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A RE-EVALUATION OF JOYCE GRENFELL AS SOCIO-POLITICAL COMMENTATOR

by

Jane Emma CoomberSewell

Canterbury Christ Church University

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Abstract

The objective of this thesis is to re-evaluate Joyce Grenfell and her monologues as socio-political commentary set within what the Wave Model of Feminism considers a dormant period. The challenges of the Wave Model are addressed, encompassing other models such as the Kaleidoscope model, in an attempt to reconcile the issues of the Wave Model with the realities of a splintered but active set of feminisms throughout Wartime and Reconstruction Britain.

This proposition is underpinned by a literature review covering feminism from the 1920s to the 1970s. This reveals a faulty acceptance in the record that feminism was dormant from the achievement of women's suffrage in the UK and America until the mid-1960s. While I acknowledge that theory-based feminist writing from an Anglo-American perspective was lacking during this time, the record of women working in new fields, challenging the marriage bar and taking other activist steps suggests that this period is a time of activity that is currently overlooked; women doing feminism by acting upon and widening the opportunities available.

The theoretical framework and methodology have been refined throughout the analytical process. Using the 1953 translation of De Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* as a primary feminist resource, and coming from an interpretivist standpoint, the research is framed by Foucauldian interpretations of power/knowledge and discourse analysis. An in-depth analysis of Grenfell's creations concludes that her work is a socio-political commentary of great value to feminists and historians of feminism. It concludes that Grenfell was an astute observer, thinker and commentator with an awareness of women's issues, who can be framed within a broad and strong feminist reading.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The objective of this introduction is to outline the aims and background to this thesis and to provide biographical information on the primary subject of this study, Joyce Grenfell, OBE (1910-1979). There will then follow a literature review in two sections, the first (Chapter 2) outlining the literature and processes, leading to the theoretical framework and analytical approaches used throughout. The second part (Chapter 3) concentrates on the literature providing a historical viewpoint on late 1920s to 1970s feminism, contextualising it against Grenfell's life, experience and performances. In subsequent chapters, I shall use the work of Simone De Beauvoir and Michel Foucault to examine Grenfell's sketches by concentrating first on those where all the women are in paid work of some form (Chapter 4), and then those where they are in unpaid work roles, caring for family, friends, or being the power behind the throne of important leaders (Chapter 5). After discussing some pieces addressing socio-political issues of class and belonging (Chapter 6), I shall then examine these elements of Grenfell's work which directly relate to the Second World War, set against her relationship with her soldier fans, their families, and the impact her war work had on her outlook long term (Chapter 7). Her roles on the Pilkington Committee (1960-62) and in the *Bow Dialogues* between 1968 and 1977 are then examined (Chapter 8). I shall consider whether there are any clear definitions or differentiations to be made between her socio-political stances as a performer and her other work as herself.

Grenfell was an entertainer whose career began in Revue in 1938 and encompassed radio and film work as a comedian and actor, and television and radio work as herself. She is

perhaps best remembered for her monologues, and it is these that are the focus of the discursive field throughout this thesis.

There is a school of thought in academia that Feminism was dead, or at least in hibernation between the later 1920s and the early 1960s. In her article, ‘The Women’s Movement Took the Wrong Turning’, Julie Gottlieb (2014) posits that women who had been active in feminism in the 1920s and who would have been the next generation of feminists in the 1930s and 40s were diverted either into pacifism or the war effort through that period. As the likelihood of war increased, Gottlieb poses the question, ‘Where did individual women, and particularly those who had spent the two preceding decades in the forefront of the feminist pacifist movement, position themselves during the Munich Crisis [1938], and how did they “arm” themselves for a war against Nazi Germany?’ (Gottlieb, 2014, p. 442). She argues that historians of diplomacy have ‘yet to rise to the challenge of gendering their topics’ (Gottlieb, 2014, p. 442). Gottlieb discusses the role of the feminist movement and notes that as the spectre of war grew, many, such as Maude Royden, who had previously been actively pacifist saw, in the rise of Hitler, something that even the passive resistance techniques seen as so effective at the time could not overcome. Thus, many who had been pacifist feminists took on the mantel of patriotic feminism. Finally Gottlieb argues that in the concentration on war, young women missed the opportunities to promote the feminist cause while also supporting the war effort.

However, one only has to look at recent well researched historical dramas such as *Home Front*, which ran on BBC Radio 4 from 2014 until 2018 and *Land Girls*, another BBC production running 2009 to 2011, to see that during both World Wars, in Britain and beyond, thousands of women did not have time to be feminists because they were too

busy doing feminism. Therefore, it is the intention of this study to address alternative models and visualisations of feminism to highlight some of the feminist activity under way during this period. A very well-known public figure throughout this period, Grenfell worked, spoke and lived in ways previously earmarked for men; the public stage, political service in her roles on the Pilkington Committee, her input into public religious debate as part of a male majority roster in the *Bow Dialogues* among other appearances. However, she was in many respects an ordinary working woman who, like hundreds of other women from all classes, found her life significantly altered by the impact of the Second World War. As such, two research questions are addressed:

1. Can Joyce Grenfell's published works be considered a useful resource in a contextual approach to feminist history of the time and as socio-political commentary?

2. Can Joyce Grenfell be seen as having lived a feminist life, within a period hitherto considered dormant?

The methodology for this study will utilise a variety of analyses of Grenfell's published work, with support from her private correspondence to cement her position as an exemplar, having formed a base definition of feminism in Chapter 2. This definition acknowledges the Wave model, but also takes into consideration Linda Nicholson's (2010) kaleidoscope imagery, and explores feminism as Grenfell and her colleagues experienced it, using a wide-ranging literature review of existing academic work on feminist history 1928-1973. Additionally, in Chapter 2, I will introduce an alternative image, that of a hand spun skein of wool, as I have found holding this image useful in the explorations made throughout this thesis.

The parameters for the historical and contextual literature review (Chapter 3) stretch between and slightly beyond two milestones in feminist history: the attainment of the franchise for women in the UK at one end of the period, and the impact of Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* in 1963. This period also marks the beginnings of Grenfell's awakenings as a socio-political commentator and her growth into a purveyor of socio-political comment, to her official retirement in 1973. These analyses will be set against a co-textual background of contemporary news articles, historical documents and private letters that inform and illuminate Grenfell's published work and her own stance. These papers demand a different type of analysis as they are often informal in style, are fragmentary and require a certain amount of inference and joining of the dots that is not required in the feminist writings Grenfell and her colleagues would have encountered. Although it is difficult to say exactly which feminist thinkers Grenfell had direct contact with, Simone De Beauvoir has been selected as a touchstone, while from the realms of socio-political philosophy, Michel Foucault's power/knowledge concept has been utilised.

The larger aim of this thesis, however, is to achieve recognition of Grenfell's role as a socio-political commentator, and of her work as useful material to feminists and feminist historians. In order to achieve this, we need to understand the biographical context of the socio-economic background and the range of Grenfell's work and interests. Like all of us, Grenfell was not entirely consistent in her views, either at any one time or throughout her life. While in some of her views she was ahead of her peers, in others she was somewhat reactionary and introspective; indeed, in the latter part of her life, she began to appear cautious and conservative.

My exploration of lived experiences is formed by an interest in feminism with a small ‘f’ – the action of feminism in the lives of ordinary women, in the way their lives changed and the impact that had on those around them in the middle of the twentieth century. In a private communication, Janie Hampton, Grenfell’s biographer, and to an extent, benefactee, argues that ‘she would never have called herself a feminist — because it meant something different then. But she believed in gender equality. (I don't think she'd have used the word 'gender' either!)’ (Hampton, 2016).

It is worth noting at this point that the view the general public have of Grenfell is already a largely curated or managed one. Grenfell herself ensured that the majority of her most private letters, those between herself and her husband, were destroyed upon her death, thus asserting a level of control over her persona. Further, there are three people largely responsible for the image currently held. Jane Hampton has already been mentioned. As well as being Grenfell’s biographer, Hampton edited *Joyce & Ginnie* (1998), the collection of letters which led me to the Lucy Cavendish Archives, in which Hampton’s editorial notes can be plainly seen in pencil in the transcribed pages. Another editor, James Roose-Evans is highly influential in the curatorship of Grenfell’s legacy; not only did he edit *Darling Ma* (1988) and *The Time of My Life* (1989), he worked with Maureen Lipman to create the tribute show *Re:Joyce* which ran primarily from 1988 to 1993, with other performances in 1994, 1995 and 1998 (University of Sheffield, 2017). Lipman went on to lead the *Choice Grenfell* recording project and to discuss her relationship with Grenfell and her work for some years. While all these publications acknowledge Grenfell’s radio, film and other acting roles, they concentrate on Grenfell the monologist. Therefore, this study is entered into in the acknowledgement that my early knowledge of Grenfell has been curated for

me, along with thousands of other people who believe they 'know' Grenfell, by these three editorial influences.

Joyce Grenfell (née Phipps) was born in 1910, to Paul and Nora Phipps, with a well-off, politically astute extended family; her aunt was Viscountess Nancy Astor, the first female British MP to take her seat, elected to Parliament when Grenfell was nine years old (Parliamentary Archives, ND). Nancy Astor and Nora Phipps were two of five daughters of the Langhorne family; the girls were a phenomenon of the American South in their own right, the second eldest being Irene, who married Dana Gibson and became the original Gibson Girl. Dana Gibson's pen and ink drawings of Irene and other young women came to exemplify the fashionable look of the late 19th and early 20th Century.

Nancy, Grenfell's aunt, was the middle daughter who, on marrying Waldorf Astor, became a member of one of the wealthiest and most powerful families in the world at that time. The fourth sister, Phyllis, married early, then divorced and later married Oxford scholar Bob Brand, known as 'The Wisest Man in the Empire' (Fox, 2000). Nora, Grenfell's mother, was the acknowledged baby of the family and had to be virtually forced from the family home, Mirador, out into the world. Grenfell's letters, edited and published as *Darling Ma* (1988) show a long running argument with her mother about paying for goods purchased, and Grenfell claimed in her memoirs that her mother never took a bus or walked if a taxi was available (Grenfell, 1976) Only Lizzie, the eldest, remained in Virginia; all the other girls made their way to the UK (Fox, 2000), although Nora returned to America after her marriage to Grenfell's father, Paul Phipps, ended in divorce. Katchmer claimed that their marriage was broken up by Nora's second husband Maurice Bennett 'Lefty' Flynn (2002), and although Hampton's biography of Grenfell (2002) confirms this, Grenfell rarely spoke

of her parents' divorce until the publication of her first volume of memoirs, *Joyce Grenfell Requests the Pleasure* in 1976, and never publicly acknowledged the causes of it.

Grenfell's architect father, Paul Phipps, was a specialist in country house design (Rostron and Edwards, 2017) and while Grenfell and her brother, Tommy, were certainly not poor by any reading of the word, hers was probably the least well off branch of the family. Phipps trained under Lutyens, ran a successful practice with Oswald Partridge Milne (Country House Reader, 2011), and appears to have been influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement. Grenfell recounts their Sunday afternoon excursions with her father, normally by bus, when he would take her to the deserted financial areas of London and teach her how to really look; to appreciate, for example, the different tones in a red brick wall, or the inherent beauty of an object that does perfectly the task for which it was designed, such as a spoon (Grenfell, 1976). These different priorities led to friction between her upper-middle-class father and her socialite, frivolous upper-class mother, so that Nora was easily enticed away from Paul when Grenfell was 19 years old (Grenfell, 1976). Grenfell obviously loved both her parents deeply, and respected her father's values. It is her mother, however, to whom she appeared closest, keeping up a frequent correspondence with her mother until Nora's death in 1955.

Grenfell spent much of her childhood free time at Nancy Astor's house, Cliveden, where conversation was lively and free flowing and dinner guests would include members of the aristocracy, 'MPs of all parties, an international banker, a Christian Science lecturer, all mixed up with friends[…]' (Grenfell, 1976, p. 102). During this period Grenfell formed her views and ethics in life, which, though open to adaptation and change, remained largely set. Astor's influence continued throughout Grenfell's life, as she lent Grenfell and her

husband, Reggie, their first settled home, Parr's, a cottage on the Cliveden estate, and made clear to Joyce her expectations in return for that loan, including her work on the wards when Cliveden became a Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD) hospital during the Second World War. Astor was at first concerned when Grenfell began her later work for ENSA, the Entertainments National Services Association (Roose Evans, 1989, in Grenfell, 1989), but relented and allowed the Grenfells to keep the cottage until 1942, when Grenfell moved to London as 'stricter petrol rationing was making commuting impossible' (Hampton, 2002, p. 122) although this was also loosely contemporaneous with the Astors' gifting of the estate to the National Trust.

On her father's side of the family, Grenfell's formative political influences included her paternal aunt, Margaret Phipps, the first female mayor of Chelsea (Grenfell, 1976), while both her grandmother, Jessie Phipps, and her uncle, Edmund Phipps, had been involved in local boards of Education (Hampton, 2002). In 1962, Grenfell claimed that she was a rebel, but not political, without party allegiances, 'I've voted all three in my time,' she wrote to her penfriend Katherine Moore (Grenfell and Moore, 1981, p. 25). Rather she concentrated on people; 'But, oh, dear, there's not much to choose between any of them *politically* – all are out for themselves and *against* someone else. Roll on the day when we all really care for each other! For *everyone'* (Grenfell and Moore, 1981, p. 26, italics Grenfell's) On occasion this suspicion of all politicians brought her into conflict with her actively Conservative Aunt Nancy, but vast chunks of Grenfell's memoirs are devoted to tales of her formidable aunt's activities, and her description of their relationship suggests that they reached an affectionate understanding of each other as they both matured.

Grenfell’s education reflected her upper-middle- to upper-class upbringing. She attended a variety of small private schools, normally Christian Science faith schools, before a finishing school in Switzerland. It was at one of these small private schools in the suburbs that she first met Virginia Graham, who Grenfell referred to as ‘Ginny’ and remained her best friend for the rest of her life. It is to their friendship that much is owed in this research, as Grenfell and Graham were prolific correspondents, often writing daily, even if they were going to see each other at some point during that day. Grenfell was presented at Court, or ‘debuted’ in 1928, when ‘coming out’ referred to being presented to the monarch and taking on the role of debutante, with an attendant round of balls and parties, intended to introduce possible suitors to each other, but also to formalise certain types of socio-economic networking in order to set the young people up for life. However, neither Grenfell not Graham met their husbands this way.

