'amour libre," using several of her novels to attempt to prove his point.[11]

Whatever her attitude toward sex outside of marriage, her writing, both fiction and non-fiction, shows a determination to address the question of marriage itself and she used both negative and positive examples to make her case. Sand's negative portrayals of arranged marriages are more than balanced by her depictions of happy, tradition-defying marriages in which the man and woman choose each other. Annabelle Rea calls Sand "the eternal optimist [who] was calling for social change through her pleas on marriage as a union of equals, a woman and a man who compliment each other, both sharing traditionally masculine and feminine qualities" (47). This type of equal relationship between men and women appears in the majority of her novels: it is Sand's strongest statement, lasting throughout her career.

Social and educational equality were the cornerstones of Sand's writing: "Elle écrit par besoin de s'exprimer et de communiquer . . . parce qu'elle est poussée par le sens de la justice," (Makward 536). She protests in her writings "contre la subordination économique, sociale et politique de la femme"

(Makward 536). Her intentions were misunderstood and misinterpreted by some of her contemporaries, including women. She was forced to baldly state her opinion on women's sufferage and women in politics when a group of women nominated her for the National Assembly without consulting her. In her famous letter, shocking to today's feminists, yet entirely reasonable for her time and in keeping with her fiction, Sand declared that women were not yet ready to vote or hold political office because "la femme étant sous la tutelle et dans la dépendance de l'homme par le mariage, il est absolument impossible qu'elle présente des garanties d'indépendance politique" (Sand, "A propos," 22). In this long letter Sand highlights all the atrocities of the laws: women treated as children, men who can commit adultery freely yet emprison their wives if they commit adultery, and the absurdities of other inequalities in mariage. She unequivocally states, "pour que la condition des femmes soit ainsi transformée, il faut que la société soit transformée radicalement" (Sand, "A propos," 22). The transformation of the condition of women and of her society is the message in Sand's work; these are the ideals she wished to share with her world. Her message was heard by the women born after her death; her attempt to change the world was successful, even if she did not live to see the outcome.

Mme de Staël and George Sand, "rares femmes qui [ont] joué un rôle dans l'histoire de la France au dix-neuvième siècle" (Maurois 365), helped women see the inconsistency of the demands placed on them and the unfairness of their inferior place in society. Sand's financial and critical success and acceptance encouraged other women to write also. Those who came immediately after her were attacked by male writers who felt threatened by them. In 1878 Barbey d'Aurevilly published Les Bas-bleus, a collection of articles critical of women writers; Albert Cim and others continued that misogynist tradition into the twentieth century.[12] Sand's call for equal

education for women was heard and her desire realized in 1881 when secondary education was opened up for girls. Soon after, women began winning university degrees, law degrees and graduate degrees. Between 1896 and 1929 over three hundred women writers were awarded literary prizes by the Académie Française.[13] Sand opened the way for other women by her tenacity and by writing according to her convictions. Annarosa Poli calls her "un chef de file" due to "le retour à la psychologie, à l'étude des moeurs et à l'analyse attentive du moi considéré dans ses rapports avec les autres" ("Critique" 100). Sand was an artist who chose to show "individus, tous égaux, dans cette aptitude infinie à être différents, qui fait la saveur du monde humain" (Ozouf 182). To this day she remains controversial: critics debate the merits of her feminism, her socialism, and her literary talents. No one can make any universal claims about her, however, unless they first consider her entire body of work; it is a microcosm of both the world in which Sand lived, and her vision of what it could be.

The goal of this study is to explore and highlight the most basic aspect of her novels: her message to women and about women, their rights and responsibilities, and Sand's advocacy of their equality with men.

Chapter 1: Questionable Feminism

The novels studied in this chapter contain some problematical situation, outcome, or implied attitude that does not lend itself to a positive feminist reading. They are classified here as "questionable" because there is no observable or discernable advocacy for equality or self-determination for women. These novels appear throughout Sand's career; there is no obvious biographical or historical explanation for their lack of feminist vision or projects. They include women who give up all self-determination for a man who makes no promises to marry them, women who are entirely passive and dependent, relying on fate or others for their happiness, and women who become completely absorbed by their husband's beliefs and life-style. Many of these novels have led feminist critics to question Sand's feminism. They make up a small percentage of her fiction, however, and should not be judged apart from the rest of her work.

Leone Leoni (1834) examines a role reversal of men and women and is George Sand's speculation on what would happen if there were a male "Manon Lescaut." [1] His name is Leone Leoni; he spends his entire life seducing, using, and betraying women.

The young woman whose story is told in Leone Leoni is Juliette, from a well-to-do family. She falls in love with Leone Leoni and runs aways with him. When asked why she sacrifices her reputation for him she recounts that before she met him, "Je n'avais pas l'idée des passions. On m'avait élevée comme si je ne devais jamais les connaître; ma mère avait été élevée de même et s'en trouvait bien" (15). She knew how to be the typical decorative bourgeois woman: "je touchais le piano d'une manière brillante, je dansais à merveille, je

peignais l'aquarelle avec une netteté et une fraîcheur admirables" (15). She obeyed her parents in all things, and was prepared to marry whomever they chose for her: "je m'en remettais aveuglément au choix de mes parents, et je ne désirais ni ne fuyais le mariage" (16).

Her passive acceptance of life is shattered by Leoni. She is conscious for the first time of her situation as a woman whose parents are matchmaking when Leoni looks at her. He has been made aware that Juliette's parents are interested in him and she understands that her "rôle de fille à marier était un peu ridicule . . . et pour la première fois de ma vie peut-être je rougis et sentis de la honte" (18). It is Leoni's look: "il y avait quelque chose d'ironique dans l'admiration de son regard" (18) that causes her first shame--a foreshadowing of all the shame in her life that he will cause.

He continues to affect her burgeoning emotions of pride, shame, respect, and love. He courts her in the usual manner, but he also brings her novels:

> c'étaient de beaux et chastes livres, presque tous écrits par des femmes sur des histoires de femmes . . . ces aperçus d'un monde idéal pour moi élevèrent mon âme mais ils la dévorèrent. Je devins romanesque, caractère le plus infortuné qu'une femme puisse avoir. (25)

Even when she realizes that he is a fraud, that he has no money, has gambling debts, and has stolen all her jewels and money, she continues to love him. She refuses to claim responsibility for her emotions, saying:

> Leoni avait désormais sur moi plus qu'une force morale, il avait une puissance magnétique à laquelle je ne pouvais plus me soustraire. . . je n'étais plus qu'une machine qu'il poussait à son gré dans tous les sens. (78)

Without any strength or will power left, she allows herself to be ruled by Leoni. She becomes involved in various criminal actions, lives incognito with criminals in hiding, and makes no attempt to save herself. When Leoni abandons her she is sheltered by a man who loves her and is good to her, yet she leaves him as soon as Leoni comes back into her life.

These emotions and their consequences are similar to those depicted in Prévost's Manon Lescaut. But the sex of the main protagonists is reversed. Manon, as the seductress, does not need to ask for marriage. She offers herself as mistress, and that is enough. Leoni must offer proof of birth, rank, and fortune in order to marry for wealth. He must use imagination and cunning to convince his female victims and their families that he is wealthy and that he loves the women for themselves and not their money. He need not fear any retribution from the women he dupes; they are powerless, and are so ashamed and "ruined" socially that they do not ask their families to prosecute him. Unlike Manon, jailed and punished for her crimes, Leoni roams freely among various high society groups in Europe. Their victims' fates are also different. Des Grieux can return to his normal life; Juliette, branded forever as a fallen woman, cannot return to her former life. She can live only with other outcasts, and is totally dependent on men for her survival.

As in Prévost's Manon Lescault, the first-person narration is told to another person, who interrupts and frames the story with action. The difference is that Juliette tells her story to a man who loves her and even attempts to murder Leoni. In the end he realizes that he has killed the wrong man, and that Leoni is still alive. Unlike Manon, who dies as if to expiate her sins, Leoni is allowed to live and perpetuate his crimes in a society in which men and women are not treated equally. It is Juliette whose life can never be the same.

What is problematical about this novel is that George Sand, while successfully depicting the gender inequity in her society, does nothing to "redeem" her female protagonist from a feminist perspective. Juliette chooses to remain with the man who demeans her and mistreats her; she rejects the man who loves and respects her. At the close of the novel, Juliette and Leone are together again. Nothing has been resolved, nothing has changed. Juliette allows herself to be Leone's victim.

According to Larry Riggs, this novel "relativizes the entire social semiotics of class and gender" and "undermines the categorical laws . . . of society" (50). Juliette defies her society by choosing "the freedom of masquerade over rescue and reintegration in the social system" (54). Riggs claims that the relationship between Juliette and Leone is "more affirmative than any available alternative" (57), and that Bustamente's love for Juliette represents the traditional, bourgeois prison for women. As Kathryn Crecelius states:

> clearly, for Sand, . . . marriage is not a satisfactory ending . . . Sand has rewritten Manon Lescaut from a doubly female perspective, for both the protagonist and the author are women. In so doing, she has not only given Juliette a far different destiny from either Des Grieux or Manon, but she has also sharply distinguished her novel from its two sources, Prévost's work and women's novels of the previous generation. (125)

Crecelius believes that Juliette's choice shows a "repudiation of the fatherly, overprotective father figure" that is Bustamente "for the heroic Leone." (126). There is nothing heroic about Leone, however. He has mistreated Juliette already and will most likely continue to do so. She is not free because as a woman she cannot live on her own. Her choice of lover/husband is not the most advantageous for her, yet, as Kristina Wingard Vareille suggests:

> la figure de Juliette tient plutôt du fantasme; elle représente, dans l'oeuvre de Sand, quelque chose comme l'attirance du gouffre . . . [elle choisit] de vivre la passion dans l'abjection . . . Leone Leoni . . . confirme la . . . scission qui oblige la femme à choisir entre la passion et le statut de sujet . . . une telle alternative est insupportable [pour Sand]. (243)

The ambivalence towards love and marriage demonstrated here is typical of Sand's early novels, and will not continue throughout her career. At this point, however, she cannot seem to find, because it does not yet exist in her experience, an acceptable alternative to dependency on a man. The self-abasing yet revolutionary choice of Leone is perhaps not the best, but it seems preferable to a safe life with a man Juliette does not love.

The women in Le Compagnon du Tour de France (1841) are not particularly noteworthy, although each one represents a different class in society. La Savinienne, of the working class, is a poor widow with children who is revered by her husband's former co-workers. She is considered honorable and saintly because she is chaste. The bourgeoisie is represented by Josephine, a wealthy factory owner's daughter who is now a widowed marquise. The aristocrat in this novel is Yseult de Villepreux, a young woman who reads books and poetry and who believes in the equality of people's souls despite their social class. Each woman in this novel is totally dependent upon and submissive to society's rules and expectations for them; none is allowed to achieve true happiness.

La Savinienne is not even called by her own name. Her husband, an inn-keeper, had been called le Savinien by his friends, so she is called by the feminine form of his nickname. Her identity is completely subsumed by his,

even though he is now dead. She is not even considered a real woman because she has been deemed holy and sacred by the men in her life. When the narrator compares La Savinienne to the bourgeois woman who married into the aristocracy, he commands the reader:

> ne pense pas que cette Marquise. . . soit un être aussi beau, aussi pur et aussi précieuse devant Dieu que la noble Savinienne, avec sa résignation, sa fermeté, son courage, sa réputation sans tâche, et son amour maternel . . . voilà de grands attraits, pour nous autres surtout, qui ne voyons ces beautés. . . qu'à une certaine élévation au-dessus de nous, comme nous voyons les vierges . . . dans les églises. (59)

She has no real name, and no real personality in the eyes of the men; she is untouchable like the statues and stained-glass women in church. Bernadette Segoin writes that La Savinienne "occupe une place privilégiée. Son rayonnement est extraordinaire" (194).

She is in love with a young, impoverished carpenter, Le Corinthien, who is not financially secure enough to marry her. Her one defiant gesture against society is to reject the marriage proposal of an older, wealthier man, and leave her home with her children to go where Le Corinthien is working, placing herself and her reputation in jeopardy. Her salvation comes in the form of Yseult, who takes pity on her and offers her the job of "repasseuse" for the château. Yseult helps la Savinienne become independent, yet she herself is not independent. She is in love with Pierre, the intelligent, noble-minded main protagonist, yet when her grandfather forbids the marriage, she obeys. Her only attempt at defying society is her intention to marry whom she chooses. She tells Pierre:

> je reconnais qu'il faut que nous nous quittions pour quelques mois, pour quelques années peut-être . . . j'ai envers mon aïeul des devoirs de toute la vie . . . je me soumettrai à toutes ses volontés, excepté à celle d'épouser un autre homme que vous (325).

All her education and all her "liberal" ideas are meaningless when faced with reality. Pierre, while obviously much poorer than she, is a skilled craftsman who could support a family. Yet she is unwilling to break the rules. Lucette Czyba claims that the relationship between Yseult and Pierre "donne à lire la nature complexe des rapports du féminisme et du socialisme dans l'utopie sandienne" (26). Even the name of the heroine is significant: "Yseult" is a name assiciated with forbidden love, one "dont un interdit barre le destin" (Czyba 26). This barrier is contemporary society, both the fictional one of Pierre and Yseult, and that of George Sand. According to Czyba, "les limites que le text assigne ainsi aux revendications d'inspiration féministe ne signifient pas toutefois une prudence excessive de la part de la romancière. Elles temoignent plutôt de son sens des réalités contemporaines" (26). Pierre and Yseult are representatives of Sand's ideal, "condamnés à attendre et à espérer ce qui n'est pas encore de ce monde" (Czyba 28). The worker and the aristocrat are equal in mind, spirit, outlook, and desire. Yet they are condemned by their society to remain apart indefinitely.

Yseult's grandfather represents his society, that which forbids their union, so they must wait for him to die; once he and the society he represents are gone, couples such as Yseult and Pierre will be allowed to marry. Class differences will not be an obstacle, neither will patriarchal power over a woman's right to choose.

Josephine knows society's rules well. While she would never marry a working-class man, she does have an affair with Le Corinthien. When the affair is discovered, Josephine quickly repents: "elle se déclara si bien guérie de son amour, qu'elle y renonçait et priait son oncle de l'aider à le rompre" (308). As long as her actions are hidden, she can maintain the illusion of compliance with the rules. When forced to choose, however, she will sacrifice her own desires and feelings in order to please society.

The only truly strong character in this novel is the Count, Yseult's grandfather. He claims to believe in equality for all, yet does not allow his grand-daughter to marry the man she loves, one who could be, by the count's own admission, an exceptional man in any class. The women in this novel obey society's rules; society, in this novel as in most others, being embodied by an old, wealthy aristocrat who refuses to change his ways. Rather than attempt to challenge his authority over them, they acquiesce.

In Jeanne (1844), the main protagonist is, according to George Sand, the type of ignorant, chaste, Jeanne d'Arc woman who became her prototype for La Mare au diable, (1846) François le Champi, (1847) and La Petite Fadette (1849) (28). According to Mireille Bossis, Jeanne is the first solidified example of a type of female protagonist she calls the "femme prêtresse" (250). She is the representative of the "forces souterraines" in the novel and she neither looks at others, nor hears them (253). All this leads to the fact that Jeanne "n'est pas de la même race" of the others (254). She lives in her own world, with her own view of reality and her own opinions. She is the object of desire of the three men in the novel, yet she never desires any of them or any other part of normal life.

Jeanne is a young shepherdess who believes in the magic and superstitions of her class. She has taken a vow of chastity because when she was a child, three coins mysteriously appeared in her hands while she was sleeping on a large rock. She believes she was given this money by her "fades," or female spirits, which means that she is somehow special and different from the other women in her village.

The money is, in fact, placed in her hand by three young aristocrats. Mersillat leaves her a coin and grants her the wish, "je te souhaite un gaillard vigoreux pour amant, "Boussac wishes her "un protecteur riche et généreux," and Sir Arthur leaves her a wish for "un honnête mari qui t'aime et t'assiste dans tes peines" (39). Each of these men will, himself, fulfill his wish for Jeanne.

Jeanne is considered a helpless dependent woman when she is taken in to Boussac's home years later. She is not, however. She defies everyone's wishes, clinging to her own superstitions and vows. Even when confronted with the truth about her three coins, she refuses to relent. The three wishes are ironically granted when Mersillat attempts to rape her, Boussac rescues and protects her, and Sir Arthur asks her to marry him. She resists all three and dies of injuries suffered in her escape from Mersillat.

Such strength of character is exhibited only in Jeanne. The other female characters in the novel play the traditional role of women. They are considered normal, and Jeanne is the "other." As does the strong "autre" Jeanne d'Arc, the virgin who sees visions, this Jeanne refuses to yield to society's rules. Her religious beliefs help her resist the expectations of society. Jeanne believes in God, yet instead of the Catholic church and the Pope, "le grand prêtre," she believes in "les fades" (84). The "fades" are "des femmes qu'on ne voit pas, mais qui font du bien ou du mal" (84). With the exception of God, her entire

religious reference is her dead mother, her "fades" and Saint Mary, whom she calls the "grande fade." She has no male authority figures and she lives by her own rules. Her promise of chastity was made to God and the female figures she worships. Her complete adherence to these vows leads her to reject paternal authority; under no circumstances will she yield to men, those who wish to help her as well as those who wish to harm her. This rejection of male authority leads to her death.

In Isidora, (1845) George Sand presents a tug-of-war between two women who represent the male-generated opposition of prostitute and "Madonna." [2] They are fighting over Jacques, a young man attempting to write a definitive treatise on women. The action in the novel parallels the research that Jacques is undertaking. Interspersed with his journal and the narrator's accounts of the story are Jacques' notes on his observations of women. He decides to become acquainted with Isidora, the courtisan, because she is a representation of "un nouveau type de femme" (77). During one of their discussions on women and their role in society, she asks him, "que feras-tu de la passion dans la république idéale? Dans quelle série de mérites rangeras-tu la pécheresse qui a beaucoup aimé?" (77). Due to the delicate nature of this discussion they switch immediately into metaphors for women; the pure "vierge qui n'a point aimé encore" and the "matronne à qui les soins vertueux du ménage n'ont pas permis d'être . . . émue et enivrée de l'amour d'un homme" (77) are called the camelias, and her type of woman is the rose. According to Jacques, "la rose est enivrante . . . mais elle ne vit qu'un instant." (78). He wants to give to the rose "la persistance et la durée du camélia blanc, symbole de pureté." (78). But Isidora believes that she and her kind are "l'élite des

femmes . . . les types les plus rares et les plus puissants" (78). They have "les dévouements les plus romanesques, les instincts les plus héroïques" (78).

It is the camelia, however, who performs the acts that change the lives of everyone. Isidora and Alice de T. are in love with Jacques, and he believes he loves both of them. Alice is a young widow who has promised her dying brother that she will befriend and protect Isidora, his former lover. Alice renounces Jacques because, according to Eve Sourian, "soeur spirituelle de Lélia qui cherche l'infini dans la créature, elle ne lui pardonne pas d'avoir succombé à Isidora" (30). She refuses to accept the word of a man who is not sure if he truly loves her: "s'il m'aime, et qu'il se laisse distraire seulement une heure, je ne pourrai jamais le lui pardonner" (147). Requiring exclusive love, she sends Jacques to the woman who has never known any true love at all.

Yet after living with him for awhile, Isidora also renounces Jacques, writing to Alice that she is "guérie de l'amour" (163). At this point Jacques disappears from the novel and Isidora retreats from society, eventually adopting a young girl and devoting herself to raising her. As often in the Sandian universe, women can be "redeemed" through maternity. It is their mission and purpose in life; if a husband is not available, a child can be adopted.

Eve Sourian suggests that Alice has also been completely subdued and controlled by society: "Instrument du système patriarchal dont elle avait été victime elle-même, Alice l'aristocrate, la castratrice a rempli sa fonction: Isidora est maîtrisée, neutralisée, elle n'est plus un danger pour la famille du Comte de S." (35). And she is no longer a danger to the rules of society. The free-spirited, independent woman has been tamed, broken, and reigned in by one of her own: a woman.

The "péché" in Le Péché de Monsieur Antoine (1845) is, technically, his daughter, Gilberte. She is the result of her mother's affair that has been a secret all her life, from Gilberte and everyone else. Gilberte leads an uncomplicated, happy, innocent existence until she falls in love with the first man to enter her life, Emile Cardonnet. She is deemed too poor by his wealthy bourgeois father until Emile is named the heir of a local wealthy marquis.

The women in this novel are all ineffectual and dependent. Gilberte enthusiastically espouses her father's ideas and beliefs, she is loved and treated with respect by her father and the servant who has raised her. Emile's mother, on the other hand, is not happy. She is completely dominated by her husband: "la bonne madame Cardonnet manquait totalement de ressort . . . et l'espèce de stupeur dont son âme était à jamais frappée se traduisait chez son fils par un invincible mélancolie" (91). Her husband treats her as a child. She has no knowledge of his business and, as a result, is unable to share in his life.

Gilberte's mother is notable for her literal absence. She is the long-dead wife of the marquis; her portrait is kept in a locked room, seen by no one. She has paid for her adultery by her death and by her daughter's complete ignorance of her existence. She is never acknowledged, never understood, never forgiven. She has been erased by her society and her family.

Lucrezia Floriani (1846) is a psychological examination of two incompatible people who, in spite of being in love, make each other miserable. It is the story of how jealousy, possessiveness, and selfishness can destroy love and slowly poison the life of a woman who has always "lived for love." It also contains many comments by the supposed male narrator not only on love and psychology, but also on how he, the narrator, has chosen to tell the story, and

on how we, the readers, will react to and predict certain aspects of the story. Alex Szogyi claims that Sand is following the narrative practice of several of her contemporaries, yet she "struggles with the high passion of the Romantic novel, wishing to temper it and analyze it, thereby taming it and creating a new genre" (191). This genre is less a psychological study of idividuals than of relationships and of how men and women view, feel, and act on love. Szogyi believes that the gender of the narrator is neutral when he/she "speaks directly to the audience," but that "when she tells the story per se, her instinctive feminist approach . . . forms the stuff of her analysis" (195).

A precursor of Colette's La Vagabonde (1908), Lucrezia Floriani is a thirty-year-old actress who has retired from the stage to raise her four illegitimate children. She has been honored and respected as an actress and playwright. She has had a succession of lovers, yet "sa maison était agréable, et sa conduite tellement honorable et digne . . . que des femmes du monde la fréquentèrent avec sympathie et non avec un certain sentiment de déférence" (36). She is George Sand's perfect woman in a perfect world; free to live as she pleases, yet honorable and respected. Lucrezia understands her unique position in the world and attempts to explain it:

> Diriez-vous que je suis une courtisane? Je ne crois pas, parce que j'ai toujours donné à mes amants . . . diriez-vous que je suis une femme galante? Les sens ne m'ont jamais emportée avant le coeur. . . Suis-je une femme de mauvaise vie, de moeurs relâchées? . . . Je n'ai jamais aimé deux hommes à la fois, je n'ai jamais appartenu de fait et d'intention qu'à un seul pendant un temps donné, suivant la durée de ma passion . . . Toutes les fois que j'ai aimé ç'a été de si grand coeur, que j'ai cru que c'était la première et la dernière fois de ma vie (37).

This is Lucrezia's defense against attacks on her reputation. It is also an attempt to explain why a woman can be something other than a "madonna" or a "prostitute." [3] She is truly in love with each of these men while she is with them. When, at the end of her life, she thinks back on these relationships, she realizes that they have not loved her the same way, and that she has been deceiving herself. Lucrezia leaves the stage after her fourth child is born. She is prepared to spend the rest of her life loving only her children, and returns to a life of secluded maternity in her childhood home. This maternal oasis is invaded by a friend, Salvatore Albani, and his friend, the Prince Karol de Roswald. Karol is cold, weak, and virtuous. He has loved only one woman, to whom he was engaged, whom he never really knew, and who has died. She was the ideal, pure woman whom he believes is the only woman he can love. Lucrezia is so different from his ideal that he is at first disgusted by her. When he falls ill she insists that he stay at her home and she cares for him as if he were one of her children.

Through her maternal actions and care he sees what a woman can be and he begins to fall in love with her. Bernadette Segoin believes that George Sand understood better than anyone "le type de mère idéale, véritable modèle de femme universelle, obéissante à une mission humanitaire, et investie de la responsabilité de promouvoir une société nouvelle" (181). It is this maternity that leads to Karol's love; when his health returns he is unable to disengage himself from the power Lucrezia has over him (Segoin,185). As she nurses him back to health, he sees her as a mother figure: "il vit Lucrezia dans sa chambre, au milieu de ses enfants endormis. Il la vit partout grande par nature et dégradée par le fait. Il se sentit transir et brûler" (83). At this change of sentiment and apparent reversal of moral guidelines, the narrator again intervenes with a question to the reader: "pourquoi t'en étonnerais-tu, lecteur

perspicace? Tu as bien déjà deviné que le prince de Roswald était tombé éperdument amoureux à la première vue et pour toute sa vie de Lucrezia Floriani" (85). Following this observation is a long discussion by the narrator concerning why opposites attract, and then he adds, "c'est ce qu'il y a de plus vraisemblable dans mon roman, puisque la vie de tous les pauvres coeurs humains offre pour chacun une page, sinon un volume, de cette expérience funeste" (85). The words "éperdument" and "funeste" foreshadow that this romance is doomed to fail.

Lucrezia is not prepared for Karol's declaration of love and resists him for awhile. When she finally yields they have a happy two-week period together while Salvator is away. They are alone with the children; no one from Lucrezia's past comes to visit. Karol has forgotten her previous lovers; she is all his, and she loves only him. The nuclear family is a whole, complete unit, and everyone is happy. As soon as their islolation is disrupted by Salvator's return, Karol is reminded of Lucrezia's past and jealousy becomes his major emotion. He imagines that Salvator and Lucrezia are together. He begins to think about the fathers of her children. He is suspicious of all and any men in her life. When Lucrezia goes to the bedside of a dying old man, Karol becomes consumed with jealousey:

> Karol quitta le jardin, courut s'enfermer dans sa chambre, et s'y promena, poursuivi par les Furies. Cette âme, tout à l'heure si magnanime et si forte, n'était plus que le jouet des plus misérables illusions. Qu'était-ce donc que le Boccaferri si intéressant aux yeux de Lucrezia? (139)

As Karol continues his destructive tendancies, Lucrezia is unable to see or understand them. She loves one man at a time, completely. She has never betrayed anyone's trust. She is proud of her independence and considers

herself an honorable person. The narrator insists on this aspect of her personality:

> La Floriani, qui le croirait? était d'une nature aussi chaste que l'âme d'un petit enfant . . . quand elle aimait, tout ce qui n'était pas son amant était pour elle, sous le rapport des sens, la solitude, le vide, le néant. (169)

Upon discovering the extent of Karol's jealousy Lucrezia is shocked and confronts him, declaring her innocence. When he apologizes, "La Floriani se contenta de cette fausse réparation . . . mais en cela elle eut grand tort, et se précipita d'elle-même dans un abîme de chagrins" (241).

The narrator comments on their two very different personalities and asks, "que devient l'enthousiasme, que devient l'amour, quand celui qui en est l'objet se conduit comme un maniaque" (244)? The inevitable conclusion is that, "une nature riche par exubérance et une nature riche par exclusiveté, ne peuvent se fondre l'une dans l'autre. L'une des deux doit dévorer l'autre, et n'en laisser que des cendres. C'est ce qui arriva" (251).

During their tumultuous ten-year relationship, "jamais femme ne fut plus ardemment aimée et en même temps, plus calomniée et plus avilie dans le coeur de son amant" (266). When there is no one for Karol to be jealous of he begins to criticize her opinions and actions, including the way she raises her children. She hides her unhappiness and remains with Karol, however. On her fortieth birthday she finally realizes that "elle n'aimait plus Karol" (269). He has killed not only her love for him, but her capacity to love at all. Once she is no longer able to experience and enjoy love she begins to die: "l'amour était sa vie: en cessant d'aimer, elle devait cesser de vivre" (270).

Her obstination in remaining with a man who is making her miserable is lauded by the narrator, yet her independence and self-direction seem to have

ceased once she falls in love with Karol. She refuses to marry him because she is too proud and knows the derision a "mésalliance" can cause, yet she allows him to ruin her life. Why does a woman who is so strong in every area, including love, allow this to happen? Why does this love affair last ten years, even when she knows it is killing her?

As in other Sandian novels, there is a distinct pattern in this relationship. Karol is one of many Sandien men who are weak and effeminate.[4] His hands are like a woman's hands, he is sickly, and his friend refuses to fight with him even in anger, explaining that he is not a man. His relationship with Lucrezia begins as a mother-child one. He is sick, she puts her maternal arms around him. At one point in his initial delirium he asks her whether she is his dead mother. She is six years older than he and has responsibilities: a home, children, and a father to support. Karol has no responsibilities at all. He is definitely the child in the relationship. His immaturity poisons it because he is incapable of true, adult love, the only kind she has ever felt. This novel condemns Karol's jealousy and his inability to accept her as she truly is. The narrator's insights into and explanations of his personality make this clear. Yet there is also a sense of martyrdom and pathos here when Lucrezia realizes that all of her other lovers have disappointed her as well. She decides that it is time for her to renounce hope in love:

> je ne demanderai plus l'idéal sur la terre, la confiance et l'enthousiasme à l'amour, la justice et la raison à la nature humaine. J'accepterai les erreurs et les fautes. . . avec le désire de les atténuer et de compenser, par ma tendresse, le mal qu'elles font. (262)

She blames herself for believing that she could find happiness: "elle se dit que c'était une faute de sa part d'avoir caressé un si beau rêve, après tant de

déceptions et d'erreurs" (262). It seems from Lucrezia's example that women connot be happy in love as long as men do not share the same ideas and understanding of what love is. Until a man can accept that a woman has been with other men and still love only him, until he can allow her to be independent and proud, until he can allow her to be herself, he will kill her; if not literally, then psychologically. What is questionable here from a feminist viewpoint is Lucrezia's lack of self-preservation in allowing him to remain in her home and in her life, knowing he is destroying her.

Les Dames vertes (1857) is full of legends, alleged ghosts, and romance, yet in the midst of this gothic story lies a very real fact of life for women: they are totally dependent on men, and have little legal authority. The château where Just is staying on business is supposedly haunted by three young women who had been poisoned. He is there as the lawyer of the woman who is in the midst of a legal battle for control of the estate. Just is not optimistic about his client's claim. He informs her that legally, as a woman, "vous êtes en puissance du mari" (61). She understands this, responding, "il a sur ma fortune plus de droits que moi-même" (61).

While Just is in the château, the three ghosts appear to him. The next night he sees another female ghost at the fountain, and she gives him a ring. He falls in love with this ghost and decides to live his life waiting to die so that he can meet her again. The single female ghost is really Félicie d'Allaine, who has been ordered to play this role by her father who is fighting with Just's client. He is hoping that the sight of the ghosts will influence Just not to work on his client's behalf. Félicie is completely obedient to her father even though she feels she has fallen in love with Just and does not want to deceive him. After several months during which Just retreats from society to dream about the ghost

he has seen, Félicie is allowed to meet him. She informs him of the hoax and asks his forgiveness. They declare their love for each other and live happily ever after.

The women in this novel are completely dependent and powerless. Félicie makes no attempt to make contact with Just, waiting for her father's permission, which comes only when Félicie's brother suggests a match between them.

Flavie (1859) is a short epistolary novel. It is one of the few George Sand novels that contain a female first-person point of view; however, like most such novels by Sand, it is in the epistolary form. Letters and journals seem the only forms in Sandian fiction in which the reader can hear the woman's perspective directly.

Flavie is writing to her friend about her prolonged stay in Italy with her father. She is quite charmed by the mother of a young man who is is love with her, so much so that she tells her friend, "oui, ma chère, je crois que j'épouserai Malcolm à cause de Lady Rosemonde" (9). This frivolity of spirit is the basis of her nature; she is a flirt, and, according to a rapidly disenchanted Malcolm, "elle n'aime rien qu'elle-même" (147).

