Architectural Histories

Cheatle, E. 2024. From Simone de Beauvoir's 'House' to bell hooks' 'Homeplace': *Autofiction* and *Autotheory* in Architectural Writing. *Architectural Histories*, 12(1): pp. 1–25. DOI: https://doi.org/10.16995/ah.11690

From Simone de Beauvoir's 'House' to bell hooks' 'Homeplace': *Autofiction* and *Autotheory* in Architectural Writing

Emma Cheatle, School of Architecture and Landscape, University of Sheffield, UK, e.cheatle@sheffield.ac.uk

From 1936 to 1948 Simone de Beauvoir lived alone in different hotels in Marseille, Rouen and Paris, from where she conceived her fictional and philosophical writing. In 1937, after convalescing in the south of France from a collapsed lung, she took a room in the hotel Mistral in Montparnasse to write the *autofictional* novel *She Came to Stay* (1943). The English writer Jean Rhys also lived an itinerant existence in successive, shabby Parisian hotels. Her novels written between 1928 and 1939 — *Quartet*, *After Leaving Mr Mackenzie and Good Morning Midnight* — are autofictional renditions of the desperate existence of a stateless, impoverished, unmarried woman.

Making close readings of de Beauvoir and Rhys texts, the article theorises that the in-between, material space of the early 20th-century hotel was integral to shaping an alternative domestic life for women which resisted patriarchal imperatives. Whilst promoting feminist *autofiction* as a source of evidence of the material conditions of women's lives, I draw on Audre Lorde (1984) and others to critique the limitations of de Beauvoir and Rhys' renditions with respect to class and race. Analysing the *autotheoretical* approach of bell hooks' 1990 essay 'Homeplace', I suggest that *autotheory* is an alternative mode that can decolonise writing on domesticity and, further, politically extend architectural history writing.

Keywords: hotel; home; domesticity; autofiction; autotheory; feminism; decolonial; race; class; 20th century; spatial/material culture

Introduction

As a young woman in the 1930s, Simone de Beauvoir (1908–1986) pursued an independent and intellectual life by living alone in hotels. Referring to de Beauvoir's new room in the hotel Mistral in Montparnasse, Paris, Jean-Paul Sartre wrote:

> It doesn't look very promising, has a shabby stairway and motheaten halls, but the rooms are large, clean, and much better furnished than those at the Royal Bretagne, with a sofa, rug, bookshelves on the walls … [costing only] 350 francs a month plus service. (de Beauvoir 1992: 131)

It was in this top floor space that de Beauvoir set *She Came to Stay* (1943), the novel drawn from her life in the late 1930s and around which this article pivots. The novel also served as a demonstration of her later *The Ethics of Ambiguity* (1947), an exploration of the ethics of individual freedom, and *The Second Sex* (1949), her critique of the way that marriage subordinates women as the private property of men and domesticity expects them to perform and reproduce the essence of family life as 'the angel of the house'.

In parallel, the English novelist Jean Rhys (1890–1979), though privileged by background, lived an itinerant existence in successive shabby London and Parisian hotels throughout the 1920s and '30s. Her first autobiographical novels *Quartet* (1928), *After Leaving Mr Mackenzie* (1930) and *Good Morning Midnight* (1939) frame the desperate existence of an impoverished, unmarried woman forced to live in hotel spaces: 'It lacked, as it were, solidity; it lacked the necessary background. A bedroom, balcony and *cabinet de toilette* in a cheap Montmartre hotel cannot possibly be called a solid background' (Rhys 2000a: 10).

At first glance Rhys's lifestyle of living independently in a hotel room aligns with de Beauvoir's. Belonging nowhere, her itinerance in de Beauvoir's terms was the ultimate of freedom. Yet Rhys and her characters are stateless and unstable. Uneducated and lost, in their occupation of the hotel they oscillate between depression — waiting passively to become the property of a man, to be loved, found, or given a place in the world — and bursts of activity where they try to find agency, become successful and make enough money to live independently and comfortably.

Rhys and de Beauvoir weave their lived experiences into fiction writing. Their novels are retrospectively considered renditions of the French literary *autofiction*, a hybrid genre which simultaneously combines and blurs the distinctions between the real and the imagined to give identity to complex lived experiences. Autofiction, coined as a term by the French writer Serge Doubrovsky in the 1970s, offers a dual

narrative where the nonfiction of autobiography is indistinguishable from fictional, invented elements (Gibbons 2022: 471). Some writers position autofiction as a method of escaping the misunderstandings and introspection of autobiography yet avoiding the 'fakery' of fiction (Przulj 2022: 273). Rather than a fabulation, autofiction can hence uncover the relevant 'truth' of a lived life, through knowingly unstable attempts to explore and provoke the meaning of difficult personal-political realities associated with trauma, illness, depression, marginalisation or violence. Autofiction is sometimes criticised as narcissistic, but as Isabelle Grell counters, 'The author of autofictions is outside himself. Plunging into his own fade-out, he submits the subject of the writing (the self) to the misunderstanding of the world. He is political and he is "there where life is played out"' (Dix 2018: vii).[1] Autofiction both reveals and gives shape to the discomfort of identity. Tracking prefigurative material onto political trajectories (Traganou 2022: 6), it teeters between the fabricated and factual — fabricating from the factual — and in this lies its potential for understanding an otherwise forgotten personal political.

In *She Came to Stay*, de Beauvoir's carefully described hotel spaces can be read as the spatial/material culture for her philosophical and political stance on freedom for women. She seems to be saying that the material and spatial qualities of the hotel allow an in-between space, iterative for developing a free feminist existence. Rhys also clearly describes hotel spaces and the longing for identity — solidity — that the characters inscribe into them. Although Rhys's work is unframed by clear social intent, her poverty places her close to the presence and identity of working-class women. This raises a particular gap in the writings of de Beauvoir: her novel revolves around the experience of privileged, white, bourgeois women rejecting domesticity and ignores race and class as feminist issues. Her and her characters' personal rejection of social reproduction is enabled by the (invisible) labour of the hotel staff (Bhattacharya 2017: 1–3). As Audre Lorde attests in 'The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House' (1984), racial and class difference should be integral to feminist thought. Lorde quotes de Beauvoir's *Ethics* — 'It is in the knowledge of the genuine conditions of our life that we must draw our strength to live and our reason for acting' (de Beauvoir 2007: 8) — yet in tacit criticism requests that white feminists consider what 'poor women, Black and Third World women, and lesbians' have to say on these 'genuine conditions' (Lorde 2007: 114). The gap that Lorde identifies leads me to rethink de Beauvoir's critique of domesticity and the limits of autofiction. Through the alternative mode of *autotheory*, the explicitly feminist practice of evolving a politicised *theory* from autobiographical writing (Fournier 2021), domesticity and homeliness can actively further and decolonise into a form of authorial criticality (hooks 2014: 45; Douglas 2003: ix).