Graham came from a similar economic background to Grenfell, her father Harry Graham being a reasonably successful author, perhaps best known for his *Ruthless Rhymes for Heartless Homes* published under the pseudonym Col. D. Streamer in 1901. Graham collaborated on many of Grenfell’s songs (Persephone Books, 2017) as well as supporting Grenfell in her work in other ways, such as attending dress rehearsals and giving feedback. They rang each other at 8.20 every morning when Grenfell was home, and Graham had a successful career as a humour columnist for *Punch* and as film critic for *The Evening Standard* in 1952, and *The Spectator* from 1946 to 1956, of which Grenfell was as proud as of her own career (Lipman, 1997). Her regular journalistic career ended with a long stint as a columnist for *Homes and Garden* from 1953 until 1982 (Archives Hub, 2020). Graham married Tony Thesiger, a tea plantation manager, but worked under her maiden name

throughout, so the choice has been made to refer to her thus, for ease of referencing as much as respect for that choice.

Faith was also an important part of Grenfell's early life; while her father and mother appeared to hold no set religious view initially, her Aunt Nancy was a staunch Christian Scientist (Hampton, 2002; Gartrell-Mills, 1992), and converted Paul Phipps and a 13-year-old Joyce to the faith. Throughout her diaries and letters, reference can be found to Christian Science Churches Grenfell visited and worshipped at all over the world, although if she could not find a Christian Science Church, she was content to worship at the nearest Anglican one. Grenfell's best friend Virginia Graham was also a Christian Scientist. Grenfell was quite interested in other people's faith paths, and in all her travels and writings the only religion to incur her disrespect was Hinduism. This may have been influenced by her reading of Beverley Nichols' work *The Verdict on India* (1944) and the religio-political situation in India when she toured there in 1944 and 1945.

Grenfell met her husband, Reggie, in April 1927, prior to her debut, when a house party was cancelled at Ford, the home of her Aunt Pauline Spender Clay. The house party at Ford was cancelled due to ill health but 'no one remembered to tell Reggie' (Grenfell, 1976, p. 87). The pair married on a cold 12th December 1929, and they appear to have been in a largely mutually supportive relationship until Grenfell's death in 1979. Evidence as to how they viewed each other is elusive, however, as the vast majority of Grenfell's letters to Reggie were destroyed after her death, upon her instruction. Her autobiography portrays Reggie as affable and indefatigably supportive, and this is largely upheld by Reggie's obituary, where it was reported that he could 'bark like a kindly sergeant major' to express his opinion of the draft of a sketch (Hoare, 1993). Reggie did not follow a formal faith, as

Grenfell did, but naturally exuded 'goodness' (Grenfell, 1976, p. 90). Information about Reggie prior to meeting Joyce is sparse, but Hampton portrays a privileged background, as Reggie was educated at Eton and Oxford, the son of a financier with an impressive war career.

Reggie's family were referred to as the 'banking Grenfells' (Dietrich, 2015). Hampton recounts that Reggie had lost his job in the City in the depression shortly prior to the wedding (Hampton, 2002). Reggie later passed his accountancy exams, which led to a career in his father's mining interests in Europe and Africa. This experience was harnessed by the War Office in the lead up to the Second World War, and proved its worth when Reggie noticed that the Germans were buying abnormal amounts of copper in 1938, a clear indication that they were stockpiling for shell casings. Reggie was so determined to see uniformed service in the War that he underwent treatment for varicose veins and joined his father's regiment as a Second Lieutenant in June 1940 (Hampton, 2002). He was promoted to Captain in January 1941 (Hampton, 2002) and finished his military career as a Lieutenant-Colonel (geni.com, 2020). After the Second World War, it became clear that Grenfell's career was going to take off, and Reggie settled into a new role as her financial manager, while also maintaining some mining interests. He was clearly successful in this new role; in Grenfell's later letters to Graham she expresses surprise at the amount she earns, as she trusted Reggie entirely with this side of the business, 'it isn't done to tell figures, but R. [Reggie] tells me I have *averaged* just under £1,000 a performance in Melbourne and am up 5,000 on all previous records!' (Grenfell, 1969)

The Grenfells were childless, as were the Thesigers, although they had many nieces and nephews, godchildren and other children in whom Joyce took a special interest, including

the Anderson family, of whom Grenfell's biographer, Janie Hampton, was one. Grenfell acknowledged that, initially, the impossibility of having children had made her sad, but in retrospect, she felt she would have made 'a bossy nagger of a mother' (Grenfell, 1976, p. 119). Grenfell gives no details for the medical reasons why they could not have children, only that it was established that there was no possibility. The Grenfells hosted evacuees at Parr's during the Second World War; the evacuation officer arrived with a 12-year-old girl just as Grenfell was about to catch the train to London to appear in *The Little Revue.* Grenfell reports that she 'had intelligence enough to say I had room for two children' (Grenfell, 1976, p. 141) but then, after failing to find childcare for them, was forced to leave the girls to their own devices until Astor's chauffeur's wife could return from her own family duties later in the evening. Luckily, on the way to the station, Grenfell ran into her housekeeper, Rene, who went to the house straight away. While Grenfell appears to have been concerned about the arrangement, she makes clear that if she had not found Rene, she would have been quite prepared for the children to 'settle themselves in' a while longer (Grenfell, 1976, p. 142).

Grenfell also took care of her eldest nephew, Wilton, for a time in 1940, but her sister-in-law provided a nanny as Wilton's primary carer (Hampton, 2002, p. 70). Wilton was killed in a boating accident at the age of 20 in 1959, but Grenfell maintained as close a relationship with her niece and younger nephew as she could, considering they grew up in America. Her brother Tommy's first marriage to Betty broke down long before Wilton's death and he remarried in 1949, having two children, Sally and Langhorne (Lang), with his new wife, Mary. Tommy had taken American citizenship, worked as a screen writer in America, and had fought for the American Army during the war, and, it is implied by *The Independent,* Grenfell dealt with concern about the children's English heritage by hiring 'an

English nanny called Constance Hardy. She stayed for seven years and instilled in them the "English nanny discipline" that Grenfell so approved of' (Hampton, 2003). When her niece, Sally, moved back to the UK, Grenfell spent time with her discussing Sally's work for a domestic violence centre in Chiswick (Moore and Grenfell, 1981). Grenfell was mystified as to what Sally thought could be achieved by working with the male offspring of domestic abuse situations, but was appreciative of Sally's awareness that if she only persuaded one of them not to follow in their father's violent footsteps, she would have made a difference. Grenfell openly admitted that while she was glad such places and ideas existed, she could not do such work, which she described as 'alarming, and indeed sordid' (Moore and Grenfell, 1981, p. 223).

Throughout her adult life, Grenfell became an acute observer of children as well as adults and while in Australia she was the subject of adoration by the four-year-old son of the Grenfell's hosts, Geoffrey and Kay Ritchie. The boy, Simon, was convinced that Grenfell was Reggie's mother, rather than his wife, which Grenfell decided was a compliment, as 'at that age, one's mother is the ideal…' (Grenfell, 1980, p. 83). Grenfell remembered how, for her approval, Simon would demonstrate hopping, which he had just mastered, for incredibly long periods of time, until she could find a way to distract him. This fascination with people, old and young, it could be argued was both the impetus for, and source of Grenfell's career.

As a young wife in the late 1920s Grenfell felt pressure to find some form of occupation that was more rewarding, both financially and in terms of satisfaction, than her mother's role as a genteel housewife. Reggie's work for his father's gold and mineral interests proved lucrative later in life, but in the late 20s and early 30s was relatively unstable. Having flirted with art and with acting (she lasted two terms at RADA), Grenfell finally became the first

radio critic for *The Observer*. She did not apply, but impressed J.L. Garvin with her enthusiasm for the medium over a luncheon at Cliveden one day in 1936 and, when the paper introduced the post of radio critic some months later, she was Garvin's first choice. She was trained on the job, and Garvin's advice is relevant to journalists and academics to this day:

> Avoid 'which' and 'and'. Stop and start again.
>
> Facts first – feelings later
>
> Indicate, don't elaborate.
>
> Short sentences are more telling.
>
> (Grenfell, 1976, p. 121).

Garvin had already been editing *The Observer* for twenty-nine years by the time he appointed Grenfell. As *The Observer* was then owned by Lord Astor, Garvin was another family friend, at least until a disagreement led to Garvin's resignation in 1942. Garvin took the view that the paper should continue to support Churchill despite what Astor saw as political missteps by the Prime Minister (Ayerst, 2015). While there is no doubt that the family links led to their meeting, there is no evidence that anything other than Grenfell's enthusiasm for radio secured the job for her. Garvin had also edited the 1929 edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Spartacus Educational, 2016), meaning he was a respected man, with contacts that were potentially useful to Grenfell.

It is noteworthy that no record can be found of Grenfell ever having the need to formally apply for a job; it was just as she was getting restless in her role at *The Observer* that she

met Stephen Potter at a party hosted by her cousin Phyllis Spender Clay. Potter listened quietly as Grenfell told a story about a speaker at her local Women's Institute. This was not a sketch, but Grenfell's account of a real Women's Institute lecture. However, at his party a few weeks later, Potter announced that Grenfell was going to do a sketch, and the whole room was spellbound; one of those present was Herbert (Bertie) Farjeon (Grenfell, 1976). Within days, she had been invited to join Farjeon's revue with two items, one of them being 'Useful and Acceptable Gifts' (1939), a polished version of the story she had told at the dinner party. The other was a short collection of vignettes called 'Different Kinds of Mothers' and during the show's run, a third sketch was added, 'Head Girl'. All remained in Grenfell's repertoire, although neither of the latter are as well-known as that first monologue.

The working relationship between Potter and Grenfell grew to be strong, as they went on to co-author and perform in radio programmes, including 29 episodes of *How to…*, including *How to Listen* (1946) which launched the BBC Third Programme on 29th September 1946 (oneupmanship, 2017). The *How To…* programmes were as much about how not to, and often featured guest writers and performers, including John Betjeman and Celia Johnson (Foster and Furst, 1996). Potter started his career as a serious academic, lecturing in English at Birkbeck from 1926 to 1936, and, like Grenfell, slid over into satire and entertainment almost by accident, as indicated by a chapter in his biography entitled 'Sliding into the BBC' (Potter, 2004). While Grenfell's entertainment work became her major occupation, Potter's academic publications continued alongside his satirical radio and writing work throughout his life; he published on Coleridge and wrote the corporate biography of H.J. Heinz (oneupmanship, 2017). Grenfell noted his eccentric working habits and his careless chain-smoking, 'He told me his worst burning was an entire sofa' (Grenfell,

1979, p. 127). When writing the *How to...* series, Grenfell and Potter would work in one of two places; Rothwell House, a BBC building in New Cavendish Street, Westminster, with a shorthand writer — 'there, in cold blood we improvised scenes' (Grenfell, 1976, p. 225). Alternatively, they would go and work in the park, holding down their notes with whatever heavy items they had to hand, until the weather got the better of them.

Grenfell's success on the stage was by no means guaranteed; Farjeon had taken a risk by inviting her into the company, her colleagues viewed her lack of rehearsal technique with trepidation, and were surprised at the audience response that first night. She learned on the job, employing the acute observation skills she had developed as an academically uninterested child. Throughout her career, she was naïve about certain aspects of the business, taking on challenges about which other artists might have hesitated. Farjeon is probably best known as a theatre impresario, but he was also a respected theatre historian who wrote reviews and other pieces for a variety of newspapers and theatre magazines. His own theatrical success was mainly limited to London and UK tours, but many songs and sketches made their way to Broadway in other people's revues after his death (allmusic, 2017).

Farjeon and Potter were just two of a number of significant partnerships Grenfell worked in throughout her professional life, despite her reputation as a solo act. Graham collaborated and acted as sounding board on significant amounts of work, particularly when it came to putting running orders together, while pianists became the mainstay of Grenfell's life; without them her range would have been much more limited and three, Richard (Dick) Addinsell, Viola Tunnard and William (Bill) Blezard would become lynchpins

and anchors, as well as close friends. However, in the first instance, Grenfell worked with whichever accompanist, or small ensemble, Farjeon provided for the revue.

At the beginning of the Second World War, all the London Theatres were closed by order of the government, it was believed initially, for the duration (Farjeon, 1940). In fact the ban lasted only two weeks before Grenfell returned to the theatre along with the rest of the cast. It was quickly realised, as will be discussed further in Chapter 7, that within certain restrictions and conditions, such as providing access to Air Raid Shelters and the application of curfews, that entertainment and educational gatherings were essential for the maintenance of public morale.

Grenfell also became a Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD) volunteer, partly because her aunt expected it (Cliveden was turned into a military convalescent home), and partly because, with no aptitude for nursing and an unwillingness to be involved in anything that could actually lead to killing or injury, she could not think of another way to serve her country. The early years of the war were a lonely time; Reggie had joined up and was away for significant periods at a time, but Grenfell gradually returned to the stage as well as doing radio work. Grenfell also gradually got drawn into attending and then volunteering to help provide the lunches at the Lunchtime concerts at the National Art Gallery, which cemented her friendship with Myra Hess, the pianist who was the driving performing force behind this morale raising effort. This lunch preparation experience would become useful when Grenfell came to write 'Canteen in Wartime / Canteen' (1940/1940a), her first war-based sketch.

In 1942, Grenfell was persuaded by Walter Legge, who had produced one of her records, to start working for ENSA. Legge was a significant force in the international music scene;

the *Washington Post* records that he was not a musician himself, but 'a man of the rarest artistic perception and taste' (Hume, 1979). He founded the Philharmonic Orchestra of London (Philharmonia Orchestra, 2017) and was the director of EMI, the record label, for some years. As a producer, Legge was responsible for the recordings of many influential musicians and conductors, including Herbert von Karajan and Elizabeth Schwarzkopf, whom Legge married. He also wrote as a critic for *Gramophone* magazine; thus, when the war started Legge was in a prime position to entice many performers to work for and embrace the ENSA lifestyle (Mann, 2011).