Her selfishness and shallowness lead her to pursue the one man in her life who is not impressed by her. When she talks to him of marriage he refuses to discuss it. Having never been denied anything in her life, she falls ill, hoping to shame him into relenting. When he does not, she is forced to reflect on her life and, after some self analysis she realizes that "mon passé ne vaut rien. . . je ne suis plus la même" (174). Instead of reflecting on what she has learned about herself, however, she soon finds another man to marry. She does not love him with the same passion she felt for Emilius, but she tells her friend, "j'ai

pour lui une amitié réelle et en lui une confiance absolue" (178). The former flirt has become serious; she values what is important in a man now: "le mérite d'un homme n'est ni dans ses habits, ni dans ses chevaux, ni dans sa manière d'entrer dans un salon, ni dans aucun de ces riens dont, sans en convenir, j'étais éblouie" (177).

This new wisdom does not, however, allow her to marry for love. She knows that Emilius will never love her, yet she decides, "j'aime mieux qu'il reste dans son nuage comme un esprit mystérieux dont je ne souhaite pas l'apparition, mais dont le souvenir me reste doux et dont la benediction me portera bonheur" (179). She seems destined to live her life in peace, but without the passion of love. She has decided to accept second best and make her life as meaningful as possible.

This is a very practical, unromantic statement on George Sand's part; there is no real happy ending, there is no marriage of love. The feminist message of this novel is questionable; it is not known whether Flavie is shallow and selfish because of the traditional education given to women or because such is her basic personality. The female protagonist, denied her first choice of a husband, immediately finds another. A marriage based on love is not seen as the most important aspect in her life; being married seems more important than being happy.

In Narcisse (1859), the female character is mostly passive and ineffectual. The narrator, M. E*** , recounts the events of the story. He is the confidant, the father figure for the main protagonists, Narcisse and Juliette. Juliette is a wealthy aristocrat who maintains and runs her own convent. She is not a nun, yet she lives like one. She spends her life helping others and attempting to bring them to her idea of God and religion. One of the people she

helps in the novel is an actor, M. Albany, whom she knew as a child. The crisis of the novel develops when both Narcisse, a good, honorable, worthy man, and M. Albany, a selfish, womanizing man, declare their love for Juliette. She has feelings for both of them, yet she truly does not wish to marry. She is happy in her convent, and feels that she is contributing to society. When faced with society's insistence that she marry she resolves her moral conflict by falling deathly ill, rejecting Albany and marrying Narcisse before she dies. It seems that, from society's point of view, it is better for a woman to be wed and to die than remain single, happy, and alive.

As she is on her deathbed she analyzes her actions and motivations, declaring, "je me suis accusée seulement d'avoir manqué le clairvoyance. . . et d'avoir attaché trop de prix à une sympathie qui ne valait rien, tandis que je laissais souffrir une amitié qui eût dû être tout pour moi" (306). She realizes that, of the two men, she should love Narcisse because he is more deserving, and she feels she should marry him to make him happy. However, M. E*** observes that "elle était née avec l'instinct du célibat, instinct providentiel peut-être, puisque la seule pensée de l'amour terrestre brisait sa vie" (309).

In La Famille de Germandre (1861) there are two women, an aristocrat and a peasant, who fall in love with men that society will not allow them to marry. Hortence, the aristocrat, falls in love with a farmer. His sister, Corisande, is in love with Octave, an aristocrat. Both women know that there is no possibility for marriage, yet neither one plans to do anything about it. They are passive and resigned to not being able to marry.

There is one possible solution for both couples: their grand-uncle has left his title and fortune to whichever family member can open a treasure chest he

has designed. Fortunately for everyone, the farmer opens the chest. He and his sister inherit the title and fortune; the two couples may now wed.

The message in this novel is unclear. The female characters are in love with socially unsuitable men, yet they are not prepared to challenge society's rules. They helplessly wait to see what will happen.

Valvèdre (1861), like many of Sand's novels, is a study of different types of women. Alida is a beautiful, traditionally-educated, shallow, neglected wife. She is married to a well-respected scientist, Valvèdre, who is intellectually superior to and emotionally distant from his wife. Adélaïde Obenay is over-educated (for a woman), pure-hearted, and chaste. She is the sister of Valvèdre's assistant, Henri, and is extremely interested in science. Henri's childhood friend, Francis, the protagonist of the novel, falls in love with Alida. They run away together and she becomes ill. Valvèdre arrives at her bedside in time to forgive her, and she dies.

As the traditional object of men's desire, Alida attracts Francis the first time their eyes meet, and he tells himself that she is vain and demanding: "elle leva lentement ses yeux sur les miens, comme pour me dire, 'eh bien, vous décidez-vous enfin à voir que je suis la plus parfaite créature que vous ayez jamais rencontrée?' " (47). He finds himself immediately obsessed by her: "tout était déjà consommé dans ma pensée et dans ma conscience, avec ma destinée, avec moi-même; j'appartenais aveuglement, exclusivement, à cette femme, à cette inconnue, à cette magicienne" (49). He believes that she has performed some kind of feminine magic that renders him completely under her control: he therefore excuses himself from blame for his actions or emotions.

This magical beauty affects other men who see her as well. Another man who is in love with Alida tells Francis, "les femmes n'ont pas de coeur. Elles se

servent du mot vertu pour cacher leur infirmité, et avec cela elles font encore des dupes" (64). Alida speaks honestly with Francis, however. She tells him: "j'ai un rêve, un idéal, que vous contristez, que vous brisez affreusement. Depuis que j'existe, j'aspire à l'amitié, à l'amour vrai . . . je cherche une affection à la fois ardente et pure" (106). She blames her husband for her unhappiness, claiming, "moi, je suis une femme, une vraie femme, faible, ignorante, sans valeur aucune. Je ne sais qu'aimer" (114). She adds that her husband never really loved her: "il voulut être mon mari afin de pouvoir être mon amant" (114). At first Alida fights her inclination to become Francis' lover. She reminds him of the sacrifice she would make, the damage to her reputation and her life. In an attempt to convince Francis and herself of her role in life she tells him, "je suis femme: ma destinée est d'aimer mon mari et d'élever des enfants" (254). Unlike most of Sand's female characters, however, Alida is not satisfied with her maternal duties and seems to lack maternal instincts. She abandons her husband and her children.

When she finally submits to her passion and runs away with Francis, they do not find the joy they had anticipated. Lucy M. Schwartz considers the example of Alida as part of Sand's theme of "condemnation of passion, that is, of desire without love or transcendence" ("Limits" 51). She also believes that Alida is one of "Sand's most interesting negative female characters" ("Limits" 51). Alida claims to want "l'amour vrai," yet "she does not understand it herself: she is completely selfish and passive, waiting for love to come to her and [for] a lover who will devote his entire life exclusively to her" (Schwartz, "Limits," 52). Such expectations are contrary to Sand's concept of a happy marriage, which "involves extraordinary effort by two people, each of whom has something more to do in life than to love" (Schwartz, "Limits," 52). Alida is unable to accept her husband's interest in science; she leaves him for a man who abandons

everything for her. Yet his devotion is not enough. The relationship is doomed from the start and Alida dies.

Francis does not have to pay the same penalty for his sin. He works for seven years, then returns to the friends he left behind. He is forgiven, and becomes interested in Henri's sister, Rosa. She is not as scientifically inclined as Adélaïde, but, "moins instruite, elle l'est assez pour une femme qui a les goûts du ménage et les instincts de la famille" (351).

Adélaïde is not the same sort of woman. Francis admits: "j'avais toujours trouvé mauvais que les poêtes fissent du raisonnement ou de la philosophie, et que les femmes eussent d'autre souci que celui d'être belles" (235). He thinks that Adélaïde is "une femme supérieure, c'est-à-dire, une espèce d'homme. Elle ne sera pas longtemps belle, il lui poussera de la barbe" (235). She is only "un hybride dénaturé par l'éducation, un écolier qui sait bien sa leçon et qui mourra de vieillesse en la répétant, sans avoir aimé, sans avoir inspiré l'amour, sans avoir vécu" (236). But Francis is incorrect in his assumption that an educated woman cannot feel love. Adélaïde and Valvèdre eventually marry, as do Francis and Rosa. Sand provides a happy ending for both her traditional and non-traditional female characters who remain chaste and follow society's rules for female comportment, yet she chooses to punish Alida, whose sin, more than that of leaving her husband, was to abandon her children; a much worse sin in Sand's universe.

Mademoiselle la Quintinie (1863) is a study of religion and philosophy framed by a love story. Lucie la Quintinie is obedient, "croyante," and traditional in her behavior and expectations; her only rebellion is in falling in love with a "non-croyant." Emile Lemontier is the son of a well-known philosopher feared and hated by the established church. The couple will debate throughout most

of the novel on the relative merits of religion and rationalism. The obstacles to their marriage are Lucie's father and her confessor, who forbid it due to the reputation of Emile's father.

In contrast to this more erudite couple is the couple made up of their friends, Henri Valmare and Elise. They are traditional: their marriage is approved by both families and there are no uncertainties about their shared beliefs or complementary roles in life. During a discussion of his fiancée, Henri tells Emile:

> Elle se taira. Tu penses bien que, si je ne m'étais assuré d'être toujours le maître avec elle, je n'aurais jamais cédé au désir de l'épouser. . . je suis l'homme de la société. . . le mari doit être le maître, mais le seul moyen de l'être réellement, c'est d'avoir de l'esprit et de laisser croire à la femme qu'elle jouit d'une entière indépendance. (196)

Henri totally controls Elise's life and destiny, and he believes that it is his role to do so. Elise has no thoughts or beliefs of her own. She obeys her mother, who wants only a "good" marriage; she will obey her husband. There is no indication that this subservience is troublesome for Elise; she believes it is her natural position in society, and she seems to have no concerns.

Lucie has thought about her role in society: she believes that society's rules are given by God and are therefore correct. She tells Emile, "je crois et croirai toujours à la grâce, c'est l'action de Dieu en nous. . . elle me montre la vie de la femme glorieuse et douce dans le sanctuaire de la famille" (198). But, since "la famille" for her is to be that of Emile, she breaks with her previous beliefs concerning organized religion and its power over her. She has decided that "jusqu'à ce jour, ou la religion m'a trompée, ou je me suis trompée sur la

religion . . . je ne veux plus d'autre interpretation, d'autre direction que la vôtre, si vous devez être mon mari" (198).

She has the choice between obeying her father and her confessor, or her husband. Her sex allows her no other honorable or financial options. Simone Vierne has written that George Sand "sait bien . . . que le pouvoir du directeur de conscience et confesseur sur l'esprit des femmes est immense" (20). The subversive power of the Catholic church is what Emile and his father are attempting to expose. Whether or not Lucie la Quintinie agrees with their view of the Church's misuse of power, she cannot marry Emile without her father's permisison, and he will not give it if the priest withholds his.

Lucie and Emile marry only when her father and her confessor give their permission, Emile's father having patiently and with reasonable arguments destroyed their fears of him. Lucie and Emile's marriage is possible not because Lucie valiantly fought for her rights to marry a man she loves, but because she has won the approval of patriarchal society.

Le Dernier amour (1866) is told in the first person by a man, yet it is a psychological study of a woman and her sexual passion. Félicie is a "fille perdue." She tells the narrator, Sylvestre, "je dois tout à mon frère . . . il m'a pardonnée ce que personne dans la famille et dans la contrée ne me pardonnera jamais. A quinze ans j'ai été séduite par un étranger qui m'a abandonée. Mon père . . . m'a chassée" (46). She has dedicated her life to taking care of her brother: "je ne veux pas me marier, je ne veux pas être aimée, je ne veux pas être heureuse, je ne le dois pas" (58). She believes, as society does, that she does not deserve happiness because she has given in to her sexual nature. She lives with her older brother, who is also single, and her younger cousin, Tonino, whom she has raised.

Sylvestre and Félicie eventually marry. There are some nagging doubts in Sylvestre's mind about Félicie's feelings for Tonino. He believes he has seen expressions of more than maternal love on her part, and Tonino has reacted to their engagement with an outburst of jealousy. When they are discussing the idea of other men being interested in her, Sylvestre warns Félicie, "je ne verrai jamais cela avec indifférence, mon amie, à moins que vous n'encouragiez ce regard lascif, qui vous souillerait à mes yeux et aux vôtres" (139). Sylvestre also makes a chilling prediction: "si jamais vous aviez la fantaisie de faire servir le masque expressif de Tonino à cette prétendue épreuve. . . prenez garde . . . je vous dédaignerais profondement l'un et l'autre" (141). Félicie is a passionate woman, and expects Sylvestre to be as passionate as she is. When she asks him if he would ever be so passionately jealous that he would kill her and her lover and he answers that he would not, she responds, "Vous ne m'aimez pas. . . vous parlez de passer en un jour, de l'adoration au mépris" (141). This has been a purely theoretical discussion, yet it shows the types of personality each has, and it foreshadows how they will both react when this situation actually occurs.

Félicie attempts to convince herself that she loves Sylvestre exclusively, yet her love for Tonino is more than maternal, and Tonino knows it. When he asks for permission to marry, he tells Sylvestre that Félicie will not grant it because "elle est jalouse de moi" (162). This statement, along with Félicie's unusual attachment to Tonino leads Sylvestre to suspect that she and Tonino are having an affair:

> Il y avait des jours où je croyais voir clair dans toute cette intrigue: Tonino feignait d'aimer la Vanina pour irriter Félicie et l'attirer dans ses bras, lascifs et incestueux. . . Félicie en proie à je ne sais

quel fatal vertige était d'autant plus prête à tomber dans le piège qu'elle s'en éloignait avec terreur ou le bravait avec audace. (165)

Sylvestre eventually discovers letters which reveal to him that: "Cette passion datait de son enfance. Félicie avait eu à la réprimer et à la combattre durant de longues années. Elle l'avait redoutée et ménagée, elle en avait eu peur, non seulement pour moi, mais pour elle-même" (204). Sylvestre understands that his suspicions were correct: "La fièvre de Tonino s'était allumée en elle depuis longtemps déjà quand elle m'avait aimé d'une affection plus digne et plus morale, mais déjà souillée par des appétits secrets d'une âpreté invincible et fatale" (204).

Félicie has never been able to control her sexual desires; she is seduced as a young girl and then has an affair with her cousin while both are married to others. Sylvestre believes that Félicie has always been in love with Tonino, and that "la rivale de Vanina avait horriblement souffert de voir Tonino épris de cette pauvrette" (217). He also believes he knows what precipitated her first act of adultery with him: "le jour où Tonino avait dû lui dire, 'je n'ai jamais aimé que toi' elle avait été enivrée et séduit" (217).

She has raised Tonino since he was a child. Sylvestre realizes that Tonino is a creation of Félicie: "c'est elle seule qui eût pu le rendre chaste, sincère et désintéressé. Elle n'avait pu lui donner la droiture et la chasteté qu'elle n'avait pas" (252). His suspicions that she has always been in love with him, that her sexual appetite is socially unacceptable, are proven in a letter he finds from Félicie to Tonino:

> Rappelle-toi les premiers temps de notre bonheur, [il y a] un an. . . Dans ce temps-là je n'avais pas plus de conscience qu'une fleur, pas plus de scrupules qu'un

oiseau. J'étais ivre. Il y avait tant d'années que le feu couvait sous la cendre et que j'avais soif des voluptés que tu m'as données. Je les ignorais. (231)

She is, indeed, so "ivre" with Tonino's love, that she risks everything to be with him. She is also extremely jealous, and verges on the edge of insanity when she thinks he may not love her. Tonino does not seem to love her in the same way she loves him. His love is much more casual; hers is exclusive and fanatical. She warns him, "Aime-moi, tout est là . . . sinon, je me tuerai . . . Tant que j'aurai de l'espérance je ferai taire le repentir; mais, si tu me brises, si tu m'abandonnes, je me hairai moi-même et je ne supporterai pas la vie" (232).

Félicie is once more under the control of her passion; once she has fulfilled her desire, she realizes that she can no longer repress it or live without it. She is a passionate person who has just released her feelings and acted on them; she cannot understand why her husband does not feel emotion as she does. When she learns that Sylvestre knows about her affair, she begs him, "Sylvestre! Un mot de colère, je t'en conjure, un seul mot de haine contre Tonino et de jalousie contre moi! Sois un homme! Maudis ton rival et punis ta femme! Je croirais alors que tu m'aimes et je t'adorerais!" (294).
Sylvestre is a dispassionate man, however, and he merely treats Félicie with polite coldness. He has, as he had predicted, ceased loving her. Félicie attempts for one year to regain his love; she fails. Without her husband's love and with Tonino sent away, Félicie is forced to live without the one emotion she must have: passion. She explains to Sylvestre in her suicide note, "j'ai sans doute commis un grand crime; mais à quoi bon s'humilier, puisque rien ne peut l'effacer? La mort seule" (305). She commits the ultimate sacrifice, hoping to earn Sylvestre's love again, since she has deemed it impossible to live without it.

After her death Sylvestre learns that Félicie's sexual passions have led to even more unacceptable behavior. A neighbor tells him, "Cette femme avait des passions terribles; elle avait déjà été à moi avant d'être à Tonino et à vous. Je voulais l'épouser; c'est elle qui m'a refusé en me mettant au défi de la trahir" (308). She has tried to fulfill her desires all her life; she finally finds the one man who can satisfy her, but the circumstances are not favorable. Again, as in most of George Sand's novels, the main female protagonist who is guilty of adultery must die for her sin. Mireille Bossis, in her introduction to the novel, states that, "pour la femme, et cela ressort de tous les romans de George Sand, en dehors même de la problématique adultérine, tout égarement sensuel est coupable, qu'elle en soit ou non responsable, il est impardonable a priori" (13).

Malgrétout (1870) is the name of the farm purchased by the main female protagonist. The novel consists in a long letter from Sarah Owens to her childhood friend. Sarah is the older daughter of two. She is so responsible and dependable that she takes charge of her father's life and fortune and purchases a piece of land, Malgrétout, where her father can peacefully live out his days in seclusion and where she can care for her sister's child. Sarah tells her friend, Mary, that she is interested in marriage, but, for Sarah, marriage seems only a means to an end: "j'avais toujours senti battre mon coeur à l'idée de tenir aussi dans mes bras un cher baby, vivante image d'un époux chéri et respecté" (15). The baby, not the man, is what attracts her to the idea. She must sacrifice her own desires, however, to help first her father, and then her selfish, insensitive and unmaternal sister, Ada, who gives her child to Sarah to raise because she is too busy in society.

The first time Abel sees Sarah is in a maternal setting: she is singing a lullaby to her niece under a tree. As Sarah and Abel begin to fall in love she is

hesitant to commit until she is sure he loves her. He is reluctant to marry, as he has no money. He is a well-known musician, yet he has not yet made his fortune. They agree to wait for one year; Sarah, so that she can be sure he loves her; Abel, so that he can make a name and fortune for himself.

Sarah's happiness depends on her servitude to others. When she finds herself alone and without her niece for a period of time she confides to her friend that "la vie de famille est nécessaire à la femme; c'est ce qui fait notre grandeur. Sans le dévouement de tous les jours et les sacrifices de tous les instants, nous ne comprenons plus notre raison d'être, nous ne savons que faire de nous" (95). Without her niece to care for, Sarah feels depressed and restless. Without Abel at her side, she begins to doubt her feelings for him.

She is still convinced that she must marry for love, and breaks off her engagement to Abel when she discovers that he has been seen with women on his tour. She is further distressed when she believes he is in love with a Spanish noblewoman named Mlle d'Ortosa, who relishes her ability to emotionally (but not physically) seduce the most resistant men. She and Sarah's now-widowed sister have become friends and, according to Abel, have set out to seduce him. He tells Sarah, "votre charmante petite soeur fera tout au monde pour vous détourner de moi, non qu'elle veuille de moi. . . mais parce que toute femme coquette voit avec dépit l'amour dont elle n'est pas l'objet" (132).

Upon learning that her sister may have feelings for Abel Sarah remains consistent in her desire to sacrifice her own happiness for others. When she tells Abel that she wants her sister to be happy he asks her, "que feriez-vous si j'étais assez lâche pour épouser votre soeur au lieu de vous" (133)? When Sarah answers, "je resterais près de vous, j'élèverais vos enfants, je tiendrais votre ménage," he responds, "vous n'aimez pas, Sarah, c'est trop d'abnégation

. . . vous êtes folle et vous me brisez" (133).

Sarah is so confused about her feelings for Abel that she vacillates between claiming that she loves him and swearing that she wants nothing to do with him. Abel cannot understand her and decides to force the issue. He deliberately gets lost during a trip with her, claiming that he wants to elope with her. She refuses, telling him, "vous voulez me compromettre, m'ôter cette bonne réputation que devrait faire votre orgueil, et qui est la seule dot que je puisse être fière de vous apporter" (135). Her reputation is the only part of her that she feels has worth, as well as her maternal instincts. As long as she has a child to care for she is happy and seems to have no need for a man's love.

Her last hope for happiness is shattered, however, when her sister takes the children away. Finding herself alone again, Sarah goes back to her favorite place in the garden. She recounts:

> Je . . . revis le banc où j'avais reçu les serments d'Abel. J'étais au bout de mes forces et . . . je pleurai comme pleurent les personnes . . . qui se trouvent . . . écrasées . . . Tout pleurait en moi et autour de moi, je souhaitai ne me relever jamais et mourir là. (173)

It is only at this point in her life, when she has no one to care for and nothing to do, that Abel can convince her that he loves her. Sarah realizes that now, "je cherchais le souvenir de ses torts, et, soit que ma tête fût affaiblie, soit que la puissance immédiate d'Abel sur moi fût de celles qui s'imposent fatalement, je ne me souvenais plus d'avoir douté de lui" (175). She finally agrees to marry Abel, telling herself, "et toi aussi, il faut que tu sois une femme, une mère" (175) She feels no illusions of eternal happiness with Abel. She is prepared for any future sorrows, knowing that she is adept at self-sacrifice and suffering. She

identifies herself only with maternity and, since her sister has reclaimed her own children, Sarah must marry and have her own.

She seems capable of happiness only with the promise of children to care for; all she is can be is a mother. Ruth Carver Capasso has written a psychological study of this novel based on the Adlerian method of interpretation and comparing it to a Freudian analysis. These approaches suggest that Sarah needs to take her mother's place. Capasso believes that adult sexuality frightens Sarah, yet that she "felt in herself an immense need for its natural fruit, a child, probably because it would help confirm her identity with the mother" (31). She needs a central role in the family structure to feel important, and in a family the only way the woman can have power is as the mother. Capasso believes that Sand "may have created this character to assert a femininity and a maternity which she sometimes embraced, sometimes rejected" (39). Even as a older woman Sand seems to realize that, despite all her attempts to liberate women from their gender-specific, cultural roles, women still have no real options, and that, for a woman to be able to use her skills and gifts, the only viable place is still the family.

La Tour de Percemont (1875) continues the well-established and documented literary tradition of contrasting types of women. One is evil, selfish, and, worst of all in the Sandian universe, unmaternal. The other is a very maternal virgin. One is the aggressor, the other the victim. Only a wise, benevolent man can save the victim, and he is willing to do so only because she is indeed pure.

Alix de Nives is the stereotypical step-mother to Marie de Nives. The evil step-mother plots and schemes to disinherit her step-daughter, the chaste,

noble-hearted victim of her malevolence. Fortunately for Marie, she has a sort of fairy godfather in the person of the narrator, the wise lawyer M. Chantebel.

In the tradition of her society, Marie's reputation is her most vulnerable asset, and it is attacked first. Alix informs M. Chantebel that Marie is "une nature échevelée, capable de tous les égarements" (41) and that, "malgré la claustration du couvent, elle a trouvé le moyen d'avoir plus d'une fois des relations coupables" (41). She is hoping that this accusation will render Marie unable to claim her father's inheritance.

When M. Chantebel counters that this is not enough of a reason to disinherit her, she attempts another smear on Marie's reputation:

> A onze ans . . . elle ne s'embarrassait pas . . . d'exposer sa vie dans les exercices les plus périlleux des garçons. Dans les près elle sautait sur les chevaux en liberté et galopait sans selle ni bride . . . elle grimpait aux arbres, elle tombait, elle revenait déchirée, souvent blessée. Là était le délire, l'emportement d'une nature violente. (47)

These activities, properly reserved only for boys, should be, in the mind of Alix de Nives, enough to prove that Marie is not "fit" to inherit; there is something wrong with her because she does not act as a girl should. In spite of society's shock at this comportment, M. Chantebel, representing legal authority, proclaims that this is still not enough to disinherit Marie.

In a last attempt to provide damaging information against Marie Alix claims, "elle ne pourra jamais s'astreindre à aucune règle, . . . elle a des attaques de nerfs qui frisent l'épilepsie, elle crie, elle veut tout briser, elle cherche à se tuer. On a peur d'elle, on est forcé de l'enfermer" (53). "Inconduite," un-ladylike behavior, and accusations of insanity are not enough to bring legal action against her. The most damaging evidence is that she has

escaped the convent with a man and is in hiding, most undoubtedly living with him.

This is the only charge that M. Chantebel takes seriously. He has decided to see for himself what kind of woman Marie is; if she is not chaste he will not help her. If she is, then he has decided not to act for Alix. Through an unlikely series of events, M. Chantebel discovers that Marie is the friend of his nephew and niece, as well as his son. The four young people are honest, chaste, and obedient to M. Chantebel. To reward their compliance with propriety Marie is granted her inheritance. They "buy" her half-sister from Alix, Marie maries M. Chantebel's nephew and they raise her half-sister, while M. Chantebel's son marries his cousin. Everyone lives happily ever after; M. Chantebel arranges everything.

He has allowed the two couples to be happy only because the women are traditional and obedient. The men are not held to the same standards; they are even encouraged by M. Chantebel to hide the truth of their past from their wives. M. Chantebel advises his son that:

> il ne faut pas faire de confessions à sa femme . . . il faut résolument nier tout, c'est humiliant, c'est le châtiment de nos fautes . . . [ta femme] ne te l'imposera jamais. . . elle a une grande notion de l'égalité voulue entre époux; elle se dit que l'homme. . . est le guide naturel de la femme . . . et que la femme par sa réserve, sa pureté, s'élève jusqu'à lui et mérite le respect de son maître. (237)

This wise, adept man is still part of patriarchal society. He believes that he and his son and nephew are superior to their wives. Their wives are worthy of their love only because they are "pure." Without proof of their innocence and virginity their husbands would not have married them. They represent "good" women

and are loved, cherished, and protected by their men. Alix de Nives represents a "bad" woman. In addition to her cruel attempts to disinherit her step-daughter, she is also not pure. She has seduced, married, and been widowed by two elderly husbands so far. She has given up her child in order to seduce a third husband.

Unlike Alida in Valvèdre (1861), Alix de Nives does not suffer consequences for abandoning her child. She is an example of how some women cope with their lack of social, economical, and political power. They must marry in order to survive, yet they marry for money, using whatever means they can to accomplish their goal. If it means abandoning their children, they will do so. The other women in the novel represent how the rest of the women of their time cope: they remain chaste and blameless, find the protection of a male, and live in marriages in which they are loved, yet considered unequal and inferior. The only recognizable Sandian principle remaining in this novel, written a year before her death, is that they all, except Alix, marry for love.

These novels raise some questions regarding the extent and authenticity of George Sand 's feminism. She does not condemn the passivity and dependence exhibited by many of the female characters in these novels; their lack of self-direction does not prevent them from making good, loving marriages; and if they are unhappy they are blamed, not society.

Naomi Schor calls the example of Mme Cardonnet's unhappiness in Le Péché de Monsieur Antoine "a shocking regression in comparison with Indiana, Valentine, and Lélia in that it places the burden of guilt for wifely misery squarely on the wife's shoulders" (189). There are several other unusually harsh sentences placed on the women in these novels; the deaths of Félicie in Le Dernier amour, and Alida in Valvèdre do not serve as much of a feminist

purpose as similar deaths do in other novels. The negativity in the female protagonists' lives does not prove a point, and no optimistic alternative is given. If any feminist advocacy is to be seen in these novels, it is in Naomi Schor's belief that the contradictions themselves make Sand a feminist because they reflect her awareness that the condition of women is problematical no matter what they do: "if Sand is a feminist, it is in the sense that she bodies forth and articulates these contradictions and not to the extent that she resolves them in a more or less satisfactory fashion" (76).

Chapter 2: Hidden Feminism

The following group of novels contains situations and events that call into question society's traditions, beliefs, and practices concerning women. While some statements critical of society are made by the characters or the implied authors, these novels are noteworthy for their use of negativity in female characters' lives to make their point. They have been placed in the category of hidden feminism because the feminist advocacy seen in other works is not as obvious; no omniscient narrator comments on or decries the fates of these females, it is left mostly to the reader to see, understand, interpret, and potentially react to the injustice portrayed. As with the questionable feminist novels, the novels with hidden feminist messages appear within each decade of Sand's literary career; they do not fit into any one time period of her life, but they are an on-going attempt to question and educate her society.

La Dernière Aldini, (1837) is the story of a couple in love who are forced apart by society. It is the first-person narration of Lélio, an actor telling his friends about his doomed relationship. When he was a young man he fell in love with an older, aristocratic woman, for whom he was a servant. Bianca had been married to a cruel man whom she did not love. She and Lélio are not allowed to wed, due to their differences in social rank. She is threatened with the loss of her child to her husband's family; since women had no legal right over their children, she would have lost her daughter to them had she remarried against their will. Even though she is convinced that this is her one true love : "c'est Dieu qui m'a permis d'aimer Nello, et qui désormais me commande de l'aimer jusqu'à la mort" (45), she does not fight society: "elle n'avait pas l'âme assez forte ni l'esprit assez éclairé pour s'élever au-dessus de l'opinion. Elle se

plaignait de la morgue des autres, mais elle donnait à cette morgue une valeur réelle par la peur qu'elle en avait" (59). Lélio leaves her to her "monde" and loses all contact with her.

Years later, when they are reunited, Lélio realizes that he still loves Bianca, even though she has remarried. Society has kept them apart; yet instead of spending the rest of her life alone, Bianca has remarried; she has repeated the pattern of an arranged, loveless marriage because she was denied marriage for love. She is not condemned for this in the novel, and there is no rallying cry for change: the novel is merely a descriptive portrait of a woman forced to chose between marrying for love or following society's traditions. As she has no legal rights, there is really no choice.

L'Uscoque (1838) is George Sand's version of the same story told by Byron in "The Corsaire" and "Lara" (1814). Carol Mozet has done a comparative study of the two author's versions of the story, and claims that "leur création littéraire est fortement marqué par leur attitude sexuelle . . . George Sand, féministe, se met du côté des femmes" (62). The main character, Orio Soranzo, is loved by two very different women, both of whom feel an all-consuming passion for him, and reject everything to be with him.

His wife, Giovanna, is the representation of the pure, saint-like woman who cannot resist him. She rejects a more worthy man because of her passion for Orio, telling her fiancé: "pardonnez-moi. . . le mal que je vous fais, et priez Dieu que je n'en sois pas punie; car je n'ai plus ma volonté, et je cède à une destinée plus forte que moi" (51). She recalls the day she met Orio as "le jour fatal," (51) and insists that she has no control over her own destiny, that he has some magical power over her. This power begins with the announcement of his name: "Ce nom me fit tressaillir," then the sound of his feet, "je tremblai de

tous mes membres quand j'entendis le bruit de ses pas," then his eyes, "fascinée par ce regard magique . . . je restai clouée sur mon fauteuil, sans pouvoir me lever ni détourner la tête" (52). The usual power of the seductive gaze has been preceded by sounds: his name, his footsteps.

This magical attraction has affected many other women, and Orio uses it to his full advantage. The third-person narrator defends Giovanna's weakness by affirming that, "Orio . . . connaissait les femmes et le pouvoir qu'il avait sur elles" (53). She becomes totally "subjuguée" to him on their first meeting and breaks off her engagement to another man the night before her wedding.