In these contexts, the aims across this article are fourfold: to show the material space of the hotel as integral to shaping an alternative, cultural and domestic life for early 20th-century women; to outline and promote the autofictional as a source of evidence in reading women's existences; to critique the limitations of these early 20th-century renditions with regard to class and race (Federici 1975; Davis 1981); and to establish an autotheoretical position emergent from the key 1990 essay by bell hooks 'Homeplace (A Site of Resistance)' as a transferrable, resilient, decolonised feminist domestic theory. These aims are organised through an introductory 'Entering', and three parts: the first part understands the hotel as an ambiguous domestic space and gives an unstable autofictional 'portrait' of the hotel bedroom.[2] Here de Beauvoir's descriptions of the hotel Mistral room in *She Came to Stay* are juxtaposed and interwoven with excerpts from Rhys's early novels. This part of the article is accompanied by a series of early 20th-century archival photographs of hotel exteriors and streetscapes in Paris (**Figures 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6** and **7**). While these locate us in the city at the time, scrutiny of their detail (Traganou 2022; Duras 1984) gives little sense of the interiority of the building, leaving us visually dislocated. Instead, the impermanence of the interior is richly captured, I argue, in de Beauvoir's and Rhys's autofictional texts.[3] The second part of the paper, unillustrated, reflects on Lorde's criticism, and positing Rhys as a decolonial writer, questions de Beauvoir's 'house', its blind spots and construction of illusions. Finally, drawing on hooks, I offer the critical practice of autotheory as a political refinement to feminist domesticity and as a decolonised mode of architectural history writing.

Entering

My research understands domestic spaces as relational — inseparable from the social complexities of urbanity and political institutions. The embodiment of domestic life is played out across both interior and exterior spaces, private and public. This material thinking posits the space, its objects and its inhabitants' bodies as intertwined subjects. Rather than prioritising, it creates a complex subjectivity, each subject shaping the other. The inhabitant's daily lives, habits and practices create spatial living conditions. As Sara Ahmed suggests, 'bodies do not dwell in spaces that are exterior [to them] but rather are shaped by their dwellings and take shape by dwelling' (Ahmed 2006: 9). As I have written elsewhere, the room itself acts as a witness to the body, watching, recording and collecting evidence (Cheatle 2017: 133), in turn shaped by sociopolitical values and imaginaries.

The potential of a hotel in contrast to the private house is that as a space of domesticity, it reconfigures private and public relationships. Lying outside typical 20th-century domesticities that entrap a woman in the home, the spaces of the

hotel not only present a fluid setting for telling a story and hence remaking the self as autofiction, they also perfectly embody that potential. Commonly for short stays enacting a temporary reinvention, by staying long term in a hotel de Beauvoir and Rhys lived a form of domesticity composed of repeated daily reinvention. For de Beauvoir this was shaped through the explicit rejection of the bourgeois tenets of property, marriage and housework. Rhys took to hotel living simply from desperation, yet she also saw its potential. The novels describe women's lives as though each day contains the same possibilities for starting again as the previous one, for a better room and hence life (Rhys in *Good Morning Midnight*), and for re-enacting the purity of freedom (de Beauvoir in *She Came to Stay*). Yet the repetition they portray also masks and reveals forms of, first, circularity as they remain stuck in their lives, and, second, exploitation and oppression of others. In de Beauvoir's *She Came to Stay* there are uncomfortable and unresolved class/race relationships embedded in her characters' so-called free existence. She almost completely overlooks the fact that their lives in hotel bedrooms are maintained by working-class women. The concierge and cleaners and maids who 'service' the rooms and the life therein are barely acknowledged. The responsibility of the occupants instead lies only with themselves. Further, de Beauvoir draws attention to and simplifies Black women's bodies as public, exotic or primitive, despite her writing on existential ethics offering a critique of such objectification (de Beauvoir 2007: 98–99).

The 1930s Hotel as Ambiguous Space

The home is recognisably a gendered space, and a central part of the feminist project has been to show how marriage is a domestic double trap for women: first, they belong inside a property, the home; and second, they are considered a man's property, a chattel in that home. De Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* examines the ways in which women were historically constructed as the property of men. As land is privatised first through the spread of agriculture and second through its subsequent ownership by men, women move from being equal partners in tilling, smallholding and crafting objects for domestic living to becoming subjugated in and by the home. She writes, 'Woman was dethroned by the advent of private property, and her lot through the centuries was bound up with private property' (1997: 113); when 'private property appears: master of slaves and of the earth, man becomes the proprietor also of woman. This was "the great historical defeat of the feminine sex"' (1997: 85). With women now chattels, private property also instigated a system of patrimony, with ownership transferred from male to male over time: 'the owner transfers, alienates, his existence into his property; he cares for it more than his very life' (1997: 113). This leads a woman to be 'shut up in her flesh, her home', which Emma Short explains means to be 'bound to the domestic space by a patriarchal society which assumes

the inevitability of her embodiment' (de Beauvoir 1997: 609; Short 2011: 180). *The Second Sex* goes on to overtly reject the construction of marriage, its privatising of women's bodies and the resultant performative gendering of domestic spaces. Long before writing the book, de Beauvoir was personally modelling a resistance to entrapment through the spatial arrangements of her life-long open relationship with Sartre. De Beauvoir firmly asserts female 'freedom', choosing a separate room in the in-between spatiality of a hotel (and often a separate hotel) which allows her to reject the strictures of sexuality and the inevitability and reproductive labour of childbearing and housekeeping.

Born in 1908 into a bourgeois Parisian family, de Beauvoir had a liberal father yet extremely religious mother. The family lost its wealth after the First World War, and in 1919 they moved to a sixth-floor flat (formerly the servants' quarters) with no running water at 71 rue de Rennes. In response to this decreased status, her mother became increasingly moral and conservative, and Simone and her sister led a very confined upbringing — Simone reports that in her teens she knew little of menstruation or sex and gained her information from her cousin Magdeleine (Bair 1990: 74–75). Apart from walking to her convent school, she rarely went out. Her father, with his 'individualism and pagan ethical standards', on the other hand, was both proud and frightened of Simone's intellect and stated that she had 'mind of a man!' (Bair 1990: 60). During Simone's childhood, notions of home were reconfigured by the active roles taken by women in the First World War, and many women began to taste the freedom that work might bring them. After the war a conservative backlash pushed them back into the home (MacMillan 1981). Resisting the conservative imperatives of both her mother and the postwar period, de Beauvoir was determined to become independent. Leaving school in 1925 for the Sorbonne and gaining her degree in 1929, at 21 she was the youngest person to have passed the philosophy *agrégation* in three rather than four years (Bair 1990: 122–23). By 1929 she and Sartre were a couple. Now trained as a teacher but prohibited by her mother from living alone as an unmarried woman, she stayed for a time in her grandmother's apartment in the Avenue Denfert-Rochereau (Bair 1990: 140), lyrically described in *She Came to Stay*: 'It was just like the day when, years ago, she closed the door of her grandmother's house on the softness of the evening and the scents of the wild garden' (1943: 118).