The first tour Grenfell undertook was to Northern Ireland as part of a motley revue company, followed by two 'solo' tours with the Persia and Iraq Force (PAIForce). Her accompanist for these tours was originally going to be Richard Addinsell, her long-time song writing partner and accompanist. Addinsell did join Grenfell for part of the Northern Ireland tour, but his GP advised him that his physical health was not up to the conditions that were likely on the PAIForce tours (Grenfell, 1979, p. 180), so Viola Tunnard went instead.

It is, perhaps, my curiosity about Grenfell's friendship with Clemence Dane that began the path to this thesis. On the surface, it was an unlikely friendship, with Grenfell's slightly prudish outlook on life based in her religious beliefs contrasting sharply with the bohemian Dane, who was almost certainly as open about her relationships as a homosexual woman could be in the late Victorian and early Edwardian periods. As the considerably older woman, Dane took Grenfell under her wing and virtually taught her how to interview when they met for a piece for the Christian Science Monitor (Grenfell, 1976). Dane, whom Grenfell called Winifred Ashton, her birth name, was a consciously middlebrow writer who

successfully re-invented herself as a journalist, novelist and writer for radio and screen, as changing tastes demanded (McDonald, 2013). Grenfell does not refer to Dane's two long term partners as anything other than women who shared time and space with her. To acknowledge these relationships as friendships was probably about as close to being a gay ally as she could be without opening herself up to serious censure, a step too far when one's livelihood is dependent on public popularity.

Addinsell, whom Grenfell had met via her friend Clemence Dane in 1942, is perhaps best known for his *Warsaw Concerto* (1941), which he wrote after he abandoned both a degree in law and studies at the Royal School of Music (mfiles.co.uk, 2017). He composed a significant amount of music for films, including *Dangerous Moonlight* (1941) which featured the *Warsaw Concerto*, in the style of Rachmaninov. The piece could now be labelled pastiche, but Grenfell reports that at the time, it was 'played by concert pianists, dance-band pianists, and by ear on lamentable canteen uprights through the length and breadth of Great Britain and it was continually broadcast' and loved (Grenfell, 1976, p. 167). In the main, 'serious' music sites and books tend to ignore Addinsell's working partnership with Grenfell, while those who concentrate on his contributions to films are more likely to credit the impact this relationship had. However, the *Encyclopedia of Film Composers* notes that he left film composition in the mid-1960s, composing only for Grenfell (Hischak, 2015). Addinsell was one of many talented men for whom Grenfell was able to overcome her hesitation about the entertainment industry's concentration of homosexuals, and she was also good friends with his long-term partner Victor Steibel, who designed many of her stage dresses.

It is probably Addinsell's versatility that drew Grenfell to him from a professional point of view, as together they wrote musical sketches covering the full gamut of musical styles, as can sometimes be seen within a single sketch. 'Encores' (1964) allowed Addinsell to write in the style of a bergerette (a form of early French country song), English school song, contemporary composition and English Romantic in just over five minutes (Hodgson, 2019). In 1948, Lawrence Morton, writing in the *Hollywood Quarterly*, described Addinsell as a commercial genius (p. 211) and implies that he and his ilk deserve more credit than they received at the time. As previously mentioned, Addinsell's health prevented him from touring with Grenfell for ENSA. This is not to say that Grenfell's ENSA work ended her association with Addinsell; far from it. In fact, while Tunnard continued to accompany Grenfell occasionally after the war, Addinsell resumed his role as musical collaborator, although increasingly William (Bill) Blezard became Grenfell's regular accompanist and wrote music for her.

During the Second World War, Grenfell and Tunnard were noted for going to the small hospitals and outposts that other, larger companies either could not access because of the size of their entourage or simply forgot about. With a piano, a truck and a pile of sheet music, they could go anywhere and remained friends until Tunnard died. Tunnard's career and background were an unlikely training ground for her work with ENSA. The daughter of a clergyman, she won a scholarship to the Royal College of Music and was involved in the premier of Benjamin Britten's opera *Billy Budd* in 1951, when her work with ENSA was finished. She is credited with having jointly directed both this and Britten's *The Burning Fiery Furnace* in 1968 (Library of Congress, 2017) While not unheard of, even today female directors of opera are rare and considered notable. Mary Garden had preceded Tunnard in America, becoming director of the Chicago Opera Association in 1921, but she also 'had a

successful career as a “singing actress” in America’ (Johnson, 2008, p. 12), thus ensuring her acceptance by audiences. In Australia, however, as late as 2006, it was still believed that ‘the Sydney Opera House Opera Theatre [has a] seating capacity of 1500… Female Directors wouldn’t even fill the first five rows’ (McPhee, 2006, cited in Ross-Smith and Bridge, 2008, p. 67). Tunnard worked accompanying Peter Pears and arranging, accompanying and rehearsing for Britten, with whom Grenfell later became good friends through the Aldeburgh Festival. BBC Radio 3’s 2016 tribute to Tunnard characterised her as a ‘quiet perfectionist’ who resisted being poached by Herbert von Karajan, for his Salzburg Opera, because her language skills were not good enough (BBC Radio 3, 2016). Tunnard was respected amongst musicians for her work liaising and acting as a buffer between the musicians and Britten, and is now considered the third in the Britten team, although this was never acknowledged at the time (BBC Radio 3, 2016).

Grenfell was one of the two major contributors to the Viola Tunnard Trust when it was formed after Tunnard’s death from motor neurone disease in 1974, an cruelly ironic end for a pianist of her talents. Being a perfectionist, Tunnard expected a certain standard in the pianos ENSA provided for her, but they were often not up to scratch. On 14th October 1944, Grenfell recorded in her diary that they arrived in Mafraq, where, ‘Viola spent a full hour plumbing the piano again’ (Grenfell, 1989, p. 182). Writing after Tunnard’s death in July 1974, Grenfell commented on the debt she felt she owed Tunnard for teaching her a type of discipline that had stood her in good stead for the rest of her career, and spoke of Tunnard’s guts, humour and intelligence (BBC Radio 3, 2016).

Although Addinsell was the writer of the music for *Joyce Grenfell Requests the Pleasure* (1953), Blezard was Grenfell’s musical director and accompanist for the majority of the rest

of her career. Initially, he appeared pessimistic to Grenfell, but she came to learn that this was a defence mechanism (Grenfell, 1976). Like Addinsell, Blezard was a composer of film and theatre music, and had accompanied and acted as arranger and orchestrator to Noël Coward in 1949 for the film version of his play *The Astonished Heart*, and as accompanist and musical director to Marlene Dietrich from 1965 to 1975, travelling the world with her (Pierce, 2003). Like Tunnard, he had studied at the Royal College of Music (RCM), and while Tunnard had spent much of her war with Grenfell, Blezard spent it as a Morse Code Operator before returning to the RCM to finish his studies. He met Grenfell though Donald Swann, of Flanders and Swann (Pierce, 2003). Grenfell comments on how much she enjoyed improvising with Blezard, yet he probably put this skill into use most effectively in the BBC children's programme *Play School* (IMdb, 2017a). Blezard is hard to categorize as a 'serious composer'; he was seen as neither light and accessible, nor terribly complex and highbrow, rather John France considered his music 'craftsmanship' (2005).

Grenfell's memoirs indicate an unsettled period immediately after the war. She had attracted the attentions of an unnamed man, probably a prince or other noble, in Cairo in 1944, and the flirtation ran on for several weeks (Grenfell, 1989). Reggie was accepting, but it appears to have upset the equilibrium in their relationship for a while. After the war Grenfell took a role in Noël Coward's revue *Sigh No More* (1945). Coward, known to Grenfell since her childhood because he had been friends with her mother, was a difficult man to work for and, while the show was a public success, it was not a happy time for the cast. Coward had a cruel wit and Grenfell's biographer states that he was initially reluctant to acknowledge Grenfell as a professional (Hampton, 2002).

Coward was the son of 'the failed father, the ambitious mother taking in lodgers to keep the family afloat' (Morley, 2004 in Coward, 2004) who went on the stage after his mother spotted an advert for child actors (Morley, 2017, p. 1). Like Grenfell, he was an acute observer of human idiosyncrasies, with a satirical affection for the upper classes, with their strange and destructive foibles, as seen in *Hay Fever* (Morley, 2017, p. 3). Like Dane, Coward's gift was in re-inventing himself; when post-war Britain demanded an austerity and grittiness with which Coward was out of step, he eventually travelled to America and created the image of the bon-viveur we know today. The veneer of romance and glamour over his comedic work somewhat deflects from the serious nature of the subjects he chose to focus on in a much more widely ranging career (Morse, 1973); he addressed taboo issues such as drug use in *The Vortex* (1923) (Morley, 1999, p. xiv) and infidelity in *Brief Encounter* (1945)*,* in which Grenfell's friend and sometime colleague, Celia Johnson, starred. Throughout his interesting survey of Coward's work, Morse picks out themes of infidelity, indeed polyamory in Coward's *Design for Living* (1932) and loveless marriage in *Private Lives* (1931). Grenfell's experience of Coward's dominating personality in *Sigh No More* put a great strain on their relationship and there was a growing distance between Grenfell and Coward after this point.

Grenfell found her radio work increasing at this time and this became a mainstay of public exposure for her. On stage, she increasingly preferred not to take part in sketches with other people, and she finally launched her first one-woman show, *Joyce Grenfell Requests the Pleasure*, in 1953, with three dancers and Richard Addinsell as her accompanist. With the exception of the Flanders and Swann song, 'Folk Song', and some traditional American songs, however, every sketch and line was the work of Grenfell, Addinsell and Graham.

Grenfell's filmography is impressive for a woman who withdrew from RADA. She acted in twenty-five films and in semi-retirement was a regular reader for Jackanory (IMDb, 2017), but in her published diaries it is her solo work that draws most of her attention. She was much happier in such shows or, increasingly into the 1960s and 1970s, on radio and television panel shows as herself, and it was the one-woman shows which took her to America, Canada, Australia and much of the rest of the English-speaking world. However, in recent years, Grenfell's face was probably most familiar in the role of Ruby Gates, the policewoman in the first three of the original *St Trinian's* films (1954, 1957 and 1960).

Her filmic range went well beyond such slapstick comedies. In the propaganda war film *The Lamp Still Burns* (1943), a Ministry of Health tribute to the nurses of the Second World War, she played Dr Barrett, a proficient female doctor. By 1949, in *Forbidden Cargo,* a smuggling drama, while Grenfell plays an earnest, serious bit part, she initially presents the passionate birdwatcher, Lady Flavia Queensway, in the same awkward, breathy, embarrassed way as the awkward 'Lumpy Latimer', one of her very popular monologue characters, from the monologue, 'Old Girls' School Reunion' (1969a). While Grenfell never objected to her 'gallumphers' (Hampton, 2002, p. 194), she did sometimes express a desire to play more graceful roles. Grenfell found the time on set tiring and tedious, and always carried a book, her writing paper and her sewing, though she normally fell to chatting (Hampton, 2002).

It was perhaps as herself that television viewers began to become aware that Grenfell was very knowledgeable, particularly regarding classical music. *Face the Music* had its origins as a radio programme in 1955, *Call the Tune,* which became the TV programme in 1966, hosted by pianist Joseph Cooper, whom Grenfell had known since the Lunchtime Concert days in the National Gallery. These concerts are discussed in greater depth in Chapter 7.

Grenfell noted that, with teams only ever made up of two men and one woman, despite appearing in eleven out of sixteen episodes in 1973 (Hampton, 2002), 'the other female members and I were never in the same programme' (Grenfell, 1980, p. 146). This phenomenon has not yet died out, the BBC only pledged to end all male comedy panels in 2014 (Thorpe, 2014), while the scourge of tokenism is a current issue among feminist comedians, such as Deborah Frances-White and Sarah Millican, who have both discussed the issue in their podcasts, *The Guilty Feminist* and *The Standard Issue* in the last two years.

While Grenfell had never hidden her faith, and would regularly mention it in private correspondence, she first spoke publicly about it in Joanna Scott-Moncrieff's *Private Collection* in June 1965 which, while difficult to trace and date, appears to have been part of, or related to, *Woman's Hour.* Grenfell was then invited to give a *Lanchester Lecture* in October 1965 (Bristol Archives, 2017) and later, to take part in a series of talks at St Mary-le-Bow in Cheapside, and these largely poor quality recordings provide insight into Grenfell's reconciliation of her public/private persona. These *Bow Dialogues* continued sporadically until 1975 (British Library, 2019), with a Christmas themed *Dialogue* from 1968 benefitting from the improved quality of being broadcast on the BBC and are featured, along with Grenfell's work on the Pilkington Committee, in Chapter 8. Over this period, from approximately 1964 until just before her death in 1979, public speaking as herself became more and more a feature of Grenfell's work, until it appears she only acted in roles she really wanted to do.

In 1960, Grenfell was invited to be a member of the Pilkington Committee which reported on the future of broadcasting in the UK in 1962. For the purposes of this thesis, the proceedings of this committee and the letters she wrote at that time are pertinent and

relevant material, although for Grenfell this committee only merits approximately 25 pages in her second autobiography (1980). Grenfell valued the work and purpose of the committee, but it was the people from whom they took evidence who fascinated her (Grenfell, 1980). While the public may have seen Grenfell as a token member, invited because of her popularity amongst the middle classes (Hampton, 2002, p. 269), she took the work very seriously. A fellow committee member, Richard Hoggart, commented that Grenfell was very aware of her lack of a university education, but that she had such an analytical mind that he felt that if he had persuaded Grenfell of a point, he had achieved something of great value in terms of common sense and honesty (Hampton, 2002). The committee was initially made up of 13 individuals, of whom Grenfell was one of only two women. They included leaders of industry, including the eponymous Sir Harry Pilkington, of Pilkington Glass, who chaired the Committee; a working class academic, Richard Hoggart; theatre director Peter Hall, who resigned from the Committee in 1961 and footballer Billy Wright.