Giovanna lives with Orio on the pirate-filled island where he is the governor. She remains in this desolate place, practically abandoned by her husband, and grows increasingly melancholy and ill. It is not until she discovers that he is the famous "uscoque," the murderous pirate, that she accepts his real nature and vows that "elle n'aime plus rien sur la terre" (99). If she cannot love Orio, she will love no one. Even after hearing him boast of his exploits, she refuses to accept that he is a completely evil man, or that he married her for her uncle's money. She concludes that he loved her once, but that, "la passion des hommes n'est que du désir, et ils se lassent aussitôt qu'ils possèdent" (55). Her stubborn loyalty remains, up until the night he realizes that she has discovered his secret and stabs her to death.

The other woman in Orio's magnetic hold is Naam, Giovanna's opposite in every way. She had been a concubine, who had fallen in love with Orio and murdered her master to help him escape from prison. She dresses herself as a boy and becomes his servant and constant companion. She is involved with his pirating, yet is also blind to his real character: "elle savait bien qu'il mentait aux hommes; mais elle ne pouvait imaginer qu'il voulût mentir à elle aussi" (122). This oblivion on her part is due to her love for him: "elle aime,

elle se croit aimée" (97). Naam knows of his treachery to everyone else, including his wife, yet she chooses to believe that he loves her and would never treat her in the same fashion.

She stays with Orio as he successfully returns to Venise society, passing as a grieving widower for whom only gambling is enjoyable. His next "project" is to win the love of a woman who hates him for killing her brother. This audacity is stoically supported by Naam, who is still dressed as his boy servant, and who still follows all his orders. When the woman's brother comes back, claiming his intention of exposing Orio as "l'uscoque," Orio commands Naam to murder him, and she does. Orio's joy is short-lived, however, when he becomes a suspect in the crime, and he changes from praise: "ô admirable fille . . . viens dans mes bras, ô toi qui m'as deux fois sauvé," (182) to accusations: "Naam, vous avez fait une insigne folie, un crime gratuit. . . vous avez menti, je ne vous ai rien commandé du tout" (183).

Even this brutal betrayal is not enough to discourage her love and loyalty. He denounces her and she is put in prison, determined not to betray him. It is only when she discovers that he has attempted to poison her that she finally accepts him as he is. She comes to his trial, telling him,

> j'ai beaucoup de choses à te dire, et il faut que je te les dise devant ces hommes, puisque tu as détruit la sécurité de nos tête-à-tête; puisque ta méfiance, ton ingratitude et ta méchanceté ont brisé la pierre de ce sépulcre où je m'étais ensevelie vivante avec toi. (207)

She confirms that she would have done anything for him, that "il n'est pas de bourreaux avides de sang, et de torturés qui eussent pu m'arracher un mot contre toi" (207). Her love could not overcome his last offence, however: "j'ai pleuré ta femme, et j'ai juré sur son cadavre que le jour où tu voudrais me traîter

comme elle, sa mort serait vengée" (209). She does avenge Giovanna's murder, and Orio is finally punished for his crimes.

The two women, opposites in every way except their overwhelming passion for Orio, are finally equal in the end. Together they punish the man who betrayed them. Naam uses her words as a live witness, and produces the written words of Giovanna as a witness from beyond the grave. As Giovanna had sworn never to love another man, so does Naam. She spends the rest of her life alone, dressed as a man, doing charitable works.

Both women blame their passion for Orio on destiny. Both experience this love as so overpowering that nothing matters but being with him. Neither woman takes responsibility for her own actions or feelings. Neither woman decides to leave him or denounce him because of his actions. Neither woman admits that he does not love anyone but himself. Both allow him to ruin their lives. George Sand does not stop with these two women, however. At the end of the novel the woman who hated him, who knew he was responsible for killing her brother, begins to fall in love with him also and is preparing to marry him.

Despite some questionable choices on Sand's part concerning the female characters' insistence on their lack of responsibility for their actions, there is an interesting hidden feministic statement here: Naam's exoneration. She has committed as many murders and robberies as l'Uscoque, yet she is allowed to leave the country, while he is hanged. The male who domineered and controlled is punished; the weaker, dependent, victimized woman is excused.

Teverino (1845) is a story of two couples in love. One couple belongs to the noble class, the other couple are peasants. The main protagonists of the noble class are Léonce and Sabina. They are in love with each other, but she

is married and will not leave her indifferent husband; nor does she wish to risk a scandal by having an affair with Léonce. Their life is filled with bored joking and innuendos, preserving an apparently never-ending status quo. Madeleine and Teverino, the two peasants, have a different sort of existence because they are poor and have no family or social expectations concerning whom they marry.

In an effort to shake Sabina out of her deadened state, Léonce pursuades Teverino to dress in nobleman's clothes and pretend to be an aristocrat. Thinking him her social equal, Sabina finds herself momentarily attracted to Teverino. When she loses her self control and kisses him, she tells Léonce, "j' étais un être passif, dominé, entraîné, une femme, en un mot" (157). According to the narrator, she is also acting like a woman when she becomes jealous of Madeleine: "toute femme du monde est née jalouse. . . et l'attention accordée à toute autre créature de son sexe, en sa présence, devait infailliblement lui sembler une sorte d'outrage" (114). Sabina ceases to feel any emotions for Teverino once she realizes that he is only a peasant. This momentary passion has allowed her to express her feelings for Léonce, and they declare their love for each other. Yet Sabina returns to her husband and she and Léonce continue their chaste relationship.

Hidden in this study of class differences is an example of the tragedy of arranged marriages. Sabina, unlike many other aristocrat women in similar situations, chooses not to have an affair; she lives a life completely without passion; she is able to spend time with the man she loves, yet they must guard against physical expressions of love and must therefore shut off their emotions. She become cynical and jaded, caught in an unresolvable situation. Her unhappiness and wasted life are intended to serve as a negative example of the realities of life for many women in Sand's time.

Mont-Revêche (1852) is about what one woman is capable of doing to ruin the happiness, and even take the life, of another woman. The social problem Sand addresses here is that of the fragility of a woman's reputation, and of what women will do to prevent its loss.

Nathalie Dutertre is the oldest of three daughters, and is extremely jealous of her young, beautiful, saintly step-mother. Through a series of deceptions, lies, and false accusations, Nathalie suceeds in causing her father to doubt Olympe's love and faithfulness. After Olympe selflessly rescues Nathalie's sister from a horrible scandal and loss of reputation, Nathalie distorts the incident to cause Olympe's loss of reputation.

When Nathalie's father believes that Olympe has been with another man, he tells her, "tout ceci est la faute de ma confiance insensée, de mon optimisme aveugle. Je vous devais plus de surveillance, de protection. . . je vous croyais la force des anges. Je vous croyais plus qu'une femme" (233). The narrator adds "il ne suffit pas de quelques heures pour vaincre la vertu d'une femme longtemps pure" (233). Despite his love for his wife, despite her unblemished past, he immediately suspects her, refusing to see his daughter's deception. Olympe is so innocent that she cannot bear to live surrounded by those who despise and mistrust her. As soon as she realizes that her husband chose to believe his daughter instead of herself she ceases to resist the poisonous atmosphere she has been living in, becomes ill and dies.[1] She has not only compromised her reputation to save Evelyn's, she has sacrificed herself to allow "la féminization et la socialisation des trois jeunes filles" (Sourian, "Marâtre," 34). Olympe has been the object of the lust of all the men in the novel. While she is completely innocent and unaware of their feelings, she unwittingly deflects their desire away from those toward whom it should be

directed. Her death allows the younger men to place their affections where they should be; all three couples are married and live happily.

Les Amours de l'âge de l'or (1855) is Sand's version of the beginning of humankind in the garden of Eden. This story, which she calls the "conte d'Evenor et Leucippe," is, according to her preface, the first part of "l'histoire de l'amour à travers tous les âges de l'humanité . . . tout aussi bien le développement du sentiment maternel que celui du sentiment conjugal" (2). The two main female characters represent these two kinds of love: the goddess who adopts two orphans and dies as soon as they are happily married, and her human daughter who falls in love with her adopted brother.

The story line is interrupted and framed by the implied author's opinions and impressions. The goddess' voice is also given many opportunities to speak "the truth" to her children. Most of her comments concern motherhood, marriage, and love. She blesses their union, saying that "la vie solitaire est une vie anormale" (195). But she also warns that marriage can be difficult and that many trials will test their love. One of these is the male human's lack of fidelity once his wife's youth and beauty begin to fade. She tells Evenor, "[ta femme] ne sera pas toujours aussi splendidement belle . . . tu [vas] rester plus longtemps jeune et agile. Garde-toi donc de te croire un être mieux doué qu'elle et de vouloir dominer sa faiblesse par l'autorité du fait. Leucippe est ton égale" (192). She continues to warn him that, if he ever proclaimed, "cette femme et ces enfants m'appartiennent" without adding "j'appartiens à ces enfants et à cette femme," the consequences would be severe: "le lien céleste serait brisé, et, au lieu d'une famille, tu n'aurais plus que des esclaves" (193).

Her advice to women is to avoid listening to other men's flattery, which can destroy love. She explains that, "le coeur de la femme est un autel d'une

exquise pureté, où ne doivent brûler que des parfums choisis" (188). Each woman has "un instinct de pudeur" that warns her to "distraire les regards et la pensée de [l'homme] de l'ardente contemplation de sa beauté enivrante" (210). According to this goddess, men are the aggressors and connot be trusted to control their passion. It is the woman who must constantly be vigilant, and whose chastity must be preserved at all costs, even that of killing an aggressor (315).

Most of the goddess' advice, as well as her statements concerning human behavior, conform to the values and practices of George Sand's society. The feminist contribution lies in her disagreement with society's refusal to allow women the power that knowledge brings, including knowledge of sex. Leucippe is instinctively cautious about sensual passion, yet she is not ignorant: "Leucippe n'ignorait pas les lois de l'hyménée . . . l'ignorance absolue des vierges est un résultat factice de l'éducation, une nécessité toute relative de nos moeurs corrompues" (216). Hidden in the midst of an idyllic fable, where there is no overt opposition to the practices of her society, George Sand has included one suggestion: teach young girls about sexuality. She is not advocating promiscuity; she is merely asking for equality in education.

Les Beaux Messieurs de Bois-Doré, (1858) has four main female characters: three peasant women and one noblewoman. Of these women, it is the three peasants who have the most control of their own destiny. They are independent and self-supporting. They have no men to provide for them or protect them. At the end of the novel they all have the reward they deserve; not because they are women, but because of the choices they have made and the lives they have led. The noblewoman's only self-direction is in refusing to marry

men her father chooses for her, and in remaining true to her protestant beliefs, a risk in the France of 1622.

The aristocrat Lauriane is a 15-year-old widow. She had been married as a child, lived apart from her husband, and then became a virgin widow. Her life is spent in isolation in the country, with her father and a 70-year-old marquis as companions.

As the events of the novel unfold, Lauriane remains dependent on her father and the marquis. To please her father she agrees to marry either the marquis or his nephew, Mario, in seven years. By the end of the novel, she is 23 and Mario is 19, and they declare their love and marry. The narrator states that: "La noce fut splendide. Le marquis ouvrit le bal avec Lauriane, qui, heureuse et reposée, ne semblait pas avoir un jour de plus que le beau Mario" (II: 307).

In spite of her dangerous religious affiliation, Lauriane has always had the protection of her father or the marquis. She is protected, yet dependent and unable to do as she wishes. At one point she exhibits frustration at her limitations, blaming them solely on her sex: " Ah, que ne suis-je un garçon. J'y courirais à cheval à toute heure, je serais le camarade et l'ami de ce pauvre enfant, et je lui pourrais témoigner mon amitié sans avoir un lien suspendu sur ma tête ou un reproche à encourir" (II: 235). Noblewomen are unable to act independently. They must be "served, distracted, and defended" (II: 70).

The peasant women, however, have no such protection or limits. They can serve in armies of brigands, travel the country as fortune tellers, spy on and murder people. Pilar is a deformed, abused gypsy girl who escapes her abuser by murdering him. She then joins another woman, Belinde, and they make a living as a dancer and a fortune-teller. Both women choose this profession, refusing offers as domestic servants. Mercédès, another peasant woman, is also without male protection, yet she chooses to obtain work as a servant, thus

remaining "honorable" and eventually marries a fellow servant with whom she is in love.

The differences among these working-class women seem to fall along the lines of choices they make within their limited options. The choice is whether or not to work in an honorable position. Those who choose honorable servant positions, as did Mercédès, may achieve a secure albeit hard-working life. Those who do not choose established positions must necessarily face hardship and uncertainty. The two gypsies choose to lead a life of crime, which leads to disastrous results, and for which they are punished by society. The feminist statement in this novel is implied in the limited choices offered to women of all classes. Here they involve the choice of an approved husband for the aristocrat and the choice of honorable or dishonorable work for the peasant.

Tamaris (1862) is the name of the villa where the female protagonist lives. Mme Martin, who is really a marquise, is the typical chaste, decent, proper woman, "une jolie femme très douce et très aimable" (29). She is a widow with a sickly child, and she has determined to spend the rest of her life caring for him in relative isolation. The narrator, an unnamed single doctor, assumes that she is in love with La Florade, a handsome marine officer. He tells himself that a woman must necessarily fall in love with the first eligible male she meets, and since "elle est seule, . . . elle a besoin d'aimer, c'est fatal: elle aimera dès qu'elle sera aimée" (91).

The Marquise surrounds herself with appropriate male company and never trespasses society's rules. She and the other traditional parent figure in the novel, the doctor, marry once they have solved the problems of all the others in their circle of friends.

There are two other female characters who trespass against society's rules; one, in displaying her emotional vulnerability, the other by openly committing adultery. The overly emotional female character is Nama Roque, the illigitimate daughter of a Frenchman and a Creole. She is described as "éprise de La Florande et n'aspir[ant] qu'à être aimée de lui" (97). Her honesty causes concern for her morality, for which the doctor vouches, telling the marquise, "Mlle Roque est pure mais elle est trop dépourvue de toute idée des convenances pour que sa passion ne vous suscite pas quelque désagrément" (97). Nama learns to control her emotions and follow the sage advice of the marquise, who befriends her. Once she has submitted to the values of proper conduct for young women, she conforms completely with society and is eventually rewarded.

The third female protagonist does not obey conventions. She commits adultery, then kills herself when she discovers that her lover, La Florande, has written a love letter to another woman. She admits her own weakness to the doctor: "vous êtes un homme sage. . . si, au lieu de lui, je vous avais aimé, vous ne m'auriez pas fait manquer à mes devoirs, ou. . . vous m'auriez aidée à m'en repentir. . . tandis qu'il m'a abandonnée" (154). Rather than be a faithful wife and devote herself to her children, La Zenovise prefers to live for romantic love, and dies rather than live without it.

By the end of the novel, order is restored: the unrepentant adulterer has committed suicide and her cuckolded husband has asserted his male identity. He challenges La Florande to a duel during which La Florande falls into the ocean. The doctor finds him and brings him back to life. La Florande marries Nama, and the doctor and the marquise marry.

This is a traditional storyline: the female adulteress dies and the male lives. However, George Sand has added a feminist caveat to this: the male adulterer is punished.

La Confession d'une jeune fille (1864) has as its implied audience a "Monsieur M.A.", whose identity is not revealed until the end of the novel. Lucienne de Valengis is writing him the story of her life before she answers an unknown question that he has asked her. This mystery is followed by other mysteries. She often refers to terrible things that will happen to her long before they occur. A sense of foreboding and doom throughout the novel is intended to pique the reader's interest.

Lucienne is a passive victim; she was kidnapped from her grandmother as a baby, and returned four years later. Her mother, living in England, died of shock at the kidnapping. When her grandmother and father die, her identity is questioned and she is forced to relinquish her inheritance and her name.

There are two men in her life; her cousin who lives with her, and their tutor, a young man named Frumence. When Marius leaves, Frumence is no longer able to tutor her, and she is given a governess.

She realizes the difference between education given to women and that given to young men immediately, and writes now, from the vantage point of time, " je crois que l'éducation d'une femme ne doit pas être dirigée exclusivement par des femmes. . . et je ressentis bientôt la privation de cet aliment plus mâle et plus large que m'avait procuré jusque-là l'enseignement de Frumence" (I:149). Lucienne's grandmother believes, however, that "une demoiselle de mon rang ne devait pas être une personne sérieusement instruite, mais une petite artiste" (I: 149). Lucienne steals romance novels from her governess and begins her

investigation into the meaning of love. She blames these novels for misleading her in her understanding of it:

> ce n'étaient pas de mauvais livres à coup sûr, mais c'étaient de bien mauvais romans . . . certes il y a de bons romans . . . mais sans doute Miss Agar les savait par coeur, et il fallait à son cerveau émoussé ces excitations vulgares, comme il faut de grossiers condiments aux appétits blasés. (I: 155)

Reading these novels leads her to begin thinking romantically of Frumence, and she finds herself committing those embarrassing acts that most adolescents do when they believe they are in love. She soon realizes her folly and asks Frumence to help her: "les bonnes lectures sont l'unique défense de la jeune fille contre les vaines imaginations qui la sollicitent" (I: 183). She and Frumence conduct many intellectual debates on passion versus rational thought.

As a young woman, Lucienne has few options available to her. Marriage is the only possible recourse for those in her class, yet she vacillates between thinking she loves Frumence and thinking she loves her cousin. She tells Jennie, her new governess and devoted friend, "j'ai trop de clairvoyence masculine, tu l'as dit; je veux revenir à mon sexe et croire bêtement au bonheur." (II: 228). In this novel, education and logic are masculine; feelings and blind trust are feminine.

She is not to receive much "bonheur," however. Her step-mother has disinherited her and the lawyer sent to investigate her birthright, Mr. Mac-Allen, has declared his love for Lucienne. She finds him interesting, but is distressed to find that he was her step-mother's lover at one time. Mac-Allen leaves for several years, and returns with proof that, while she is indeed the same baby who was kidnapped, she is not her father's child.

She is still not ready to marry Mac-Allen, however, because she feels she must prove to him that she never really loved Frumence or her cousin. This despite Mac-Allen's confession that he has had many lovers in the past. He asks her, "à présent que vous avez tant grandi dans le malheur et que je me suis tant purifié dans la souffrance, ne sommes-nous pas dignes l'un de l'autre?" (II: 312). In an unusual double double-standard, Lucienne forgets his past romantic liasons and doubts her own emotional past: "dois-je dire que je vous aime encore? Non, je ne le puis ni ne le dois, car je ne sais pas si mon âme est assez vierge de toute affection pour accepter votre confidence illimitée dans le passé" (II: 312). Not only must the woman be a virgin physically, but now she must be able to state that she has never loved anyone else emotionally. She is jealous of Mac-Allen's past love-life, but there is no question of forgiveness on her part. She must assure herself that she is good enough for him: "suis-je l'être idéal dont la pureté vous enivre" (II:313)?

In addition to soliciting Mac-Allen's approval concerning her past (chaste) feelings of love, Lucienne is also attempting to communicate who she is to him. He is the person to whom she is addressing this "confession" after he has proposed marriage. His reaction will determine whether they wed or not. He must listen to her; he must validate her "voice."

Lucienne has seen the voices of three other women be completely rejected, denigraded, and dismissed by Mac-Allen, and she wants to make sure hers is not. Ruth Carver Capasso believes that this is a study of "the role of gender in the process of communication" (56). Lucienne's grandmother's insistence that she is indeed the kidnapped child is dismissed as "l'illusion d'une tendre aïeule" (II: 33). The woman who returned her to her grandmother writes a detailed account of how she come in contact with the child: her account is dismissed by Mac-Allen when he asks her, "croyez-vous que votre

témoignage et vos preuves puissent servir à quelque chose" (II: 34)? The third woman whose voice is rejected is that of her mother. She confessed her infidelity and Lucienne's illegitimacy in the hope that her honesty would ensure some future for her child. Her husband responds by ordering the kidnapping. Up until this point in her life, Lucienne has seen only disrespect of and disregard for a woman's thoughts, ideas, and testimony. If Mac-Allen dismisses her testimony, and by extention, who she is, she cannot marry him. In his response to her, Mac-Allen proves that he has read her story, yet our sense of his acceptance of it as a serious document is weakened when he says, "je le croirai, parce que je vous adore" (II: 315). After all her effort to be taken seriously, her story is accepted not because it is true, nor because she is worthy and respected enough to be believed, but because she is the object of her reader's affection.

Césarine Dietrich (1870) is one of George Sand 's few novels in which a female character narrates the entire story. The story is about the narrator's student, Césarine Dietrich, and how her life and the narrator's, (her governess, Pauline de Nermont), are intertwined. This novel examines two types of women. Césarine is quite untraditional in her character and aspirations. Marguerite is a typically dependent, subservient, passive woman. Both women are involved with the same two men, and the actions and emotions exhibited by them add to the contrast of their personalities.

A third, more subtle contrast can be seen in the attitude of the narrator. She begins her relationship to Césarine with a high opinion of her and continues to make excuses for her unconventional behavior. When she first meets Marguerite, in contrast, she has no respect for her. It is through Pauline's

eyes that the reader sees and understands Césarine and Marguerite, and, by the end of the novel, her opinions of the two young women have been reversed.

Pauline is left without money when her father dies. She cannot rely on the traditional salvation for women, however: "j'étais laide, et personne ne m'avait aimée. Je ne devais pas songer au mariage" (2). She becomes the governess to fifteen-year-old Césarine, who has just lost her mother. Pauline soon learns that Césarine is very much in charge of herself:

> elle avait comme une double organisation, toute la patience de la femme adroite pour arriver à ses fins, toute l'énergie de l'homme d'action pour renverser les obstacles et faire plier les résistances . . . elle est invincible . . . ceux qui savent dominer souffrent-ils ? (16)

Pauline also senses the need to protect herself: "[Césarine] m'effraya . . . il s'agissait de savoir si elle était bonne, . . . si elle se servirait de sa force pour faire le bien ou le mal" (16).

Césarine is aware of her own power and personality, and of the fact that others have expectations for her that do not always conform with her own. She tells Pauline that her mother "voulait que je fusse une femme et rien de plus, rien de mieux. Mon père veut que je pense comme un homme. . . heureusement je sais me défendre, et je saurai me faire aimer de vous comme je suis" (19).

This strength of purpose becomes clear to Pauline, who soon fears that Césarine may be what is called in todays' terms a psychopath. She claims not to know the difference between good and evil. When Pauline speaks to her about it, she replies, "vous me permettrez, à l'âge que j'ai, de ne pas savoir encore ce que c'est que le mal" (21). Pauline adds to this declaration, "et elle s'arrangeait pour ne pas paraître le savoir" (21). Césarine consistently

demonstrates lack of remorse in her treatment of her family and friends. She manipulates everyone into obeying her wishes, yet manages to explain her actions and words so that she does not appear to be selfish or unfeeling, and when things go wrong she is adept at turning the blame on others. Unlike her traditional mother, she has determined her role in society:

> je crois que j'aurai un rôle plus difficile à remplir que celui de montrer les plus beaux diamants, les plus belles robes et les plus belles épaules. Il faut que je montre le plus noble esprit et le plus remarquable caractère. (41)

Césarine's strength of character and her insistence on getting what she wants lead to the major struggles in her life: obtaining the love of a man who shows no interest in her, Pauline's nephew, Paul. Paul is controlled, honorable, and self-determining. He meets Césarine several times and refuses to be manipulated by her. His resistance is unacceptable to her and she spends all of her time and energy in an attempt to secure his love. She declares her love for him, yet Pauline knows that she is incapable of love and wants only to dominate him by causing him to fall in love with her. She has already ruined the life of another man, the Marquis de Rivonnière, who is helplessly in love with her and whom she refuses to marry.

Césarine is more interested in a man who shows no desire for her than in a man who loves her. Pauline warns her nephew, "je la connais, je sais que toute résistance l'irrite et que, pour la vaincre, elle est capable de beaucoup d'obstination" (90). One of her attempts is to purposfully compromise herself with Paul, assuming he would feel obliged to marry her. She claims, "si je n'épouse pas cet homme-là, je n'aimerai plus jamais, je resterai fille" (99). Pauline understands both Paul and Césarine: "Césarine n'a qu'une pensée; faire que tout lui cède. Paul n'en a qu'une aussi; ne céder à personne" (101).

Césarine continues to abuse the marquis and insist on marrying Paul. When Paul informs them that he has a mistress and a child, Césarine shows her displeasure "en se donnant une attaque de nerfs qu'elle obtint d'elle-même avec effort et qui finit par être réel, comme il arrive toujours aux femmes despotes et aux enfants gâtés" (134). In order to attempt to break up Paul and Marguerite's relationship, Césarine introduces herself to Marguerite and becomes involved in their lives. Her manipulations continue as the marquis returns to her and demands that she marry him. When Césarine again out-maneuvers him, Pauline realizes the extent of her abilities: "Césarine . . . était féconde en expédients et habile à s'en servir. . . elle croyait fermement à son inspiration, à son génie de femme, et se persuadait opérer le sauvetage des autres en les noyant pour se faire place" (168).

Despite all her abilities to manipulate and control, Césarine has one implacable enemy that she can never overcome. She is a woman in the nineteenth century, and her freedom is severly restricted. She has foolishly left herself open to questions about her reputation by leaving the house on her own and spending large amounts of time unchaperoned. Without a good reputation she will not be allowed to operate in and manipulate high society. When the marquis exploits this weakness to push her into marriage she succombs, yet not until he is on his deathbed and expected to die. As a widow she will have much more freedom and independence, and her reputation will be more resilient. She maintains control of her life, however, by forging an unusual agreement with the marquis. If he lives, he will not be allowed to touch her. If he does attempt to consummate the marriage, she will file for annulment.

Once married, Césarine makes another attempt at seducing Paul. She writes a book and asks him to read it and make suggestions. Since both are now married, Paul sees no risk and begins to spend time with her discussing

philosophy and ideas for her book. She succeeds in her quest at winning his confidence. Pauline notes, "la marquise avait réussi là où avait échoué Césarine. . . tout ce que Paul avait juré de soustraire à sa sollicitude, elle le tenait, et, loin de s'en plaindre, il était heureux qu'elle l'eût conquis" (249). Césarine triumphantly gloats, "j'ai voulu être aimée de Paul Gilbert; je le suis" (261). But Paul realizes her misconceptions and informs his aunt:

> elle n'est pas si forte qu'elle le croit . . . je suis l'homme de mon temps, que la femme ne gouvernera plus, à moins de devenir loyale et d'aimer pour tout de bon. Encore un peu de progrès, et les coquettes, comme tous les tyrans, n'auront plus pour adorateurs que des hommes corrompus ou éffeminés. (299)

Paul ceases all contact with her when she sends him a note asking him to spend just one night with her. He tells Marguerite, "sa démence n'a rien de noble. C'est l'égarement d'une conscience malade, d'un esprit faux, d'un méchant coeur . . . elle a espéré me punir" (309).

Instead of punishing Paul for resisting her, Césarine finds herself in the unusual position of losing. Her husband does not die. He returns from his convalescence and becomes a permanent part of her life. Pauline leaves her to live with Paul and Marguerite. Realizing that she will never obtain Paul's love, Césarine quickly replaces him. Paul sees her with the new man and informs his aunt, "le pauvre vicomte. . . est devenu, en qualité de cible, mon remplaçant. . . il a été moins heureux que moi, et elle lui a passé sur le corps" (317).

This is a woman who must dominate and manipulate. Since she is not permitted to enter the business world where these traits are common and valuable, she must use them in the only area allowed her: sex. She uses sex as a tool; it is never the end result. She accepts this restriction because it is not really an obstacle. Her strength is in the insinuation and double-entendre of

language and situation. She is presented as the opposite of Marguerite, who is Paul's wife. Marguerite is poor and uneducated. She is seduced and then abandoned by a man whom she later discovers is the marquis. Paul saves her from an attempted suicide and she becomes his mistress and then his wife. She is passive and simple-minded compared to Césarine; she is totally dependant on men.

At first, Pauline is prejudiced against her and attempts to dissuade Paul from marrying her. As Césarine continues her machinations, however, and as Pauline witnesses Marguerite's basic goodness and self-sacrifice, she begins to feel more compassion for her and less for Césarine. By the end of the novel Pauline is praising Marguerite and damning Césarine. The "fallen" woman becomes the heroine and the virgin becomes the villain. The "fallen" woman is contrite, passive, and obedient. She receives the rewards in life; love, marriage, children.

The traits Césarine exhibits are usually reserved for male characters; while they may be despised, they are often the captains of industry, the wealthy controllers of society. By giving these dubious personality traits to a female, George Sand has suggested that there are other ways for women to be than what society expects of them. Some can be just as ruthless and unfeeling as men, another example of androgynous behavior.[2] Instead of accepting the submissive, loving, dependent role assigned to women, Césarine "accepte aucune limite. Ce qui l'intéresse n'est pas de communiquer, mais de dominer . . . rien ne l'intéresse qui paraît désirable aux autres" (N. Mozet, Ecrivain, 126). Césarine Dietrich may not be a pleasant person; she is certainly unlike all of George Sand's other female characters, yet as a female, she is allowed to act as she pleases; she is granted a personality equal in strength to that of men, even if her society does not allow her to use it in the same way.

Francia (1871) tells of a woman driven to commit murder by her circumstances in life. She is a poor Parisian girl with no family to take care of her; she cannot make enough money to support herself and her younger brother. Since there are no honorable jobs available, she is forced to live with whichever men agree to care for her and her brother. She has been used and abused by several men by the time she meets the Russian soldier. Mourzakine is able to seduce her by telling her that he saw her mother in Russia before he left. Francia has never known her mother's fate, and she clings to the hope that Mourzakine can locate and return her mother to her, which will allow Francia to have the protection she so desperately needs. Once they begin their affair she falls in love with him, both as protector and as possible rescuer of her mother.

Mourzakine knows that her mother is dead, however, and he continues a series of lies and deceptions, beginning an affair with another women while he claims to love Francia. When Francia discovers that he has been lying about her mother and that he has another mistress, the loss of hope drives her insane and she stabs him in the heart. She is not seen at the house and is never accused of his death. She becomes both mentally and physically ill soon after and dies, never regaining her memories of her murder of Mourzakine.

Because she is a woman, and poor, Francia has only two options available to her if she wants to survive; both involve her body, and both require her to be dependent on men. She can either marry a man just as poor as she, who barely makes enough money to support himself, or she can live with wealthier men and prostitute herself to them. This cruel reality is too much for Francia to bear, and she escapes into a mental world in her mind where none of this is true.

Before she dies she sees a vision of Mourzakine and her mother together. Both of them represent failed protectors for her. She has been forced

into the life of a "grisette" with no one to help her. Her society has cruelly mistreated her, and she has become insane. This is a dark yet accurate portrayal of reality for many poor women in George Sand's time. [3]

It is not surprising that most of these novels have received little or no attention from feminist critics. The situations in which the female protagonists live are not positive; there are few happy endings. They are a stark portrayal of the realities George Sand sees and lives in her society, and they are meant to be disturbing. They form the smallest group of Sand's novels and they are relatively unknown. Their powerful message should not be overlooked, however: they are potentially rich sources of information about George Sand as a writer, about her message to her society, and about that society itself.

Chapter 3: Sympathetic Feminism

The term "Sympathetic Feminism" applies to novels in which the reader's sympathy for the female protagonist is evoked, encouraging him or her to desire equality for the women characters in the novel, and by extention, for women in general. Some of these novels contain outright feminist statements that highlight the unfair treatment of women; others allow the reader to experience sympathy for the female protagonists without didactic interference. These novels span Sand's entire literary career and show a deliberate attempt to lead the reader into the female protagonist's world, exposing the injustice women experience.

Indiana (1832) is the first novel written by George Sand without the collaboration of Jules Sandeau. It was well-received by critics and made her famous.[1] It is the first in a long series of novels in which George Sand exposes and condemns women's subordinate role in society and in marriage. There is abundant criticism on this novel, most of which recognizes and analyzes its feminist aspects, using narratological, psychoanalytical, biographical, social, and political methods as means of understanding the text. Three of the most interesting points brought out by these studies concern the telling, deliberate use of a male narrator; the use of dialogue; and the Romantic, Rousseauesque privileging of nature above civilization.