Once established independently as a teacher and with a growing confidence as an intellectual, de Beauvoir was able to use the hotel as an alternative lodging space. Living in seedy, dirty hotels in Marseille and Rouen where her first teaching jobs took her, she eventually arrived back in Paris in 1936, where she took a cheap room in the hotel Royal Bretagne in Rue de la Gaîté until 1937. From here she breakfasted daily in the Dôme cafe before going to teach at Lycée Molière. A year later she was installed on the top

floor of the hotel Mistral on rue Cels, depicted as 'Hôtel Bayard, rue Cels' in *She Came to Stay* (1943: 63). In this hotel interior de Beauvoir spatialises the genuine love triangle between herself (depicted as the character Françoise in the novel), Sartre (Pierre) and Olga Kosakievicz (Xavière), a young woman in whom they were both interested.

In *The Second Sex* de Beauvoir shows how the home is constructed around and constructs womanhood. Once married, a woman's work is purely domestic, and 'with or without the aid of servants, woman makes her home her own, finds social justification, and provides herself with an occupation, and activity, that deals usefully and satisfying with material objects — shining stoves, fresh, clean clothes, bright copper, polished furniture — but provides no escape from immanence and little affirmation of individuality'. Housework is merely 'endless repetition: the clean becomes soiled, the soiled is made clean, over and over, day after day. The housewife wears herself out marking time: she makes nothing, simply perpetuates the present' (1997: 470), arguments of social reproduction taken up by Silvia Federici and others (Federici 1975; 2012). As Iris Marion Young says, for de Beauvoir, 'house and home are deeply ambivalent places' (Young 1997: 134). The only sensible opposition to the material pointlessness of the home and its trappings of domesticity is for a woman to create a life she can control. In *She Came to Stay*, Françoise is at first happy in the anti-bourgeois setting of the hotel — it 'was well heated and well located: Françoise liked its mixed clientèle and ugly-flowered wallpaper' (1943: 91). 'She loved the squamous chrysanthemums on the wallpaper, and the threadbare carpet, and all the confused sounds of life. Her room, her life' (1943: 174–75). Yet by the end of the novel, this spatial life is nearly destroyed by Xavière's presence both in the hotel and in Françoise and Pierre's relationship.

The hotel is a space of oscillation. Between private (home, ownership, property, interiority, repetition) and public (common, cultural, inventive, open), it variously shifts and settles on elements of each to create an almost domesticity. Historically, the hotel was created to provide hospitality for travellers. As Daniel Maudlin writes, in the United Kingdom and North America before the 18th century, this was often an 'inn', a place to stop, sleep and refuel in the countryside whilst travelling between cities or towns. By the 18th century it was 'decorated and furnished in imitation of high-status domestic spaces in order to make the elite [predominantly male] traveller feel, if not at home, then at ease in familiar surroundings' (James 2017: 6). Now associated with the French term *hôtel de ville*, which firmly rooted it in the town, by the 19th century the hotel, though still similar to the country inn, was generally an urban, larger-scaled building (James 2017: 4). This developed a new typology: 'a substantial, fashionable building that spoke of gentility, urbanity and mobility not rusticity, nostalgia and cosiness' (James 2017: 5).

Figure 1: Rue des Anglais [no. 4. Café et boutiques]. Eugene Atget, 1902. Bibliothèques Patrimoniales Paris, https://bibliotheques-specialisees.paris.fr/. Public Domain.

Where the historic hotel is a space of hospitable transience for the traveller or tourist, by the early 20th century a new mode of 'modern hotel' for leisure and long-term stay became popular in European cities. It particularly allowed women to shrug off the constraints of womanhood and the home yet retain a sense of respectability through its almost domesticity. As Rhys writes in *Good Morning, Midnight*, the hotel room exhibited a familiar domestic order: 'There are two beds, a big one for madame and a smaller one on the opposite side for monsieur. The wash-basin is shut off by a curtain.' She continues, noting 'the smell of cheap hotels faint, almost imperceptible'. The location is less appealing: 'The street outside is narrow, cobble-stoned, going sharply uphill and ending in a flight of steps. What they call an impasse' (Rhys 2000c: 9).

Figure 2: Hôtel de France, Grand Bouillon Bizouard. Pâtisserie, boulangerie, Maison Marchal, 31, rue de Buci (6e arr.) Pejoux, editeur 1905–15. Bibliothèques Patrimoniales Paris. Public Domain.

Spatially the modern hotel in Paris follows the expected layout of a vertical terraced house, yet it switches between public, common spaces; semi-private; and completely private spaces. In *She Came to Stay* Françoise describes a front door, off a little street: she loves 'coming down to earth in this little street, in front of her hôtel' (1943: 304). Inside is a hallway and stairs with 'yellow walls' (1943: 304), along which she is taken on a stretcher when she suffers from a collapsed lung: 'Down the stairs, head first, her feet in the air, nothing more than a heavy piece of luggage', 'the proprietress, the hall-porter and his wife … lined up in the hall' (1943: 178; Bair 1990: 203). There is

also a scullery, a kitchen and a breakfast room, and even a ‘little drawing room’ for the proprietress (1943: 90). The bedrooms have a shared bathroom on each floor. Even the most private areas hint at the lives of unknown others: when Françoise is in her room, ‘a door slammed on the landing and someone shuffled across the passage’ (1943: 174).

Figure 3: Buvette au bon vin, Maison Pierre, 57, rue ? Photographer unknown, 1925–30. Bibliothèques Patrimoniales Paris. Public Domain.