The work was unsalaried for freelancers such as Grenfell and expenses were a trial to claim, and she cheerfully told Sir Harry Pilkington that the committee work had cost her several thousand pounds. The philosophical depth of the report's findings came as a shock to the government when it was released in 1962 (Hampton, 2002) as it went further into issues of education, ethics and morals than the writers of the original brief had perhaps envisaged. Grenfell began to make pencil sketches, later moving to the discipline provided by pen, to help her concentration during the meetings and witness hearings, and her letters of the period are studded with pen pictures of those who attended, but little is discussed of the actual proceedings. Eventually, she gathered all her drawings into a collection to commemorate privately her time on the committee (Grenfell, 1980) and were published in

a limited fashion shortly after her death. Once again, this implies Grenfell's desire to put people at the centre of everything.

The nature of Reggie's other work in mining interests kept the Grenfells in contact with South Africa throughout their lives from the mid-1940s onwards. After spending the end of the war working for the government on what would become the National Health Service (Hampton, 2002), Reggie was appointed as the 'financial director of his cousin Harold Grenfell's mine at Messina, in the Transvaal', a few miles from the Rhodesian border on the South African side (Hampton 2002, p. 170). South Africa became a twice-yearly destination for Reggie, with Grenfell reluctantly joining him for the first time in 1953 (Hampton, 2002) for the first of eleven trips. For her, one benefit was complete anonymity, as she was simply the wife of the mine's financial director. While there is a minute passing reference to the changing times with the move from empire to Commonwealth in 'Old Girls' School Reunion' (1969a), 'You have to call it Kenya nowadays', perhaps the greatest demonstration is the monologue 'Nicodemus' Song' (1967), a sketch which, if written and performed by a white upper-class woman today, would be unlikely to see the light of day. The reference to Kenya in 'Old Girls' School Reunion' (1969a) is a difficult one, as Kenya had been known by that name as a colony since 1920, and may be a reference to the pronunciation 'Keenya', which Grenfell uses once during the sketch. If so, this is missed in Lipman's version of the sketch, with the inference of a desire to return to the pre-colonial name of British East Africa.

While she loved the luxury of her life in South Africa, Grenfell's awareness of apartheid and the lives of black Africans changed and grew. While there, she struggled with the formality of social engagements required in her role as Reggie's wife, particularly the expectation to

don hats, stockings and gloves for tea parties in the heat. She grew to hate the Afrikaaners' attitude towards race as much as they appeared to hate black South Africans. She could not see the point of apartheid, disliking it immensely, and considered performing in South Africa for the Institute of Race Relations, but Bill Blezard was relieved when the British Musician's Union boycott of South Africa meant that he did not need to have a difficult discussion with Grenfell; he simply could not go (Hampton, 2002). This is not to suggest that Blezard approved of Apartheid, simply that he was not willing to break the Boycott.

As the British Empire was dismantled, Grenfell understood that it was not a case of the British authorities being removed from Rhodesia and South Africa, which she realised was an over-simplification of the situation and would only lead to problems. In January 1966 she wrote to Katherine Moore, explaining her concerns for the newly independent Rhodesia; 'I don't know Smith and I quite see *why* he feels it is far too soon for one-man-one-vote, but to have taken U.D.I. [Unilateral Declaration of Independence] strikes me as the most idiotic thing for anyone to have done' (Grenfell and Moore, 1981, p. 87), and later in the same letter, 'The Africans are still childlike for the most part in the best meaning of the term: needing care, simple in attitude, happy and contented […] Whether it is right to go on being as simple as that *is* the question, I know […] I blame Smith harshly for this folly… I wish I thought he really *cared* about people and not only party people […]' (Grenfell and Moore, 1981, p. 88). While the language used now appears archaic and paternalistic, Grenfell's concern for the welfare of all humans and her awareness of the complexity of the situation, as well as her own discomfort in her lack of solution or access to it, is clear. The Grenfells became friends with several anti-apartheid activists and anti-colonial writers, including Freda Troup and Nadine Gordimer (Hampton, 2002). While Grenfell loved the South African countryside, the political pressures made Johannesburg feel airless and

claustrophobic to her and she hated the place. She and Reggie however, spent more time in other parts of South Africa and in the English Lake District as Grenfell approached and entered her quasi-retirement.

Grenfell took a step back from entertainment in the late 60s and early 70s, but she never really made it to what might be traditionally considered retirement despite a so-called formal retirement beginning in 1973; in fact in 1977 she queried to Katherine Moore whether such a word was appropriate to her life at all, 'Retirement? If that's what has happened to me, I know it is not a season of idleness' (Grenfell and Moore, 1981, p. 235). She was now filling her time with lectures and talks. In 1962 Grenfell began attending the Aldeburgh Festival and fell in love with it. In 1967 Benjamin Britten invited her to perform in a light concert and she continued to be involved, whether performing or supporting, until her death in 1979. After significant involvement in fundraising and planning for a permanent home for the Festival, she was devastated when the new building was destroyed by fire in 1969, and helped arrange temporary accommodation that year. When Britten became ill and later died in 1976, Grenfell and Reggie both supported tenor Peter Pears, Britten's long term companion, despite Grenfell's hesitations about the 'non-marryers' (Grenfell, 2006, p. 42) and they remained good friends until her death in 1979.

As a Christian Scientist, Grenfell believed that the body, indeed earthly life, is something of an illusion, and avoided contact with the medical profession as much as possible. If there was something wrong with her body, she would work on her relationship with God. She ignored 'a problem with an eye' (Grenfell and Moore, 1981, p. 194) for a considerable time, and by the time she succumbed to Reggie's concerns and consulted a doctor, the diagnosis of a retinal tumour led to removal of the eye and the use of a false one. She never referred

to having anything more serious than an eye that was being tiresome, but it was this that probably led to her death.

After her faith, two things took up most of Grenfell's spare time; letter writing and bird watching. In addition to correspondence with Virginia and Reggie, Grenfell was a prolific letter and note writer; for twenty-two years she kept up a correspondence with Katherine Moore, an established writer and fan, as well as sporadic correspondence with Britten and Pears, Walter de la Mare and many others. She rarely failed to answer a fan letter, and pen and paper were simply part of her travelling kit. Much of this correspondence is held at the Lucy Cavendish Library in Cambridge and the interplay between these and a range of artefacts, including excerpts from the Mass Observation Diaries, contemporary critics and other works, forms the basis of the research underpinning this thesis. There is a scholarly challenge here, however, as Grenfell claimed that one did not confide everything to anyone, and that all her confidences were happy ones. Therefore, even using the private letters, Grenfell portrays an idyllic existence. She rarely appears to be anything other than charmed with life, and this resolve never to tell anyone everything must be borne in mind when utilising the evidence at hand.

However, the aim of this study goes beyond offering a wide biographical survey of Grenfell and her cohort; her experience offers an alternative view of feminism throughout the Second World War and into Reconstruction Britain (broadly, from the end of the Second World War until the early 1950s), which is already being challenged by the likes of Nicholson, (2010), who acknowledges the splintering of feminism, but denies its hibernation, with her Kaleidoscope model. I shall go on, in the next chapter, to lay out the various elements and approaches that have been considered as research and theoretical

models. While the method employed is primarily a contextual analysis, it contains some of the aims of triangulation and an awareness of Critical Discourse Analysis and Reception Theory.

The question of Grenfell as a feminist leads to a descriptor, not a definitively identifying statement. This creates challenges of positioning, especially when existing authors on Grenfell position her as an egalitarian (Hampton, 2016). It is my argument that, to all intents and purposes, being an egalitarian and a feminist are not mutually exclusive positions; rather, to achieve the former, in certain points in history, one has had to be the latter, especially in the historical context within which Grenfell sits. Throughout this thesis I will, on several occasions, make the claim that Grenfell was an innovator in what she did, a woman in a man's world of entertainment. There are of course, caveats to that claim. There were women monologists working before Grenfell, of whom possibly the most famous was Ruth Draper, who was friends with Grenfell's mother, and would visit, entertaining Grenfell and her brother with her dramatic monologues at bedtime when they were tiny children. Grenfell was not unaware of the comparisons between herself and Draper, commenting, '"Ruth, I don't know how anyone dares mention my name with yours"' and she said, "They don't"' (Grenfell, 1976, p. 251). While this put Grenfell firmly in her place, it also reflected Draper's awareness that they were not doing the same thing. Draper performed primarily dramatic monologues which displayed humour, and was considered a recitalist and diseuse, and preferred to be described as a character actress (Draper.com, 2017). Grenfell began and remained in comedy, with straight monologues coming later and never being the majority of her work. There is no doubt however, that Draper inspired Grenfell in much the way that she in turn inspired those who came after her.

It would also be legitimate to point to the work of Marie Lloyd and other Music Hall artists as predecessors and to an extent, contemporaries to Grenfell. Indeed, this claim is supported by Deborah Frances-White, whose great-grandmother worked in Music Hall in a comedy double act with her sister, and recently stated, 'What were the chances of a woman being a comedian? Before the first world war, great actually, really great [...] women were funny before the First World War' (Frances-White, 2020). The key here is that Lloyd was strictly a music hall artiste, most beloved for her singing (allmusic, 2020), while Grenfell was a Revue artist. Lloyd's comedic patter, often lewd in nature, was more of a joining of the songs, rather than an act in its own right, just as the jazz singer Clare Teal uses humour to join parts of her set now. Teal's humour may well be appreciated by her fans, but she is, first and foremost, a jazz singer. Grenfell was a comedian who sang as part of her comedy, not a singer who told jokes, and in all the research undertaken, never used double entendre or lewdness of any form.

Similarly, Nellie Wallace was another music hall performer. She was a contemporary of Grenfell's and worked on the same bill as Grenfell in a number of war time shows. Crucially, however, her comedy was very different from Grenfell's. She was in many respects much more directly part of the early days of stand-up, as opposed to character monologue, than Grenfell. As Double (2005), explains, stand-up is much more about direct contact with the audience, involving an interactive patter with the audience. Indeed, Wallace and Grenfell came from such different stances that Wallace did not really appreciate Grenfell at all. Grenfell recounts how, in a particularly cramped venue, she could hear what was going on backstage as she performed, and was put off her stride by Nellie's Wallace's desperate spoken commentary on her act: 'What *does* she think she's doing out there on her own talking to herself?' (Grenfell, 1976). Crucially then, Grenfell's particular talent is around

creating a relationship with her audience via imagined characters, rather that Wallace's direct repartee.

Equally, some comparisons and contrasts could be drawn with Gracie Fields. Fields performed monologues but was primarily famed for her working class persona and choice of characters. There is less evidence that Fields created her own work, rather she chose her songs and other material closely, and while Hampton (2002) claims financial success for Grenfell as an all-round entertainer, Slide (2013) suggests that Fields became Britain's 'highest-paid film performer' (p.16). Fields moved much of her stage life to America, becoming very successful in Vaudeville (Cullen, Hackman and McNelly), the American cousin of Music Hall; Grenfell toured internationally, but always maintained London as her home. Both volunteered to do war entertainment work; indeed, Fields was already known to Basil Dean, the director of ENSA, having starred in *Sing as We Go* (1934), which Dean produced. However, while Grenfell's reputation and professional engagements increased after the war, Fields' fragile health and her marriage to American-Italian actor Monty Banks in 1940 meant that her standing in the eyes of the British public became inconsistent and somewhat tarnished (Cullen, Hackman and McNelly, 2007).

Thus, we can honestly say, that while Draper, Wallace, Lloyd and Fields are similarly loved and remembered, they did not do the same work as Grenfell and have inspired those who come after them in different ways. A brief examination of Lloyd's personal life also suggests a lack of financial independence and innovation compared to Grenfell. Thus, we can clearly state that as a female monologist of comedy with a career formed from and based in Revue, Grenfell provides a first, and with the rapid move away from monologue and into

Stand-up by the time Grenfell retired, possibly a unique opportunity to examine the outlook of this woman in an otherwise male-dominated field.

In this chapter, then, I have introduced the research questions undertaken and given a biographical summary of the subject of that research, Joyce Grenfell, and her colleagues, while beginning a reflection on my position as researcher. In the next chapter, which largely has the characteristics of a theoretical literature review leading to a methodological approach, I will deepen this reflective aspect; I will both demonstrate and defend the inductive journey to the creation of my theoretical standpoint, and describe how a triangulated (or multi-layered) approach to methods was formed, incorporating a variety of cultural studies approaches and techniques to ensure depth and rigour in the analysis and discussion provided throughout this thesis. The third chapter will offer a literature review that contextualises and gives background to the feminist socio-political environment within which Grenfell worked, and created her context.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Literature Review and Methodological Framework

The nature of this chapter is largely that of a literature review. I will reflect on my personal researcher positioning suggested in the introduction and provide a rationale for the theoretical framework and methodology set in a context of feminism largely created by Simone de Beauvoir. I will explore the Foucauldian concepts of power/knowledge and Critical Discourse Analysis, leading to an in-depth discussion of the methodology undertaken in this thesis.

Before proceeding any further, it appears appropriate to describe my own relationship with Grenfell's work and therefore the context from which my interpretation has been built. I come from the point of view of an admirer, and this is, for me, an inter-generational experience, being the child of a Grenfell admirer. I admire the solo, stage and radio work, but while I enjoy her film roles, the material is of less relevance to this discussion. Grenfell referred to her film roles largely as 'gallumphers' (Hampton, 2002, p. 194) and in terms both of my research and my enjoyment, they are not where my attention lies. This is not to say that the choices made by an entertainer in the roles they perform lack value academically; they are simply not the main focus of this study. It is also worthy of note that starting from a position of admiration holds dangers, both in the context of potential researcher bias, which I believe my methodology goes some way to mitigate, and in the risk of disappointment, of discovering something disturbing. As will be observed on several occasions throughout this thesis, while Grenfell's characters and her persona are different, there is little discovered which impugns her integrity.