Pierrette Daly identifies the manipulation of her male narrator as part of Sand's feminist message. Sand most often uses a male narrator or implied author to "infiltrate the masculine structures and write of women's experience through his voice" (Daly, "Problem," 23). Sand uses her male narrator to emphasize both the men's lack of understanding of women and their refusal to

allow them to speak. At times the male narrator chooses not to report or interpret the words of the female protagonists, leaving their voices unheard. In one scene in Indiana, when the servant, Noun, needs desperately to communicate her situation (she is pregnant) and feelings (she loves him) to Raymon, her lover, the narrator declares, "elle ne se servit peut-être pas des mêmes mots mais elle dit les mêmes choses, bien mieux cent fois que je ne pourrais vous les rendre" (103). By refusing to relay Noun's words verbatim, the male narrator reduces her to virtual silence. All she has been able to convey to the implied reader is that she is "perdue" and that there is no recourse for her (108). Noun commits suicide; her words are not heeded by Raymon and not transcribed by the narrator.

Indiana, Noun's "soeur-de-lait" and employer, has more of a voice. Her words are the most obviously feminist aspect of the novel, and the male narrator does transcribe her heartfelt cries of frustration at her lack of power in her own life. She falls in love with the seductive Raymon and attempts to leave her husband to be with him. When Raymon rejects her and she is returned to her husband she knows the consequences of her actions and defiantly informs him:

> je sais que je suis l'esclave et vous le seigneur. La loi de ce pays vous a fait mon maître. Vous pouvez lier mon corps, garrotter mes mains, gouverner mes actions. Vous avez le droit du plus fort, et la societé vous le conforme; mais sur ma volonté, monsieur, vous ne pouvez rien . . . cherchez donc une loi, un cachot, un instrument de supplice qui vous donne prise sur moi . . . vous pouvez m'imposer silence, mois non m'empêcher de penser. (233)

Due to her second-class role, she has no protection, nowhere to go; life before her attempted affair was unbearable; it will now be even worse. Indiana's

diatribe to her husband is met with one sentence on his part: "j'ai pitié du dérangement de votre esprit, dit le colonel en haussant les épaules" (234). There is no dialogue between them, no attempt on his part to address her concerns, not even anger at her attempt to leave him. He accuses her of having an "esprit dérangé" and shrugs his shoulders, both verbal and physical expressions of his lack of understanding and his lack of interest in communicating with her.

Lucy M. Schwartz comments on the use of dialogue within this novel, noting that it serves two purposes: "a kind of battle of the sexes," and " a method used by a female writer in a particular historical period in relations between the sexes" ("Persuasion," 70). The power of dialogue is shown in scenes between Indiana and Raymon. As he attempts to seduce her, Raymon talks to her and listens to her, actions lacking in her marriage. George Sand shows a clear understanding of the male seducer's psyche and methods in her depiction of Raymon; a woman starving for attention and ackowledgment is an easy target:

> l'habitude acquise auprès des autres donnait à ses paroles cette puissance de conviction à laquelle l'ignorante Indiana s'abandonnait, sans comprendre que tout cela n'avait été inventé pour elle. Il se sentait du goût pour une femme, et devenait éloquent pour la séduire, et amoureux d'elle en la séduisant. (84)

Raymon's atttentiveness in addition to his words attracts Indiana to him; she is unaccustomed to participating in a dialogue with a man, and his apparent interest in her as a person leads her to believe that he is in love with her.

The most important dialogue in the novel is the one she holds with her cousin, Ralph. After her second attempt to leave her husband for Raymon fails, Ralph and Indiana return to Bourbon, prepared to commit suicide together. In

what is to be their final moments together, Ralph honestly communicates his long-held feelings of love for Indiana and she realizes the idealized love she has longed for can be found in a relationship with Ralph. They are far away from the civilized world of arranged marriages and social constraints, away from the world where women cannot speak for themselves and have few legal rights. They are surrounded by unspoiled nature, "au bord du lac Bernica" when Ralph informs her of "le secret de ma vie" (314). Kathryn Crecelius claims that the setting for Ralph's declaration is also that of their sexual union, that it is a highly sexualized scene in which "the gorge is decidedly female and the waterfall is a male image" (65). Once their spiritual and physical love are communicated, Ralph and Indiana have no more desire to commit suicide and they spend the rest of their lives on the island, away from the society that condemns both women and men to arranged, loveless marriages. George Sand's revision of the novel, which originally ended with the suicide, (Corr. 2: 46-48) is an early indication of her newfound hope for relations between men and women, and her rejection of society's views on marriage. [2] Crecelius believes that the addition of the final chapter, in which we discover that Ralph and Indiana have decided to live together in happiness away from society, is a "positive and significant addition to the novel, and not the appendage it has been taken to be." (63). By allowing her heroine to live happily with a man who loves her and whom she loves, Sand begins the series of positive examples that will extend to further novels, encouraging her readers to consider the possibilities of self-assertion for themselves and future generations.

Valentine (1832) was written and published the same year that Indiana appeared. As in Indiana, there is a loveless arranged marriage. Unlike

Indiana, however, Valentine does not escape her husband to live happily ever after in an earthly paradise: Valentine commits adultery and dies.

There are two exposed "fallen" women in this novel: Valentine and her older half-sister, Louise. The influence of Louise on Valentine is immediately evident. They have a strong mother-daughter relationship created and sustained through a series of letters they have exchanged throughout Valentine's childhood.[3] The example Louise sets for Valentine is completely different from that set by her actual mother. When Valentine and Louise are secretly reunited before Valentine's wedding, Valentine tells her:

> je vous dois peut-être de n'avoir pas un mauvais coeur; on a tâché de dessécher le mien de bonne heure. . . mais votre image chérie. . . votre bonté pour moi, avaient laissé dans ma mémoire des traces ineffaçables . . . chacune [de vos lettres] m'inspira plus fortement la volonté d'être bonne, la haine de l'intolérance, le mépris des préjugés. (63)

Instead of serving as a warning of the consequences of defying society, Louise sets an example which Valentine seems compelled to imitate. Kristine Wingard Vareille claims that there are three different types of women represented in this novel: Valentine is "la femme pure, la femme esprit," Louise is "la femme faible et sensuelle," and Anthénaïs is "la femme frivole et vaniteuse . . . la femme corps" (77). Vareille classifies these three types according to their response to sexuality: Valentine "ne succombe à la séxualité que par le fait d'un concours de circonstances malheureuses . . . et extérieurs," Louise "succombe par inclination mais regrette sa faute et réussit à se racheter par une conduite fière et courageuse, "and Athénaïs "ne se pose pas trop de questions et est par là . . . douée pour être heureuse" (Vareille 77). Bénédict calls Athénaïs "une bonté toute native, toute végétale, à la manière des légumes qui croissent bien ou mal

sans en savoir la cause" (36). Athénaïs has no ambition but to marry. Because she follows the traditions of her society, she is rewarded by a happy existence.

In contrast to Athénaïs, Valentine knows exactly what her limitations are, and they worry her. She knows that her education has prepared her for nothing:

> nous qui savons imparfaitment l'anglais, le dessin et la musique, . . . sur vingt d'entre nous il n'en est souvent pas une qui posède à fond une connaissance quelconque. Je ne sache qu'un état qui leur convienne, c'est d'être femme de chambre. (56)

Valentine knows that she has neither been prepared nor intended to be anything other than wife and mother. Her powerlessness leads to her arranged marriage with M. de Lansac, an impoverished aristocrat who needs her money. As the laws of their society allow him complete control over both her estate and her person, there is no doubt of his intentions when he tells her before their marriage that he is not yet "votre maître, c'est à dire votre protecteur" (67).

M. de Lansac succeeds in being her master, yet fails as her protector. In a scene reminiscent of Tristan and Iseut[4] and La Princesse de Clèves,[5] Valentine begs him to help her resist the advances and temptations of Bénédict. His refusal provides compelling evidence of what Nancy Rogers calls George Sand's "conviction that marriage in her time is not a viable institution" ("Social Protest" 67).

Bénédict and Valentine had met at the ball celebrating Valentine's wedding. In a scene eerily forshadowing their future, Bénédict, wanting to see her, "fut forcé de monter sur un piédestal de pierre brute surmonté d'une croix fort en vénération dans le village" (45). Benedict will be a sacrifice to his own love, as he pursues his own passions. Like his climbing on the cross, his

seduction of Valentine is an "acte d'impieté" (45) leading to his death. The narrator's opinion about Valentine and Benedict's love is clearly stated :

> cela n'était-il pas selon les desseins de Dieu?. . . l'un était nécessaire à l'autre. . . mais la société se trouvait là entre eux, qui rendait ce choix mutuel absurde, coupable, impie. . . la providence a fait l'ordre admirable de la nature, les hommes l'ont détruit . . . faut-il que, pour respecter la solidité de nos murs de glace, tout rayon de soleil se retire de nous? (104-105)

Nature, then, according to the narrator, should be obeyed, not society. And society seems always to act in opposition to nature.

Louise had followed nature when, unmarried, she had an affair and became pregnant. Her transgressions led to her being severely punished by society. Her father was killed protecting her honor, she was banished from her family, and she and her son were forced to live in hiding. Valentine knows that she, too, may break society's rules, yet, even with Louise as a constant reminder of what could happen to Valentine if she succumbs to her passion, she continues to see Bénédict platonically. They meet in a secluded pavillon on the grounds of her estate with Louise and her son until M. de Lansac discovers their retreat. Though he tacitly allows their meetings, Valentine no longer wishes to meet there, and Bénédict is forced to climb into her bedroom to be with her alone. When he falls attempting to climb into her bedroom, "vaincue par la pitié, par l'amour, par la peur surtout, [Valentine] ne s'arracha plus de ses bras quand il revint à la vie . . . " (Sand's ellipses) (194). Their adultery is the inevitable, fated result of the choices Valentine and Bénédict have made: "Il y a bien de la temérité à espérer vaincre une passion quand on se voit tous les jours et qu'on a vingt ans" (194).

There is no possible "good" choice for Valentine. Her choices appear to be the same as for most nineteenth-century French women. She is given only two--to live respectably but miserably with her husband, or to trespass society's rules in an attempt to find some happiness. Her husband and grandmother seem to expect her to have affairs. M. de Lansac refuses to help her resist an affair, informing her that:

> une femme ne doit jamais prendre son mari pour son confesseur. . . j'ai assez fait pour vous . . . en fermant les yeux . . . je ne désire pas trop vous voir rompre cette liason, qui a pour vous encore toute la beauté romanesque d'un premier amour. Le second serait plus rapide, le troisième. . . (Sand's ellipses) (185)

M. de Lansac is part of his generation and class. Marriage is for money or land; it has nothing to do with emotions. He cares not what Valentine does with her time, only that she be discreet. Her grand-mother sees nothing wrong in an affair either. She tells Valentine, "aime donc. . . mais ne prends jamais un amant qui ne soit pas de ton rang" (188). It is expected that Valentine have an affair; she is only to keep it hidden and within her own class. Unlike Louise, she is married and any pregnancy will not be suspect. The rules of society are clear; all she has to do is follow them. What is missing is the idea of marrying for love. If Valentine could have married for love she would not have had to break the marriage vows, which she takes very seriously. Vareille suggests that the main obstacle for Valentine's happiness, and the reason that she is uncomfortable with the idea of an affair is "la peur de sombrer dans la honte et le mépris de soi en cédant à la séxualité . . . Valentine ne veut à aucun prix trahir la foi conjugale" (82).

When she does break her marriage vows she cannot live with the guilt. Upon hearing that her husband has been killed in a duel (over another woman,)

she is filled with fear: "je n'ai pas mérité d'être heureuse, moi, et je ne dois pas l'être. J'ai été coupable; j'ai trahi mes serments; j'ai oublié Dieu; Dieu me doit des châtiments et non des recompenses" (205). She does not believe that she should now marry Bénédict: her sin should not be rewarded. The woman who cannot accept love and passion outside of marriage cannot live happily in nineteenth-century France. George Sand refuses to compromise with this issue. When Bénédict is killed soon after her husband, Valentine dies of chagrin and shame. She will not live in a society that expects her to live as a hypocrite, so she chooses to leave it. Vareille's "femme pure" will not live tainted. The feminist statement here is Sand's condemnation, not of an adulteress, but of society's creation and allowance of the conditions that force a "femme pure" to choose between the legalized prostitution of an arranged marriage and adultery.

Lélia (1833/1839) is George Sand's best-known work to critics and is "une étape décisive de l'évolution personnelle et littéraire de George Sand" (Vareille 140). The novel has no definitive genre or format, and has been called "an unclassifiable novel-poem" and a "failed allegory" (Schor 57), a "novel of the invisible" (Naginski, Writing, 107), and "obscure" (Sand, Corr. 3: 93). Its richness involves many layers of meaning, allowing various means of analysis and interpretation. Lélia is the only novel that George Sand changed significantly throughout (in Indiana only the dénouement was altered). Lélia appeared in two very different versions, six years apart. The differences in the two versions provide important insights into Sand's developping feminist agenda.[6] There are three telling areas of change: the character and emotional outlook of Lélia, the role of education for women, and the change from passivity to action.

In the 1833 version Lélia is a female Romantic; she is despondent, negative and passive.[7] She believes that, as a woman, "je n'avais qu'une destinée noble sur la terre, c'était d'aimer" (170). It is this belief that causes her supreme sadness. Unlike Pulchérie, her courtesan sister, Lélia compares men and women and their capacity and way of loving, and finds that she cannot accept love that is given differently than is hers. She complains:

> l'homme est brutal et ne sait pas où commence le dévouement de la femme, ni où il finit . . . elle offre avec abandon, elle donne avec joie; puis elle s'arrête étonnée et méprise celui qui, étant le plus fort et le plus puissant, n'a pas rougi de recevoir. L'homme est stupide, et la femme est mobile. (172)

Lélia discusses a past relationship and echoes the age-old complaint of women when she states, "quand il m'avait brisée dans de féroces embrassements, il s'endormait insouciant et rude à mes côtés, tandis que je dévorais mes sanglots pour ne pas l'éveiller" (173). Instead of leaving him to find another more acceptable lover, Lélia begins to reject all men and all relationships.[8] She realizes that, "il n'était pas en lui de calmer [ma souffrance]; Dieu seul eût pu le faire, s'il eût daigné amortir la vigueur maladive de mon âme" (175). She decides that it is love, not her own expectations, and not this particular relationship, that is at fault. At this point she takes the drastic step that will determine her fate: "un jour je me sentis si lasse d'aimer que je cessai tout à coup" (175). She has chosen to deny herself the possibility of happiness and spends the rest of her life in sorrow and despair.[9]

In the 1839 version, Lélia becomes less passive and despondent, placing the blame for her unhappiness on God and society: "La faute en est à

Dieu, qui permet à l'humanité de s'égarer ainsi" (385). God is the father of humanity who has failed to protect his children; specifically, his daughters:

> Quel oeil paternel était donc ouvert sur la race humaine le jour où elle imagina de se scinder elle-même en plaçant un sexe sous la domination de l'autre? N'est-ce pas un appétit farouche qui a fait de la femme l'esclave et la propriété de l'homme? (385)

Lelia compares woman's role in society with that of a (male) child's and finds the child in a better position:

> La relation de l'homme avec l'enfant est limitée et temporaire . . . un temps arrive où les leçons du maître ne suffisent plus . . . car l'élève entre dans l'âge de l'émancipation et réclame à son tour ses droits de l'homme . . . la femme joue le rôle de l'enfant et l'heure de l'émancipation ne sonne jamais pour elle. (386)

This is a much more strident, politicalized outcry from Lélia than that of 1833; she is expressing frustration at society here; before she was frustrated with her own perceived failure to fit into her world.[10] The Lélia of 1839, however, has found a purpose for living; has found meaning in her life, and attempts to make a difference for others. This would seem to make her the mirror image of her creator, George Sand. In 1833 George Sand is just beginning to reject woman's traditional role in society. In 1833 she is not yet sure what to do with her new-found freedom and her non-traditional role. But in 1839 Lélia and George Sand have a new purpose in life: social change.

This social change must begin with women themselves, and it begins with education. As a woman, however, the only voice and power Lélia can have is as the abbess of a convent. She argues with the Monseigneur that the

only good she is capable of is that of instruction: "je veux donner de l'instruction aux riches. . . vous avez ouvert à leurs fils des écoles liberales, vous avez encouragé le développement de leur intelligence. . . je pourrais et je saurais en faire autant pour leurs filles" (461). Lélia has a definite agenda for what she wants to teach the students. She wants to expose the reality of women's role in society, and to prepare them for inevitable disappointment; first, regarding their chance at happiness: "on leur parle trop d'un bonheur possible et sanctionné par la societé; on les trompe!" (481). They will also be disappointed in their husbands: "on leur fait accroire qu'à force de soumission et de dévouement, elles obtiendront de leurs époux une réciprocité d'amour et de fidelité; on les abuse! " (481). The only way a woman can obtain true happiness in Lélia's world-view is when she has a nobler goal than happiness: "Il faut qu'on ne leur parle plus de bonheur, mais de vertu" (481). With the blessing of an unconventional Monseigneur, Lélia is given the chance to express herself and help others. She holds meetings for women and is considered "la première femme qu'on eût entendue parler avec clarté et élégance sur des matières abstraites" (507). She is so good at this that "l'intelligence des femmes qui l'écoutaient s'ouvrait à un monde nouveau" (507).

The new world dreamed of by Lélia is not to be, however, in either version; society rejects Lélia's attempt to improve the lives of women. In the 1839 version she is falsely accused, banished to a convent in ruins, and dies with her friend and fellow visionary Trenmor at her side. In the 1833 version her refusal to accept her role in society is also punished; she ends her life in a state of resigned sadness, dying at the hands of a lust-filled priest and at the bedside of Stenio, the man who killed himself because of her rejection.

In the 1839 version Sand has embraced the ideas of social change, yet society is not yet prepared for her changes. There are several aspects of

society present in both versions against which Lélia struggles and by which she is defeated. One of these aspects is the problem of power. Lucy M. Schwartz calls Lélia "le roman qui détient la clef des rapports entre l'homme et la femme dans les romans de George Sand." ("Persuasion 75). The main obstacle to happiness for Lélia is the "lutte pour le pouvoir" (Schwartz, "Persuasion," 75). One of these struggles can be found in a "scene de séduction manquée" (Schwartz,"Persuasion," 75) in which first Lélia then Stenio attempts to be the sexual agressor. Since Lélia refuses to allow herself to be dominated in any way by a male, she rejects Stenio's advances; since Stenio believes that as the male he should be dominant, he rejects her advances. Their relationship is never satisfactorily defined, either sexually or platonically. Schwartz calls Lélia's actions a reversal of "la tradition chrétienne de la femme esclave de l'homme" ("Persuasion" 76). Lélia refuses to be subservient to a male, wishing to be his equal. Yet equality with a male is not possible for Lélia; she either sees a man as her intellectual, moral superior (Trenmor-Valmarina) or as her inferior (Stenio). Lélia is a superior being, an unusual woman for her times. There is no one with whom she can feel comfortable, no one to whom she can be an equal.

In the 1833 version Lélia sees no hope for herself or other women; in the 1839 version she attempts to change her society by enlightening other women and encouraging them to think for themselves and see how their society treats them. She is banished and her voice stilled, yet she has spoken, her words were heard, there is hope that her message will bear fruit. It is up to those women who receive her insight to take it to others and to effect change for themselves.

According to George Sand, Jacques (1834) is "un livre douloureux" (1). It is an epistolary novel, with four correspondents.[11] There is no omniscient narrator, no editorial voice to explain the characters' motivations and actions; they all express their thoughts and feelings in their own words. Their intermingling lives illustrate several themes, among which is the denouncement of arranged marriages. In this novel, however, it is the male who suffers, not the female.

Jacques is a victim, but not a traditional fragile romantic male: he is a war hero and an honorable soldier. He is cold, rigid, and moral, yet despite these masculine traits, his appearance is unusual and foreshadows his destiny: "il est plutôt petit que grand, et semble très delicat. . . il est constamment pâle. . . il a le sourire triste, le regard mélancolique" (7). One of the reasons Jacques is so melancholy is that he is in love with Sylvia, the illigitimate half-sister of his wife, Fernande. Fernande's mother cannot be sure who Sylvia's father is, and, as Jacques' father was one of her lovers, Jacques assumes she is his half-sister, making her forever unattainable to him.[12]

Fernande's mother, Mme de Theursan, has been shaped by her society. Kristine Wingard Vareille claims that for her, "la vie est reduite à l'apparance, au paraître." She is "le produit d'une société injuste, artificielle et immorale." She is, in all aspects, "un véritable épitomé des vices de la socialité" (277). As the representation of her corrupt society, Mme de Theursan is the basic cause of Jacques', Sylvia's, and for a brief period, Fernande's problems.

The major problem is presented early in the novel: Jacques is 35 years old, and his much younger fiancée, Fernande, 17 years old. Jacques make it clear that he is not marrying her for love: "c'est du mariage que je veux vous parler dans cette lettre, et l'amour est une chose à part, un sentiment qui entre nous sera tout à fait indépendant de la loi du serment" (65). Jacques also

promises her that he will follow his own vows to her, which are, "si, malgré mes soins et mon dévouement, je te suis à charge, je m'éloignerai, je te laisserai maîtresse de tes actions, et tu n'entendras jamais une plainte soirtir de ma bouche" (68). In addition to the fact that they are not in love, their personalities are very different, and they do not have a basic understanding of each other.

After the birth of their twins, Sylvia comes to stay with them. With her is a former lover of hers, Octave.[13] Since the birth of their children, Jacques and Fernande's relationship has deteriorated from honeymoon passion to mere contentment on Jacques' part. He finds it difficult to return to her bedroom now that she is a mother. Fernande is unsure of his feelings for her, and writes to a friend, "Dieu sait, d'ailleurs, si Jacques m'aimerait assez à présent pour être jaloux! Ah, que les temps sont changés. . . qui a détruit ce repos? qui a emporté ce bonheur? Je ne puis croire que ce soit moi seule" (183).

She continues to feel unloved by Jacques and falls more and more in love with Octave. Her friend warns her of the impending crisis: "Fernande, tu te perds. . . je savais bien que cela devait t'arriver un jour, avec ton caractère faible et l'absence de sympathie qui existe entre ton mari et toi" (190). When Jacques becomes aware of the affair between Fernande and Octave he resigns himself to becoming the father figure in the household, allowing the lovers to remain together as they all raise Fernande and Jacques' twins. Once the twins die, however, there is no reason for Jacques to stay; there is no one left to whom he can be a father. Fernande has rejected his paternal affections towards her for the romantic, sexual affections of Octave; they have even conceived a child to replace those of Jacques. Maryline Lukacher believes that in Jacques, "Sand questionne la fonction paternelle en faisant du père de Jacques et de Jacques lui-même des géniteurs malheureux; l'un ne sait pas s'il

est véritablement le père de Sylvia, et l'autre perd tragiquement ses jumeaux" (23). Jacques has failed as a father because he is unwilling to be the lover of his wife. It is his sexual indifference to her that leads to her acceptance of Octave's advances.

The failure of this relationship is yet another example of Sand's abhorence of marriage in her time. Her views appear in a letter from Jacques to Sylvia: "je n'ai pas changé d'avis, je ne suis pas réconcilié avec la société et le mariage est toujours, selon moi, une des plus barbares institutions qu'elle ait ébauchées" (38). Because Jacques lacks respect for the institution of marriage he has no fear of disolving his own. As there is no legal divorce[14] his "solution sandienne" (Lukacher, 24) is to stage his own suicide.[15] At the novel's end, Fernande and Octave are free to marry, as Jacques is missing and presumed dead. The loveless arranged marriage has been completely erased; a marriage of love that began in adultery is blessed. Unlike in Valentine (1832), André (1835), and later novels, the female adultress/sexual transgressor does not die. She is "punished" by having her first two children die, yet the child of her adultry is healthy and lives. The price has been paid by Jacques, in his ultimate paternal action. A male has finally sacrificed himself to allow a female happiness.[16] Sand offers an absurd solution to the problems presented in order to lead us by implication to a more reasonable one: as suicide, even staged suicide, is not the answer, the obvious choice is divorce.

In André (1835) George Sand presents the opposite of the arranged marriage, a "mésalliance." The heroine and hero fall in love, conceive a child, and marry against the wishes of his wealthy father. There is no happy ending, however, owing to André's weakness of character and Geneviève's total dependence on him.

Two sets of men and women are represented in this novel. Henriette is the town beauty, the "grisette" who is strong-willed and street-wise, and knows what she needs to do to persuade Joseph, the town's most eligible bachelor, to marry her. Geneviève is the local florist and is the only "grisette" who receives any respect, accorded because of her chastity and strict morals. She is described as "une fille qui vit toute seule enferméee chez elle, travaillant ou lisant le jour et la nuit, n'allant jamais au bal, n'ayant peut-être pas donné le bras à un homme une seule fois dans sa vie" (54). As long as Geneviève retains her chaste life-style she is respected and protected by all the men and women in her village.

She loses all this protection, however, by not knowing her place and not recognizing her vulnerability in society. According to Kristine Wingard Vareille:

> le sort de la jeune fleuriste figure aussi une aporie plus spécifiquement féminine . . . rarement Sand n'a si clairement montré combien la liberté est impossible pour la femme, même matériellement indépendante, dans un système qui entérine l'oppression des femmes et les soumet absolument au verdict de l'opinion. (255)

It is not Geneviève's libido that begins her demise; it is her desire to improve herself, to raise herself above her expected place in society, both as a woman and as a "grisette." She reads botany books to help her in her work of reproducing flowers for hats and weddings. But that knowledge is not enough for her. Her first long discussion with André consists of him teaching her things about botany that she does not know. Since this subject is essential to her profession and is her passion, she listens eagerly and has no fear of him:

> Elle l'écoutait avec avidité; c'était la première fois qu'elle rencontrait un jeune homme aussi distingué dans ses

manières et riche d'une aussi bonne éducation. Elle ne songea donc pas un instant à s'éloigner de lui et à s'armer de cette réserve qu'elle conservait toujours avec Joseph. (69)

He is socially superior to her; she knows that he would never marry her. Secure in her good reputation, she does not even consider the possibility that he would try to compromise her. He is also superior to her in education, and more education is something she wants. Her desire for knowledge increases André's initial admiration for her, and "il se sentit transporté d'enthousiasme à l'idée de devenir le Prométhée de cette précieuse argile. . . il se sentait maître du feu sacré qui devait embraser l'âme de Geneviève" (81).

Their mutual enthusiasm and innocence lead to their downfall, beginning with his first attempt to see her. He wants to see her to teach her what he knows; he suceeds in compromising her. When he enters her shop there is a woman there who is thrilled to "pouvoir publier une jolie médisance bien cruelle sur le compte de la vertueuse Geneviève" (84). Geneviève "sentit le danger de sa position" (84) and has to pretend that he is there for an order.

They meet on various occasions, innocently discussing botany, astronomy, philosophy; everything that Geneviève wants to learn. Such intellectual, innocent intimacy between a man and a woman is not permitted. Society leaves no opportunities for an unmarried man and woman to be alone together, especially a peasant woman and a wealthy bourgeois. Rumors begin to circulate, and Henriette has to inform Geneviève that her reputation is ruined. She had been different from everyone else, and now,

cette gloire acquise au prix de toute une vie de vertu,
cette position brillante où jamais aucune fille de

> condition n'avait osé asperer, Geneviève l'avait perdue à son insu; elle était devenue savante, mais elle ignorait encore à quel prix. (94)

She is vulnerable because she does not understand her society, her position in that society, and the rules that she must follow to be accepted by that society. Vareille describes Geneviève's rapid descent in society's opinion of her by "la malveillance qui frappe tout ce qui dépasse de tant soit peu la norme. Les habitants de L. . . saisissent cette occasion de se venger d'elle, moins parce qu'on lui croit un amoureux que parce qu'elle est différente" (258).

Henriette knows how people think and she knows how to protect herself. She tells Geneviève, "tu ne sais pas ce que c'est que la calomnie. Je l'ai appris plusieurs fois à mes dépens. . . mais j'ai su prendre le dessus et forcer les mauvaises langues à se taire" (96). She attempts to educate Geneviève as to her place in society and how she should have acted. Had she been like all the other "grisettes" she would have been safe; but Geneviève wanted to be different: "voilà ton orgeuil! C'est cela qui te perdra. . . tu veux trop te distinguer" (97).

As her situation worsens, she is reduced to living with André, since no one will bring her business anymore, and she has no other way of supporting herself. Up to this point, she and André have remained chaste. Society is condemning them for what they have not done, yet instead of remaining strong and defying society, they eventually prove the rumors to be true: "André ne savait pas batailler contre lui-même; il succomba, et Genviève avec lui" (156). Once their relationship moves from intellectual to corporeal, it rapidly deteriorates. Geneviève sees André differently now: "elle sentit qu'André lui devenait moins cher et moins sacré de jour en jour. . . il n'était plus pour elle, comme autrefois, un ami précieux, un instituteur vénéré; la tendresse

demeurait, mais l'enthousiasme était mort" (156). She also loses respect for herself: she has become like all the other women of her class. Her chastity had been her defining action; now "elle a l'impression de perdre son identité, sa raison d'être" (Vareille 264). Once she becomes pregnant, she realizes that all is lost. She and André marry, but, as it is against his father's wishes, "ce fut un mariage triste et commis en secret comme une faute" (157). She begins to talk of dying, even after they have moved into André's father's house. She cannot fight the hatred of his father or her mistreatment by the women servants. She senses that her unborn child has died, and she wills herself to die.

Again, society has punished the woman. The cause of Geneviève's fate, according to the novel, is her attempt to better herself through education. As Geneviève packs her books, she blames them for all her problems:

> la vue de ces livres si chers lui fut bien doulerouse. C'est vous qui m'avez perdue, leur disait-elle. J'étais avide de savoir vous lire, mais vous m'avez fait bien du mal. Vous m'avez appris à désirer un bonheur que la société réprouve et que mon coeur ne peut supporter. Vous m'avez forcée à dédaigner tout ce qui me suffisait auparavant. Vous avez changé mon âme, il fallait donc aussi changer mon sort. (145)

She looks back in longing at her days of ignorance, and believes that "tous ses maux dataient du jour où [André] lui avait parlé d'amour et de science" (176). To the end of her life, she blames knowledge for what happened to her. She cannot see or accept the role her own ignorance of society played. Other women of her acquaintance have lovers, marry, and live happily. Geneviève refuses to compromise or live as a hypocrite, and, through her refusal to be like the others, causes her own demise.

This novel highlights the situation for women in George Sand's time; they are either "femme vierge" or "courtisane." Society's complete condemnation of any woman who dares attempt to break this code leads to Geneviève's death.[17]

The women in Horace (1841) represent two very different personality types. Eugénie is a "modern" woman, outspoken about women's rights. Marthe is her complete opposite, a woman totally dependent on men, with no apparent self-esteem, who allows herself to be controlled by her emotions. The novel, in spite of its title, traces the circumstances and events in Marthe's life with as much attention as it describes the life of Horace, and this attention allows the reader to see how difficult the life of a woman can be.

Théophile, the narrator, describes Marthe's life with Horace as "son esclavage" (167). Horace is the personification of the romantic hero suffering from "mal du siècle." He is lazy, selfish, egotistical and fickle, never satisfied, constantly searching for something that will make him instantly happy. Marthe tries to keep him happy, and although "elle rougissait des précautions minutieuses et assidues qu'elle était forcée de prendre," (167) when she sees that Horace is calm and "satisfait de ses sacrifices et fier de son dévoûement, elle se trouvait heureuse aussi; et pour rien au monde elle n'eût voulu changer de maître" (167). The words "esclavage" and "maître" make it perfectly clear how the enlightened male narrator feels about this particular woman's condition. His commentaries on this topic are just as feminist as those of his lover Eugénie. He observes that this state of being, this relationship, "constituait un bonheur incomplet, coupable . . . car aucun des deux amants n'y gagnait moralement et intellectuellement" (167).