Domestic order mimics the structures for the efficient, gendered functioning of the capitalist state, with women as carers and homemakers and men as policymakers and businessmen. Yet unlike the home, the hotel blurs this division through common and impersonal spaces, such as a front desk, a lobby, lifts, and (sometimes) restaurants as extensions of the street and public space. The mimicry of private, homely spaces

is a kind of disguise — the anonymity of the hotel bedroom, and the lack of privacy it affords the inhabitant, undermines any homeliness. The whole space is transient, and although sleep happens inside, most meals are taken outside in cafes. The combination of impersonal spaces with personal bodies in them is unnerving. This recalls Sigmund Freud's definition of the *unheimlich*, or unhomely, as a confusion of boundaries between the (female) body, home and city: walking in an unfamiliar Italian town, he stumbles across 'painted women ... seen at the windows of the small houses, and I hastened to leave' (1990: 359). Returning again and again to the same street and houses, the image of the fleshy bodies of prostitutes merging with their windows becoming uncannily familiar. The hotel's impersonal spatiality suggests a similar strange unhomeliness, of overheard and overseen strangers acting out familiar and unfamiliar relations.

Figure 4: 16, rue de la Pierre Levée (11e arr.). Photographer unknown, 1910. Bibliothèques Patrimoniales Paris. Public Domain.

De Beauvoir describes her hotel bedroom as a space to escape to: ‘all she could do was to return home, go to bed and try to sleep’ (1943: 174). Rhys likewise writes of escape and familiarity, ‘I listen anxiously to this conversation. Suddenly I feel that I must have number 219, with bath — number 219, with rose-coloured curtains, carpet and bath. I shall exist on a different plane at once if I get this room, if only for a couple of nights. It will be an omen. Who says you can’t escape from your fate? I’ll escape from mine, into room number 219. Just try me, just give me a chance’ (Rhys 2000a: 32).

The self here is as unstable as Freud’s. Chandra Talpade Mohanty and Biddy Martin note that the very idea of the home is ‘an illusion of coherence and safety based on the exclusion of specific histories of oppression and resistance, the repression of differences even within oneself’ (Mohanty and Martin 2003: 90). The hotel recreates these very illusions in the squamous wallpaper or room 219 with its rose-coloured curtains.

Figure 5: Maison Puéchal, 55, rue des Acacias, angle avenue Mac-Mahon (17e arr.). Photographer unknown, 1909–1. Bibliothèques Patrimoniales Paris. Public Domain.

The objects and edges of the hotel are both present and obvious, and horribly entangled, as hinted by the wallpaper and the curtains, as well as the image of Françoise, in *She Came to Stay*, when she is being taken through 'the yellow hallway' and downstairs headfirst on a stretcher. The rooms necessarily contain recognisable domestic materials and objects — a bed, table, chair, sofa, wardrobe, basin, wallpaper, carpet — yet these recognisable objects are crammed together and overlapping, to blur boundaries and categories. These blurrings lead to an entanglement of spatial practices, choices, and daily routines.

Figure 6: Café, restaurant. Au Vouvray, 6, rue Mondétour, et 104, rue Rambuteau; Crèmerie. Beurre, oeufs, fromages, Maison Louis Pérou, 8–10, rue Mondétour; Vins, liqueurs hôtel, Maison Boudes, 12, rue Mondétour (1er arr.). Photographer unknown, 1925. Bibliothèques Patrimoniales Paris. Public Domain.

In *She Came to Stay* the characters are frequently asleep all day and awake all night: 'Behind her the un-made bed looked as if it was still warm, and it was obvious that the shutters had not been opened all day' (1943: 274). They make tea and sandwiches in their bedrooms: 'Above the wash-hand stand, the kettle was purring on a spirit stove, and in the half-light Françoise was able to make out two plates of multicoloured sandwiches' (1943: 132); 'there was a gas ring in her room. She set a saucepan full of water on it' (1943: 399). And they wash behind a screen: 'She stepped behind the screen and smeared some orange-scented cream on her face' (1943: 306). They also speak of this public, impersonal building tenderly and intimately, as when Françoise says, '"My nice little hôtel"' (1943: 93).

The blurring of boundaries loosens the constraints of domesticity, yet also leads to darkness, existential chaos, madness even. In *Quartet* Rhys describes Marya noticing that 'the wallpaper was vaguely erotic — huge and fantastically shaped mauve, green and yellow flowers sprawling on a black ground'. When distressed, 'she sighed,

Figure 7: Paris. Angle de la rue des Nonnains-d'Hyères, de Fourcy et Charlemagne. Emmanuel Pottier, 1913. Bibliothèques Patrimoniales Paris. Public Domain.

turned-on the light and lay contemplating the flowers which crawled like spiders on the black walls of her bedroom' (Rhys 2000a: 87; 91). In *She Came to Stay*, when Françoise goes downstairs to check on Xavière, she 'remained on the threshold of the room, inert and appalled … it was the cell of a bedlamite, in which the dank atmosphere adhered to the body' (1943: 274). And at the climax of the book, Françoise actually turns the gas ring on and leaves Xavière to asphyxiate in the room. The autofiction here swerves into fiction — in reality, de Beauvoir did not kill Olga Kosakievicz.[4] Yet the episode serves as evidence and a warning of the dangers of crossing the personal and spatial.

The Blind Spots of de Beauvoir's 'House'

> But never tell the truth about this business of rooms, because it would bust the roof off everything and undermine the whole social system. All rooms have four walls, a door, a window or two, a bed, a chair and perhaps a bidet. A room is a place where you hide from the wolves outside and that's all any room is. (Rhys 2000c: 33)

The hotel setting, its ambiguity, its blurred boundaries, its space of reinvention and creativity, is de Beauvoir's 'house'. Yet de Beauvoir constructs a house of illusions and blind spots in that she overlooks, in Lorde's terms, the 'genuine conditions' of 'others', namely the women and men who are servicing the lives of the hotel occupants (2007: 114). In *The Second Sex* de Beauvoir shows how women have historically been made the 'other', where in *The Ethics of Ambiguity*, a text which explores the contestable nature of existential freedom of the individual, de Beauvoir asserts that the freedom of the other should also be taken care of. As Charlotte Moore explains:

> A summary of her argument might read: Humans are inherently free; to be moral is to will oneself free; but not every human acts morally: so is it not a contradiction to suggest that all humans are free? De Beauvoir resolved this contradiction by drawing a distinction between two kinds of freedom: ontological freedom and moral freedom, such that though we are always ontologically free, we aren't always morally free. It is moral freedom which forms the basis for de Beauvoir's ethics of ambiguity. (Moore 2008: n.p.)