Grenfell claimed merely to observe and reflect what she had seen. She also claimed that if we love people, we should not burden them with our innermost thoughts and worries. While, as Reidy (2010) points out in relation to John Cage, we cannot guarantee that all a person says about themselves is the truth, I have not thus far caught Grenfell in a lie or a contradiction, when comparing memoir and the documented record. This differs from many other mainstream writers and entertainers, such as James Frey, caught lying by Oprah Winfrey (McCutchen, 2008). I acknowledge the dangers of research begun in a state of admiration; I may give a biased conclusion, or fail to reach any coherency. However, in dedicating such a large portion of one's life to the effort, it was wise to start from a place of being moved, touched and inspired. It should also be noted that some techniques and attitudes have been borrowed from the Social Sciences' approach of triangulation. Denzin argues that 'by combining methods, observers can achieve the best of each while overcoming their unique deficiencies' (Denzin, 1978, p. 302), and while Jick confirms this he also warns against complacency, '[…] triangulation purports to exploit the assets and neutralize, rather than compound, the liabilities' (Jick, 1983 p. 138). It is therefore the responsibility of all researchers considering a triangulated, multi-layered or hybrid approach to pick wisely, in order to guard against some of the flaws created by bias, and to keep in mind the knowledge that failure to build a method carefully can exacerbate them if the research is not undertaken wisely and judiciously.

My own feminist experience and ideology is also worth examination. I have always admired the suffragettes, who were considered 'militant' in their tactics (Purvis, 2006, p. 125), including physical violence. However, I felt more empathy towards the 'constitutional' suffragists (Purvis, 2006, p. 125), with their peaceful resistance and political appeals and negotiations, being somewhat squeamish about direct action. My own ideology, therefore,

has always erred towards a more conservative branch of feminism; primarily I am egalitarian, which makes feminism compulsory.

My feminist stance has more recently been formed through journalistic and comedic podcasts such as *The Guilty Feminist* (Francis-White, 2015 – ongoing) and *Hoovering* (Fostekew, 2018 – ongoing). Herein lies the major reason why any feminist theory as it is initially written is problematic in this research. Real people on the streets, whether they call themselves feminists or not, have not, by and large, read and analysed Butler, Cixous, De Beauvoir and their theorist colleagues, from this century or the last. The brands of feminism most ordinary people absorb are more populist in origin, as presented in women's magazines, newspaper editorials and more recently, in podcasts, TED Talks and other accessible forms. Such 'soundbite' feminism is what most people experience in our everyday lives. In order to set my framework and ground my understanding, I have made an effort to read, absorb and debate a range of theorists, but always with the knowledge that this is not the interpretation that most active feminists construct for themselves. Such lived feminism is the strongest driver in this research.

It may not be coincidence that I am also an interpretivist rather than a pragmatist. According to Schwandt (1998), followers of constructivism and interpretivism 'share the goal of understanding the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it' (p. 221). Scotland (2012) argues that 'the ontological position of interpretivism is relativism' (p. 11), emphasising that as individuals, we experience and sense life differently. This is reflected in Marks and de Courtivron's comment that 'We do not understand them now the way they understood themselves or the way they were understood by succeeding generations. We read differently' (1981, p. 4). This statement

hints at some of the dangers of retro-engineering a stance on to an historical figure and helps acknowledge that this thesis must necessarily be one interpretation of Grenfell's own interpretation of her experiences. In this instance a pragmatist refers to finding a truth that works in that moment, and in that context, whereby pragmatists 'do not see the world as an absolute unity' (Creswell, 2014, p. 11), but they do not see the need to challenge reality (Cherryholmes, 1992). Thus, I will, on occasion refer to making 'pragmatic' choices, this is not utilising the theoretical definition, but the more lay version, simply referring to issues of scale, or accepting the world as it is.

Scotland also claims that there are as many truths or 'meanings' (Scotland, 2012, p. 12) as there are individuals; I would argue that there are even more, as interpretation changes over time, thus my truth of Grenfell is not the same as it was even when I began this research journey. Scotland, along with significant amounts of the literature on theoretical positioning, links interpretivism to the social sciences and to the interaction between researcher and participant. In this study, what is ripe for interpretation is the interaction between the researcher and Grenfell's texts, letters, recorded performances, and her interactions with the public, as exposed through fan letters, reviews and other contemporaneous accounts. In order to reconcile her position as an unlikely feminist, the creation of a discursive field through selective sampling to be analysed, must be undertaken to allow a snapshot to be taken, borrowing elements of understanding from Reception Theory, yet here there is a risk of researcher bias. This link with the social sciences will also be seen below, in the terms I use to frame my multi-layered analysis approach. Selective or purposive sampling, the 'selection of information-rich cases related to the phenomenon of interest' (Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan and Hoagwood, 2015, p. 533) fits well with a multi-layered, or triangulated, approach to analysis, as well as

ensuring that the field of data is not made unmanageable in size or thinned by interesting, but less relevant tangents.

This research, intended to address a thin period for feminism according to the Wave Model, which is defined later in this chapter, explores feminist issues and experiences within a fairly broad historical context and will take a largely interpretivist framework. Although many facts will be discovered, this will not lead to finding a definitive truth, but rather a range of truths which will allow us both to use Grenfell's work in this case study fashion, and to begin to develop a system to potentially identify other candidates for further study of feminist history. I both construct my knowledge (Gray, 2013) and interpret and re-interpret that knowledge in my findings as my theoretical framework base (Gray, 2013).

For example, Grenfell's unlikely position as feminist is found in the influence of her work on Victoria Wood, Maureen Lipman, Dawn French and many other publicly feminist female comedians. In Victoria Wood's obituary, *The Guardian* summed up, as a successful entertainer who largely retained her independence, Grenfell's significance for all these women: 'Grenfell was an interloper in a male preserve' (Jeffries, 2016). To this day, entertainment is not a gender-equal work environment; the concept of balance is one to which Grenfell refers in 'Eng. Lit. II' and has run through newspaper articles and media current affairs issues. The biographical details provided in the introduction demonstrate that in terms of professional relationships, Grenfell had far more men around her than women. Jeffries' (2016) simple sentence quoted above sums up my approach for evaluating Grenfell's feminist impact as a socio-political commentator; my interpretation is that of a woman having a major impact on how women are seen and how they see

themselves simply by going about her business. Therefore, it is essential that researcher bias is acknowledged throughout and integrity in the reflections on choices made is displayed. I do not claim perfection for interpretivism, only its relevance and appropriateness in this case.

Marks and de Courtivron's comment above (1981) sums up the challenge of framing the research undertaken; decisions have had to be made about the theoretical approach which have indicated and, to an extent, dictated the methodology used. From a broad starting point of feminism, much of the more specific theoretical framework reflects the analytical process, and vice versa. It would be impossible to make any comment on Grenfell's role as a socio-political commentator, nor upon her value to the recasting of feminist activity in the post-war period without approaching the literature from some form of feminist understanding. This research thus re-casts feminism in a way that those who have lived it as part of their daily lives, rather than being campaigners and activists, might recognise. Grenfell's work provides an opportunity to re-tell the British feminist story from the 1920s until her death in 1979, and indeed beyond, in a way that is more recognisable and relatable to the ordinary working woman than the Wave Model provides.

In considering the nature of a theoretical framework, one must also bear in mind what theory is. The concept of the theoretical is too often seen as only the most 'inaccessible texts that are destined for a privileged social elite' (Editorial Collective, 1981, p. 212). I am working with a more down to earth definition of theory. The women of the Editorial Collective also argued for the destruction of this equation between theory and the elite: 'We want to rehabilitate the true meaning of theory, and in doing so, make theory everyone's concern' (1981 p. 212); this is central to the framework laid out here, but also

provides challenges, considering the nuances of the concepts Foucault provides throughout this work. The Collective, a group including De Beauvoir, Christine Delphy, Claude Hennequin and Emmanuèle de Lessepes who edited the journal, *Nouvelles Questions Féministes*, continued, ‘We consider as theoretical *any discourse, whatever its language may be,* that attempts to *explain the causes* and *the mechanisms,* the *why* and the *how* of women’s oppression in general and of one of its particular aspects.’ (1981, p. 212, original italics). The Collective listed materials that they considered ‘theoretical’, among them ‘a lampoon’ (1981, p. 212), a category into which Grenfell’s sketches can be said to fit. Therefore, my theoretical framework is a conservative feminist approach to discourse analysis in its most practical format.

The key word in this approach from the Collective is ‘discourse’. What is discourse analysis, and why it does it matter for this thesis? Throughout his writing, Foucault asserted that the concept of a natural, preordained power balance was fallacy, particularly rejecting the concept of the juridical notion of sovereignty, as it sets up ‘the individual as a subject of natural rights or original powers’ (Foucault, 1994, p. 59). This resonates strongly with Grenfell’s outlook; in referring to an old verse of the hymn *All things bright and beautiful,* ‘He made them high or lowly and ordered their estate’; she wrote, ‘I am relieved to know that even then I knew that verse was a whacking lie’ (Grenfell, 1980, p. 67). Both Foucault and Grenfell value the concept that discourse and power interact on each other to change the status quo.

Foucault went on to raise the issue of war as a metaphor for the push and pull between context, subjectivity and impact, arguing that it is not possible to express objective truths because ‘the subject who speaks in this discourse cannot occupy the position of the

universal subject […] he is necessarily on one side or the other' (Foucault, 1994, p. 61). This leads to the concept of subjective, or interpretive, right, as the subject will try 'to make [their] right prevail (Foucault, 1994, p. 61). Foucault argues for a history, a discourse explained 'from below, which is not the simplest, the most elementary, the clearest explanation, but, rather, the most confused, the murkiest, the most disorderly, the most haphazard' (Foucault, 1994, p. 62). In simple terms, Foucault calls for a dynamic discourse, reflecting the push and pull of everyday interactions of power/knowledge. Grenfell, with her upper-class birth, is hardly at 'the bottom' but, as a woman making her way in a man's industry, she is certainly not one who is automatically handed power, at least not until she was truly established. She can therefore be co-opted to challenge the official discourse.

In both its simplicity and its complexity, what Foucault presents in his power/knowledge concept is a symbiosis. This in itself has a variety of meanings; in general symbiosis refers to a mutually beneficial relationship, such as that between the clownfish and the anemone, but can denote an obligatory relationship whereby one cannot survive without the other, such as the existence of lichen, which are in fact two interdependent entities. Foucault's implication appears to lean towards the latter. There are a few issues with the power/knowledge concept as proposed by Foucault. Firstly, he defines the manifestations of power, but he does not fully explain what power is, as outlined above. Certainly, he explains what it is not, 'Power is not something that is acquired, seized, or shared, something that one holds on to or slips away […] Power comes from below; that is there is no binary and all-encompassing opposition between rules and ruled at the root of power relations' (Foucault, 1979, p. 94). Foucault however, does give us a reasonable grip on power relations, in terms of them being both 'intentional and nonsubjective' (Foucault, 1979, p. 94). He also says that there is a necessary and perpetual foil to power, and that is

resistance (Foucault, 1979, p. 95). So we can see that, however challenging to put together the picture, Foucault gives a working path to an understanding of power, although it is still rather abstract. However, the knowledge aspect of the power/knowledge concept is significantly de-centralised and therefore much less stable. Canguilhem (1994), suggests that cultural knowledge as characterised by Foucault is different from facts, 'different from the knowledge constituted from sciences and philosophies' (p. 76). Bodies of knowledge rather, 'became intelligible and authoritative' based on context (Rouse, 1994, p. 93). It is for this reason that so much attention is given throughout this study to the contextual and co-textual documents surrounding Grenfell's life and work. However, at no point is knowledge itself defined, therefore it is possible rather to talk about authoritative knowledge, or the appearance of knowledge, whereby society gives credence to the veracity of a statement according to the status of the person saying it and the conviction with which they speak. This interplay of two abstractly defined terms means that the power/knowledge concept is neither binary nor linear, as the various forms of power and knowledge and their relationship lead to a multi-faceted situation, with many possibilities and interactions within it.

This then leads to the question of who gets to speak and how they gain that right. If we go back to Foucault's suggestion that history is best recounted 'from below' (Foucault, 1994, p. 62), then speaking truth to power, a peaceful resistance tool extrapolated from Foucault's *Fearless Speech* (2001), can only be effectively spoken by the bravest, as the potential cost is high, one's friends may desert you and you may even lose your life. Grenfell was brave in her Christian Science faith and often used it to give herself a good talking to when she was apprehensive about a matter she had to deal with, but she also

understood that for most performers, there must be the safety net of audience approval or relatability (*The Bow Dialogues*, 1973).

Foucault also advocates for an open-minded approach out of respect for the position of other human beings involved in a debate, a position with which Grenfell may have empathised. In an interview with Paul Rabinow, asked to define his political position, he instead warned against the dangers of polemics, which, it can be argued, is the mind-set behind positivism. ‘In the serious play of questions and answers, in the work of reciprocal elucidation, the rights of each person are in some sense immanent in the discussion.’ (Foucault, 1994, p. 111). Grenfell also advocated for trying to find areas in which to meet, whether that was on an intellectual, spiritual or more abstract, indefinable way (*The Bow Dialogues*, 1970).

The relationship between power, knowledge and context within discourse is spelled out by Foucault throughout his works. Early on, he explained ‘the problem is not just to determine how power subordinates knowledge and makes it serve its ends or how it superimposes itself on it, imposing ideological contents and limitations’ (Foucault, 1994, p. 17), and he later linked this back to the individual’s changing view of the world and grasp of power and political views, asking ‘How was the subject established, at different moments and in different institutional contexts, as a possible, desirable or even indispensable object of knowledge? How were the experiences that one may have of oneself and the knowledge that one forms of oneself organized according to certain schemes? How were these schemes defined, valorized, recommended, imposed?’ (Foucault, 1994, p. 87). In these questions one can see the interplay between power, subjectivity and truth that Foucault

also explores in his treatment of the sexes, sexuality and power. One can see the perils and strengths of symbiosis.