Marthe remains in this relationship despite abject poverty because, according to Théophile, it is an "aveuglement, . . . la part d'une certaine faiblesse . . qui est, chez les femmes, le résultat d'une mauvaise éducation et d'une fausse manière de voir" (187). It is "l'effet d'une absence totale d'instruction et de jugement dans cet ordre d'idées si nécessaires et si négligées d'ailleurs chez les femmes de toutes les classes" (187). Marthe is a product of her society; ignorant and devalued, she has no concept of equality with men. In addition to society's lack of education for women, her lack of awareness is blamed on the reading of novels. She has, as other women, "tout appris dans les romans" (187). To remedy this insufficient knowledge of life, Théophile asks a philosopher friend to instruct Marthe "de la vraie destinée qui convient aux femmes" (187). This instruction is part of what Théophile calls "la réhabilitation et l'émancipation du genre humain dans la personne femme" (187).

Marthe's emancipation, however, comes not from her own philosophy, beliefs, or any new ideas. It comes in the form of Paul Arsène, a man who has loved her for years but whom she rejected to be with Horace. When Horace in turn rejects Marthe and her unborn child, Marthe is rescued by Paul, who asks only that she allow him to be with her. When Marthe finally agrees to live with Paul, she becomes Eugénie's double. Both women now live with men who will always protect them, which is considered an enlightened state. As Eugénie explains to Horace: "je ne vois dans le mariage qu'un engagement volontaire et libre. . . Marthe est, je le sais, dans les mêmes idées, et je crois que jamais elle ni moi ne vous parlerons de mariage légal" (134). This idea of a marriage of conscience and not of law entails other presuppositions. Horace protests, "pourquoi faut-il absolument qu'entre deux êtres qui s'aiment, il y ait un

protecteur et un protegé? Vous, Eugenie, qui réclamez toujours l'égalité pour votre sexe. ..." (132)? Eugenie responds:

> Oh, Monsieur, je la réclame et je la pratique, bien qu'elle soit difficile à conquérir dans la société présente . . . mais savez-vous en quoi je considère [Théophile] comme mon protecteur légitime et naturel? Si je tombais malade . . . je trouverais dans son coeur un refuge contre l'isolement et la misère. Si un homme était assez lâche pour m'insulter, j'aurais un appui et un vengeur. Enfin, si je devenais mère . . . mes enfants ne seraient pas exposés à manquer du pain et d'éducation. (132)

Eugenie implies here that she is not an equal partner in the relationship; that she needs someone to help her. She never mentions what she could do to help Théophile in more than an emotionally or domestically supportive way. There is also no discussion of the fate of these illegitimate children in a society in which legal marriage is the only way to achieve acceptance and even the possibility of social status and respect for both the parents and their offspring.[18] Eugenie has made a fortunate choice in Théophile. Without the legal obligations of marriage he would be bound only by his own sense of honor and duty to provide for her and her children if they ever separated. Marthe has not made such a fortunate choice: Horace, the father of her child, abandons her and provides no financial support.

This ideal of a non-legal marriage provides no more protection or security for the woman than does traditional marriage. In a protest against marriage without love, no improvements have been made beyond giving the woman a greater measure of precarious freedom. Through the use of the male narrator who is responsible and loving, George Sand effectively demonstrates the remaining obstacles to women's achieving true happiness and security.

Marthe is happy and secure only through her relationship with Paul, an enlightened man who loves her and will treat her and her child honorably. It is the man a woman choses to be with who determines her destiny. Her only control is in her choice of a man.

There are two distinctly different types of men for a woman to choose in this novel. Marthe chooses Horace first. He is the wrong kind of man, naturally irresponsible and weak. He seeks out an older, more experienced man who can teach him how to seduce women and exploit them even more than he has done with Marthe. Much like Meilcour and Versac in Crébillon's Les Egarements du coeur et de l'esprit, Horace finds himself a tutor in the ways of "le monde." Le marquis de Vernes is "le libertin supérieur, le débauché de premier ordre" (236). He is a systematic seducer of women whose pattern is "tromper, soumettre, et conserver" (237). Horace admires the aristocracy and becomes the marquis' disciple. He asks and receives advice on how to seduce "une femme du monde," and is advised, "je vous conseille de vous en tenir pendant cinq ou six ans aux femmes enthousiastes et folles qui se tuent par amour ou par dépit. Quand vous aurez détruit ou désolé une douzaine, vous serez mûr pour la grande entreprise. . . d'attaquer une femme du monde" (245). Marthe is therefore considered to be a practice case, leading to a more worthy goal, a high society woman who is also, however, considered less than human.

This sub-plot enriches the novel's treatment of the woman's condition. George Sand presents three case studies. One is happily involved with a "good" man who treats her well and seems to respect her, although they are not legally married and he is under no obligation to support her. The other woman chooses unwisely, suffers horribly, and finally concedes to her reality by choosing a protector who loves her but whom she does not love. The third example is that of the vicomtess Léonie, the object of Horace's obsession, a

representative of all women who are systematically seduced and rejected by men who have no feelings of love or respect for them. All three women have only their choices to ensure their happiness, and it is only the women who suffer or have the potential to suffer.

In this particular novel it is the male narrator who comments on the women's condition. He reproduces some of the women's words, yet his is the only commentary. His unique insight and seemingly impossible knowledge of others' motivations and actions make him more authoritative than he should be, and thus suspect. As an enlightened male he is sure to quote Eugénie's declaration against legal marriage. Yet he never condemns Horace for abandoning Marthe and her child; he feels sympathy for him and lends him money. This lack of judgment serves to undermine his position in the novel, and George Sand subtly shows him to be unreliable and flawed.

His is a positive example, however. By showing some of his flaws, Sand encourages ordinary, normal men to be like Théophile. He is not perfect, yet he can understand women's enforced role in society, condemn it, and speak out and live against it. If he were shown to be completely perfect, he would have been impossible for Sand's contemporaries to emulate. By choosing to have Horace, the traditional male, as the object of Théophile's commentary, Sand has aligned the reader's point of view with Théophile instead of Horace; another strategy to alter her current reality.

François le Champi (1847) is the second of the pastoral trilogy that includes La Mare au diable (1846) and La Petite Fadette (1849). The role of the female characters is quite different in each of these three novels; it is the most unusual in François le Champi. Madeleine Blanchet finds a foundling child, whom she raises with her own son. She is living in an unhappy, abusive

marriage; her husband "buvait beaucoup le dimanche. . . et Madeleine n'aimat pas le voir guilleret, parce qu'elle savait que le lendemain soir il rentrerait enflambé de colère" (45). Her mother-in-law is also cruel to her: "elle haïssait sa bru, parce qu'elle la voyait meilleure qu'elle" (45). Madeleine accepts her bad treatment, however: "elle souffrait comme si cela lui était dû. Elle avait retiré son coeur de la terre, et rêvait souvent au paradis comme une personne qui serait bien aise de mourir" (46). Instead of giving into despair she stays healthy for her son: "elle acceptait tout en vue de l'amour qu'elle lui portait" (46).

Madeleine's basic goodness leads her to take in François along with an older woman, La Zabelle, who had raised François since he was a baby. La Zabelle is very poor, and not very maternal toward François. Her poverty has led her to be "aussi bonne qu'on peut l'être pour les autres quand on n'a rien à soi et qu'il faut toujours trembler pour sa pauvre vie" (37). Despite Madeleine's own difficult situation, she is selfless enough to help others. But Madeleine's goodness is met everywhere by cruelty, suspicion, and negativity. François is the only person in her life who seems to share her personality traits; he seems to "penser comme elle," (46) he returns malice with kindness, and he is, in fact, becoming a mirror image of her.

After her husband's death, François helps Madeleine at the farm; she considers him an adult, yet still her son. When he is twenty-one she decides it is time for him to marry, and suggests her sister-in-law, Mariette. Yet François has just overheard Mariette and another woman gossiping about him and Madeleine and is determined to marry her to save her from the gossip.

Madeleine is so humble and has been so mistreated all her life that she cannot understand how a young man could find her attractive, nor how she could be the object of malicious sexual gossip: "je suis vieille et laide. . . cela me donne le droit d'être respectée, de te traiter comme mon fils, et de te

chercher une belle et jeune femme" (176). Her lack of self-esteem is so embedded that she must be told several times that she is a possible wife for François, and that he could love her sexually: she tells her friend, "je n'imaginais rien comme cela, et j'en suis encore si étourdie dans mes esprits" (185). It is at the fountain where she first saw François as a child that Madeleine and François' relationship begins anew: after hearing that he is in love with her, she cannot look at him as a son anymore: "[elle] se trouva du coup interdite et honteuse comme une fille de quinze ans; . . . [elle] comprit. . . que ce n'était plus son enfant le champi, mais son amoureux François qui se promenait à son côté" (186).

In a situation not unusual in Sand's literary universe, the female protagonist is mother first, then woman and wife. Yet she is more than just a maternal figure; she is a human being who deserves love, who deserves a sexual identity. George Sand's message is clear: if Madeleine's own adopted son can see beyond her maternal role in life, how much more so should the rest of her society?

Despite the title Le Piccinino (1847), the princess Agathe is really the novel's main character. She is loved by several men, yet remains unmarried and chaste. She is feared and dispised by her country's leaders and must play an important game of waiting, protecting her interests, and ruling her empire. She is adored by her people, and is generous, caring, and giving to them. By the end of the novel it is disclosed that she had been raped as a young girl, was married to her rapist, an aristocratic bandit, and then forced to give up her child. She has remained strong and in control of her life since these events, making sure that her son's identity is not discovered, which would lead to his murder by her enemies.

La Princesse Agathe is strong, yet maintains traditional feminine characteristics: "La princesse [avait] ce tact délicat que possèdent seules les femmes" (II: 57). She is able to command respect in even the bandit le Piccinino, the illegitimate son of her rapist: "Elle le pénétra d'un regard où la prudence supérieure de la femme forte l'inspira si bien, que le Piccinino subit le prestige et s'aperçut que le respect et la crainte se mêlaient à son enthousiasme" (I: 275).

While Agathe exhibits both traditional male and female traits, so does le Piccinino. He is small and looks like a woman: "sa figure était d'une beauté étrange . . . un sourire fin et paresseux, un charme tout féminin" (I: 234). His voice is also like a woman's: it is "un son de voix si doux que Michel eut besoin de regarder le muscle d'acier de sa jambe pour ne point croire encore une fois qu'il entendait parler une femme" (I: 235). Both are strong characters, both are leaders, and both share male and female characteristics. Agathe is strong and self-determining, yet so feminine that all men who meet her fall in love with her and wish to serve her. Le Piccinino is soft-spoken and delicate-looking, yet is strong and brave, and is feared by the leaders of the country.

By blurring the demarcation between traditional male and female characteristics, George Sand is demonstrating what Carolyn Heilbrun calls the androgynous nature of human beings: each person can be totally male or female, yet also share traits of the opposite sex. A woman can still be a woman, can still be honorable and chaste, even if she is powerful and in control of her own destiny. A man can seem effeminite, yet still be a "normal" man; even, as in this case, an unusually "masculine man" by his acts of bravery and his exploits in war and rebellion. When these two androgynous characters work together they form a partnership so strong that they are able to defeat the malevolent leaders who have been plotting to kill Agathe's son. As a result of their

collaboration, both achieve their goals: le Piccinino has his freedom, Agathe formally recognizes her son and legitimate heir to the throne, and she is able to marry the man she has loved for years.

Both the strong male and strong female need each other; their androgynous characteristics make them stronger than the others, and when they work together they are able to ensure the happiness of all those dependent on them. This is a strong, positive statement for allowing women the freedom of expressing their true nature, whatever it may be. It is a statement and an example that can be found in many of Sand's novels, and is always presented in a positive way.

In Adriani, (1854) the female character, Laure de Larnac, lives alone in an old house isolated from society. After the death of her husband she realized that what she thought was love for the man was really love for the idea of love, and that, "elle n'avait connu ni l'amour ni le bonheur" (148). Instead of rejoicing that she has been spared a life tied to a man who does not love her, she spends her time lamenting "naïvement des biens qu'elle n'avait jamais possédés" (148). She falls in love with the first man she meets after her husband's death, yet they are forbidden to marry due to their different economic situations.

Laure has decided to fight for what she wants, and she marries him despite her family's objections. In doing so she loses her fortune and her place in society, yet she knows she has made the right decision because "l'amour, c'est le vrai. Il suffit de n'avoir ni le coeur souillé, ni l'esprit fausse, pour savoir que c'est la loi la plus humaine, parce que c'est la plus divine" (277). Laure is ready for love; when she finds it it is forbidden to her based solely on society's ideas of suitable marriages. She refuses to compromise and sacrifices everything, not for a sexually promiscuous lifestyle or a hidden affair, but for a

legal marriage. The reader feels sympathy for Laure because she is a good person, and has broken no other societal constraints.

Laure's state of mind and situation in life are compared to a garden. Her garden, like her soul and heart, is wild and unkempt--no one is there to care for it. Its trees, because they have not been picked, are ripe with fruit. In a passage that could be describing Laure as well as her garden, Sand writes: "les branches, chargées de fruits, barraient le passage." (26). As Adriani attempts to enter the garden, he finds his way barred by neglected yet fertile fruit trees. Laure and the garden could be metaphors for all women trapped in arranged marriages. Because love is "la plus divine" law, it should govern marriage, not social class or financial holdings. This heroine makes a daring choice: to give up her financial security and social position to marry an impoverished opera singer. Her willingness to sacrifice is immediately rewarded, however, as Adriani soon becomes very wealthy. George Sand is encouraging women to take a chance in love, promising unexpected rewards.

There are three female protagonists in Constance Verrier (1859): "une duchesse, une bourgeoise, et une artiste" (10). The narrator states: "toutes trois étaient riches. . . toutes trois étaient libres. . . toutes trois étaient charmantes. . . toutes trois avaient une existence mysterieuse ou problématique" (10). As each woman tells her story, the focal point of the novel becomes love:

> de quoi parlent et de quoi peuvent parler trois femmes réunies? Belles ou laides, jeunes ou vieilles, riches ou pauvres, il faut toujours qu'à propos de soi-même ou des autres, ouvertement ou à mots couverts, comme c'était ici le cas, ce soit question d'amour. (28)

These women represent three possible sexual scenarios: the singer has been with many lovers, yet she has really loved only the first, who took her innocence and then left her. The duchess experiences unrequited love for her husband who tells her, "vous êtes romanesque. . . il faut vous corriger d'une maladie qui ne sied pas à une femme mariée. . . je vous prie de rester dans la mesure de l'affection que nous nous devons l'un à l'autre et de ne pas exiger des extases de poëte et des simagrées de théâtre" (91). When her husband dies she carries out discreet romances that in no way jeopardize her reputation. Constance is engaged to be married and is waiting for her fiancé to return from a four-year absence. The tragedy of this novel unfolds as the three women reunite after a short separation, only to discover that both the duchess and La Mozzelli have slept with Constance's fiancé, unaware of who he is.

The double standard of sexual faithfulness is put into question when Constance finds herself unable to forgive Raoul. She becomes extremely ill and almost dies; then, in order to save her reputation, as he has been spending time with her as she recuperates, she agrees to marry him. She will not forgive him, however, and he vows to win back her love even if he spends the rest of his life as her "brother" instead of her husband.

She does forgive him within a year, and they have a child and live happily ever after. If the situation had been reversed, however, it is most likely that Raoul would not have married her, and that she would have been disgraced for life. It is the woman's role to remain faithful to one man, and forgive him when he is unfaithful. The duchess reproaches Raoul about this fact of society, telling him:

> ceci doit vous faire reconnaître une vérité que [les hommes] essaient en vain de supprimer en disant qu'il y a pour nous une vertu qui n'est pas la leur. Moi, je n'ai pas l'esprit tellement

> faussée par la résignation aux choses établies que je ne sache combien cela est faux et injuste. La liberté ou la vertu pour tous et pour toutes, voilà mon doctrine. (199)

Raoul defends his actions, claiming, "Constance n'est plus une enfant, et une enfant seule croit à l'austérité monacale d'un homme de mon âge, séparé d'elle depuis si longtemps" (192). He is unprepared for Constance's reaction to his infidelity; his only chagrin is that she has discovered it, not that he has commited it.

The issue of the double standard is highlighted, discussed, and condemned in this novel. Lucy M. Schwartz claims that "without ambiguity Sand is still attacking the double standard and finds male infidelity to be just as serious and damaging as female infidelity" (53). However, the traditional role of the woman continues; the male is forgiven and the marriage takes place.

According to Joseph Barry in his introduction to Elle et Lui (1859), "Elle est George Sand. Lui est Alfred de Musset" (5). This novel has been defined as the story of Sand and Musset's relationship. Sand was warned by her editor that she should try to "représenter Thérèse moins parfaite," but that the novel as a whole is "non une oeuvre de vengeance" (24). Despite the autobiographical nature of the work and its inevitable bias, the novel as examined on its own, without knowledge of its real-life counterparts, is worthy of study.[19]

Thérèse is a single, independent woman living alone in Paris. She works to earn her living as a portrait artist. She has a solid reputation as an artist and as a woman; she has no known lovers, she lives quietly and in dignity. Her past is shrouded in mystery, yet because she follows society's rules, she is treated with respect.

This tranquil, respectable lifestyle is interrupted by a fellow artist, Laurent. He has decided that he is in love with her and wants her to be his mistress. He is the epitome of the eccentric genius; he is moody, unpredictable, and never satisfied. He treats women as objects to be posessed. As he begins to pressure Thérèse into a physical relationship she reminds him: "Vous m'avez dit cent fois que vous me respectiez trop pour voir en moi une femme, par la raison que vous n'aimiez les femmes qu'avec beaucoup de grossièreté. Je me suis donc crue à l'abri de l'outrage de vos désirs" (63). Laurent replies that it is really not his fault: "est-ce ma faute si j'ai vingt-quatre ans et si vous êtes belle" (63)? Thérèse is the only woman of his acquaintance with whom he has not had sexual relations; she is a challenge to be met, a change of pace from the prostitutes and other women he frequents.

When she does succomb it is "a self-sacrifice aimed at saving him from the loose women who are debauching him and destroying his art " (Diamond 168). Their initial affair lasts seven days. As soon as Laurent achieves his goal he tires of her. Their trip to Italy ends when he insults her, calling her serenity and calmness boring and infuriating.

What follows is a series of events in which Laurent verbally abuses Thérèse, leaves her, apologizes, asks to come back, and insults her again. She continues to be devoted to him, nursing him back to health, giving him all her money, rejecting an offer of marriage from a dependable, loving man. Thérèse remains independent, working for a living, yet never knowing when Laurent will be back. Her reputation is ruined; all of society knows about their affair. Her life is shattered and the peaceful contentment she had before her affair can never be restored.

Instead of allowing her female character to suffer for the rst of her life for her transgression of having given in to Laurent, Sand chooses to allow her to

re-focus her love and attention on a more deserving person: her son. Thérèse had been married to a cruel man whom she discovered was already married. When Thérèse left him and took her son with her, her husband had him kidnapped and then announced his death. When a friend returns her son to her she leaves society and takes him to the countryside, happy at last:

> Thérèse alla cacher son enfant, son bonheur, son repos, son travail, sa joie, sa vie, au fond de l'Allemagne. Elle eut le bonheur égoïste; elle ne pensa plus à ce que Laurent deviendrait sans elle. Elle était mère, et la mère avait irrévocablement tué l'amante. (179)

Motherhood will restore all the joy she needs. As a Sandian woman Thérèse is irreproachable in her emotional conduct; she had loved Laurent and given everything she could for him. When her child is returned to her, she transforms romantic love to maternal love. She needs to love someone, to mother someone. Her attempts to love Laurent were blocked by his own inadequacies.[20] Because he was incapable of love, she ultimately became unable to love him. As a woman in George Sand's universe, the safest, most rewarding depository of her love is a child. If she cannot have both lover and child, she will choose the child.

This novel depicts the reality of women in George Sand's time; once they break society's rules for them, their lives can be destroyed. Laurent suffers no loss of reputation for being Thérèse's lover; she is despised, forced to withdraw even further from society. She has been mistreated by almost every man in her life; her only chance for happiness now is the hope that she can raise her son to treat women as they should be treated.

Self-sacrifice and equality in marriage are the main focus of Jean de la Roche (1859). Jean de la Roche has been raised in a château built right into a rock, and he finds that the will of the woman he loves is also as strong as a rock. Love Butler is well-educated, strong-minded, and noble-spirited. She makes a strong impression on Jean the first time he sees her: "c'était une physionomie décidée dont le principal caractère était le courage et la franchise" (41). He realizes that "cette personne mènera son mari, son ménage, et ses enfants par un chemin très logique, vers l'accomplissement de ses propres volontés. . . elle sera honnête et juste, mais personne n'aura d'initiative avec elle" (42). This anaysis proves correct, and foreshadows the action of the novel; Love Butler will lead Jean into years of sorrow and uncertainty before they can be happily together.

She has promised her dying mother that she will take care of her father and younger brother. She has taken on the maternal role for her brother and it has become so natural for her that she tells Jean, " je ne me rappelle pas le moment où j'ai commencé à m'oublier pour [lui]" (82). She remembers her mother telling her "il est né après toi, c'est pour que tu le serves" (82). Her mother's death has forced her to assume her maternal role from the age of ten. Like Consuelo and Jeanne, Love Butler faithfully keeps her vow to her dying mother, even if it means indefinite self-sacrifice. In this instance, as in François le Champi, and other Sand novels, motherhood comes before romantic love; she is mother before she is woman. When her brother protests her marriage to Jean she postpones the wedding. It is not until five years later that Jean and Love are reunited and receive her brother's blessing to marry.

Jean and Love are both non-traditional in their views of courtship and marriage. Jean believes that:

> malheureusement, les conditions du mariage dans les classes

> aristocratiques sont détestables en France, surtout en province. Les demoiselles y sont gardées comme des amorces mystérieuses qu'il n'est permis de connaître que lorsqu'il est trop tard pour se raviser. (57)

Once they are married they live according to their own ideas on marriage: "cette loi bestiale, imaginée par l'humanité primitive et sauvage, qui ordonne à la femme de servir et d'adorer son maître . . . fut écartée de notre pacte conjugale commme une impiété . . . inapplicable à des êtres doués de conscience et de réflexion" (182). This couple has waited five years for their happiness; they have sacrificed their own desires to those of their families. They have been patient and honorable. Their reward is a happy marriage of equals who appreciate what they have that much more because they earned it.

In this novel, the female character both commands males and obeys them. She obeys her brother by promising not to marry until he allows her to, and she commands her fiancé by forcing him to wait. This makes her both traditional and original in her approach to the female role in society. As her English name attests, Love Butler is completely ruled by love, maternal as well as romantic. Her marriage to an enlightened male gives her life the promise of equality and self-direction, the hoped-for future of all women in Sand's time.

Le Marquis de Villemer (1860) is a combination of third-person narration and epistolary novel in which the woman's voice is expressed in the first person through a series of letters. Caroline de Saint-Geneix is an impoverished aristocrat who must earn a living for herself and her sister. She is employed as a secretary-companion to La Marquise de Villemer, who has two sons from two marriages: the Duc d'Aléria and the Marquis de Villemer. She rejects the advances of the duc, whose only intention is to seduce her, but she and the

marquis seem to have common interests and values. As they spend more time together they begin to fall in love; no emotions are expressed verbally, however, and their relationship is chaste.

Caroline is excellent in her job. The marquise is pleased with her and begins to treat her as a daughter: "[Caroline] avait une remarquable netteté de jugement, jointe à une faculté rare chez les femmes, l'ordre dans l'enchaînement des idées. Elle pouvait s'absorber longtemps sans fatigue et sans défaillance" (202). As long as Caroline's reputation is faultless, she can continue in this family and this profession. However, once a jealous friend starts a rumor about Caroline and the duc, she is rejected by the marquise and fired. Eventually, through a series of coincidences, Caroline and the marquis are reunited. Caroline is absolved of guilt, they declare their love, and are married.

Her life, as those of all women, is completely controlled by her reputation. It is not an act which almost destroys her life, it is the suspicion of the act. Caroline is the epitome of a virtuous woman; she is considered "pure, généreuse et dévouée" (69). Yet , once she comes under suspicion, her previously spotless reputation is completely ignored and she is given no opportunity to defend herself. She is another innocent victim of society whose story strengthens Sand's on-going case against injustice toward women.

Antonia (1862) is the name of a rare flower. The novel is the story of a young woman, Julie. The woman and the flower's fates are intertwined, and, in the end, the flower even bears Julie's name.

The flower is presented to Julien, a young artist, to be painted in honor of its new existence; there is only one of its kind in the world. As Julien is painting it, he meets Julie, a young widow, who has also just started a new existence.

Julien, in an attempt to impress her, breaks the flower from its stem and gives it to her.

Julie, like the flower, will soon be cut off from her life. Her husband has left many debts and she is forced out of her home by Julien's jealous, much older uncle. He promises her that he will support Julien and his mother if Julie renounces him and never sees him again. She leaves, and is advised by an aristocratic woman: "vous avez eu grand tort de ne pas épouser ce vieux riche . . . personne ne vous blâmerait à présent, quand une femme n'a plus rien" (296). Her only escape from financial ruin is marriage. Her mother-in-law invites her to her home, suggesting, "Nous verrons du monde, ça vous remettra, et peut-être, si vous reprenez vos belles couleurs, trouverons-nous un mari pour vous (297). While Julie is not interested in another arranged marriage, she is also not willing to marry Julien, knowing he would have both her and his mother to provide for. As long as she stays away from him, his uncle will continue to support Julien and his mother.

Julie sacrifices her own happiness, health, and potentially, life, to keep Julien and his mother out of poverty. Julie is another example of George Sand's female characters who are willing literally to die for love. Whereas men proclaim that they will die for their lover, they rarely do: promise without performance. Women, on the other hand, actually perform this promise, yet they seek no publicity. Julie hides in the country. Julien does not know where she is or why she has left; he is unaware of his uncle's theats.

The separation and unhappiness cause her to become ill: "l'âme s'éteignait et la vie s'en allait avec elle. . . [elle] continua à dépérir, lentement, sans crise, mais sans relâche" (273). Julie becomes so ill and feels such despair that she decides to see Julien one more time before drowning herself in

his fountain, a privileged place where they used to meet. Julien, also drawn to the fountain by his memories, sees her there and persuades her to marry him.

Upon their reunification, Julie becomes healthy again: "la vie revint en elle comme elle revient à une plante demi-morte qui reçoit la pluie" (329). Not only does Julie regenerate; so does the flower. During its official naming ceremony, "Julien fit un cri de surprise en voyant l'*Antonia Thierrii* fraîche et fleurie dans toute sa gloire" (332). His uncle is so pleased at the regeneration of his flower that he allows them to marry, promising financial support.

The parallels between Julie and the flower are unmistakable: Julie and Julien meet; the flower is presented. The flower wilts because it is separated from its source of life; Julie almost dies because she is separated from Julien. A second flower blooms from the stem; Julie and Julien are given another chance at happiness. The flower is oficially named *Julia-Antonia Thierrii*, and Julie's married name is Julie Thierri.

This motif exemplifies the woman-as-flower topos. It also demonstrates, as do many other George Sand novels, that women are dependent on society, yet can be strong enough to will themselves to live or die.

The main female protagonist in Flamarande (1875) is suspected of commiting adultery. She is never allowed to defend herself; she is never even accused. Her husband believes that, because there is a possibility, it did occur. Her life and her children's lives are forever changed because her husband does not respect or love her enough to discuss the issue.

The narrator of both Flamarande and its sequel, Les Deux frères (1875) is the family valet and manager. He is writing an account of the events to show what role he played in them, and to attempt to justify his actions to himself. Trouble is foreshadowed at the very beginning of the novel. Charles informs the

reader that the comte de Flamarande asks him to spy for him because "il fut tourmenté par la jalousie conjugale" (10). Mme de Flamarande is young and beautiful and has "le sourir angelique, le regard franc et doux" (8). She is honest and chaste. When her husband's friend Salcède first sees her he falls in love, and, "en un quart d'heure, ce jeune homme avait franchi, sans le savoir, un abîme" (19).

This abyss leads Salcède to enter Mme de Flamarande's room, believing they have left. He is searching for some talisman he can have of her. She is asleep and unaware that he is there, but when her husband sees him leaving he assumes adultery. Charles attempts to defend her, claiming, "ou madame est sans reproche, ou elle est d'un habilité de premier ordre" (59).

When she gives birth to a son, the comte orders Charles to remove him and tells Rolande that her son has died at birth. The count insists, "je veux qu'elle le pleure amèrement, c'est le châtiment, et il n'est que trop doux" (90). When Rolande gives birth to a second son she is told that everyone believes her first child has drowned, but that there was no body found. When she begins to search for him the count threatens to take away her second son if she does not cease in her efforts. He informs Charles, "qu'elle sache donc que je suis son juge et sente que je suis son maître" (176). When Rolande discovers where Charles has taken him, she visits the child secretly whenever she can, yet, even though the comte has been living in England with his mistress, she is a virtual prisoner in her home and can escape only rarely.

In a straight-forward yet uncommented double standard, the husband is enraged at the mere possibility of his wife's infidelity, yet sees nothing wrong with openly living with another woman. Rolande must accept this: she has no authority or value that would give her the right, either legally or morally, to object. Charles knows of the count's mistress, yet continues to feel justified in

his actions against Rolande because he feels she has (also) committed adultery.

The husband is allowed to have a mistress and to spend all his money on her to the neglect of his wife and child. The woman has never been confronted with an accusation of adultery, yet she has been tried and convicted, and must forever deny her maternity to her first child. The end of the first part of this story is full of unhappiness and injustice for the female character, yet the male narrator is completely on the side of patriarchal society and does not condemn its treatment of her.

Les Deux frères (1875) continues the story begun in Flamarande. After the count's death, Roger discovers the identity of his older brother, about whom he has heard. The suspicion of his illegitimacy means that his mother's reputation will be tarnished if he is recognized as her son. Roger informs Espérance:

> Que le soupçon auquel vous avez été sacrifié soit injuste ou fondé. . . il renaîtra dans l'esprit de tous ceux qui vous verront reparaître, et, au lieu d'avoir des amis agenouillés devant la vie d'une sainte, nous aurons des curieux malveillants ou railleurs à châtier. Nous ferons notre devoir. . . mais on ne persuade pas à coups d'épée ou de pistolet, et plus nous ferons du bruit autour de l'honneur de notre mère, plus ressortira sur sa robe blanche cette tache que tout notre sang ne pourra effacer. (202)

Once again, Rolande's supposed fault is discussed; once again she is not given the chance to defend herself. Her word is so worthless that it is never allowed even to be heard.

Rolande has never been informed of what exactly her husband believed. She asks Charles, "suis-je accusée d'avoir lâchement cédé à la brutalité d'une surprise infame ou d'avoir trahi sciemment l'honneur conjugal" (8)? She realizes that, even if he believed she had been raped, he would have continued in his mistrust and hatred, and she would still have been blamed. Charles continues to believe she is guilty until he eavesdrops on a private conversation between Rolande and Salcède and realizes that she is innocent. Roger is also gratified to hear this; in spite of his pledged loyalty to his mother, the thought of her adultery had saddened him enough that he had planned to leave her.

Rolande is completely clear of all suspicions now. We would think that she should finally be able to find some happiness for herself. However, she must make yet another sacrifice. She knows how jealous Roger is of her love, and that he would not be able to tolerate her remarriage. When Salcède asks her to marry him, she says no. Charles writes: "elle aimait donc Salcède et elle se sacrifiait à Roger. . . elle me parut sublime, et je fus honteux de l'avoir mal jugée" (250). Her honor and reputation remain intact as Espérance refuses to become the next Comte de Flamarande.

Rolande will spend the rest of her life traveling between her two son's homes. She has been a helpless victim her entire life and to avoid losing both her sons she must allow others to govern her life. Her husband has absolute control over her during his lifetime, and even after his death. Her reputation is so fragile that she can never escape his original suspicions and actions. Her only happiness is in being with her sons, and she tells Salcède, "la mère a tant souffert en moi qu'elle a tué la femme" (246).

By demonstrating a woman's complete lack of power and control, George Snd highlights if not names the deplorable condition of the women of her time. Worse than a loveless, arranged marriage, wherein a woman can at least enjoy

her children, Rolande's situation shows a woman without romantic love and without fulfilled maternal love. Instead of losing a child to natural causes, she loses him to her husband's stubborn will, with no recourse. Her exoneration comes too late; she has suffered too much to trust herself to another man in another marriage, and society has allowed this to happen.