Moral freedom comes with responsibility: 'We can tell, for instance, whether or not we are treating others — whether it be one specific other, or some nebulous, abstract group of others — as an in-itself (an object) or a for-itself (as a subjective conscious being)' (Moore 2008: n.p.). And further: 'if, as [Barbara] Andrews suggests, de Beauvoir's conception of the self is "self as relation", and the ethics of ambiguity are partly based on care, that is, concern for others' freedom, once again this provides objective criteria

for determining whether or not a choice or action is moral' (Moore 2008; Andrews 1998). Despite de Beauvoir suggesting in her novel that the hotel as an alternative, unhomely and thus emancipatory space for women and her concern for relational freedom in *The Ethics of Ambiguity*, her hotel as home actively excludes and belittles the construction of others' identities, particularly those of Black and working-class women (Mohanty and Martin 2003: 90).

One of the ways in which the spaces of the hotel are free of domestic constraints for a bourgeois woman (even a marginalised one such as Jean Rhys), is that there is no imperative for her to maintain her bedroom. Indeed, she can only reinvent herself by disinvesting from the necessity to care for the space.[5] The hotel bedroom is serviced invisibly and seamlessly by others — maids, laundresses, cooks, porters — in acts of extractive reproductive labour.[6] The very essence of these actors' roles in the hotel is to invisibly reproduce the space as a clean slate each day, to create the freedom to which de Beauvoir aspires — to produce spaces without traces. Indeed where such traces exist, they are viewed by de Beauvoir with horror. When Françoise is ill, 'her eyes wander over the room. It smelt like a sick-room. For two days, the housework had not been done, nor had the bed been made; the window had not even been opened' (1943: 174–75). Even worse, the apparent squalor of Xavière's life — '"her room is in such a mess! There are cigarette ends and fruit-pips in every corner, and the bedspread is singed all over"' (1943: 90) — is horrendous specifically because it forces domestic evidence and its necessary labour back into view. As Short writes:

> The tasks of the chambermaids … take place within the more private space of the hotel room when the guests are not there, thus reinforcing the dualisms of public/private, male/female on a smaller scale within the hotel. In this sense, the nature of the relationship between female guest and female hotel staff remains problematic. (2011: 185–86)

And despite de Beauvoir's horror, an occupant can make her room dirty without having to think about what happens next: Françoise opens Xavière's door to find 'her skirt was covered in dust … Three suitcases stood gaping in the middle of the room; the cupboards had disgorged on to the floor piles of crumpled clothing, papers, and toilet articles' (1943: 91). These messes have miraculously disappeared without comment by the next page. The autofictional, in its collusion with class structures, by omission reveals an unpleasant truth.

For de Beauvoir cleaning is the central emblem of domestic entrapment and degradation. The home is constructed around housework with the negativity of dirt

central: 'cleaning is getting rid of dirt, tidying up is eliminating disorder … [yet] the hovel remains a hovel in spite of woman's sweat and tears … Legions of women have only this endless struggle without victory over dirt' (1997: 470). She adds, 'Few tasks are more like the torture of Sisyphus than housework, with its endless repetition: the clean becomes soiled, the soiled is made clean, over and over, day after day … Eating, sleeping, cleaning — the years no longer rise up towards heaven, they lie spread out ahead, grey and identical. The battle against dust and dirt is never won' (1997: 470). In the context of this antipathy, it is unsurprising that the cleaners of the hotel, though fleetingly presented, are neglected by de Beauvoir: their lives revolve around this endless, repetitious 'torture'.

Whilst I cannot be sure of the identities of those who cleaned the hotel, by 1920 domestic labour was 'feminised' and only women performed the roles of *femme de ménage* (daily cleaner) and chambermaid (McBride 1976: 63). Archival scholarship shows they were mostly girls from the French provinces (McMillan 1981:70). Wages were low, yet the alternative for young girls was to settle down to a life of childbearing and drudgery (abortion and contraception were banned in France until 1969; see Cheatle 2017: 33–34). For chambermaids, the hotel was literally their only home. Though barely visualised in de Beauvoir's work, their work of daily stripping of beds and cleaning bidets made them intimate with the bodily functions of and relationships between occupants, witnesses to their secrets and lies. All-seeing yet unseen, they were unable to take part in the freedoms they witnessed. De Beauvoir's freedom, then, whether moral or not, was for herself and her cohort of likeminded writers and artists known unironically as the Family (Bair 1990: 197). In this way, the hotel then is merely an *illusion* of freedom. Reproducing social structures, it simply uses the master's tools to displace domestic labour and emulate the conditions of the bourgeois home.

De Beauvoir's other blind spot is race. Where some, such as Margaret A. Simons, say that 'Beauvoir's understanding of racism is central to her philosophical project in *The Second Sex*' (2002: 271), they also recognise that her attitude to race is simplistic. When de Beauvoir writes, 'Just as in America there is no Negro problem, but rather a white problem; "just as anti-Semitism is not a Jewish problem; it is our problem;" so the woman problem has always been a man's problem' (1997: 159; she quotes Sartre), she analogises racism with sexism. Further, as Marine Rouch and others point out, the use of whiteness, or *blanchité* as it is known in France, is demonstrably problematic. Whiteness as a category continues to reinforce the other as Black, without actually turning to the issue of what it is like to be Black, let alone a Black woman. This becomes obvious through de Beauvoir's frequent drawing of attention to Black women's bodies as exotic, primitive or strange, and as public property for consumption. In *She Came to Stay*, in the clubs Françoise and Xavière frequent, 'these Negroes danced with untrammelled obscenity,

but their movements had such pure rhythm that in its elemental simplicity the rumba kept the sacred character of a primitive rite' (1943: 247). Kathryn Sophia Belle critiques the lack of engagement by white, European existentialists with critical theories of gender and race in Black existential thought, concluding that, 'unfortunately, while Beauvoir and Sartre do recognize problems of white privilege, neither of them explicitly engages black women intellectuals or a black feminist analysis' (Belle 2010: 59). De Beauvoir developed her stance and understanding of racism over time. When travelling frequently to America after the Second World War, she was introduced to a breadth of thinking through Richard Wright and others. Yet, undergoing 'self-transformation' as she 'came to an understanding of her own racial prejudices' (Bernasconi 2019: 151), de Beauvoir's remains a 'colonial gaze' (Belle 2024: 25) which merely iterates diversity — as Sara Ahmed points out, 'institutional whiteness can be reproduced by the logic of diversity' (2012: 44).