It is perhaps the lack of a stable definition that leads to Foucault's statement, 'I have the feeling knowledge can't do anything for us, and that political power may destroy us' (Foucault, 1994, p. 130). This sums up much of Foucault's estimation of subjectivity. At no point does he assert that the political status quo cannot be changed, but he recognises the magnitude of the resistance task and the level of risk involved. Such resistance happens at all levels, from individual relationships, through to politics, leaving very few opportunities for meaningful and equal discourse: 'In a civilization that for centuries considered the essence of the relation between two people to reside in the knowledge of whether one of the two parties was going to surrender to the other, all the interest, curiosity, the cunning and manipulation of people was aimed at getting the other to give in' (Foucault, 1994, p. 151). This is clarified in the statement, '[men] think of themselves as existing in the minds of women as master' (Foucault, 1994, p. 152). Resistance remains possible: 'we are not trapped […] there are always possibilities of changing the situation. We cannot jump *outside* the situation, and there is no point where you are free from all power relations' (Foucault, 1997, p. 167). This is at the core of discourse analysis; all around us people and powers are trying to exert an influence of their truth upon us as individuals, while we in turn, whether we intend it or not, are exerting an influence of our own. This concept of being unable to step out of relationships is also seen in Actor-Network Theory (ANT) which suggests that nothing can be achieved outside relationships and that 'power relations [are built...] as it were from the bottom upwards and outwards' (Fox, 2000, p. 858). This suggests that not only close analysis of the words of Grenfell's scripts, but also the context and discourses in, around, and as a result of the performances and what her audience was

willing to accept, is needed to evaluate her role as an unlikely embodied feminist. ANT originated and developed by Latour and Woolgar is based in science and the social sciences but has also been applied to business. Callon (2001) suggests that it is ‘the sociology of translation’ and ‘what the social sciences usually call “society” is an ongoing achievement’ reached within relationship (Callon, 2001, p. 62).

Much of what Foucault has to say about the body and about power/knowledge can be found, to a greater or lesser extent, in De Beauvoir’s work in *The Second Sex* (1997). Zerilli (1991) points out that De Beauvoir recognised the body as a situation while Foucault shows us how the body has been historically disciplined. In doing so, De Beauvoir allows an alternative to the concept of ‘feminine enslavement to the body’ (Butler, 1986, p. 45) Here then is an academic failure to peel back the layers far enough and acknowledge the discourses which influenced Foucault himself. Further, as Bordo (1993) suggests, we, the academy, still view theory as the preserve of men. Looking back on her academic career, she said that ‘in 1980, despite the fact that I was writing a dissertation […] I still expected ‘theory’ only from men.’ (Bordo, 1993, p. 184).

The concept of the body as situation is key to an understanding of De Beauvoir and can be approached and understood in one key De Beauvoirian phrase: ‘One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman’ (De Beauvoir, 1997, p. 295). In this phrase is summed up De Beauvoir’s essence, that femininity, the role of woman, and the otherness of woman is a social construct in which those with power, the patriarchy, have taken the right to speak truth (Foucault, 1988). If we understand this, then we also understand the power of De Beauvoir’s call to brotherhood, and her assertion that only those women who can attain a life free of domestic drudgery, who can work at independent and fulfilling occupation,

'participation in general industry by the whole female sex' (De Beauvoir, 1997, p. 86) have achieved equality. Thus, we can see that De Beauvoir argues for women to be able to work in any professional role according to her talents, not her gender.

It must be acknowledged that the expectation of male dominance in fields of academic theory is beginning to change since Bordo's contribution, with the rise of feminist theorists such as Judith Butler, but we still fail to see the embodied theory staring us in the face: '[…] contrary to current narratives, that neither Foucault, nor any other poststructuralist thinker discovered or invented the "seminal" idea […] that the "definition and shaping" of the body is "the focal point for struggles over the shape of power". That was discovered by feminism […] as far back, indeed, as Mary Wollstonecraft' (Bordo, 1993, p. 185). Here we should also acknowledge the Marxist influence on Foucault in the concept of the environment of constant movement in the power/knowledge game, where 'not all players on the field are equal' (Bordo, 1993, p. 185). Foucault's position in regard to the body, to discourse and to power/knowledge is used here not because he has invented it in some kind of discourse vacuum of originality, but quite the opposite; it is used in tandem with De Beauvoir's embedded and embodied theories because it extends and combines them with Marxist concepts of evolutionary/revolutionary momentum, concepts that De Beauvoir herself held at the time of writing. This is Foucault's original contribution, the blending of previous philosophies into a discourse analysis that works in the 20th and 21st centuries.

Before one can propose an alternative interpretation to the Wave Model version of feminism, a certain examination of its strengths and weaknesses must be addressed. The Wave Model, as commonly understood, is only broadly without problem in its definition of

the first wave, loosely defined as taking place in the late 19th and early 20th century. With each wave iteration, definitions and cohesiveness become more and more problematic. A general definition of a wave describes it as, 'A forward movement of a large body of persons…' which either recedes and returns after an interval, or is followed after a time by another body repeating the same movement (OED, 2018). Yet the feminist movement does not make the same movement over and over again, neither does it make its progress as a body, except perhaps during what the Wave Model defines as the first wave. Even those who explain and support the Wave Model admit that it is largely Anglo-American in concentration (Kroløkke and Sørensen, 2006), with little regard for the feminist experience in the rest of Europe or the other continents. It should be noted that sources for a description of the Wave Model are relatively hard to come by; first, as laid out below, what resources there are disagree on basic issues such as dates, although interpretations of goals and objectives are moderately more united, secondly, at any academically sound level there appears to be an assumption that we all know what the Wave Model is, focussing instead on a certain perspective towards it or making a challenge to it.

So, bearing this in mind, an examination of the descriptions and commonalities found follows. Even in the first wave, focused on the emancipation of women and seen in popular terms as being primarily about middle and upper class ladies, behaving in a fairly unladylike way, there was a splintering and fading in and out of priorities including temperance, abolition in America, and the involvement of the working classes (Kroløkke and Sørensen, 2006). Donawerth argues that the first wave has its roots in nineteenth century Europe and America, with its success emblemised within suffrage (Donawerth, 2009). Both she and Kroløkke and Sørensen see the second wave as emerging in the 1960s. The demarcation of suffrage as the end of the first Wave does indeed work quite well with the image, with the

peak of activity rising and dying away from 1918 in the UK, through 1920 in the USA (Hewitt, 2012, p. 658) and onwards, but of course, many countries did not achieve equal suffrage until decades later. Hewitt argues that this definition of the first wave is 'seriously flawed' (2012, p. 659) and argues that there were many other, smaller waves between the first and second waves, which are now impossible to label as the concept of dormancy between the first and second waves and their current definitions have become so entrenched, even being adopted by the Library of Congress as topical categories (Hewitt, 2012).

Notwithstanding, Donawerth identifies the second wave as being rather more Americo-centric in its beginnings, while Kroløkke and Sørensen identify two distinct phases lasting until the 1990s, and with the third wave taking over immediately from this. Yet Hewitt (2012) characterises the Americans as 'part of' (p. 660) the second wave, rather than leading it, initially at least. She also suggests that while first wave is a definition history has applied, second and third wave feminists have enthusiastically taken on the identifying term for themselves. Hewitt characterises them as 'eager to discover our foremothers' (2012, p. 658), while Stansell suggests that they were dismissive of their predecessors (2010). It can be seen that these statements are largely mutually exclusive.

Donawerth identifies the third wave as being characterised by a rejection of the work of the previous generation, and moving increasingly to a concentration of addressing global women's issues and collection action. One of the problems with this definition is that the third wave is also sometimes called Post-feminism, which implies that the time for feminism has passed, whereas, in many ways one may believe that the work of the Second Wave is not yet complete (Donawerth, 2009 p. 214). Donawerth herself expresses discomfort with these definitions and goes on to offer an alternative five category or era definition.

Further, by having no lull between the second and third waves, the Wave Model fails to reflect the historical reality, and as pointed out both by Kroløkke and Sørensen (2006) and Nicholson (2010), the arguments about focus create an image more of a splintered tree that remains strong than a wave. The second wave is supposedly characterised by a growing concentration on feminist theory, a link to the academy, and the beginnings of the performance of feminism, such as the public abandonment of 'bras, girdles, false eyelashes, high heels and makeup, into a trash can in front of reporters' (Kroløkke and Sørensen, 2006). This then links and grows into how the third wave of feminism is portrayed, often as the rise of the 'grrls' (Kroløkke and Sørensen, 2006), with a strong emphasis on re-engagement with street level issues, and the concept of performative feminism, an increase of subverting theatre and the arts for the feminist cause. There is another, even more basic problem with the Third Wave, as academics cannot even truly agree when each wave happened; note Donawerth's implication of a 1980s start to the Third Wave, Stansell's suggestion of the late 1970s and Hewitt's vote for the early 1990s.

Further, there are inconsistencies such as the criticism of sexist language, while also re-appropriating derogatory terms for self-proclamation (Kroløkke and Sørensen, 2006). There is an acknowledgement that feminism is no longer united in its purpose, but in its mode of communication. Returning to our definition of a wave, if there is a marked diversification of goal, how can contemporary feminism be defined as a wave at all? When one considers either of these summaries of the Wave Model, in all cases however, the period between attaining the vote and the 1950s/60s is entirely unmentioned. This then leads one to believe that feminism was dormant, if not dead, between 1920 and the mid-1950s, which is a dangerous supposition, yet one that pervades the very literature that seeks to dissuade the reader of this view.

Some believe we are currently in the third wave of feminism, or perhaps even beyond it. Both Hewitt (2012) and Frances-White (2018) identify not only a fourth, but a fifth wave. Today, 'we read differently' (Marks and de Courtivron, 1981, p. 4); for example, issues that were at best tangential to Grenfell's later years, such as considering the individualist identity to be more important than the role of women as a whole, are now prevalent. The views of people such as Judith Butler are so far removed from the world Grenfell's group grew up in as to be almost irrelevant to this discussion. Yet, Butler's assertion that feminism had made an error in grouping women together has relevance to the stance here taken (Butler, 1999), particularly within an interpretivist framework. A key concept is De Beauvoir's assertion, which will be referred to many times throughout this thesis, that, women are 'attached through residence, housework, economic condition, and social standing to certain men – fathers or husbands – more firmly than they are to other women' (De Beauvoir, 1997). Butler confirms and extends De Beauvoir's concept that women are more likely to ally with the men with whom they share domestic space than with other women, and suggests that the very subject of women is not a stable concept. Here she takes up the work of Cixous, who in summer 1976 encouraged women to 'write herself, because this is the invention of a *new insurgent* writing down which, when the moment of her liberation has come, will allow her to carry out the indispensable ruptures and transformations in her history' (Cixous, 1976, p. 250). This focus on women writing themselves paved the way for Butler to write a more fluid meaning of the word "I" into existence. Grenfell's careful construction of her public persona and stage presence show her writing herself into existence; she presents herself, both in her characters and her public persona, as strong but largely unthreatening, thoughtful and intelligent but without being learned. There is much in her private letters which show a different aspect, slightly

more frivolous, with long running themes of battles with her hair, which she referred to as Maud, and a jolly hockey sticks attitude to good food. However, none of this undermines the public persona; there are no ethical or attitudinal clashes that have been revealed through this research, only a different emphasis.

I am not the first to find questions within the Wave Model. Nicholson (2010) suggested that it begins to break down around the time of The Second World War, when more women embodied popular feminist ideals, such as entering the labour market and accessing less gendered working roles, but nevertheless failed to persuade their husbands to take on an equal share of the domestic duties. Nicholson also argues that if one acknowledges the various competing branches of 1960s and 1970s feminism, liberal, radical and Marxist among them, one is also forced to acknowledge that this competition breaks up the Wave Model, almost as a row of groynes break up the power of a wave on the beach, hindering its progress. Nicholson's alternative model suggests: 'At any given moment in time, the view in a kaleidoscope is complex, showing distinct colors and patterns. With the turn of a kaleidoscope, some of these colours and patterns become more pronounced, others less so, and new colors and patterns have emerged' (Nicholson, 2010, p. 5). An alternative image offered itself to me while considering Nicholson, that I will return to at points throughout this discussion is that of a skein of hand carded and spun wool, strong, but of varying textures and thicknesses. There are, on the surface, gender threats to the usefulness of this image, indeed it is the industry from which the word 'spinster' originates, however, the wool industry provided the financial independence De Beauvoir aspires to for many women (Veggeberg, 2020).

Having considered the feminist approach of this research, it is now time to turn to the historical techniques and backgrounds that have been surveyed and from which techniques and attitudes have been borrowed to form my hybrid approach: Total Historicism, New Historicism, Cultural Materialism and, to a lesser extent, Reception Theory, each of them with their own strengths and issues.

Even the concept of Historicism brings its own issues; New or otherwise. There is no aim here to predict the future; rather, an acknowledgement that Grenfell's commentary allows us a new take on a less-than-perfect model of feminism. A problem with the Wave Model of feminism is that there is a danger that we manipulate historical knowledge to fit the model, rather than adjusting the model, or creating a new one to fit the knowledge. This is the issue I am attempting to address. There also needs to be an acknowledgement of Foucault's advice to historians that they should abandon any claim to it being a sort of science, and, as summarised by Shafique and Akhtar (2012), 'concede their own purposive involvement and commitment to the writing of history' (p. 141). This also nods to the linguistic interpretivism which is very much in evidence throughout the analysis found in this thesis.

Cultural Materialism is an 'attempt to account for the origin, maintenance, and change of sociocultural systems' (Elwell and Andrews, 2016) including how we portray ourselves, our interactions with each other and the world around us. Cultural Materialism examines infrastructure and social practices, particularly how the former impacts on the adaptation of the latter. Originated by Marvin Harris, there is a recognition that 'hierarchies based on class, sex, age, ethnicity, and other statuses exist throughout the structure of societies and that the interests of the elite weigh more heavily than most' (Elwell and Andrews, 2016).

Thus, we can say that Harris prioritises context, of local, national, and international infrastructure, and of upbringing and status, in how society is formed and adapted. As the analysis here is largely undertaken from the standpoint that our context shapes us, and that Grenfell was impacted by the physical world of war, this is a useful broad standpoint.

However, the Materialism of Cultural Materialism is the opposite of the kind of idealism and optimism that I espouse, as Dollimore and Sinfield assert that culture cannot 'transcend the material forces and relation of production. Culture is not simply a reflection of the economic and political system, but nor can it be independent of it.', (Dollimore and Sinfield, 1994, p. viii). Dollimore points out that Cultural Materialism explores the operations of power, or at least representations of that power (Dollimore, 1994, p. 3), begging the question of whether Dollimore and Sinfield are in fact using different words to try and explain the inextricable relationship that is Foucault's power/knowledge concept. In many of Grenfell's sketches, the 'Eng. Lit.' trio for instance (1965, 1967 and 1968), the operation of power/knowledge is hidden from the viewer until the last second. This gives an abstract quality to Cultural Materialism which makes a strict adherence impossible against a background of the lived experience of feminism in Reconstruction Britain. One might argue that Cultural Materialism shares hegemonic concerns with Foucault, although this is difficult to directly demonstrate.