There is a persistent tug at the heart of the reader in all of these novels. From Valentine's heroic attempts to resist temptation to Rolande's absolute innocence, the female characters in this group of novels remain blameless in their actions and motivations. Their attempts at goodness are not rewarded by society, however. This obstinance pushes Sand to attempt a more clear, systematic method, as can be seen in the next group of novels.

Chapter 4: Systematic Feminism

From the very beginning to the very end of her career, George Sand wrote obviously feminist novels. While some are radical, others communicate a similar message in a muted way. The novels in this chapter offer a variety of techniques in making feminist statements, yet all share the same goal and all have the same unmistakable message: the right of a woman to marry the man she chooses, not one society or her family has chosen. Instead of the more subtle technique of sympathetic heroines or hidden messages found in other novels, Sand clearly states her beliefs in a systematic, predictable way in these novels.

The marriage in Simon (1836) is a "mésalliance" that works. It works because, despite their class differences, Simon and Fiamma share similar values and beliefs. Fiamma is, according to Kristine Wingard Vareille, "la première des héroines sandiennes qui parvienne à reconcilier son besoin d'amour et sa personnalité forte et indépendante" (345).

Fiamma represents "la femme nouvelle," and her counterpart in the novel, Bonne, is the "femme traditionnelle: douce, soumise, un peu coquette" (Vareille 347). Bonne follows a traditional storyline; Fiamma does not.

Fiamma is aware of her expected role in society as a woman, and she does not accept it.[1] She informs Simon that in Italy, "les femmes n'ont pas besoin de s'appuyer sur un défenseur . . . nous sortons seules et à toute heure . . . on nous respecte parce qu'on nous aime. Ici on ne nous distingue des hommes que pour nous opprimer ou nous railler" (65). Simon is an enlightened male, however, one who will accept Fiamma's non-traditional attitude and actions.

Despite their feelings of mutual attraction there is "un barrier insurmontable" that society has positioned between them, and, as a country lawyer, "il ne devait pas se nourrir d'illusions auprès d'elle" (68). It is these barriers and that society that Fiamma and Simon work together to reject and overcome. Nancy Rogers calls their efforts an example of "Sandian sons and daughters reject[ing] their heritage and turn[ing] elsewhere than to the house of the father to find harmony and happiness" ("Subversion" 61). In this novel, the "house of the father" is replaced by the house of the mother: Fiamma turns first to Simon's mother, then to her own dead mother to help her escape her patriarchal restrictions.

Simon's mother is Jeanne Feline, a wise old woman who welcomes the young women, Fiamma and Bonne, into her home. They find peace and contentment there, as well as the mother's presence both have been lacking. Jeanne is a simple peasant, yet she shares Fiamma's beliefs. As they begin to spend time together, "une affection profonde, une sympathie complète s'établit entre Jeanne et Fiamma" (73). Once Fiamma has established ties with a maternal figure she is strengthened enough to reject her step-father's orders. When he forbids her marriage to Simon, Fiamma turns to another maternal presence: the letters of her own dead mother. These letters prove the count's complicity in several crimes and they force him into allowing her marriage.

As a female in her society, Fiamma is limited in her choices; but once she can change legal male authority from her step-father to an enlightened husband, she is able to free herself from past sorrows and restrictions and begin a life with a man who is more her equal. Fiamma represents Sand's new woman; one who choses her mate and a new family, even when forbidden to do so by her society. Together, she and her enlightened husband have overcome

restrictive paternal authority and begun their own authority; that of marriage for love.

Le Meunier d'Angibault (1845) is the story of two couples who are in love but who face the obstacles of "mésalliance." Both of the women are wealthier than the men; both of the women want to marry in spite of the financial differences. But both couples can marry only when the women's fortunes are destroyed.

The only non-traditional female character in this novel is La Bricoline. Because her parents refuse to let her marry the man she loves, considering him socially inferior, he is sent away and dies in war. Due to her grief and rage against her parents, La Bricoline becomes insane, living in the wild, unkempt and dirty, and wandering around the countryside calling her lover's name. When she realizes that her parents have forbidden her younger sister 's choice for the same reasons, she becomes the Deus-ex-machina in the story; by burning down the château she causes everyone's financial ruin, which allows the two couples to marry. Tatiana Green calls La Bricoline's actions "a victory over her father's destructive authority, and a negation of it" (64).

La Bricoline's role in the novel is to remind the others of what can happen when one is denied the right to live in happiness. She is also a reminder of the cruelty of society's rules in allowing only certain alliances. She is the voice of true love, true passion; indeed, humankind's basest need for love. Her act of burning the château cleanses society of all monetary and social differences. Everyone is an equal after the fire, and everyone can marry and live happily every after, which they do.

La Bricoline's madness has been caused by her absolute powerlessness. Her father has forbidden her marriage, therefore she cannot

marry. As this is the case for most women of her time, George Sand uses La Bricoline as an example of what can happen to any woman of any kind. It is a warning to society that, if they continue to deny a woman's individual rights, their society may well suffer the same consequences: they may actually be destroying themselves. La Bricoline remained harmless until she sees that her father has not learned from her example. It is the prospect of the denial being repeated to a younger generation that pushes La Bricoline into a state of urgency. The only way to stop society from denying a woman's choice is to remove the artificial barriers. Fire is the great equalizer, as well as a purifier. George Sand is hoping her society will not need to be purified by fire and destruction before they make changes.

Women in La Mare au diable (1845) have one role: that of wife and mother. The two female protagonists are considered by their society to be incomplete because they are not married; Marie, the impoverished sixteen-year-old is modest, chaste, and humble; Catherine, a thirty-two-year-old widow, has money. Germain is confronted with both women and chooses the one he is not meant to marry, but with whom he is in love.

Marie is a typical peasant girl who demonstrates all the acceptable and approved characteristics of her place and role in society. If she has one unusual quality, it is her independence of mind. She is only sixteen, yet she knows she must work for several years as a shepherdess in order to raise enough money to support her impoverished mother as well as earn herself a dowry. She insists that she must do this: "je ne me marierai que quand j'aurai un peu amassé, je suis destinée à me marier tard et avec un vieux" (87). There are no frivolous, romantic aspirations in Marie; she is poor, therefore she must manage her own destiny. She does not sway from this conviction, even when

Germain declares his love. She firmly announces her plan to work, stating that he is too old and wealthy for her.

Marie's more traditional female traits are highlighted as well. She loves children and is good with them. When Germain praises her rapport with his son, she asks him, "est-ce qu'il y a des femmes qui n'aiment pas les enfants" (53)? Sylvie Charron Witkin calls Marie "à la fois la vierge et la mère, la femme pure mais féconde" (13). There are many allusions to Saint Mary in connection to Marie, beginning with her name. There are also many references to the color white, and there is an image of her "à cheval entre le père et l'enfant ou enlacée avec le petit Pierre" (Witkin, 13).

As Marie overcomes each obstacle encountered on their journey, she earns more and more praise and admiration from Germain: "Tu es la fille la plus avisée que j'aie jamais rencontrée . . . elle pleurait . . . en sortant de l'auberge! Ça ne l'a pas empêchée de penser aux autres plus qu'à elle-même" (75). It is her maternal attributes that first attract Germain and lead him to see her as a possible mate: as is often the case in Sand's novels, she is seen as a potential mother before she is seen as a sexual woman. She provides for Germain and his son; she sacrifices her own desires to do what she must; and she is completely honorable. Marie's sense of honor is proven when her new employer attempts to seduce her. She takes the child with her, refusing his offers of money, and tells Germain, "cet homme-là n'est pas mon maître et ne le sera jamais" (121). She throws his money back to him, telling him, "voilà, monsieur, le cadeau que je vous fais" (122).

This honorable young woman is convinced that she is not worthy enough to marry Germain. When he first begins to find her attractive, she insists that he is too old for her. When he tells her he loves her and wants to marry her she replies, "ne pensez plus à cela; c'est une idée qui vous êtes venue dans la nuit,

parce que cette mauvaise aventure avait un peu dérangé vos esprits" (100). She continues to refuse his offer until it is sanctioned by his parents-in-law. Once it has been approved by those who have authority in their community she can finally tell him, "vous n'avez donc pas deviné que je vous aime" (140)?

Marie has been forced to deny her true feelings because she is not an acceptable match for Germain. Catherine is society's best choice for Germain; she is of the same age and social class. Seen through the traditional, chauvinist Germain's eyes, she is a frivolous, shallow woman, yet this obviously negative portrayal is softened by a reminder of women's role in society, which serves to explain her reluctance to marry. Germain's negative reaction to this independent woman is a mirror of society's views regarding women who prefer to enjoy their independence and wealth rather than marry and give it all away.

She has several suitors. Her father reminds Germain that, "la Catherine a de quoi attirer les épouseurs, et elle n'aura que l'embarras du choix" (104). Germain is one of four current suitors at her Sunday table, yet:

> elle avait une expression de visage et une toilette qui déplurent tout d'abord à Germain. Elle avait l'air hardi et content d'elle-même . . . il pensa . . . que cette veuve avait la plaisanterie lourde et hasadardée, et qu'elle portait sans distinction ses beaux atours (105).[2]

She has the financial means to dress and behave as she pleases. She has the option, more than many women of her time, to marry for love. Yet she is seen through Germain's eyes as conceited and shallow. When one of her suitors makes remarks that Germain considers "si plates que cela faisait pitié," (107) Catherine "en riait comme si elle eût admiré toutes ces sottises" (107). In Germain's opinion, "elle ne faisait pas preuve de goût" (107). She is proud of her position and shows it: "la veuve marchait d'un air fier, escortée de ses trois

prétendants, donnant le bras tantôt à l'un, tantôt à l'autre, se regorgeant et portant haut la tête" (107). Her pride continues at the dance, and Germain continues to be dissatisfied with her. Her attitude and behaviour suggest she is less worthy of him than is Marie, from Germain's and society's point of view. Yet her father explains her actions in a way which should justify her comportment. When Germain discovers that she has been pursued for two years, he asks her father why she is not yet married. He replies,

> Elle ne veut pas se presser, et elle a raison . . . c'est une femme d'un grand sens, et qui sait fort bien ce qu'elle fait. . . Jusqu'ici ma fille a très bien compris que le meilleur temps de sa vie serait celui qu'elle passerait à se laisser courtiser, et elle ne se sent pas pressée de devenir la servante d'un homme, quand elle peut commander à plusieurs. (110)

This is the most overtly feminist statement in the novel. The words are uttered by an older, enlightened, sympathetic male, who understands why his daughter is avoiding marriage. The person hearing these words is a younger man who is not enlightened. He does not see marriage as a loss of independence for a woman because he does not believe women want or should have independence. Demonstrably, for Sand, the new generation has not improved in its views of women; Germain has been told to find a wife, "une bonne âme bien sage, bien douce et très portée au travail" (34). Catherine is obviously not inclined to lower herself to this way of life, whereas it is all Marie knows and wants. In the end, the status quo remains.

The self-sacrificing, humble Marie is happily married to a man she loves. The independent widow is left to her seeming endless cycle of shallow flirtation and an empty life. Sand expresses society's lack of sympathy for her by showing her only from the outside: Marie has many lines of dialogue,

Catherine has none. Marie represents the traditional woman who is known and respected as such by society. Her voice is heard in the novel; her motivations and state of mind are clear. Catherine represents a non-traditional woman, unknown to society and misunderstood. Her voice is not heard, her motivations and state of mind are communicated only through an intermediary, her father.

Both women are able to choose whom they marry; Marie has found her perfect choice, Catherine is still searching. Aleksandra Guzinska suggests that one of the subtle messages by George Sand concerning happiness in marriage is that "on peut faire un bon mariage mais alors il faut se parler, se regarder, s'écouter et puis voir afin de se connaître et de se comprendre" (143). Marie and Germain were able to begin that process on their journey. Catherine is continuing it with her Sunday dinners and dances. By giving examples of both a traditional and a non-traditional woman chosing to marry for love, George Sand is creating an example for her society to follow.

In Le Château des Désertes (1851), a group of young actors and their friends, male and female, leave the stage temporarily to study and improve their craft. They spend their time at the château reading, writing, and performing plays for themselves.[3] There are four main protagonists who eventually form two couples. Despite their profession and its perceived lack of morals, the women are both chaste and honorable.

Célio Floriani and Cécilia Boccaferi are in love, yet Cécilia waits until Célio proves that he respects her. Célio's sister Stella makes this very clear to Adorno, the other young man in the group: "mon frère aime Cécilia, et il faut qu'il devienne digne d'elle. Tel qu'il est aujourd'hui il ne l'aime pas encore assez pour la mériter" (144). Célia is determined not to repeat the mistake made

by other women: she plans on a happy marriage, which can be achieved only by mutual respect. Respect is also sought by Stella. She loves Adorno, yet she insists: "il ne faut pas me tromper . . . j'ai vingt-deux ans; je n'ai pas encore aimé. . . mon premier amour sera le dernier, et si je suis trahie . . . je mourrai." (143).

In the midst of these demands for respect on the part of the female characters, the group of actors is working on a production of Don Juan. They are combining various elements from various representations of the play, most notably those of Molière and Mozart, in addition to adding their own interpretations. The choice of play is not a coincidence in this novel: George Sand interweaves discussions of the art, philosophy, theater, music, and psychology surrounding the mythical character of a man who seduces and abandons women with the discussions of love and respect of the main characters of her novel. In the notice to the novel Sand claims that is is "une analyse de quelques idées d'art plutôt qu'une analyse de sentiments," (31) yet the juxtaposition of the play with the real world of the characters makes a salient point: the women in this novel know all too well the "Don Juan" attitude and behavior of most men towards women. Both of them refuse to accept it and demand better from the men who claim to love them. Unlike the women in the plays about Don Juan, these women force the men to wait and prove their words of love. These two women, actresses in a society that does not respect their profession, not only disprove the stereotype that actresses are promiscuous and immoral, but set an example for all women in their society. Cécilia is held up as a model woman: "elle avait un idéal, elle le cherchait et savait l'attendre" (147).

La Filleule (1853) is the story of secret family relationships, formed and maintained in direct defiance of society's rules. Morénita is the adopted daughter of Anicée, who is secretly married to Stéphen. When Stéphen found the child in the forest he brought her to the first house he could find; his relationship with Anicée started through their parenting of Morénita; like several other Sandian female characters, Anicée was "mother" before she became wife, all the while maintaining her chastity and honor.

Anicée and Stéphen marry secretly due to society's unaccceptance of their age and class differences. Nicole Mozet calls them "un couple conjugal à la fois exemplaire et atypique--mais très moderne à certains égards--, sans enfants et sans cohabitation, dans lequel chacun conserve une totale autonomie de mouvements" (Ecrivain 156). They are "paragons de vertus qui vivent en marge d'une société avec laquelle ils n'entrent pas en révolte ouverte, mais dont ils ne suivent guère les règles" (Mozet, Ecrivain, 157). It is not all of society's rules that they thwart, however; it is society's immoral rules--those that do not allow marrige for love outside class boundaries. The rules of morality are followed: rather than have her characters live in a "union libre," Sand has them secretly marry.

It is adherence to certain rules, not to all, that is important to Anicée. When Morénita risks her reputation by running away with a gypsy, Anicée asks Stéphen to find her and bring her back. As she is still considered a single woman it would be inappropriate for her to travel to find her; as Morénita's godfather and guardian, and as a male, Stéphen is the logical and acceptable person to return her home. Anicée understands her limitations and does not speak out against them. She fulfills her own (moral) desires by secretly marrying the man she loves. Society accepts her because she has not openly transgressed.

This is the message she wishes to give her adopted daughter. Morénita tends to fight society's constraints, yet at the end of the novel she is married, her wild nature suitably channeled, at Anicée's suggestion, into the theater. Anicée is both a positive and negative feminist example: negative because she is forced to live most of her life in secret, never able to openly express her feelings for her husband; positive, because she has followed her own desires, ignoring society's restrictions while remaining a part of it.

Les Maîtres Sonneurs (1853) is one of the "romans champêtres," yet it differs in several ways from the others. Béatrice Didier suggests that it is more complex than they and is made up of several "contes," which, when likened to music, make the novel "polyphonique" (110). All the other storylines have one focal point, however: Brulette. She is a chaste, honorable young woman who takes in a foundling. When she is maliciously suspected of being his mother, she asks, "sa mère? Moi, sa mère?. . . est-il possible que l'on pense de moi une pareille chose?" (419). Brulette keeps the child and raises him well until his birth parents are revealed and he is returned to them. Once the adopted child is returned, Brulette marries the man she loves; having been proven "blameless" as well as a good mother, she is now considered excellent marrige material.

The role of motherhood by adoption is again celebrated in this novel; Didier points out that these adoptive mothers "ont quelque chose d'inquiétant; c'est qu'elles ne se conforment pas au schéma de la succession des générations, fondement même de l'ordre" (113). Sand shows a woman who acts on her own wishes--those of raising an abandoned child. Society not only does not expect her to do so, it reviles her because of it. She continues to

follow her own beliefs and is eventually rewarded with society's acceptance and the husband of her choice.

L'Homme de neige (1858) is about the the mysterious past of the male protagonist and his struggles to marry a women forbidden to him by society. The attraction between the male and female protagonists is immediate and mutual yet they are prohibited from marrying because Marguerite's aunt wants her to marry a baron, and Christian has no social status. Marguerite never wavers in her determination to marry Christian, and is willing to give up her own fortune: "je vous respecte et vous estime, et, si jamais je suis libre et que vous le soyez encore, je partagerai votre fortune, quelle qu'elle soit" (I:195). She has determined to work for a living, knowing that she could "donner des leçons, ou tenir des écritures comme tant d'autres jeunes filles pauvres qui travaillent" (I:195). Marguerite's willingness to sacrifice her fortune and place in society are rewarded when it is discovered that Christian is the nephew of the baron in question. In this novel George Sand follows her pattern of rewarding her heroines who sacrifice and wait for true love. Her message is always clear; whether they actually live in relative poverty (Le Meunier d'Angibault) or receive an unexpected fortune (Adriani, Antonia) marrying for love is the right choice.

Monsieur Sylvestre (1865) is named for the wise old man who helps the young people sort through their problems. The novel contrasts the various choices that women make in the nineteenth century. One female protagonist chooses honorable, self-supporting poverty, the other chooses marriage without love. Both have the taint of a dishonorable parent, which adds to their difficulties; neither has the protection of family.

Aldine Vallier begins her life as the daughter of a wealthy yet legally suspect businessman. She is sought after as an acceptable wife for bourgeois society until her father's business fails. She determines to support herself and her sickly servant, yet as a young woman on her own she is extremely vulnerable, not only to physical violence, but also to loss of her reputation. After Pierre meets her, he writes to his friend, "Mlle Vallier est une de ces natures saintement tranquilles que les épreuves de la vie ont armées de pied en cap contre les puériles vanités et les tentations mauvaises" (121). She is forced to work as a governess for a wealthy widower, Monsieur Nuñez, who wants to marry her. Aldine is in love with Pierre, however, and refuses Monsieur Nuñez' offer of marriage.

The woman who does marry Monsieur Nuñez is Jeanne, a young woman on her own without family protection, attempting to free herself from the stigma of her courtesan mother. When Jeanne learns of her mother's profession, "elle quitte sa mère . . . l'innocence se révolte contre le vice qui lui fait porter la peine de sa honte" (217). By publicly separating from her mother, Jeanne begins the long process of saving herself.

Instead of seeking honorable employment, however, she chooses to marry. Her first choice is Pierre. After attempting to flirt with him she realizes that he is not interested in her, and she attempts to manipulate him into feeling obliged to marry her. She arranges to fall off her horse, separated from her companions, outside of his house. Having ascertained her frivolous nature, Pierre is not duped. He tells her:

> Vous n'êtes pas tombée . . . voue êtes descendue de cheval ici . . . vous avez compté que je donnerais dans le piège, que je m'attendrirais sur l'accident, que je vous porterais chez moi. . . enfin que je serais assez simple pour vous compromettre; après

quoi, en homme d'honneur, je serais dans la délicieuse nécessité de vous offrir mon coeur et mon nom. (301)

When a woman is seen alone with a man, her reputation is ruined. This societal restraint can work both ways, however, and Jeanne has decided to use it in her favor. She admits her intention to Pierre, claiming:

> Je suis ambitieuse, je dois l'être. Si je ne l'étais pas, si je n'avais pas la volonté et la force de combattre le malheur de ma naissance, je serais forcée d'être courtisane ou religieuse. Je ne serai ni l'une ni l'autre. Je serai riche et considerée, coquette et vertueuse. (304)

Jeanne succeeds in obtaining a rich husband, Monsieur Nuñez. She is not in love and has no plans to wait until she is: she has accepted society's expectations for marriage and seeks to find the best possible situation for herself. Aldine refuses to accept society's views and she and Pierre marry for love. Both women have obtained the only real security a woman can have in the nineteenth century, yet one has decided to marry the man she loves whether or not he is wealthy.

Pierre qui roule (1869) is the first volume of a continuing story, which concludes with Le Beau Laurence (1869). There are two main female protagonists who are very similar in their actions, personalities, and merit. Both women know what they want and accept nothing less.

The male protagonist and framed narrator, Pierre Laurence, is an actor. He is not very talented, but he is popular because he is so handsome. He has chosen this profession only because he is in love with an actress named Impéria, whose acting troupe he has joined. She is kind to him but remains

faithful to the one man she loves, who is unaware of her feelings. Pierre cannot accept that she is uninterested in him. He believes that:

> elle n'aimerait jamais personne; sage et froide comme son talent, elle avait besoin du cabotinage pour se dégeler un peu . . . ce n'est pas l'art qu'elle aimait, c'était le mouvement et la distraction nécessaires à son tempérament craintif et glacé. (162)

Since she does not love him, he concludes that, "pour cacher le vide effrayant de son coeur, [elle] avait inventé un amour mystérieux qu'elle n'éprouvait pas" (162). Society does not accept that a woman can be strong and faithful to one man. If she does not love Pierre, who is right there and who wants her, he reasons that she must be frigid and incapable of love. He does not allow her to have the same unrequited love for someone else that he feels for her! In his mind, only men are capable of that sort of love.

Pierre's unrequited love is matched by another woman, however, and he knows that he is the object of it. There is a mysterious woman who is in love with him and wants to marry him. She asks Pierre's friend if he is in love with anyone, wishing to remain incognito until she can be sure of her chances. Pierre overhears the "inconnue" talking to Belamare, but does not see her face. She discovers that he is in love with Impéria and writes to him: "Vous l'avez aimée, cela devait être. Elle ne l'a pas deviné, preuve qu'elle est chaste et que vous la respectez profondément. N'osez pas dire! C'est le plus grand amour qu'on puisse éprouver" (165)!

Pierre's "inconnue" is willing to sacrifice her own desires for Pierre so that he can be happy. She concludes her letter by saying, "restez ainsi, c'est ainsi que je vous aimerai, comme une soeur aime son frère, comme une mère aime son enfant" (166). But Pierre misreads her sacrifice, considering it a weakness:

> mon inconnue était la plus vaillante, la plus généreuse des femmes, mais elle était femme. . . elle ne voulait pas m'aider à me débattre contre une rechute possible, se donner la peine de guérir quelque regret mal étouffé. Elle avait eu l'énergie de s'offrir, elle n'avait pas celle de conquérir. (166)

His misogyny resurfaces when he accuses a woman of being unable to feel what he feels. He now knows that a woman is capable of unrequited love, yet he continues to deny those feelings to Impéria. He also blames a woman for being weak, simply because she concedes any possibility of happiness for herself.

Pierre ceases correspondence with this woman and remains with the troupe after Bellamare, the older actor and director, tells him, "Impéria est sage et ne veut pas d'amant. De plus, elle est raisonnable et ne se jetera pas dans la misère du mariage. Enfin, elle se trouve heureuse dans sa vertu " (186). Pierre has no qualms about abandonning a woman who is in love with him, and who has no hope of ever consummating that love, yet he will not accept that Impéria chooses to remain loyal to another man under the same circumstances. Pierre remains with Impéria's troupe as they prepare to leave on an overseas acting tour. As the novel ends they are in limbo concerning Pierre's feelings for Impéria and her steadfast devotion to an unknown rival.

Le Beau Laurence (1869) continues the story, starting with the voyage of Pierre and Impéria's acting troupe. They are shipwrecked on an island and almost die. Impéria shows her true strength of character by remaining calm and strong. Her first thought is of her father: "je pense à mon père; si nous ne réussissons pas à sortir d'ici, qui le nourrira" (27)? Her steadfast resistance to panic is noticed and appreciated by the other actors: "Cette fille est

certainement à un échelon au-dessus de l'humanité; elle est là comme un ange au milieu des damnés" (29). She is so noble and self-sacrificing that the men must force her to eat what few provisions they find until they are rescued.

In spite of all he has seen of her courage and strength on the island, Pierre insists that she is at fault in not loving him. She cannot make him understand how she feels, so she must make him see that it is as if she is married to someone else. She tells him:

> Laurence, quand tu me dis que je ne t'aime pas, tu me fais un mal affreux. Je ne suis pas froide, je ne suis pas egoïste, je ne suis pas ingrate, je ne suis pas imbécile . . . écoute, Laurence, je ne suis pas libre, je suis mariée . . . ce n'est pas vrai par le fait; mais à mes yeux je suis irrévocablement liée. J'ai engagé ma conscience et ma vie à un serment qui est ma force et ma religion. (101)

This refusal is her final one. Pierre accepts it and, after returning to France, he leaves the troupe and returns to his home.

After several years, Pierre inherits the title and château of his uncle. He lives there alone and islolated until he meets a new neighbor, Mme de Valvèdre, who claims to be the friend of Pierre's "inconnue," who has died. They become friends, and Pierre senses that he could love her, except that, "j'ai contracté dans ma vie errante une maladie très grave: le vouloir irréalisable, la fantaisie de l'impossible, l'ennui du vrai, l'idéal sans but déterminé, la soif de ce qui n'est pas et ne peut pas être" (127). When he realizes that he cannot possess Impéria, he dreams of his "inconnue," who is also now unobtainable.

When Impéria and Bellamar return from another trip, they are reunited, with Pierre and many revelations occur. The first is that Impéria knows who the "inconnue" is: "l'amie de son inconnue est son inconnue elle-même" (133).

Another mystery that is revealed is the identity of Impéria's secret love, who is Bellamar himself. Impéria has been in his presence for years, never revealing her feelings, and never asking for anything in return except to be near him. Mme de Valvèdre has also been in constant proximity to the man she loves, Pierre, yet has respected his wishes and asked nothing for herself. Both women have controlled their own destinies. Their single most rewarding virtue is patience. Each has remained steadfast in her love for one man; each has spent her life as close as possible to this man; neither woman is concerned with following the traditional lifestyle for women by being married, even without love. Both wait until they can achieve their goal, both wait for the right time and person to marry.

Through the use of the first-person male narrator, Pierre, George Sand expresses how society unfairly treats women who reject tradition. Instead of praising them for their independence of mind and their steadfast loyalty, Pierre and his society denigrate them, calling them frigid and unnatural. This is how society treats women who dare to chose their own destiny. Yet George Sand shows the rewards, which make all their patience and determination worthwhile. She is also attempting to shame and/or quiet those who speak against them by making them sympathetic and honorable, worthy of admiration rather than scorn.

Ma Soeur Jeanne (1874) could technically be called a story of incest. The female roles are entirely traditional; however, the narrator's descriptions of their emotions and passions suggest a study of sexual repression and its impact on women.

Laurent, the narrator, becomes a doctor and is employed as a personal physician to an Englishman and his much younger wife, Manuela. Laurent is

not tempted by her until he learns that she is not really married, and that she is the same girl that his parents had once considered as a wife for him. When he first meets her he admits that she is beautiful, yet, "cela ne faisait point que je fusse amoureux de sa compagnie. Elle me paraissait trop nulle, trop irresponsable dans la vie qu'elle menait, pour être aimée autrement qu'avec les sens" (112).

Manuela is a victim of her society. She has been raised by nuns who teach their students nothing about life. She knows only what she sees the other girls doing: "l'art de se coiffer avec la mantelle, de jouer des yeux et de l'éventail, . . . de deviser sur l'amour avant même de savoir ce que c'est que l'amour. Nos religieuses, ne sachant rien ne nous apprenaient rien" (132). She is soon consumed by the idea of love and dreams of an ideal man: "je suis toute à l'impatience de le voir paraître. J'en ai la fièvre, une fièvre qui colore mes joues et rend mes yeux brûlants" (133) She meets a young man and allows him to take her away from the convent. Once she has left the security of convention she has no recourse. She is suddenly and forever a "femme perdue." Her father, a smuggler, realizes she can no longer make a "good" marriage and sells her to a wealthy man. She escapes and comes under the protection of Sir Richard, an Englishman who cares for her and does not take advantage. Now that she is safe and treated with dignity for the first time in her life she believes that she is in love with him: "je l'aimai donc sans me souvenir d'en avoir aimé un autre la veille" (142). She is still a virgin, yet her passions threaten to control her. Sir Richard attempts to find a suitable husband for her, and warns her of the power of her passionate nature: "il faut vous habituer aux convenances de la pudeur. . . apprenez à vous garder des dangers dont vous semblez vous jouer" (149).

Manuela obeys him, never leaving her apartment, not making any friends, doing nothing. Her only physical activity is dancing. She and her servant perform exotic Spanish dances which heighten Manuela's sexual energy but leave her with no outlet. Laurent witnesses one of these dances and sees the danger: "en un instant, les deux femmes devinrent comme folles. Manuela voltigeait comme une colombe ou se tordait comme une couleuvre" (176). When Laurent chides them for dancing, her servant replies, "à quoi voulez-vous qu'elle emploie les forces de son beau corps" (180)? This is a woman who needs love, physical and emotional. Sir Richard is aware of her tendencies and Laurent realizes, "il n'a pas confiance en elle; il croit qu'elle ne doit sa vertu qu'à l'isolement où il la tient" (184). This strict, loveless life is not healthy for Manuela, and Laurent worries that, "la fiancée avait trop attendu pour ne point arriver à explosion" (185).

The "explosion" does occur, and with Laurent. Left alone with her, Laurent becomes more and more attracted to her and feels her passion for him. He excuses his weakness by blaming Sir Richard for leaving them alone together: "Depuis que le monde est monde, un homme à qui une jeune et jolie femme confie ses peines de coeur est un homme tenté ou vaincu" (210). Maneula is so desperate for love that she believes she is in love with every man she meets. When Sir Richard returns and discovers their feelings he dismisses Laurent and asks him to wait.

Laurent returns to his sister and mother and begins a practice there. His sister, Jeanne, is also a woman who is repressing sexual passion. She has known since she was young that she is not her parents' biological child. She has also known from a very early age that she is in love with Laurent. When she was fourteen she declared her love for him: "je t'aime passionnément. . . je ne puis avoir de passion que pour toi" (36) and she asked him, "si tu voulais

me promettre de ne pas te marier, je ferais de même,. . . et je t'aimerais, si tu n'aimais que moi" (35). She responded to his compliments by blushing and hiding, "comme si le compliment d'un frère l'eut scandalisée ou effrayée" (40). Jeanne insists that she is not his sister; he refuses to believe her. As an adult, she begins to find a new outlet for her emotions: "elle était musicienne et jouait du piano d'une façon exquise" (53).

The longer Laurent is away from home, the more adept Jeanne becomes in her musical ability. His mother tells him:

> cette musique qui l'a enfin passionnée, elle l'a abordée en tremblant . . . tout le problème à résoudre pour elle, c'est de trouver l'expression des pensées musicales qui l'oppressent. . . quand elle a trouvé sous les doigts le vrai sens de son rôle enthousiaste, elle renaît, elle s'épanouit, elle est heureuse. (269)

Jeanne has found a suitable outlet for her feelings of love toward Laurent. As a child she had at first rejected the idea of passionate love because she had seen what it could do. Once she has rechanneled her feelings into music, she feels she has conquered her passion: "moi, j'ai osé regarder en face ce grand problème et j'ai dit au dieu malin . . . tu ne me gouverneras jamais" (281). She is convinced that she can live her life without sexual and emotional love as long as she can express herself in her music.