In *She Came to Stay*, de Beauvoir's problem with race and class is obvious. Earlier, I purposefully truncated the quote: 'A door slammed on the landing and someone shuffled across the passage'. The full quote is: 'A door slammed on the landing and someone shuffled across the passage; it must be the blonde tart getting up. In the room above, the Negro's gramophone was softly playing' (1943: 174). The same couple appear earlier; Xavière says, '"He's as graceful as a cat, and he looks just as ruthless and treacherous"', and de Beauvoir continues, 'Françoise had never really taken a good look at this Negro; beside Xavière, she felt very barren' (1943: 134). This comes just after Françoise warns Xavière to '"take care that the blonde [his girlfriend] doesn't scratch your eyes out!"' (1943: 134). In these several lines, de Beauvoir exhibits both racism, by typifying the Black man as dangerous, and classism, in labelling his girlfriend a hot-tempered 'tart'.[7]

In contrast, Rhys's identity transected issues of class and race. She was born in the French (then British) colony of Dominica to a Creole mother (whose grandfather was a slave owner) and Welsh father.[8] Although Dominica had a large population of *gens de couleur libres* (free people of colour) with wealth and equality, early 20th-century society remained highly regulated by race/class structures, with many Black people still enslaved (Fick 1990). Within this context, Rhys's upper-class mother, who Jean feared, strangely thought Jean was too pale and 'was fond of remarking that black babies were prettier than white' (Pizzichini 2009: 8). Rhys became a timid child, an outsider with few friends. Terrorised by her nurse, Meta, she 'lived in the kitchen with the servants … one of the few places she felt safe' (Pizzichini 2009: 24; Rhys 2016). When she tried to befriend a girl of mixed race at school, the latter's 'look of hatred was unmistakeable. Jean never tried to be friendly to a black girl again' (Pizzichini 2009: 29). Despite occupying privileged spaces of high society in Dominica, Rhys always felt an outsider. With the family wealth diminishing, she left the island at seventeen

to live variously between London and Paris. Often penniless, and invariably alone, her ambiguous, fraught identity is written into each of her novels (Seymour 2022).

Rhys's writing complicates our understanding of bourgeois female attitudes to race and class. In *Voyage in the Dark* (1934), where the young character is catapulted from Dominica to London, she writes, 'I wanted to be black. I always wanted to be black [...] Being black is warm and gay, being white is cold and sad' (Rhys 2000b: 26; Spyra 2009–2010: 79–92). In *Quartet* she personifies the maid in ways that de Beauvoir fails to, writing, 'Outside in the passage the little *bonne*, Marya's namesake, sang as she mopped the floor. She was sixteen years of age, and pretty with a soft, warm, broad-browed prettiness. She sang, she mopped, she minded the *patronne's* baby' (Rhys 2000a: 122). Rhys's novels from the 1920s and '30s are not explicitly feminist and, like de Beauvoir, her attitudes to race tend to be binary and essentialist, yet her final novel, *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966), reaches a more sympathetic position. A prequel to Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847), Rhys recuperates the Creole character Antoinette Cosway, depicted by Brontë as mad and confined to the attic. In reclaiming and centring Antoinette, exploring her relationship with her Black maid Christophine, and justifying her madness as a defence to being dehumanised (by, for example, being renamed as Bertha as the private property of an abusive husband), Rhys offers not only a feminist but a decolonial revision. Yet as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak implies, and Peter Hulme later develops, in the end this decolonial rereading falls short — Antoinette remains an elite, white imperial woman and a beneficiary of colonisation (Spivak 1985: 270; Hulme 1994: 72).

Homeplace: From Autofiction to Autotheory

In short, while de Beauvoir's and Rhys's autofictions depict an escape from the patriarchal entrapment of the traditional home, we are left with a fraught and contested picture of their new domestic spaces. Even if, as Iris Marion Young suggests, we revisit domesticity through the idea that 'not all homemaking is housework' (Young 2005: 38; Short 2011: 186–187), de Beauvoir particularly offers only a highly individualistic sense of freedom. Can we ever see the home alternatively, as a space of feminist solidarity, collectivity and growth? I attempt to do so in a twofold manner: by extending and challenging autofiction through the method of *autotheory*; and simultaneously recuperating the lived experience and theory of Black women with bell hooks' powerful autotheoretical 1990 essay 'Homeplace (A Site of Resistance)'.

Hooks opens by writing, 'When I was a young girl', using her own experience in an act of autofiction. Recalling her grandmother's house, she extrapolates that 'houses belonged to women, were their special domain, not as property, but as places where all that truly mattered in life took place ... . The folks who made this life possible, who were our primary

guides and teachers, were black women' (2014: 42). Working from the personal to the political, as Joy Ritchie and Kate Ronald say, 'bell hooks combines story with theory, history with contemporary contexts, concrete experience with academic citations' (2001: 382). Hooks, in 'self-consciously articulat[ing] in written discourse the theoretical principles of decolonization' that could only be intuited by her foremothers (2014: 45), moves us from the unhomely autofictional to an excellent demonstration of autotheory as a public challenge to the conditions of white supremacy and a call for resistance and collectivity.

Like autofiction, autotheory writes through the body situated in her personal life experiences, entangling the (re)searching subject and object or field of inquiry, so that one contaminates or emerges from the other. Where the value of autofiction is that memoir writing is blurred to create stories which otherwise cannot be told, autotheory develops an explicitly political, social and resistant stance. An increasingly recognised mode of research, it offers a methodology that allows the author to explicitly draw theory into and from the field of her personal experiences. Autotheory not only states that 'the personal is political' (Man Ling Lee 2007: 163)[9] but asserts the political as an irruption from the personal (Frichot and Cheatle 2023: 863). Furthermore, for me as an architectural writer, the best examples of autotheory are also inherently spatialised and material. In *The Argonauts* (2015), Maggie Nelson enacts an autotheory of queerness. Through the spatial metaphor of the ship *Argo*, continuously rebuilt through the period of the journey from the inside out, she examines her shifting sexual and personal identity. As a lesbian woman, now pregnant and with a partner transitioning (to male), neither Nelson's genre of writing nor her sexuality can remain binary (Nelson 2016). Lauren Fournier, Stacey Young and Paul B. Preciado have written extensively on the value of autotheory in creating space and time for 'intersubjective and reparative relations' (Fournier 2018: 147; Young 1997; Preciado 2013). Through autotheory the body becomes a material site of knowledge that disrupts and subverts mainstream hegemonic theory.

The materially sited body inevitably intersects questions of domesticity. Influential women writers of the 20th century have tacitly examined this intersection. For example, in the 2002 reprint of *Purity and Danger* (first published in 1966), anthropologist Mary Douglas points to her 'homely arguments' (Campkin 2012: 71). *Purity and Danger*, Douglas writes in the preface, was conceived in the 1950s when she was writing her first monograph at home with three children. After a personal bout of measles, she notes, 'the background of daily life in nursery and kitchen may explain why the metaphors [of my work] are homely' (2002: xi). Yet in the original main text, Douglas, a formidable intellect who refuses housework, convolutes the meaning of homely, making 'the homely bizarre and the bizarre homely' (Fardon 1999: xiii). Elsewhere she calls for the space of the home to become an 'embryonic community' for a political 'realization

of ideas' (Douglas 1991: 288; 290). The autotheoretical homely, then, can be spatial/political criticality itself.