New Historicism may be defined as 'a method of literary criticism that emphasizes the historicity of a text by relating it to the configurations of power, society, or ideology of a given time' (Merriam Webster, 2018). One could argue that New Historicism and Cultural Materialism are very much part of the same approach, with the differences being only peripherally relevant, 'those most sympathetic to the materialist project have also been

most sensitive to the differences between it and new historicism, while those hostile to it have lumped the two perspectives together, sometimes incapable of distinguishing them at all' (Dollimore, 1994, p. 129), however, the major difference can be found in the fact that 'Materialist criticism has always found it necessary to dwell on the forces which prevent change and our own failure to achieve it' (Dollimore, 1994, p. 130). Both approaches require close reading of the text, in much the same way as the Anglo-American school of feminism, who 'see the close reading and explication of literary texts as the major business of feminist criticism' (Barry, 2009, p. 119), but in New Historicism the starting point is one of post-structuralism, however inaccessibly written. Data is presented and the conclusion drawn from it with little reference to a political framework. The most relevant feature in this discussion is that there is no distinction made between literature as a special category and the historical document; the same interrogative techniques are used and the two 'constantly inform and interrogate each other' (Barry, 2009, p. 166). In both instances, therefore, the historical does not form a context, but a 'co-text' (Barry, 2009, p. 167), citing Greenblatt, who refers to the need for 'an intensified willingness to read all of the textual traces of the past with the attention traditionally conferred only on literary texts' (Greenblatt, 2015, pp. 19-20). This informs the methodology applied here. While I shall foreground the scripts and performances, the discourse or conversation of influence is informed by the reviews, personal letters and other documentation surrounding them, and these are treated with equal attention, valued for their own merits, in the analytical process.

However, Cultural Materialism requires a stated political commitment from the outset (Barry, 2009), which tends to run to the broadly left wing. The political standpoint espoused in this thesis is of the most general aspect, both by Grenfell and by me; that we should be

kind and generous to each other, that feminism, or more broadly equality, is a good goal to have in society. However, there is also an understanding and viewpoint that, thus far, all feminism has succeeded in doing is doubling most women's workload; we now have to be both domestic goddesses and career women, yet the *Daily Mail* (Vine, 2017) still makes editorial decisions about headlines involving 'Boy jobs and girl jobs'. Until we can train our sons and husbands that putting the bins out does not constitute equal partnership in the running of the home, we have not created equality.

A relevant question here is that of the gendering of language, as embodied by Woolf's examination of 'the role of language in human form' (Bakay, 2015). In 1929, Woolf wrote, 'it is fatal for anyone who writes to think of their sex. It is fatal to be a man or woman pure and simple; one much be woman-manly or man-womanly' (Woolf, 2015, p. 78). Butler (1999) outlines some of the key issues; for example, the necessarily loaded quality of every word that is written or spoken, so that even the word 'I' is laden with interpretation. She asks whether 'the breakdown of gender binaries [... is] so monstrous, so frightening that it must be held to be definitionally impossible?' (Butler, 1999, p. vii). This raises the question of whether Butler belongs within the field of cultural studies or critical theory, or indeed if there is, or needs to be, a distinction between the two any more. However, as she points out, 'no political revolution is possible without a radical shift in one's notion of the possible and the real' (Butler, 1999, p. xxiv). It is, perhaps, in this statement that we can see a small link between Grenfell and Butler, not in terms of any historical shift, but in the fact of Grenfell's Christian Science, which gives its believers a very different perspective on temporal reality from that of the mainstream churches such as the Anglican or Catholic churches. It could be argued that the opposite is true; if our bodies are not real, and we will be free of them one day, then the environment they live in becomes irrelevant. Further,

if our bodies are not real, then all sorts of changes are possible with no real impact on us temporally.

Butler's views on the gendered person support the use of interpretivism in this thesis. She asserts that the gendered person is different in different circumstances, in that we construct ourselves as we wish to be seen, or as other people demand that we are seen. She also acknowledges that this means that 'gender is not always constituted coherently or consistently in different historical contexts' (Butler, 1999, p. 6) The same can be said of feminism as well as feminist theory, and this is particularly relevant to the period in which Grenfell was active. I shall argue throughout this thesis, that feminism was neither dead nor dormant in Second World War Britain and into the Reconstruction period but was simply constructed differently according to the historical needs of the time; perhaps at this point it can be seen as a thinnish stretch/thinner portion of our feminist wool-skein. Butler also argues that, just as the concept of a single identity of 'woman' is faulty, so is the concept of 'female oppression' as a single identity; rather, it has many guises and outlets. At the period with which this thesis is concerned, female oppression saw the circumstances of war added to layers of patriarchy, while men are also oppressed and constrained in times of conflict.

One of the major flaws in the type of feminist linguistic theory Butler expounds can be summed up in her assertion that feminism cannot effectively function within 'the constraints of the representational discourse' in which it sits (Butler, 1999, p. 7). She does not come up with a satisfactory alternative: her assertion that, in abstract, 'language refers to an open system of signs by which intelligibility is insistently created and contested' holds true, yet there is a feeling of utopian unreality in her work, in that the flawed gendered

definitions with which words are loaded will not disappear overnight. Certainly, genderless language was not available to Grenfell in any meaningful way as a mainstream entertainer.

This is, to an extent one of the reasons why De Beauvoir is the preferred feminist theorist in this work; while De Beauvoir does not lay out an in-depth strategy of how female equality and true emancipation can be achieved, she does, at least, offer a sort of solution and a goal in itself: ‘To gain the supreme victory, it is necessary, for one thing, that by and through their natural differentiation men and women unequivocally affirm their brotherhood’ (De Beauvoir, 1997, p. 741). She quotes Engels, stating ‘Women can be emancipated only when she can take part on a large scale in production and is engaged in domestic work only to an insignificant degree’ (De Beauvoir, 1997, p. 86). De Beauvoir argues that the allegiance between men and women, or rather the collusion between the Othering and the Othered is not a conscious act, but one of habit and necessity; ‘They live dispersed among the males, attached[…] more firmly than they are to other women’ (De Beauvoir, 1997, p. 19).

Further, De Beauvoir explains, ‘In actuality the relation of the two sexes is not quite like that of the two poles, for man represents both the positive and the neutral, as is indicated by the common use of *man* to designate human beings in general; whereas woman only represents the negative, defined by limiting criteria, without reciprocity’ (De Beauvoir, 1997, p. 19). The use of the term negative is intriguing as well as technically appropriate. The word has valuative judgements attached to it, thus, the negative, is also less than, is judged less worthy than, or bad in relation to the positive and neutral male. One of the issues that De Beauvoir argues goes against the chances of reaching a level of cooperation and economic productivity and independence for women is the depth of history, ‘the category of the *Other* is as primordial as consciousness itself’ (De Beauvoir, 1997, p. 16).

Thus, for De Beauvoir, in expecting and requesting true cooperation, the battle is against the nature of a human's very being, in the need not only to set themselves up in opposition to those who are different, but to also make those different people less than, insignificant or innately wrong, that is, to make women dismissible.

I commissioned two bilingual French/English teachers, Nadean Schryer and Nathan Pascoe to translate small passages of de Beauvoir from the original French, to give a third option where readings from either Parshley's 1953 translation or Borde and Malovany-Chevallier's 2011 translation, partly to act as a check to my poor French (I also attempted to consult the original) and to offer an accessible, dynamic interpretation, both Pascoe and Schryer being in their early 30s. The pair split the work between them, so some additional material is from Schryer and some from Pascoe. In this case, Schryer, (2020) offers a more literal and yet more active and conscious interpretation. Here, I will intertwine Schryer's literal and interpretive translation together, with the interpretive aspects in brackets:

> What one needs to hope for is that on their side men assume without restriction the situation that is being created (so, men need to realise and be accountable for what is happening); and then, and only then, the woman could live this independence without falling apart. Then, Laforgue's wish will be realised: "O young ladies, when will you be our brothers, our intimate brothers without (men having) the hidden agenda to exploit you? When will we give each other a real hand shake (treat as equals)?"… Therefore, she will be a complete human being, "then will be broken the infinite servitude of the woman, then she will live for herself and by herself. Man —up until now horrible — will be setting her free (from his power or dismissed from her "female" duties)'

(Schryer, 2020).

While Parshley's translation is more formal, prosaic and theoretical, Schryer's very modern interpretation emphasises the need for a conscious and active recognition of women's equality by men in order for women to reach their full potential independence and empowerment.

It is worth noting that while today, the name Simone de Beauvoir is primarily linked to feminism, at the point at which *The Second Sex* was first published in French in 1949, De Beauvoir did not consider herself a feminist, identifying more strongly with Marxism. This can be seen in her emphasis on the solution presented in the book being to work together as human beings, supporting each other based on skills and need. The lifelong companion of Jean-Paul Sartre, the French philosopher, de Beauvoir was part of the French intellectual elite, and, Bergoffen asserts, 'declared herself a feminist in a 1972 interview […] and joined other Marxist feminists in founding the journal *Questions feministes'* (Bergoffen, 2018). The combination of Marxism, with a robust critique of the patriarchy led to controversy at the time of publication. Indeed, this may be one of the reasons why *The Second Sex* (1997) was slow to have an impact on English speakers, and Evans argues, has not retained ''an assured place within philosophical, feminist or literary history' (Evans, 1998, p. 1).

There are three key De Beauvoirian themes to which we will return then, the Otherness of women created through the patriarchal society, women's complicity in this othering and subjugation by constantly allying herself with men rather than other women and the double edged sword of freedom; access to fulfilling employment, unencumbered by domestic duties and true cooperation between human beings, regardless of gender.

While feminist theory, New Historicism and Cultural Materialism are important for my hybrid methodological and theoretical approach, so is Reception Theory. The challenge here is the same as it is elsewhere; there is neither one Reception Theory nor one definitive approach. Even Barbara Klinger, who attempts to provide an accessible summary, cannot deal with every aspect. However, she does sum up the essence, attractiveness and infuriating features in a single article. Reception Theory is presented as an attempt to consider not only the subject text, but everything ever written about the text, including reviews, notes and contextual settings. Klinger argues that a text is always slightly ahead of its socio-political setting, as well as a reflection of it (Klinger, 1997, p. 107), a stance that has been embraced and welcomed in this research. She recognises both the joy of subsuming oneself in such a massive task and its Sisyphean character. However, simply in making the attempt, she says, one can discover many truths about a text, or indeed a performance. Reception Theory approaches give an opportunity to enter a Foucauldian world of a 'system of relations between heterogeneous forms of discourse' (Klinger, 1997, p. 109). While this approach holds its dangers in the frustrations of built-in failure, it gives the researcher/theorist the chance to explore the limitations the audience, producers and other factors place on the artist, as well as the influence the artist has on their audience. Klinger is concentrating on the world of film history, of which Grenfell is a part; in this thesis, however, my focus remains largely on her solo work.

There is a strong urge both to reject the narrative of the Waves of Feminism, and to create a new model. This narrative urge is both appealing and dangerous. Its attraction, as Hutcheons asserts, comes from 'the familiar narrative form of beginning, middle and end [which] implies a structuring process that imparts meaning as well as order' (Hutcheons, 2002, p. 1). Nonetheless, this obscures the question of whether there is indeed a unified

meaning to be found. Braudel argues that there is, but that it is a Sisyphean task; ‘Everything must be recaptured and relocated in the general framework of history… we must respect the unity of history which is also the unity of life’ (Braudel, 1980, p. 6). However, in attempting to recreate this unity, the historiographer risks only creating a false unity. Hutcheons argues that a Foucauldian acknowledgement of discontinuity ‘has become a new instrument of historical analysis and simultaneously a result of that analysis’ (2002, p. 63). This aspect of discontinuity is vital when trying to frame a single individual as case study for a re-examination of feminism in Second World War and Reconstruction Britain. Grenfell may well have done many good works, been socio-politically active, and commentated on the female situation in many clever and useful ways, but she was neither saint nor villain. Hutcheons points out and drives home the similarity between historical and fictional narrative making, so it is ‘the importance of context, or discursive situation’ (2002, p. 64) which, again, roots the theoretical framework of this research in Discourse Analysis.

Other types of Reception Theory or Reception Theory practice have also been considered in carrying out this research, but to a lesser extent. These include Q Methodology (Davis and Michelle, 2011), which corroborates Klinger’s views in one important way; that texts are ‘polyvalent and polysemic’. While there may be many variations within the response of each audience, there will be commonality, in terms of what makes individuals laugh, the cultural experiences they bring with them into the theatre, or the way they communicate their reactions.

These, then, are the theoretical and philosophical standpoints which have influenced my theoretical standpoint. While I agree with Foucault’s interpretation of the

power/knowledge dynamic, I would trace its roots to an older tradition, back at least as far as Marx and De Beauvoir. From Cultural Materialism and New Historicism I take, not theories, but tools and attitudes towards the validity and import of a wide variety of co-texts that undermine, as Foucault does, the concept of a pre-ordained hierarchy, both of society and of documentation. I do not, however, feel that their political pessimism is necessary; nor is it helpful to me in my operational activities. Reception Theory provides me with a key to the door of discourse analysis, within which sits the majority of this hybrid contextual analysis method.

The methodology of this study can be broadly placed within a theoretical framework of feminist discourse analysis, with a strong emphasis on the awareness that I am an interpretivist, and thus acknowledge the place that researcher bias may hold in this study. The creation of this methodology has been inductive, beginning simply as 'close reading' and being developed over time into a full-blown discourse analysis, with certain sections being re-analysed multiple times throughout the course of this research.

The concept of a 'discourse analysis' can be a tricky one, and the concept of a contextual analysis can be more accessible. Norman Fairclough, a linguistic critical discourse analyst, is helpful and has now been applied more widely. At its most basic level, discourse analysis is about having an awareness that not only are there multiple influences on the subject, but the subject in turn influences those around it/them, echoing back up the chains of context. Fairclough argues that 'the relationship between text and social structures is an indirect one. It is mediated first of all by the discourse which the text is a part of, because the values of textual features only become real, socially operative, if they are embedded in social interaction' (Fairclough, 2001, p. 92). In a way then, discourse analysis is about

untangling the multiple conversations different layers of context are having with each other.