Laurent finds that he is happy with his mother and sister. He rediscovers Jeanne, finding her to be beautiful, mature, and intelligent. He realizes that, "la conversation de ma soeur était de plus en plus intéressante et comme nécessaire à ma vie" (277). He promises never to leave them, and declares his jealousy at the thought of Jeanne marrying. He finds her embracing Sir Richard and asks himself, "que se passait-il en moi? pourquoi cette sorte de rage?. . . Jamais je n'avais été jaloux de Manuela comme je l'étais de Jeanne" (300).

When he finally learns that she is not his sister, that she is the illegitimate child of Sir Richard, he realizes that:

> Ici il y a une nuance de plus, c'est que le monde seul est entre nous et que nous nous sentons libres dans notre affection . . . Je sais maintenant que Jeanne m'a toujours aimé comme je l'aime depuis mon retour ici . . . et la verité . . . est que j'aimais Jeanne de toutes les forces de mon être. (335)

Jeanne has attempted to deny her sexual passions, knowing that she would feel them only for the one man in the world who is forbidden to her: her brother. Sir Richard understands the situation and believes that she and Laurent should marry. He remarks, "Jeanne a beau nous dire qu'elle veut plus de tendresse que de passion, elle est tout flamme et tout amour sans le savoir. [Laurent] a été le rêve de sa vie entière" (347). Once they declare their love for each other, they marry. Manuela has also found a man to love: the doctor sent to replace Laurent. Sir Richard approves of this relationship, and Manuela is finally married.

There are many instances of appearance and reality clashing in this novel. Few people and situations are what they appear. Jeanne and Laurent seem to be brother and sister, yet they are not. Manuela is thought to be Sir Richard's wife, yet she is not. She is thought to be a "fallen woman," yet is still a virgin. Sir Richard is Jeanne's father, yet he cannot declare his paternity because she is illegitimate. The main female protagonists appear content in their virginity; society would think that they were. Yet neither is satisfied. One comes dangerously close to dying, the other becomes a passionate musician who can play her compositions for no one.

George Sand is making some bold statements here; in addition to her usual theme of marrying only for love, she is showing that women have sexual

passions that need to be satisfied; yet, due to the double standard of sexual promiscuity, they must wait for marriage, and a marriage approved by society, not one of love. While Sand is not promoting sexual freedom for women, she is acknowledging the existence of sexual desire in women, even "good" ones. This is an emotion mostly ignored or denied by patriarchal society.

The female protagonist in Marianne (1875) is a woman who lives in quiet, acceptable defiance of society's expectations for women. She lives alone, does not seek the company of others, yet "faisait scandale par son audace à monter seule sur un cheval" (254). Riding alone is her only vice: she remains obedient to the most basic rule for women, remaining chaste and enjoying a good reputation. Maintaining a good reputation is difficult, however, especially for a young woman living alone. While her isolation somewhat increases the burden of propriety for Marianne, it also allows her a freedom most women, and many Sandian women, do not enjoy: there is no paternal authority for Marianne to obey. According to Nicole Mozet: "c'est toujours l'absence de tout père tyrannique qui a rendu possible cette redistribution des cartes du jeu sentimental" (166). Marianne controls her own destiny and she lives a quiet, respectable life. Her life remains calm and care-free until her godfather, Pierre, receives a letter suggesting a possible husband for Marianne. M. Gaucher asks Pierre to arrange a meeting for his son and Marianne, since, "il ne répugne point au mariage, mais il ne voudrait pas d'une femme laide et mal élevée" (259). He concludes that, "il verra chez toi Marianne Chevreuse et, si elle ne lui déplaît pas, tu pourras engager l'affaire" (259). Nowhere in the letter does M. Gaucher even admit the possibility that Marianne may not want his son. She is a woman, she is available, she has money, therefore she will marry.

Marriage is solely the man's decision, depending on whether or not she pleases him.

Pierre begins to wonder about Marianne's personality, since she seems content by herself: "Serait-elle capable de souffrir du plus ou moins d'affection? Oui, si elle était capable d'aimer, mais il n'est pas probable qu'elle le soit" (268). He reasons that, since "de quinze à vingt-cinq ans, la vie d'une femme subit l'orage des sens ou de l'imagination," (268) and since, "Marianne a traversé cette crise redoutable sans dire un mot, sans faire un pas pour s'y jeter ou s'y soustraire," (268) she must be "une âme froide ou forte" (268). A "normal" woman would not be happy living alone; she needs to be with a husband and children. Marianne must not, then, be normal.

Despite his hesitations about Marianne's womanhood, he is surprised at his own emotions at the thought of her marrying. He tells himself that, if he were ten years younger, he would ask her to marry him. He does not understand his own confusion and he notices that she seems a bit embarrassed also: "ils échangèrent un bonjour amical un peu gêné" (275). Marianne accepts his proposal to meet the young man. She realizes that "il faut que je me marie à présent ou jamais . . . plus tard, je ne m'y déciderais plus . . . parce que la liberté est une chose précieuse et très douce. Si on y est trop habitué, on la regrette trop" (282). She knows what marriage will bring: she will no longer be able to spend time outdoors where she feels the most contentment, she will not be able to do what she wishes; there will be a husband, home, and children to control her.

Upon meeting Marianne, Phillipe decides that he will marry her. Pierre asks him, "vous ne doutez pas du succès?" and he replies," pas du tout" (307). He has no doubt that Marianne will want to marry him. He is young and he wants her; that should be sufficient for any woman. Pierre's mother is not happy

with the situation; she believes that Pierre and Marianne should marry. He concedes that he should have asked her six years earlier and that, "elle sent bien que je ne m'en suis pas aperçu, et elle ne me le pardonnera jamais . . . une femme, si froide et si douce qu'elle soit, ne pardonne pas à un homme d'avoir été aveugle" (315). Once again, a man is assuming that he knows what Marianne wants and will say. He never considers that she may feel and act differently. She is assumed not to have her own personality and individuality; she is a woman, and all women are the same.

Marianne rejects Philippe, yet does not reveal her feelings to Pierre. Pierre also remains mute until he visits her garden. When he sees how she has planted it, he realizes that she is a kindred spirit: "Marianne aime donc la nature, se disait Pierre, enivré d'une joie intérieure; elle la comprend, elle la sent comme moi" (345). He is not convinced of her feelings toward him until she confesses, "j'ai lu ce qu'il y avait dans votre carnet . . . j'ai vu mon nom . . . j'ai su que vous doutiez de mon affection" (363). She confirms her love for him: "je vous attendais toujours, moi. . . et sans votre carnet, j'aurais cru que tout était fini pour moi" (364). As a traditional Sandian heroine, Marianne loves in silence and self-sacrifice; she is willing to remain alone forever, waiting for the man she loves to notice her and declare himself. Her individuality is allowed full expression only in her private garden, which nobody sees. The woman remains mute; her only expression is through nature. The man's self-expression occurs through the written word; but also in a private place, not intended to be seen. When the private space of each is revealed to the other, their hidden emotions are presented, and they can communicate verbally.

By communicating, Pierre and Marianne realize their long-held feelings for each other; since they are in the same social class, and since there is no paternal authority to deny them, the two protagonists in George Sand's last

novel are free to marry. All that was holding them back is lack of communication. At the end of her life, George Sand's message is the same. Yet this time the only obstacles are the two lovers themselves.

As the happy endings in all these novels suggest, Sand prefers to present her advocacy of women's rights to happiness in an optimistic way. There are no extreme heroines or situations here; people from all social classes are included. All the female characters find resolution for their situations, all achieve their goals for marriage. These novels all take place in France, in nineteenth-century French reality. By choosing to create such representations for her readers, Sand is attempting to show that they too, like these female characters, have options, that they can feel empowered; George Sand has shown them how.

Chapter 5: Idealistic Feminism

If realistic portrayals of everyday women and situations in nineteenth-century France are not persuasive enough to encourage her readers to make changes in their lives and society, George Sand is willing to try yet another technique to persuade them; the depiction of an idealistic situation, with women who demonstrate unusual strength of character and experience exceptional fates. In addition to depicting superior nineteenth-century French women as role-models, Sand included women from different time periods (the eighteenth century) and different countries (the Romantic writers' frequently idealized representation of Italy). Some of these women have superior talents such as singing and healing disturbed minds, others inherit fortunes that enable them to transform entire towns. All of these women have several elements in common: the courage to change what is wrong in their lives, and, like most of the other Sandian heroines, chastity and honor. These novels display an optimistic, idealistic advocacy for women's rights; these characters achieve more than most women expect, yet they work hard to deserve their happiness. By adding these to her body of novels, Sand uses the complete spectrum of techniques available (negative through positive) to convince her readers and her society to work for change.

Le Secrétaire intime, (1833) Sand's fourth novel, is her first example of a self-assured, happily androgynous female character, Quintilla. Her profession is a traditionally masculine one; she is the sole ruler of her principality. Her personality is quite rich, exhibiting many presumed male traits. It is this richness of character, this androgyny or gender-trait balance that makes her a strong leader as well as a strong person.

Quintilla is a well-loved, efficient and respected ruler, yet she is also a female, and as a female she is vulnerable to accusations against her reputation. She is the object of desire for many of the men in her court, especially that of the male protagonist, a young aristocrat, Louis St. Julien, whom she meets on the road and makes her personal secretary. He falls in love with her, not only because she is beautiful, intelligent, and assertive, but because he thinks she is sexually pure and he places her on a pedestal.

St. Julien can neither understand nor accept Quintilla's androgynous nature: during an evening of reading and discussion, St. Julien oscillates between seeing her as a traditonal, feminine woman and an unnaturally masculine one:

> la princesse interrompait de temps en temps la lecture, et, tout en continuant ses féminines recherches de toilette, contredisait et redressait la logique du livre avec une supériorité si mâle . . . que St. Julien ne savait plus à quelle opinion s'arrêter. (38)

She shakes his hand "avec l'honnête familiarité d'un jeune homme," (39) and she has a "caractère viril" (47).

The princess, however, expresses a very clear understanding of who she is and why she acts as she does. She tells St. Julien, "c'est vous tous qui êtes fous, et non pas moi qui suis folle" (108). She knows that she is different; she accepts this and believes she can help other women break free from the restrictions placed on them by men:

> j'ose toujours; je puise mon courage à une source inépuisable, ma loyauté. Un jour [le monde] me connaîtra sans doute, et si ce jour n'arrive pas, peu m'importe, j'aurai ouvert la voie à d'autres femmes. D'autres femmes réussiront, d'autres femmes oseront être franches, et sans dépouiller la douceur de leur sexe, elles

> prendront peut-être la fermeté du vôtre. Elles oseront se confier à leur propre force. (107)

Despite her pride in rejecting society's prescribed character traits for women, she is aware of her precarious position as a single female ruler. Her reputation is a constant source of worry: "j'ai cherché des amis, et pour les trouver j'ai joué plus que ma vie; j'ai exposé ma reputation, et Dieu sait si elle a dû être salie et insulté par ceux . . . qui m'ont prise pour le but de leurs viles ambitions" (107). As ruler of her small principality, she has absolute authority and power, yet she must always be aware of how her actions are perceived.

Her enemies could use an alleged affair against her, but have not: St. Julien, her most trusted male employee, does. Like most men of his time, he believes there are only two kinds of women. During his adolescence his tutor had informed him about "les deux sortes d'amour qui souillent ou purifient les âmes" (58) and this vision of women has tainted his entire understanding of them:

> les portraits qu'il me fit de la femme pure et la femme vicieuse imprimèrent dans mon coeur, encore enfant, deux images ineffaçables; l'une divine et couronnée, commes les vierges dans nos églises, d'une sainte auréole; l'autre hideuse et grimaçante comme un rêve funeste. (58)

This polarization of women serves as an additional obstacle to St. Julien's understanding and acceptance of Quintilla. He is constantly attempting to come to a conclusion as to which of these types of woman she is. If she is chaste he will respect her; if she is not, he believes he has the right to have sexual relations with her. There is no middle ground in his thinking; either no man can "have" her or any man can, including him.

St. Julien has been in love with her since he first met her, but, believing her to be chaste, he has refrained from attempting to seduce her. After discovering her in a secret rendez-vous with a man, he becomes furious. He spends the night "en proie à des angoisses plus vives que toutes celles qu'il avait déjà éprouvées" (139). As he is tossing and turning the narration exposes the entire unravelling of everything he has thought and felt about her: if she is not virtuous, she deserves no respect, and he can justifiably act on his own desires: "décidément il méprisait Quintilla" (139). He asks himself, "pourquoi ne s'est-elle pas confiée à moi come elle se confie à Spark? " (139) He reasons that, if he had known she was sleeping with someone, "une telle femme ne m'eût pas inspiré d'amour," (139) and he decides that she has been chaste only with him: "pourquoi ces raffinements d'hypocrisie avec moi . . . c'est pour moi seule qu'elle s'impose un rôle si magnifique" (140).

In his anger, St. Julien decides he will "have" the princess, and he tells his friend, "je suis offensé. Je veux me venger, voilà tout" (142). He enters her room as she is sleeping and attempts to rape her. She fights him off, being "aussi grande et aussi forte que lui. . . elle le saisit à la gorge et la lui serra d'une main si virile, qu'il tomba pâle et suffoqué à ses pieds" (148). St. Julien's change of opinion and attempted rape are a result of his lack of knowledge of and basic disrespect for any woman he deems not virtuous. He does not know that this mysterious man is actually Quintilla's husband of ten years, a man considered beneath her socially, but whom she loved enough to marry in secret. Thus, the princess is actually faithful to her husband and therefore pure. She has been St. Julien's version of a "good" woman all along, despite his perceptions of her. She is both a beautiful, feminine woman, and a strong, assertive "masculine" leader. She has not changed or wavered in her actions

or opinions. She has remained true to herself, her vision, and her beliefs. She is blameless throughout the novel; it is the men who are weak and deceitful.

Kristine Wingard Vareille claims that this novel "soulève le problème . . . de la condition féminine, du mariage et de la sexualité et comporte aussi une réflexion sur la disposition d'esprit . . . qu'exige toute oeuvre de réforme et de régénératon sociales" (215). Part of this call to reform is that of changing attitudes towards women and what they should be. Quintilla is, as Vareille states, " la femme nouvelle androgyne" (219). She exhibits characteristics of both sexes, which makes her "réalise donc la potentiel de l'être humain, l'harmonieux équilibre du masculin et du féminin" (220). Quintilla is an example of what women could be if they were allowed to express themselves completely; intelligent, if given the same education as men; able leaders, if given the authority to rule; faithful, happy wives, if allowed to marry the men they love, regardless of class.[1]

Her marriage is the only part of Quintilla's life in which she has less authority. She sees her husband as often as possible, but always in secret; behind masks or dressed as a man. Even a princess cannot openly defy all of society's rules. Yet, despite her (albeit few) restrictions, Quintilla remains an optimistic figure in Sand's fiction. She is the first of many strong, gender-trait-balanced female characters who show the way to a better future, not just for women, but for everyone.

Mauprat (1836) is, in George Sand's words, a story that paints "un amour exclusif, éternel, avant, pendant, et après le mariage" (29). This is the story of Bernard Mauprat and his distant cousin, Edmée Mauprat. Though Bernard is telling the story, it is Edmée who controls their lives. This strength of character

allows her to re-create Bernard into a man she can both love and respect, who will be her equal.

He and Edmée first meet in tumultuous circumstances; she has been kidnapped by Bernard's uncles, and he is planning to rape her. When she realizes his intentions, she has the presence of mind to flatter him into stopping: "elle vit à quelle brute elle avait affaire, et prenant son parti, elle se retourna vers moi, jeta ses bras autour de mon cou, cacha son visage dans mon sein, et me laissa baiser ses cheveux" (81). He agrees not to rape her if she promises to either spend one night with him or marry him. She agrees to marry him, even though she is already engaged.

Being a woman of honor, she keeps her promise to him. She brings him into her father's home, informing everyone that he has rescued her from his uncles. They keep their promise a secret, but she feels obliged to break off her engagement. She knows that there will be no problem with this, given the nature of her fiancé: "Quant à M. de la Marche, . . dès qu'il saura que j'ai passé deux heures à la Roche-Mauprat, il ne sera pas besoin d'autre explication" (144). Once her pledge to her fiancé is cancelled, Edmée begins her long, arduous task of rehabilitating Bernard into the kind of husband she wants.

Edmée is used to working hard for change. She is a strong presence in her community and is considered a saint by the poor in her village: "c'est une fille qui donne tout ce qu'elle a, qui ne porterait pas un joyau, parce qu'avec l'or d'une bague on peut faire vivre un homme pendant un an" (132). She is the epitome of the heroic noble. She confides to her confessor that, when she realizes how bad her life has become, she still accepts it: "je disputerai ma vie. . . mais je ne marchanderi pas avec elle un instant si mon honneur ne sort pas sain et sauf" (141). She has certain standards that she will not lower: "je me soucie peu du monde. . . je ne souffrirai jamais la tyrannie de l'homme, pas plus

la violence d'un amant que le soufflet d'un mari" (142). She insists on keeping her promise to Bernard, although she makes him wait until he has been educated and "tamed."[2]

It is Edmée's education of Bernard that makes this novel a feminist one.[3] Kristine Wingard Vareille asserts that "assumer à l'égard de l'homme aimé un rôle maternel équivaut, de la part de la femme, à essayer de substituer à la domination féminine voulue par la nature, celle que la mère exerce sur ses enfants" (422). Bernard has no maternal figure in his life; he has been raised by uncles who are murderers, thieves, and rapists. He is the product of the worst aspects of patriarchal society gone bad. Edmée needs to re-educate him in everything, including treatment of women and human equality. She know that, once she marries him, "elle aura aliéné sa liberté pour toujours" (Vareille 430). She must create for herself a husband who treats her as she wishes: as an equal.

Bernard is a passionate, natural man. He has not received the same training by society that all other men have. When Edmée sees his basic goodness-- he does not rape her, he releases her from her promise-- she realizes that she has a chance to create the perfect husband. Nancy Rogers has written that Mauprat "replaces Sand's negativism of the earlier novels by offering constructive solutions to the problems of marriage, education, patriarchy, and social equality. Marriage in Mauprat is no longer a barrier to happiness, but a blissful bond, offering eternal joy" ("Protest" 72). Like everything worthwhile, the education of Bernard takes time: seven years. During that time he must undergo many tests to prove that he has actually changed and that he is worthy of marriage to Edmée.

By the end of the novel they have come full circle; this time, however, it is Bernard who is the victim and Edmée in the position to spare him: he is framed

for an attempt on her life and she recovers from her coma just in time to vindicate him and convict the real criminal, his last surviving uncle. By putting an end to Bernard's branch of the family and joining him to Edmée's branch, "Sand does not undermine the entire patriarchal system; rather, she depicts the demise of its most evil incarnation" (Rogers, "Protest," 73).

Edmée is a woman who has had the vision and strength of purpose to re-educate a man and begin an entirely new chapter in her personal history: that of a loving marriage of equals. She has not waited for an enlightened male; she has created one. Edmée is a positive example of the possibilities for all women in Sand's time. Nadine Dormoy-Savage believes that, in Mauprat, "nous passons de l'inaction à l'action, du pessimisme à l'optimisme, et de la rêverie abstraite à la philosophie du progrès" (168).

Consuelo (1842) and its sequel, La Comtesse de Rudolstadt (1843), which will be referred to as one novel in this study, incorporates elements from two major genres, the gothic novel and the novel of initiation. Gothic novels, most notably those of Anne Radcliff, to whom Sand made reference within the text, typically use female protagonists; George Sand's use of Consuelo is therefore not unusual. It is her use of a female protagonist in the novel of initiation that makes the novel unusual and which makes it easily definable as feminist. Critics have identified many noteworthy aspects of this novel, including the insistence on love and equality in marriage, a woman's right to expect sexual passion in a marriage, and the importance of maternal influence in a woman's life.

The ideal of marrying for love is a constant theme in Sand's fiction; there are many quotations that prove her intent. In Consuelo/La Comtesse de Rudolstadt, the addition of overt female sexuality to the conventional romance

plot is evident and striking. Wanda, the wise old sage in the novel, asks Consuelo if she loves Liverani, the man who has awakened sexual passion in Consuelo, but who wears a mask and refuses to speak. When Consuelo, who plans to remain loyal to the memory of her deceased husband, Albert, answers in the affirmative yet quickly resolves not to act on those feelings, Wanda asks, "Dieu. . . a-t-il autorisée à abjurer ton sexe, à prononcer dans le mariage le voeu de virginité, ou celui plus affreux et plus dégradant encore du servage?" (3: 320). Here, as in most of her other novels, Sand chooses to allow her heroine to marry for love, both spiritual and physical. She accomplishes this by resurrecting the allegedly deceased Albert, the effeminite, sickly, insane man whom Consuelo had married out of pity on his deathbed, and turning him into the masked Liverani who is completely virile. In comparing Sand's treatment of the novel of initiation to that of male authors, Lucienne Frappier-Mazur claims that "elle en donne une élaboration adaptée à reconnaître la part féminine et matérielle d'elle-même si bien que, finalement, le parcours initiatique n'aboutit pas au rejet, mais à l'acceptation de la chair" ("Code" 54). Because Consuelo feels sexual passion for Liverani and spiritual passion for Albert, the combining of his two halves, feminine/spiritual and masculine/sexual, allows Consuelo to experience the ideal marriage, one often denied women of Sand's time.

The combination of Albert and Liverani also adds to Sand's substantial corpus of androgynous characters, and highlights her belief that androgynous behavior and sensibilities complete rather than subtract from a relationship. Frappier-Mazur calls this symbolization of the duality of human beings "un déni fétichiste du féminin, refusant soit directement, soit indirectement, la réalité de la différence sexuelle" ("Code" 57). Albert/Liverani has both feminine and masculine traits; Consuelo is in love with both parts of his personality, and chooses a man who will complement her own androgynous personality traits.

Consuelo's androgyny is most evident in her strength of character and independence. She is independent because of her ability to sing. She is not considered pretty, but her voice surpasses those of all the other singers. She is a sensation on the stage and is able to earn her living that way. She also shows androgynous traits when she leaves the security of her room to look for Albert, traversing underground maze-like passageways, showing unusual physical strength and courage for a traditional woman. Her force of character allows her to survive other adventures as she goes from one situation to another. Pierrette Daly has stated that "nowhere in Sand's works is the struggle with gender and heroic paradigms more elucidated than in the novels of the cantatrice, where. . . she masculinizes her women and feminizes her men" ("Fiction" 48). Despite Consuelo's androgyny and lack of good looks, she is a woman, and is therefore subject to the imprisoning prospectives of sexism and objectification. Her ability to resist the sexual advances she experiences is directly tied to her deceased mother, to whom Consuelo promised that she would remain chaste until her wedding. Consuleo's devotion to the memory of her dead mother is the source of much of her strength. She and Consuelo's other maternal influence, Wanda, are Consuleo's salvation. Frappier-Mazur calls the importance of the two maternal figures "une exaltation du maternal, qui a pour contrepartie l'absence d'une forte figure paternelle et le rejet du patronyme" ("Code" 60). There is no strong father-figure in Consuleo's life: she does not know who her father is; her voice teacher, le Porpora is tempermental, childlike, and weak; and Albert is ineffectual both as a person and as a man. The rejection of the paternal in this novel is even more clearly evoked since Consuelo has no last name and never acknowleges her married name, Rudolstadt. Albert also rejects his father's name, choosing a name from his mother's side of the family, which he and Consueleo use. By rejecting the

patriarchal traditions of their time, Consuelo and Albert are forging a new kind of relationship, one of equals. Consuelo is considered an equal to men when she is initiated into the secret society, The Invisibles, which plans to create a new religion based on social and gender equality. The members of this society inform her, "nous te traiterons comme un homme. . . nous professons le précept de l'égalité divine de l'homme et de la femme" (3: 313). The Invisibles acknowledge the difficulty of treating men and women as equals, given the differences in education they receive, yet, due to Consuelo's exceptional "génie" they will allow her to join them.

Sand uses Consuelo as an idealistic role model for women. She also uses her as a vehicle to portray and share a female point of view. Consuelo is one of the few novels by Sand in which most of the action is seen through the female protagonist's eyes. This perspective is especially evident in the intensely erotic passages invoving Consuelo's awakening sexual desire for Liverani. Simon Vierne calls Consuelo "un nouveau mythe féminin" ("Mythe" 45). She is "une nouvelle vision de la femme, . . . une femme que son activité, sa manière de vivre delibérément choisie, rend libre" ("Mythe" 46). As an orphan, she is freed from paternal authority to pursue her chosen career; chaste, she is free of the potential responsibility of children; single, she is free to do as she pleases. Her artistic ability allows her this freedom, and as long as she is able to sing, her freedom remains intact. Consuelo continues to be a new feminine myth after her marriage to Albert: she has married a man for whom she has emotional, spiritual, and sexual feelings; she cares for her children while she works, bringing them with her to the theater; she provides financially for her family. When Consuelo is no longer able to sing professionally she continues to use her voice; as Albert's partner she transcribes his message of social reform, his vision of a more egalitarian future.

This hope for the future is shared by both Consuelo and Albert, and Consuelo's voice, formerly used to entertain the wealthy, is now used to inform and educate the poor. Her voice is not stilled; it is used to better humankind.[4]

La Petite Fadette (1848) is the story of a young woman who completely re-invents herself. Among the many themes of the novel, the three most feminist statements are: a challenge to traditionally supposed gender personality traits; society's refusal to accept or reward those individuals who contradict its views; and a woman's ability to change and control her own destiny. The main protagonists, Landry and Sylvinet, identical male twins, one typically masculine, the other with feminine traits, and Fadette, serve as examples of how society treats individuals who do not meet expected gender roles. Fadette is introduced in the novel as a tom-boy waif: "elle était petite, maigre, ébouriffée et hardie. C'était un enfant très causeur et très moqueur, vif comme un papillon, curieux comme un rouge-gorge et noir comme un grelet" (83). She is informed that she is not given the respect commonly due a young girl of sixteen because, as Landry tells her:

> tu n'as rien d'une fille et tout d'un garcon . . . Crois-tu que ce soit à propos à seize ans, de ne point ressembler encore à une fille? Tu montes sur les arbres . . . et quand tu sautes sur une jument, sans bride ni selle, tu la fais galoper. . . C'est bon d'être forte et leste, c'est bon aussi de n'avoir peur de rien, et c'est un avantage de nature pour un homme. Mais pour une femme trop est trop. (136)

Fadette begins her metamorphosis motivated by knowing that she must meet society's and, more importantly, Landry's expectations of her as a female before she can secure his love. She does not meet society's standards for appearance, behavior, or demeanor. Michael Danahy believes that this gender

trait "confusion" on Fadette's part stems from her lack of positive female role models: "Fadette is struggling with tensions resulting from the absence [in her life] of anyone of the same sex who is both successful and happy and after whom she may model herself" ("Growing up" 51). In the absence of a female advisor she turns to the object of her affections and the only person she wishes to please, Landry. She begins her transformation seen only by Landry. Once she has secured his love and approval she expands her sphere of acceptance: first, to strangers in another town; then to her own village; and finally, to Landry's father. According to Naomi Schor, "Fadette must give up her phallic attributes if she is to pursue the positive destiny of woman, that is, marriage and motherhood" (146). Fadette has chosen marriage to Landry not out of necessity, as she inherits a sizable amount of money from her grandmother, but out of love for him.

Once Fadette has conformed to society, becoming "un peu plus comme les autres," (137) she continues to transform her life by improving the lives of others.[5] She uses her knowledge of nature to help Landry increase his farming revenues, she cures the despondency that has been ailing his twin brother, Sylvinet, and she opens a home for orphans.[6] Her ability to conform to society's gender-based expectations of her enables her to aid Sylvinet in turn to transform himself. Sylvinet is portrayed in the novel as being extremely effeminite: he displays negative, stereotypical female personality traits such as being emotional, preferring inside (women's) work, and using emotional blackmail to manipulate his family to do as he wishes.[7] Maïr E. Verthuy attributes Sylvinet's despondency to the fact that he has "betrayed his sex" by this behavior (201). As Fadette before him, Sylvinet must change his behavior in order to merit society's acceptance. Fadette aids him in his recovery from a self-induced illness, and soon after he joins the army: "only through that most

masculine of activities, war, can he hope to compensate for his effeminite behavior" (Verthuy 201). Sylvinet is rewarded, advancing in rank and receiving a medal (242). Gender-based behavioral expectations have been met by both Fadette and Sylvinet, yet both had to learn how to act; expected gender traits were not a natural part of their personalities. Sand's use of identical male twins with different natural propensities highlights her attempts to demonstrate personalty traits as being unrelated to a person's sex. Naomi Schor calls Sand's "insistence on the difference before sexual difference, on differentiation rather than difference the "feminine specificity of her writing" (147). Landry and Sylvinet's identical sex yet oposing personality traits show that, for Sand, "sexual difference is arbitrary, not essential " (Schor 145). Despite the arbitrary nature of personality traits, Sand's society does not allow any digression from its prescribed mode. Verthuy calls this novel "a cautionary tale about acceptable gender behavior" (200). Landry, Sylvinet, and Fadette are "either rewarded or not according to their willingness or refusal to comply with sexual norms" (200). Sylvinet is rewarded by achieving his family's and society's respect; Fadette is rewarded by being allowed to marry the man she loves despite their social differences.

La Daniella (1857) is one of the very few Sand novels in which a woman is not punished by society for sexual sin. Daniella is an Italian servant who falls in love with a Frenchman, Valreg. She becomes his mistress, saves his life by hiding him from the government, and, after becoming pregnant, marries him.

Daniella's definition of love is that it stands the test of time. She tells Valreg:

> je ne veux pas me marier sans avoir éprouvé la constance de mon amant et la mienne pendant plusieurs années . . . il faut que le

> désir soit grand de part et d'autre. Celui d'une femme n'est jamais douteux, puisqu'elle risque son honneur. Celui d'un homme peut bien n'être qu'un petit moment de caprice, puisqu'il n'y risque rien. (157)

She knows the price she may pay for this trial period, however. She reminds him, "une fille qui aime hors de la pensée du mariage est déchue. Tous les hommes se croient le droit de lui demander d'être à eux, et si elle leur résiste, ils la décrient et l'insultent" (158). Daniella is proud of her actions, however. When Valreg offers to marry her she tells him:

> je ne le veux pas . . . ne m'ôte pas l'orgueil de ma faute . . . je suis mille fois trop heureuse . . . la faute est commise et ce n'est pas d'être mariée un jour ou l'autre qui m'empêchera d'être notée au livre de Dieu. (I: 219)

She insists that the happiness of the moment is worth any future sorrow "de la part des hommes" (I: 219) because they are in love. She loves Valreg enough to risk society's punishment, and after a series of difficult circimstances, she succeeds in not only avoiding society's censure, but in triumphing over it.

One way she triumphs over society and its opinions of what women can and cannot do is her success in keeping Valreg hidden for months in an abandoned castle. In this ruined symbol of patriarchy at its worst, Daniella and Valreg forge a new kind of relationship, based on love and mutual need and respect. Valreg needs Daniella for his very existence; without her food he would starve to death or have to risk capture by leaving the castle. Her ability to sneak in and out of town, wander the streets at night and outwit the authorities is a testament to the strength and cunning possible in women. By reversing the roles of rescuer and helpless victim, Sand is showing how gender roles can be reversed without losing any sexual identity and without changing the basic

nature of human beings. When Daniella becomes pregnant they resume their traditional roles of the male providing shelter and food and the female caring for the children. A strong, androgynous female can still be maternal and feminine; a man who allows himself to be cared for by a woman can still be masculine. The couple who dared to transgress several of society's rules remains part of society, even contributing in the form of Valreg's art, a new vision for the future.

La Ville noire (1860) was, according to Jean Courrier, one of the first novels in nineteenth-century France, after another of George Sand's novels, Le Compagnon du Tour de France (1840) "à situer ses personnages et son intrigue au coeur du monde ouvrier, plus de vingt ans avant le toujours cité Germinal (1885) d'Emile Zola" (vii). It also includes a woman as savior, not of one man or family, but of a whole town.