Lorde (1984) and Ahmed (2006) are others who use metaphors of home and house, yet it is hooks who overtly extends this embodied spatial/political homely theory. Her work argues that the meaning of 'home' is already fundamentally different for peoples who have been colonised (hooks 2015; Massey 1994: 166–67). In her community, strong, 'black women resisted [the history of enslaved positionality] by making a place where all black people could strive to be subjects, not objects' (hooks 2014: 42). This was an interior space, a shelter, a space for learning respect for the self, for growth and development, and for the realisation of ideas in resistance to 'the culture of white supremacy, on the outside' which, through slavery, had historically placed women as equal workers in the field with men, yet also positioned them as socially reproductive in the home, blurring the public/private binary (2014: 42; 2015: 22–24). Returning us to de Beauvoir's stance on race and class, the women in hooks' life invariably remained domestic workers for white women, 'cleaning their houses, washing their clothes, tending their children' (2014: 42). This, plus other low-valued work, usually of maintenance and care for others and the urban realm, contributes to the fact that 'an effective means of white subjugation of black people globally has been the perpetual construction of economic and social structures that deprive many folks of the means to make homeplace'. These '*processes*' of social reproduction (Bhattacharya 2017: 2–3) 'enable us to understand the political value of black women's resistance in the home' (hooks 2014: 46). Where de Beauvoir solves the problem of her own freedom by ignoring others' freedom, hooks' writing builds a decolonised autotheory of domesticity which centralises, even valorises, collective homemaking and domestic labour as modes of care, resilience and resistance in marginalised communities (Federici 2012: 1, 123). 'Homeplace' destabilises individualistic, colonial freedoms and subjugations of others with a philosophical, political template that makes explicit yet resists inequalities, and instead fosters domesticity and community as spaces of knowledge making and development.

Conclusion

In 1942, in the depth of war, de Beauvoir took a different room in the hotel Mistral, one with a kitchen attached. She began to call herself a *femme de charge* (household manager), 'a term that, conscious of the irony, she preferred to translate as "housewife"' (Bair 1990: 263). Although food was rationed, de Beauvoir, with 'a glimpse of the housewife's joys' (1962: 503), began cooking for Sartre and the Family. By 1948 she had grown tired of hotel living and for the rest of her life rented small flats.

In the 1990s Ann Oakley, discussing different kinds of knowledge production, states that feminism has challenged simplistic, partial models by ‘carrying out a kind of housework of the knowledge-building process’. Further, feminism is ‘scientific’ in that it takes the embodied knowledge of subordinated groups it ‘originates in and tests against a more complete … social experience’ (Oakley 1993: 215). Despite this, even where intersectional feminism has made successful revisions, contemporary western architectural epistemologies continue to perpetuate racialised and gendered blind spots and unequal representations of spatial/material conditions. Reassessment is therefore essential to a decolonised architectural discourse. ‘Homeplace’ is an important demonstration of how autotheory can build an alternative picture. First, as a self-conscious, autobiographical writing it unearths and articulates the material conditions of diversely situated women as they navigate home, domesticity and urban space. Furthermore, by irrupting these personal descriptions with the political and theoretical, autotheory asserts a powerful mode of critically decolonising architectural theory and history writing to revise and repair our understanding of spatial conditions past, present and future.

Notes

[1] Grell's framing through the pronoun 'he' is odd as autofiction is particularly associated with women's writing. The quote is from Georges Bataille, 'L'apprenti sorcier', in *Le collège de sociologie*, edited by Denis Hollier (Paris: Gallimard, 1979), 54.

[2] Sophie Calle, referring to 'The Hotel', a 1981 photographic diary, states that she makes a 'portrait of a room, through its occupants'. See, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 'Sophie Calle›s voyeuristic portraits of hotel rooms': https://youtu.be/V5yLOcp-azI [last accessed 18 October 2024].

[3] All photographs are in the public domain from Bibliothèques Patrimoniales, Paris, https://bibliotheques-specialisees.paris.fr/. I use the photograph as archival evidence, which Traganou and Duras talk about so eloquently in their work. Interior images are harder to find and are more stylised, such as the photographs of Georges Brassaï and André Kertész.

[4] In fact, the book is dedicated to her.

[5] In *The Second Sex*, de Beauvoir does address working women. She describes their historical freedom before the French Revolution through their roles as shop-owners or craftswomen: woman 'shared in production as seamstress, laundress, burnisher, shopkeeper, and so on, she worked either at home or in small places of business' (1997: 140); the middle classes on the other hand: 'economically they led a parasitic existence' (1997: 140–141). See also Maudlin who states that a large number of women kept inns (James 2017: 6).

[6] This is little different, then, than the bourgeois home.

[7] In English a tart is synonymous with a prostitute; in the French original the girl is said to *aguicher*, tease, the Black man.

[8] Creole emerged as a term in the colonised Caribbean territories, and from the 1790s denoted a person of mixed French colonial, African and Indian ethnicity (Stewart 2016: 1–25). In this case Creole merely indicated that Rhys' mother was white yet born on the Island. The term, though, still held pejorative associations (Seymour 2022: 64).

[9] The slogan was coined in 1970 by the editors Shulie Firestone and Anne Koedt of a published paper by feminist activist Carol Hainsch, 'The Personal is Political', in *Notes from the Second Year: Women's Liberation*.

Competing Interests

The author has no competing interests to declare.

References

Ahmed, S. 2006. *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others*. Durham: Duke University.

Ahmed, S. 2012. *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*. Durham: Duke University.

Bair, D. 1990. *Simone de Beauvoir: A Biography*. New York: Summit Books.

Belle, KS. 2024. *Beauvoir and Belle: A Black Feminist Critique of The Second Sex*. Oxford University Press.

Belle, KS [formerly Gines, KT]. 2010. Sartre, Beauvoir and the Race/Gender Analogy. In: Maria Del Guadalupe Davidson, MdG, Gines and Marcano, D-DL (eds.), *Convergences: Black Feminism and Continental Philosophy*. NY: SUNY Press.

Bhattacharya, T (ed.). 2017. *Social Reproduction Theory: Remapping Class, Recentering Oppression*. London: Pluto Press.

Campkin, B. 2012. Degradation and Regeneration: Theories of Dirt and the Contemporary City. In: Campkin, B, and Cox, R (eds.), *Dirt: New Geographies of Cleanliness and Contamination*, 68–79. London: IB Tauris.