Tonine is a village girl from the factory side of town who knows her place and plans to stay there. She is impervious to the requests of the wealthier men from the other side of town who want to marry her. She wishes to marry her long-term fiancé, Etienne, who has aspirations to glory and has left town to seek wealth and position. Upon his return to la ville noire, he hears of "la patronne," a bourgeois woman who has control over the whole factory and has made many improvements in the lives of its workers. He discovers that she is Tonine, who has inherited the factory because of her "good deeds" and faultless reputation.

The change of fortune and social position has given her a new confidence:

> Etienne remarqua un grand changement survenu chez Tonine . . . avec le changement de position, l'horizon de Tonine s'était agrandi. Elle avait voulu entendre de

> son mieux la science et les arts de l'industrie qu'elle avait à gouverner, et, sans être sortie de son Val-d'Enfer, elle s'était mise au courant du mouvement industriel et commercial de la France. (178)

Tonine has been the dutiful sister, mother, daughter, and nurse to everyone who needed her. She remains humble and beyond reproach. Many of the improvements implemented are based on the common-sense needs of people: better, safer roads, education for the children, child-care. Etienne's friends tell him that the new factory is:

> . . . un atelier modèle qui rapporte gros, et dont tous les profits sont employés à donner l'apprentissage et l'éducation gratis aux enfants de la ville noire, des soins aux malades, des lectures et des cours aux ouvriers, des secours et des avances à ceux qui ont eu des accidents. Tu verras là des bains, des gymnases, des salles d'étude. (161)

It is a woman who has created and sustained all of these improvements in George Sand's utopia for the working class.[8] She has remained where she is and used her resources to improve her surroundings. Etienne has had to travel to discover improvements in manufacturing; Tonine has never left her home. Sand's choice of Tonine as town savior is telling: a woman, unable to move freely around the world, can still improve her life. There is no excuse for remaining passive and dependent. Instead of waiting for Etienne to return so that he could run the factory, Tonine implemented the improvements herself, with her own self-taught knowledge.[9] She is capable of running the factory alone and she is good at it. All that remains in order for her to have a complete life is the love of an enlightened man.

Etienne renews his vows to marry her before he realizes that she is the "demoiselle" who has inherited the factory. She knows then that he loves her for herself instead of the money and asks her friends, "croyez-vous que je lui doive assez de confiance et d'estime à présent pour souhaiter être sa femme" (176)? They marry in the presence of the entire town, celebrating the fact that they are equal partners and that together they can improve the life of everyone in the town as well as their own. George Sand's female character has shaped her own destiny, choosing a man who will understand her right to continue to do so, and becoming a living example and role model for all the women who see her.

Mlle Merquem (1868) is the story of Célie Merquem, a single, independent, well-educated woman. She is loved by all the peasants who live near her because she has helped rescue many people from the sea; she performs many charitable works and she has a good reputation.

When the narrator, Armand, arrives in town, he is told by his young cousin that Célie is "affreuse, longue, maigre, sèche, pédante, bizarre" (81). This is the usual description of an old maid, whom Célie, unmarried at thirty, is supposed to be. Armand is also informed that his aunt is hoping to marry him to Mlle Merquem. His aunt informs him, "Elle passe pour une femme instruite. . . elle n'est extraordinaire que sur un point, l'obstination qu'elle a mise à ne pas connaître les joies, les peines, et les devoirs de la famille" (85). As is the tradition, a woman who chooses not to conform to society's expectations of her is considered unnatural, and even well-meaning friends and relatives believe that she cannot be happy or complete without a husband and children.

Armand is immediately attracted to her, however, and determines to break her engagement to Montroger, a man who has been waiting for her to

marry him for ten years. In his frustration at her refusal to marry him, Montroger asks Armand, "est-ce que vous comprenez une femme sans amour et sans famille? Elle a tort, il n'y a pas à dire. . . c'est une exception, un anomalie, un défi jeté à la nature et à la société" (92). In spite of Montroger's pessimism, Armand believes that, even though she is a "savante," unlike her male conterparts, "une femme ne peut s'abstraire entièrement du besoin de vivre," (119) and a woman alone is not really "alive."

Armand begins to win her love after he and Célie rescue a child from the sea together. He continues to impress her when he offers to adopt the child. He makes this request while she is surrounded by white swans in a scene reminiscent of Leda and the swans: "Elle s'assit sur un banc de marbre blanc, au bord du bassin, au milieu de ses cygnes, qui. . . se pressaient autour du banc de manière à m'empecher d'y prendre place" (160). The maternal instincts of the woman are being matched by the paternal instincts of the man, while white swans swarm and thrust around the woman's legs. Unfortunately, the sexual tension is felt only by Armand: "elle s'éloigna comme un oiseau . . . sa grâce étonnant m'inondait de volupté, mais elle ne s'en doutait pas" (161). Claude Holland believes that Célie Merquem "may not originally have had any inclination toward marriage, but she longed to have children" (178). Armand has understood this aspect of her personality and wisely begins his courtship of her through her maternal needs instead of her sexual ones. As in several other Sand novels, the female character identifies herself first as mother, then as sexual woman.

Célie has never felt "volupté" or love. She confides her feelings about Montroger to Armand in a story typical for young girls of her time. The family chooses a match for her; if she does not agree to the marriage she is subject to mistrust and rumors. In an outright feminist statement concerning marriage,

George Sand's heroine states: "Voilà près de quinze ans que dure pour moi ce supplice de m'entendre répéter que la femme ne s'appartient ni comme fille ni comme épouse, et que vouloir se soustraire à la domination personnelle est un attentat contre l'ordre éternellement établi" (225). She has mistaken her family's love to mean that she has value as a person, and she could not understand how that could change: "je ne pouvais pas devenir humble, m'effacer du jour au lendemain" (226).

Living alone and on her own terms has allowed her to realize that she does have value:

> Je n'étais plus l'esclave de mon sexe. Personne ne me disait plus, 'souvenez-vous que vous êtes femme et que votre affaire en ce monde est d'appartenir à quelqu'un' . . . la femme n'est rien. . . elle se tient prête à subir le dégré de capacité de son futur maître et en attendant elle se conserve à l'état de table rase. (230)

Célie has done the opposite of what is expected of her; she has become better educated than most men, she has used her personality and mind to become who she wants to be.

Yet this Sandian heroine also believes that a woman is defined and controlled by her biology. She believes that all women are destined, that it is in their blood, to be mothers, and that a career-minded woman is not being true to herself. According to Célie, "c'est en vain qu'elle se soustrait au marriage et se dispense de se créer une famille. Tout est famille pour elle quand même. La femme est née pour être mère" (232). Célie has been fulfilling this need by becoming the godmother to all the new-borns in the village, and by adopting several orphans and educating and nurturing them in an family she has created on her own.

These statements, as well as her maternal instincts toward the children she has adopted, assure Armand that Célie is really a "normal," chaste woman who is merely waiting to fall in love to marry. He realizes that, "toutes les répugnances que j'avais pu concevoir jusque-là. . . disparaissaient devant le fait de sa pureté sans tache, qui la faisait plus jeune que moi et plus désirable qu'aucune jeune fille de vertu non-éprouvée (236). Once he has convinced himself that she has not been "corrupted" by all her knowledge, he proceeds with his plans to ask her to marry him. She is in love with Armand and has never loved Montroger; she breaks off her engagement to Montroger and agrees to marry Armand.

Once Célie is in love, she is willing to renounce her hard-won independence to play the role of a typical woman. She tells Armand that she will go anywhere with him and become anyone he wants her to be: "je n'ai plus ni goûts, ni habitudes, ni affections, ni plaisirs en dehors des vôtres. Si vous voulez que j'oublie tout ce que j'ai appris, j'oublierai même que j'ai su quelque chose" (313). She feels compelled to become every other woman, even though he fell in love with her and her differences. Holland calls this statement a "reversion to conventional feminine passivity" that "comes as a shock to the reader" (177). While Sand's reasoning is unclear, it is possible to reconcile Célie's attitude with the fact that she has found an enlightened male. Most of Sand's strong female characters choose their mates well enough to trust them. They are so in love with them that they would choose passive female dependence with these men over any kind of relationship with another. Célie knows that Armand loves her and understands her: he has accepted her as she is, and will continue to do so. This is Sand's vision for the future: enlightened males and liberated females forming equal, loving marriages.

Célie Merquem has given up none of her independence by marrying Armand because he realizes that society is mistaken in its practices for women. He sees how happy his wife is in her marriage and concludes:

> Peut-être ne sait-on pas à quel dégré de charme et de mérite pourrait s'élever la femme bien douée, si on la laissait mûrir. . . on les marie trop jeunes, elles sont mères avant d'avoir cessé d'être des enfants. On les élève d'ailleurs de manière à prolonger cette enfance toute la vie; aussi ont-elles perdu toute puissance réelle et toute action légitime dans la société. (315)

Célie has lived and learned enough to choose her husband well. She has been able to develop her intellect, her opinions, and her own philosophy of life. She waits until she is in love, then marries the man she chooses.

In Nanon (1872) the heroine writes the story of her life for her children and grandchildren. She is an old woman, a peasant married to an aristocrat. She displays all of George Sand's idealized characteristics: she is pure in heart, selfless, eager for knowledge and self-improvement, and she works very hard. Her reasons for writing are as self-effacing as her entire life: "mon but n'est pas d'intéresser à ma personne; il est de conserver pour mes enfants et petits-enfants le souvenir cher et sacré de celui qui fut mon époux" (31). Emilien is her social superior when they first meet, yet when the Bastille falls and the Revolution begins, they are equals; a change of status he readily accepts. In this novel, however, their equality is manifested more in the change of traditional gender roles than in social class. Their future reversal and equalization of gender roles is immediately evident in the first lines of the novel: a woman is writing about her husband. Yvette Bozon-Scalzitti remarks that she is "narratrice de sa propre histoire, au lieu d'être l'objet du récit masculin . . .

Nanon [fait] de l'homme au contraire l'objet d'un récit féminin" (13). The novel Nanon, as well as the character "nous montre que l'homme est un rôle que la femme peut apprendre et prendre" (Bozon-Scalzitti 17).

The first area in which Nanon proves she is just as capable as a man is in education. Nanon, an illiterate peasant girl, scolds Emilien, an aristocrat, for not taking advantage of his education. She asks him to teach her to read. He does so, declaring, "je sais un peu, j'apprendrai tout à fait en t'enseignant" (50). Her desire to learn influences him, and he begins to grow, intellectually and spiritually, bringing her along with him. Her influence is so strong that he becomes a different person; he had been lazy, apathetic, and selfish: he now becomes perceptive and brave.

Nanon has also changed, especially in the esteem of her village. Her ability to read allows her to give lessons to others; she earns food in exchange, which means she is a vital help in her family's welfare. She is so esteemed that the vilage honors her at a celebration and buys her home for her. She is the first person in her village, male or female, to own her own property.

She is now equal to Emilien in her ability to read, superior to him in that she owns her own property, yet socially inferior in her role as a peasant and a female. She takes another step in her evolution when she agrees to take in Emilien's younger sister. The girls are the same age, yet Nanon declares, "ce sera ma fille" (91). She does, in fact, become a mother-figure to a group of people living in the monastery where Emilien had been a student before the Revolution.

Nanon's strength of character has enabled her to rise above her humble beginnings, yet she has not yet acknowledged even the possibility that she and Emilien could love each other, their different social class making it unimaginable. When Emilien tells her, "je te jure que je ne serai jamais à

personne plus qu'à toi" (95), she feels "une envie de rire et une envie de pleurer sans savoir pourquoi" (96). Her growing love for Emilien is proven, however, by her actions. He is put in prison and Nanon enacts an ingenious plot to rescue him.

During her rescue, an act that does not in any way coincide with her sex, station, or political power, she discovers the limits placed on her as a woman. She realizes :

> La manière dont on me regardait et me parlait était nouvelle pour moi, et je m'avisais enfin de l'inconvénient d'être une jeune fille toute seule sur les chemins . . . je voyais enfin dans mon sexe un obstacle et des périls auxquels je n'avais jamais songé. Le pudeur se révélait sous la forme de l'effroi.. . j'aurais voulu me rendre invisible. (125)

She finds that the only way to avoid notice, to become "invisible," is to become a young boy: "huit jours après mon retour, je repartis de nuit, habillée en garçon, les cheveux coupés et un bon bâton en main" (128). Acording to Bozon-Scalzitti, by taking on the male costume Nanon proves that, "la femme elle aussi peut avoir accès à la maîtrise; aux vertus réputés viriles de contrôle des passions, de sang-froid, d'efficacité, dont Nanon n'est assurément pas dépourvue" (97). It is, in fact, these supposedly masculine gender traits that allow Nanon to perform a very feminine act: saving the life of the man she loves. She must take on male attire and symbols in order to be free to carry out her desires, those of a woman in love. In this case the male is passive and helpless and the female comes to his rescue. In addition to the inversion of Emilien and Nanon's gender roles, there is now an inversion of social power. The aristocratic male is helpless in prison; the peasant female devises a plan which

will save him. She has the power now and he does not. That she must dress as a boy is merely a reflection of her times. [10]

Nanon's acts of changing from uneducated peasant girl to rescuer and care-giver do not go unnoticed by Emilien. He tells her: "sois ma mère,. . . prends donc pour toi tout le respect, toute la tendresse, toute l'adoration que j'aurais eus pour elle" (149). By thinking of her as a mother figure, Emilien hopes to avoid his romantic feelings as they live together with a former servant of his in total isolation for over a year. His feelings are not only natural, but more and more socially acceptable, as Nanon continues to achieve equal status with him.

This equality becomes monetary when they leave their hideout and sell their crops. Nanon protests that she has not worked and should not receive a share, but the servant Dumont insists, "Tu n'as pas travaillé? Quand tu n'étais occupée qu'à nous procurer la nourriture et le gîte? Sans cela, certes, nous n'eussions pas fait grand ouvrage; nous partagerons, donc" (181). "Woman's work" has finally been monetarily compensated. [11] Her efforts are acknowledged and valued; indeed, given equal value to the crops that were grown by the men. Nanon's differences are allowed to be of equal worth and she and Emilien will receive the same share of the profits.

In her own mind, however, Nanon and Emilien are still not equals. She continues to deny the possibility of marriage, even when Dumont informs her that Emilien loves her: "Je restai interdite et confuse, l'amour! Jamais Emilien ne m'avait dit ce mot-là; jamais je ne me l'étais dit à moi-même. Je croyais qu'il me respectait trop et qu'aussi il me protégeait trop pour vouloir faire de moi sa maîtresse" (175). When Dumont insists that Emilien wants to marry her, she replies, "m'épouser, moi, une paysanne, lui qui est fils de marquis? Non, cela ne s'est jamais vu et cela ne se peut pas" (176).

Nanon will consent to the idea of marrying Emilien only when he tells her his intention to live as a peasant after he returns from fighting in the Revolution. Once she has accepted this fact, Nanon decides that she must provide the income: "A supposer qu'il revînt petit officier sans avenir, comment élèverait-il une famille, si la femme ne lui apportait que son travail au jour le jour" (183). Realising the probability of Emilien's inability to work, she decides, "ne pouvais-je pas devenir, sinon riche, du moins pourvue d'une petite fortune qui me permettrait d'accepter sans scrupule et sans humiliation la condition bonne ou mauvaise d'Emilien" (183)? Once she has the idea, she begins her course of action; she arranges to purchase the former monastery, using the money she has earned over the years teaching and working. Bringing land with her as a dowry is the only way she can envision a marriage with an aristocrat. When the only remaining priest at the monastery dies and leaves her his fortune, Nanon is both a landowner and a wealthy woman. She has everything that Emilien does not, except for a noble birth. She has obtained the highest position a woman can without marrying into it. There is nothing else she can do to merit an aristocrat. Her strength of character and good work have earned her respect and love; her hard work and intelligence have earned her land and position.

When Emilien returns with one arm amputated and no prospects for working as a farmer, Nanon accepts the idea of marrying him. She has land and money so that he need not do manual labor. He has become an imperfect, incomplete aristocrat who could no longer marry into his own social class.[12]

Nanon is a concrete example of what the French Revolution was supposed to bring about. As in most of George Sand's novels, the heroine has earned the right to love, and love is more important than social class and societal barriers. This heroine, more than many Sandian women, has crossed and even abolished many of society's lines. In George Sand's time, women are

not considered equal to men. By setting the superior heroine Nanon in revolutionary times, Sand is hoping that her readers will ackowledge Nanon's rights to achieve what she did, and perhaps by extension, the rights of all women to improve their social status. Nanon in 1789 had everything against her; she fought the barriers and overcame them. In contrast, George Sand as had to struggle against most of the same barriers all of her life; little progress in securing the rights of women had been made in the years since the French Revolution was supposed to usher in universal freedom and equality. [13]

As we see from these examples of idealistic feminism, George Sand strongly believed that women can and must effect change in their own lives. Edmée created her own version of an enlightened male, one that suited her personality and needs. Daniella risks her reputation and life for the man she has chosen and succeeds in getting what she wants. Tonine, Célie, Nanon, Lélia (in the 1839 version), and Fadette all become leaders in their communities, or in communities they have created. Androgynous characteristics are not something to be hidden, Sand affirms; they enable women to achieve their goals, including winning the admiration and love of the men they choose. They also empower women to contribute toward a greater social good.

Conclusion

George Sand's lesser-known novels continue and enrich the feminist advocacy she began with her first novel, Indiana (1832). Instead of continuing to write in the same style and with similar characters and situations, Sand was wise enough to vary her approach, voice, tone, and outlook in her subsequent novels. For the majority of her novels, however, the message remains the same: women deserve and are due equal rights with men. Sand's advocacy of this right is apparent when the novels are studied in the light of the categories and approaches used here. Sometimes the advocacy is obvious, or systematic; sometimes she appeals overtly to her readers' sympathy to advocate women's right to equality, and at other times she makes her appeal indirectly in a subtext whose implications are not readily apparent. The aim of this study is to encourage other readers and critics to examine those novels by Sand that have not been widely read, to see what skills she used to transmit her feminist agenda, and to examine the devices she used to influence her readers. For those critics who believe the quality of her novels declines progressively throughout her career and for those readers who simply dismiss some of her works as mere romance novels, a reappraisal is in order, since such charges are often based on a limited reading of her works.

The more complete reading undertaken by this study offers new insight into Sand's work, revealing her skilled craftsmanship and use of nuance in treating feminist issues. Sand's type of equity feminism, while lacking in some areas, shows remarkable prescience and vision. Her advocacy of equal pay for women and men (Nanon) is a topic being debated today, and her belief that men and women are equal yet have some inherent biologically determined personality differences (most notably concerning maternal feelings) is still the

basis for scientific and anthropological study. Her ability to advocate the same idea in many different ways and, in some novels, without it being noticed on a conscious or critical level, demonstrates her significant literary skill.

Sand believed that the most effective way to improve society was by reaching out to individuals: change must come from within each member of society. Her desire to help the cause of women was ably realized in her different approaches; the reader who may have been turned away by the perceived preaching or obvious feminist advocacy found in one novel might not feel as negatively toward the message when it is hidden in a novel creating sympathy and empathy for a female protagonist. She used female protagonists from every class of society, showing how all women were affected by their inequality, and effectively transmitting her feminist message to all classes. She situated her novels in a variety of geographical locations, and she included several historical novels in her repertoire. Through the use of a wide variety of characters, situations, locales, and time periods, Sand ensured a greater diffusion and acceptance of her work and message. Sand was also astute in her use of serialization of the novel; at a time when more people were reading than ever before, she used mass, inexpensive publications to reach those who may have been less inclined to think about their society. By eliciting sympathy, anger, outrage, and empathy, Sand was able to introduce social awareness to the general public. While her contribution to the realization of equal rights for women cannot be definitively measured, it would not be an overstatement to suggest that she did influence individuals.

Indeed, this study suggests that Sand wrote her novels with a master plan in mind rather than haphazardly or according to a concurrent life experience, as many critics assume. While she obviously used her life and emotions in her novels, she molded them to fit her feminist agenda. What has

not been seen before is just how extensively her writing did fulfill her stated goal of being an advocate for women's rights; it would not be erroneous to label her body of novels a sort of feminist "Comédie humaine," and her work needs to be acknowledged as such.

In a time when women had no voice, hers was one heard consistently and quite universally, and her impact on her society should not be dismissed. Her entertaining, well-crafted novels serve many functions. Feminist advocacy is only one aspect of her novels; they provide many possibilities for exploration in other areas as well, including nineteenth-century lifestyles, regional customs and speech patterns, and socio-political thought. It is hoped that this study provides new insight into George Sand which may inspire others to re-examine her lesser-known novels. Whether she is popularly labeled a feminist, idealist, Romantic, or writer of children's tales, Sand needs to be known, read, and treated as carefully and thoroughly as her great nineteenth-century male contemporaries.

Notes

Introduction

1. Kristine Wingard Vareille has written a study of Sand's novels from 1832 to 1837. She examines many different aspects of each novel, including feminism. Robert Godwin-Jones has also written a comprehensive analysis of twenty of Sand's novels; there are passing references to and comments on feminism, but that is not the focus of his study. Paul Chanson studies her works as statements on the rights of both partners in marriage; again, he touches on feminism but does not highlight it, nor does he treat all of her novels.

2. According to Renée Winegarten, George Sand believed that "women's immense potentialities went largely unrecognized and were indeed incapable of realization in the existing state of society" (162).

3. Simone Vierne states that "une des originalités de George Sand [est] sa manière toute personnelle d'incarner ses propos les plus théoriques, philosophiques, politiques, ésthetiques, dans ses oeuvres d'un genre un peu déconcertant, car apparemment fort éloigné de tels desseins" ("Roman sentimental" 175).

4. See Deutlebaum and Huff, Wenzel-White, O'Brien, and Schor for illustrations of this opinion.

5. See Massardier-Kenney and Godwin-Jones.

6. Barbey d'Aurevilly called her "un bas-bleu" and noted that "un bas-bleu fait penser à tous les bas-bleus . . . il y a entre eux la solidarité du ridicule d'écrire. . . pour écrire et pour endoctrinailler le genre humain. . . Personne. . . n'a exercé d'influence plus funeste que Mme George Sand. C'est la mère Gigogne aux adultères" (124). Baudelaire also wrote harshly about her: "Elle est bête, elle est lourde, elle est bavarde; elle a dans les idées morales la même profondeur

de jugement et la même délicatesse de sentiment que les concierges et les filles entretenues" (686).

7. Thomson has shown that Elizabeth Barrett Browning's "Aurora Leigh;" Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre, The Professor, and Shirley; Emily Bronte's Wuthering Heights; and Matthew Arnold's poem "To a Gypsy child by the Seashore" all were influenced by George Sand's work. See Thomson, pp. 54, 65, 68, 80, and 101. See also Bount and Jurgrau's studies on George Sand's influence on British writers.

8. See Karp for a detailed list of which writers she influenced. See also Banour, Herrmann, and Naginski ("Russians").

9. Anne Freadman has done a study of the implications of Aurore Dupin's choice of George Sand as a pen-name. Some of her arguments are weak, however.

10. According to Kate Millet, "Serious education for women [was] perceived . . . as a threat to patriarchal marriage, domestic sentiment, and ultimately to male supremacy--economic, social, and psychological" (127).

11. In an amazing attempt to prove that Sand was very strongly Catholic in her beliefs, Chanson claims that she is against free love, yet he neglects to mention La Daniella, a novel where a man and a woman do live together before marriage and suffer no consequences. He also refuses to discuss the fact that many of the male characters are not "sexually pure" while the females are, which would undermine his theory that Sand believed in pre-marital sexual equality between males and females. See chapter 5.

12. See Larnac (220) for a list of these derogatory publications.

13. This information is found in Larnac.

Chapter 1

I. As stated in the introduction to the 1853 edition of the novel: "je m' étais dit que faire de Manon Lescaut un homme, de Dégrieux une femme, serait une combinaison à tenter, et qui offrirait des situations assez tragiques, le vice étant souvent fort près du crime pour l'homme, et l'enthousiasme voisin du désespoir pour la femme" (i).

2. This novel is one of many for which critics have developed theories concerning Sand's use of doubles in her female characters.
The consensus is that Sand shows both the sensual and spiritual sides of women with her contrasting protagonists. See Sylvie Richards and Marilyn Yalom.

3. Denise Brahimi believes that "en la personne de Lucrezia. . .George Sand dit beaucoup de son idéal féminin . . . c'est une acceptation du monde tel qu'il est" (584).

4. Most critics agree that Sand based Prince Karol on Chopin. Ruth Jordan writes that "artistic Paris immediately identified Lucrezia with George and Chopin with Prince Karol [although] she vehemently denied any similarity" (243).

Chapter 2

1. According to Eve Sourian, Olympe "était venue annoncer l'amour mais avait rencontré la haine et la jalousie; la société n'était pas encore prête à la recevoir" ("Marâtre" 34).

2. Nicole Mozet goes so far as to say that in this novel there is "un désaveu de la différence sexuelle" ("Coquetterie" 194).

3. This portrayal of the cruelties of life for poor woman is similar to Fantine's story in Les Misérables (1862) by Victor Hugo.

Chapter 3

1. For a detailed analysis of the critical reception of Indiana, see Françoise van Rossum-Guyon's article, pp. 19-30.

2. Arlette Béteille believes the revised ending proves that Indiana's revolt against society can work: "la mort, à la fin du roman, aurait été un échec puisqu'elle aurait prouvé l'impossibilité de la révolte et confirmé l'opinion . . . que toute faute mérite son châtiment" (72).

3. Kathryn Crecelius believes that Louise represents the mother figure in an oedipal triangle in this novel and that, because she does not die, Valentine must (90).

4. For a comparative study of Valentine and Tristan et Iseut, see Crecelius, chapter 4.

5. For a comparative study of Valentine and La Princesse de Clèves, see Lucy M. Schwartz' article in The World of George Sand.

6. George Sand wrote to Marie d'Angoult: "je refais Lélia. . . le poison qui m'a rendue malade est maintenant un remède qui me guérit. . . ce livre m'avait précipitée dans le scepticisme; maintenant il m'en retire" (Corr. 3: 474). She is making changes in her characters so that all are "à l'honneur de la morale; non pas de la morale des épiciers, ni de celle de nos salons. . . mais d'une morale que je voudrais faire à la taille des êtres qui vous ressemblent" (Corr. 3: 474).

7. Margaret Waller calls Lélia "decidedly radical" since Sand "undermines mal du siècle gender politics" and her "malaise . . . is largely a symptom of her explicitly feminist discontent" (137).

8. My interpretation of Lélia's feelings on love differs significantly from Eileen Boyd Silvert's, who believes that "much of the text is an exploration by Lélia of her own culpability. When it comes to her inability to love what comes across . . . is her hatred of herself and her feelings of guilt" (52).

9. Several critics have noted that the emphasis on Lélia's sexuality is muted in the second version. According to Osten Sødergard: "Dans la nouvelle version [Sand] a eu soin de retoucher minutieusement tout ce qui apportait un caractère sensuel, particulièrement dans le portrait de Lélia" (30).

10. Isabelle Naginski notes that the new Lélia "revendique un droit encore plus scandaleux [que le droit des femmes au plaisir]: le droit des femmes au dégoût" ("Deux Lélia" 78).

11. In her article, "The use of doubles in Jacques," Janis Glasgow maintains that these two men and two women are "both a male and a female version of herself and her lover [Alfred de Musset]" (46).

12. I do not agree completely with Crecelius when she states that this possible incestuous love between Jacques and Sylvia is "clearly the hidden plot . . . and one that Sand has very poorly executed" (136).

13. Crecelius has done an in-depth comparative study of Jacques and Goethe's Elective Affinities (1810) in Family Romances, chapter 7.

14. Divorce was not legal in France from 1816-1884.

15. Jacques returns in the play Le Diable aux champs (1851).

16. Joseph-Marc Bailbé claims that in this feminist novel, "George Sand a choisi de défendre la femme dans un roman lucide, présentant une révolution au niveau de la sensibilité beaucoup plus qu'une proclamation véhémente . . . elle fait appel à toute la gamme des illusions romanesques pour affirmer les droits de la passion, le devenir de l'homme et de la femme, l'instict du bonheur individuel et collectif" (329-330).

17. I do not agree with Denise Brahimi's simplistic assertion that Geneviève's ignorance of science, her "harmony with the universe" is a feminine trait, and that "ce serait ne pas lire le texte que de ne pas attribuer cette rupture [avec l'univers] à l'intrusion du savoir masculin" (581).

18. Diderot had raised the issue of prejudice against illegitimate children a century earlier in Le Fils naturel. But this issue does not seem to be a concern here.

19. See Marie J. Diamond 's article for a psychoanalytical / biographical study of this novel.

20. In Anne Callahan's anaysis, the problems in the relationship stem from the fact that "the beloved the artist seeks is an elusive chimera; the chimeral combines the self and the other . . . symbolically, Thérèse and Laurent are two sides of the same person" (245-246).

Chapter 4

1. The character of Fiamma is one of several Sandian female protagionists who have been compared to Mme de Staël's Corinne
(1807). See Eve Sourian's aritcle, "L'Influence de Mme de Staël sur les premières oeuvres de George Sand."

2. The use of the masculin noun "air" masculinizes Catherine, both typographically and aurally.

3. As has been noted by many biographical studies, George Sand spent much time with her family and friends writing and producing plays with the marionnettes she and her son Maurice created.

Chapter 5

1. Michele Hecquet calls Quintilla's actions "les formules [qui] cherchent à préserver la liberté féminine . . . à réaliser le désir et à favoriser l'échange entre époux" (99).

2. I do not see Edmée as being a "mère phallique, indéniablement légiférante, . . . autoritaire, froide, cruelle, castatrice" (Bozon-Scalzetti, "Mauprat" 4).

3. Jane Nicholson considers Edmée's actions "a feminine agency" that is part of Sand's "feminist agenda" (27).

4. My interpretation of Consuelo's loss of her singing ability is not as negative as those of several other critics, including David Powell, who believes "the feminist argument of this novel is attenuated, however, by the heroine's enervated position in the epilogue; Consuelo, having lost her voice, now serves merely as the interpreter of Albert's message to mankind" (85). See also Eve Sourian, "Les opinions religieuses de George Sand," and Lucienne Frappier-Mazur, "Desire, Writing and Identity."

5. Brigitte Lane believes that, despite an obvious acceptance of and adherence to society's prescribed gender roles, Fadette's leadership abilities make the novel "question" male/female stereotypes and "reverse" male/female roles" (18).

6. Based on these positive actions by Fadette, my opinion differs from Naomi Schor's concerning Fadette's acceptance of her female role. Schor claims that "the female reader is lulled into forgetting that the wages of genius and wealth are the acceptance of a definition of femininity that essentializes difference and naturalizes social inequity" (142). I believe instead that Sand is showing women how to achieve their goals despite society's restrictions.

7. I do not agree with Tim Wilkerson that Sylvinet is "clearly homosexual" (50). This is one possible interpretation; another is that he is merely an example of how sex and personality traits are not necessarily connected, a theme Sand uses in many of her novels.

8. Sand's example may have helped inspire Victor Hugo in Les Misérables (1862) in the section where Jean Valjean, as factory owner and then as manager also, transforms the quality of life in an entire town.

9. Martine Frier-Wantiez likens Tonine to the female character in Balzac's Le Curé du village (1860): "le changement social reste l'affaire d'une grande dame. L'individu demeure le premier ressort de l'action" (150).

10. Nanon is following the tradition of such George Sand heroines as Consuelo (1842), the princess in Le Secrétaire intime (1833), and the concubine in L'Uscoque (1838) by donning male attire.

11. This notion is similar to the claim espoused by the equity feminists, that women should receive remuneration for housework, and salaries based on the effective worth of each person's contributions. See Hoff Sommers.

12. The amputation here of the upper-class male is similar to the blinding of Rochester in Bronte's Jane Eyre (1847).

13. The Code Napoléon was a severe setback for the rights of women after the French Revolution.

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