Cheatle, E. 2017. *Part-Architecture: The Maison de Verre, Duchamp, Domesticity and Desire in 1930s Paris*. London: Routledge.

Davis, AY. 1981. *Women, Race, Class*. New York: Random House.

de Beauvoir, S. 1962. *Prime of Life*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

de Beauvoir, S (ed.). 1992. *Witness to My Life: The Letters of Jean-Paul Sartre to Simone de Beauvoir 1926–1939*. Trans. Lee Fahnestock and Norman MacAfee. New York: Scribner.

de Beauvoir, S. 1997. *The Second Sex* [1949]. Trans. HM Parshley. London: Vintage.

de Beauvoir, S. 2006. *She Came to Stay* [1943]. London: Harper Perennial.

de Beauvoir, S. 2007. *The Ethics of Ambiguity* [1947]. New York: Citadel.

Douglas, M. 1991. The Idea of a Home: A Kind of Space. *Social Research*, 58(1) (Spring): 287–307.

Douglas, M. 2002. *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. London, Routledge.

Duras, M. 1984. *L'Amant (The Lover)*. Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit.

Fardon, R. 1999. *Mary Douglas: An Intellectual Biography*. London: Routledge.

Federici, S. 1975. *Wages Against Housework*. Bristol: Falling Wall Press.

Federici, S. 2012. *Revolution at Point Zero: Housework, Reproduction, and Feminist Struggle*. Oakland, CA: PM Press.

Fick, CE. 1990. *The Making of Haiti, The Saint Domingue Revolution from Below*. Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press.

Fournier, L. 2018. Sick Women, Sad Girls, and Selfie Theory: Autotheory as Contemporary Feminist Practice. *a/b: Auto/Biography Studies*, 33(3). DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/08989575.2018.1499495

Fournier, L. 2021. *Autotheory as Feminist Practice in Art, Writing, and Criticism*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Freud, S. 1990. The Uncanny [1919]. In: Freud, S, *Writings on Art and Literature: Jensen's Gradiva, Leonardo Da Vinci and Other Works*, 335–376. Trans. James Strachey. Harmondsworth, Penguin.

Frichot, H, and **Cheatle, E.** 2023. Introduction: Jennifer Bloomer, A Revisitation. *The Journal of Architecture*, 28(6): 851–870. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/13602365.2023.2285127

Gibbons, A. 2022. A Cognitive Model of Reading Autofiction. *English Studies*, 103(3): 471–493. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/0013838X.2022.2050611

Grell, I. 2018. Foreword. In: Dix, H (ed.), *Autofiction in English*. London: Palgrave.

hooks, b. 2014. Homeplace (A Site of Resistance) [1990]. In: hooks, b, *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics*, 41–49. London: Routledge.

hooks, b. 2015. *Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism* [1981]. London: Routledge.

Hulme, P. 1994. The Locked Heart: The Creole Family Romance in Wide Sargasso Sea. In: Barker, F, Hulme, P, and Iverson, M (eds.), *Colonial Discourse/Postcolonial Theory*, 72–88. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Lorde, A. 2007. The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House [1984]. In: Lorde, A, Sister *Outsider: Essays and Speeches*, 110–114. Berkeley, CA: Crossing Press.

Man Ling Lee, T. 2007. Rethinking the Personal and the Political: Feminist Activism and Civic Engagement. *Hypatia*, 22(4): 163–79.

McBride, TM. 1976. *The Domestic Revolution: The Modernisation of Household Service in England and France 1820–1920*. London: Croom Helm.

Massey, DB. 1994. *Space, Place, and Gender*. Minnesota University Press.

McMillan, JE. 1981. *Housewife or Harlot: The Place of Women in French Society, 1870–1940*. London: Macmillan Palgrave.

Mohanty, CT, and **Biddy Martin, B.** 2003. What's Home Got To Do With It? In: Mohanty, CT, *Feminism Without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practising Solidarity*, 85–105. Durham: Duke University Press.

Nelson, M. 2016. *The Argonauts*. London: Melville House.

Oakley, A. 1993. *Essays on Women, Medicine and Health*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Pizzichini, L. 2009. *The Blue Hour: A Portrait of Jean Rhys*. London: Bloomsbury.

Preciado, PB. 2013. *Testo Junkie: Sex, Drugs, and Biopolitics in the Pharmacopornographic Era*. New York: The Feminist Press at CUNY.

Przulj, T. 2022. Dialogic Reading Spaces in Autofiction: Rachel Cusk's *Kudos*. *Life Writing*, 20(2): 273–285. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/14484528.2022.2082264

Rhys, J. 2000a. *Quartet* [1928]. London: Penguin.

Rhys, J. 2000b. *Voyage in the Dark* [1934]. London: Penguin.

Rhys, J. 2000c. *Good Morning Midnight* [1939]. London: Penguin.

Rhys, J. 2016. *Smile Please: An Unfinished Autobiography*. London: Penguin.

Ritchie J, and **Ronald, K.** 2001. *Available Means: An Anthology Of Women's Rhetoric(s)*. University of Pittsburgh Press.

Seymour, M. 2022. *I Used to Live Here Once: The Haunted Life of Jean Rhys*. New York: W.W. Norton.

Short, E. 2011. *No Place Like Home: The Hotel in Modernist Women's Writing*. Unpublished diss. (PhD), Newcastle University. https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/40007779.pdf [last accessed 10 October 2023].

Simons, MA. 2002. *Beauvoir and The Second Sex: Feminism, Race, and the Origins of Existentialism*. Washington, DC: Rowman and Littlefield.

Spivak, GC. 1985. Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism. *Critical Inquiry*, 12(1), *'Race,' Writing, and Difference* (Autumn): 243–61.

Spyra, A. 2009–2010. Jean Rhys's Voyage in the Dark as a Trans-Atlantic Tragic Mulatta Narrative. *Sargasso: Journal of Caribbean Literature, Language, and Culture*, 1: 79–92. http://dloc.com/UF00096005/00032 [last accessed 22 November 2022].

Stewart, C (ed.). 2016. *Creolization History, Ethnography, Theory*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.

Traganou, J. 2022. Girl with Maquette: A Memoir of Prefigurative Imaginaries. *ARENA Journal of Architectural Research*, 7(1): 1–18. DOI: https://doi.org/10.55588/ajar.332

Young, IM. 1997. *Intersecting Voices: Dilemmas of Gender, Political Philosophy, and Policy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press

Young, IM. 2005. House and Home: Feminist Variations on a Theme. In: Hardy, S, and Wiedmer, C (eds.), *Motherhood and Space: Configurations of the Maternal through Politics, Home, and the Body*, 115–147. London: Palgrave.