Foucault brings discourse analysis out of the realms of linguistics and broadens it into a tool for the wider world of social sciences and practice (Diaz-Bone, Bührmann, Gutiérrez Rodriguez, Schneider, Kendal and Tirado, 2007). This was the catalyst for my working method and methodology, leading to the wringing of as much analytical goodness out of the material as possible. Foucault suggests that there are four questions the discourse analyst must pose:

- Which object or area of knowledge is discursively produced?
- According to what logic is the terminology produced?
- Who authorised it?
- Which strategic goals are being pursued in the discourse?

(Diaz-Bone et al., 2007)

The chapters presented here raise the question of why Grenfell stopped at humour, at shining a light on the hypocrisies and ridiculousness of various aspects of the patriarchy, rather than going further and challenging them. Grenfell did not see it that way, describing some of her monologues, including 'Telephone Call' (1959) as 'straight' (Grenfell and Moore, 1981, p. 22), although there are moments of amusement even in the more dramatic monologues. Foucault posits that there is a set of inherent rules, with each statement having to respect the rules set up for it by previous statements and the contexts they have produced in order even to be recognised as a serious attempt to make a

statement (Diaz-Bone et al., 2007). In short then, in ensuring that people laugh with her, Grenfell avoids having people laugh at her or judge her negatively, and increases her chances of the underlying ‘serious speech act’ (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1982, p. 52) being accepted.

It is against a background of these questions that I have analysed sketches in multiple ways, allowing for a triangulation of analysis. This multi-layered approach, using multiple methods and sources, should allow a robustness against critique (Mathison, 1988) and improve the validity of the results. Triangulation has been used in the social sciences since approximately 1959 (Mathison, 1988), and can be adapted to this research, which is of a cultural studies nature, because it allows flexibility in approach, as well as more opportunity for rigour and multi-layered analysis.

First, scripts have undergone a textual analysis. Where scripts have not been immediately available, but recordings exist, I have manually transcribed the text from the recordings. While time-consuming, this is a valuable step, as the act of audio-typing is an ingrained skill, which enables me to begin analysis unconsciously while my fingers and ears do the obvious work. Where only scripts have been accessible, a textual analysis has been the only method of analysis used.

Secondly, where both recording (whether audio, or audio-visual) and script exist (or can be transcribed), a performance analysis was then undertaken. This is important, as most of Grenfell’s published scripts provide little or no reference to vocal or stage direction, although camera and lighting plot scripts exist. Therefore, the manner of delivery can be much better established from a performance than simply from a text. If more than one Grenfell recording exists, where possible an audio-visual record has been chosen, as it gives

most information in one opportunity. On only one occasion, where there exists a script but no recording, I commissioned Vicky Stowe, an award winning amateur actor, with experience of performing Grenfell's work, to make a recording. This was for the purpose of using examples in a conference paper, but then gave the opportunity for experimentation as an analytical tool, with limited effectiveness. This sketch was 'Canteen' (1940a) and the experiment was not repeated.

Thirdly, where a performance has been made by Maureen Lipman, as well as Joyce Grenfell, the two performances have been compared. This goes towards establishing context and the influence of time and socio-historical pressures on the performer, and in turn, the performer's potential to influence the audience. This feeds into and meets the requirements of some of the elements of discourse analysis as a theoretical framework. In most cases, the Grenfell performance has been analysed first. Performances by other artists were ruled out as only Lipman's work was developed in collaboration with the Grenfell Estate and therefore has the highest level of faithfulness and research behind it. Further, this performance, *Re:Joyce* ran internationally for just over a decade and therefore has the highest level of theatrical and critical authority compared to other performances by other actors that are available. In terms of the Foucauldian power/knowledge concept then, Lipman has earned her right to speak. Lipman is also, in a way, self-selecting, as, like Grenfell, she is probably as well known for her own presentation of her personality through memoirs and comment pieces as for her work. Like Grenfell, Lipman has, as she has approached what is considered a normal retirement age, and indeed moved passed that age, become more vocal on matters of society, politics and religion. Most notably, there are parallels to be drawn between Grenfell as a Christian Scientist and Lipman as a

practising Jew including her recent work against a growing anti-Semitic environment in the UK.

The method of choosing sketches began in a fairly naturalistic way; my knowledge of many of Grenfell's sketches is far-reaching and ingrained, as I was exposed to them repeatedly and in multiple situations from a very early age. Therefore, when the literature review suggested a fragmentation of the women's movement in regard to work, and various ways of carrying forward equality in this area, the first three sketches, 'Three Brothers', 'Telephone Call' and 'The Wedding is on Saturday' suggested themselves for analysis. These formed my first conference paper. It was only later, as more scripts became available to me, that I had to actively select scripts and split them by theme for chapter selection.

Many of these readings resemble the close and contextual reading style more markedly connected to New Historicism and Cultural Materialism. This is coupled with a theoretical disregard for literature as somehow special and different from other historical texts, an attitude from both new Historicism and Reception Theory, and with an awareness of a socio-political commitment to equalities as required by New Materialism and a sense of optimism borrowed from the same. An email conversation with Dr Erin Lee Mock in autumn 2018 led me to identify more strongly with the techniques used in film analysis as separate and extended techniques. Thus, while the transcription of the texts, done by hand, is vitally important as a foundation to the analysis, this is not where the *meat* of the discussion lies; rather, it is in the content and discourse analysis. This is probably most clearly seen in the comparison between Grenfell's performances of her sketches, and Lipman's, up to forty years later. It is in these changes of emphasis, delivery and nuance that the positioning of the artist, and the analyst can be found. This is based on the socio-

political context in which the performances sat at the time and the socio-political influence they have carried forward, in a knot of perspective and impact which can only be partially unravelled here.

The discussion of the analyses does not form a separate chapter of this study, although there is a summary of them in the Conclusion; this is not a scientific method based thesis, so the findings and discussion are incorporated naturalistically throughout each chapter, interweaving narrative, analysis, discourse and conclusions together in an effort to be as seamless and pleasurable to read as possible.

This chapter, then, has laid out the literature and theories consulted in the construction of my theoretical framework and methodological approach which can be summarised as a close examination of textual and performance analysis set against a broad background of Foucauldian concepts of power/knowledge and De Beauvoirian concepts of feminism. The next chapter will provide a more traditional literature review of the historical view of Feminism from the 1920s to the 1970s, providing a contextual background against which the analysis chapters have been set.

Chapter 3: Historical and Contextual Literature Review

The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate the context of feminism as Joyce Grenfell and her contemporaries would have experienced it, as distinct from the varieties of feminism we experience today. For two reasons, the literature utilised has been restricted to that encompassing British and American Feminism. Firstly, as Christine Stansell (2010) points out, the experience of feminism outside of Northern Europe and America was vastly different to that within these areas and, therefore, to broaden out to a survey of the world would be unmanageable, and only tenuously relevant to Grenfell's experiences. Secondly, and most importantly, in later framing the wider debate about understanding feminism as Grenfell herself would have known it. Grenfell was 'three quarters American by birth and English by upbringing, education, marriage and residence' (Grenfell, 1976, p. 33); thus, then, in order to make any contextual framing relevant, it is most apposite to confine ourselves geographically in this manner. Finally, the choice has been made to restrict the timeline from the 1920s to the 1970s, as being most relevant to Grenfell's lifetime and experience. By the late 1960s, when the new feminism began to emerge, Grenfell was beginning to consider retirement, and although she formally retired in 1973, she never really ceased to have a public life, taking part in *Face the Music* and other public engagements until a few months before her death in 1979. Grenfell died before we can truly say Third Wave Feminism had found its stride, and, as Stansell points out, those young women would not have accepted her as a feminist, as they arrived 'to help but also to criticise, judge, scold and instruct' those who had gone before them (Stansell, 2010, p. 217).

In order to try and place Grenfell within the world of feminism, it is first important that it is defined. While as soon as one utilises time and title to define something, somebody else will criticise that categorisation, it is perhaps most convenient, and sufficient, to consider feminism chronologically, or in waves, although the challenges brought about are the prompt for this research, as is more widely debated in Chapter 2. While there are many reasons to criticise the terms First, Second and Third Wave feminism, they are the terms, perhaps, most often used, so for the sake of the common understanding, these are the definitions adopted here. For the sake of brevity, a summary blending the work of Kroløkke and Sørensen (2006) and Donawerth (2009) has been presented in Chapter 2, but any number of other sources would lead to similar definitions.

The first fault one can find in the contextual literature on British and American feminism from an historical point of view, rather than a theoretical one, is the scant resources published recently. Prior to Stansell's 2010 *The Feminist Promise*, the next most recent monograph material of any significance appears eighteen years prior, and then over a decade before that. A number of articles and theses exist from the late 1990s and early 2000s, and these will be addressed later in this chapter.

Olive Banks, Barbara Ryan and Stansell all claim to be redressing the gap in feminist study covering 1920 to the late 1960s, and all use terms linking welfare and feminism (Banks, 1981), or terms like 'social feminism' (Stansell, 2010, p. 180). They point out the role of protectionism and protective legislation, for example, 'setting limits on their hours of work and prohibiting night-work' (Banks, 1981, p. 112) to address all bar those activists who campaigned for equal employment opportunities, who, they imply, were the minority true feminists, although they do not directly use this term. If one considers issues like the

marriage bar (the requirement by many companies and organisations, including the teaching profession and the civil service, that women would resign upon marriage) then, these two areas of feminisms run the risk of directly cancelling each other out. In the cases of the first two terms welfare and social feminism, these writers refer to them as women who were concerned to address issues that created a better social standard of living, often through legislation, not only for women, but in general and largely for the working classes. In terms of 'protectionism', the subject here is the legislation, or attempted legislation that gave women a special status, such as the 1920 Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children's Act, which protected, but also prevented, women from working in very heavy roles or putting in what today would be called unsociable hours. In this particular case, it meant, for example, that women were effectively barred from the newspaper trade (Pugh, 1992).

The problem with protectionism is that it not only throws women at the mercy of the paternalists, it also flies in the face of the equality feminists for whom Stansell, particularly, appears to have more admiration. All three writers start from the standpoint that, having met their major goal of female emancipation, the suffragettes and suffragists became directionless. If one is also to find fault with these publications at a fundamental level, it would be that they are largely US-centric, and leave many questions unanswered about the British scene. In the case of Stansell, this is clearly her focus from the outset, but the other two, initially at least, appear to be setting out to demonstrate some form of comparison. It is interesting that the only male writer in the equation at this point not only does not use these terms, but also comes from a British-focused standpoint and appears to view the conversation much more in the nature of a work in progress rather than a dormant period. Pugh appears to define or categorise the feminists by how radical or

vociferous they were, rather than whether they were equality or welfare feminists, although he does still acknowledge these possibilities.

If this situation is to be accepted practically, however, the next course of action is to address this perception and the attitudes displayed towards the two branches of feminism identified by our female authors. While all three appear to accept that, in truth, welfare feminism was the more effective in this period, they seem to treat these women as somehow inferior or, perhaps, as less pure than the equality feminists; Banks refers to the majority working in welfare awareness as being fundamental 'for the way in which feminism was to develop in the years of intermission' (Banks, 1981, p. 157), yet Ryan and Stansell both make reference to the actions and motives of these women having little to do with feminism (Ryan, 1992). Indeed, Stansell suggests that in the post-war era, 'feminism [self-stated] was a selfish and narrow preoccupation.' (Stansell, 2010, p. 187). This then leads to a secondary question of this research, that of whether being feminist by accident, or indeed as a by-product, is somehow less feminist, if it still helps attain the goals.

It is only more recently that a challenge has really been evident in terms of the historical divides between equality (old) and welfare (new) feminism, particularly between the two World Wars. DiCenzo and Motuz (2016) is perhaps a prime example of this re-addressing of the issues. They argue that to divide the inter-war women's movement in to new and old feminism is an over-simplification, and indeed, largely false. Where Clay (2016) concentrates on the differences between *Time and Tide* magazine — characterising it as being advertised as a general interest magazine for women — and the *Woman's Leader* as a more overtly feminist magazine, aiming itself at the modern woman, DiCenzo and Motuz

take a slightly different approach, characterising the magazines as friendly rivals, who in their different areas of debate and interplay, allowed a discussion of many women's issues, including motherhood, birth control and employment. In doing so, they argue, while the magazines fell short of reaching all their goals, they mobilized areas of debate and consensus that might otherwise have slowed and stagnated.

The strength of the works by Stansell, Ryan and Banks, or rather the relevant chapters thereof, is that they do comprehensively lay out, from a solidly historical perspective the journey feminism took from emancipation through to the currently acknowledged renaissance of feminism in the mid-1960s. As previously stated, they largely lean towards activities in America, but Banks does a solid job of balancing both sides of the Atlantic, and is particularly useful from the perspective of comparing and contrasting the attitudes of both governments towards the work of women connected to the Unions. She portrays the political partnership between the Labour Party and the Unions fluently, and therefore gives a window into the relationship those Union women had with government, the idea of a work in progress. Martin Pugh also pays particular attention to the relationship between Women Activists and the Labour Party, suggesting that Labour was the home both for 'active feminists and more voluble anti-feminists' (Pugh, 1992, p. 130). However, he also points out the discomfort which many women felt in attending Party events, and their frustration 'with the status of their conference as a purely advisory body' (Pugh, 1992, p. 136). Banks links together 'the nonconformist roots' of both the Labour Party and feminism (Banks, 1981), which also helps inform the view on what might have motivated Grenfell, as it could be argued that Christian Science is part of this non-conformist movement. Non-conformism, like the Labour Party as described by both Pugh and Banks, is quite literally a very broad church, comprising any branch of Protestantism which is not part of the

established Church of England (or Church of Scotland), and in England, includes Methodist and Baptists as well as independent groups such as the Churches of Christ and the Salvation Army. While Christian Scientists are more commonly known by that name, Mary Baker Eddy and her 15 original followers named themselves the ‘Church of Christ, Scientist’, thus placing themselves in this latter independent group, although it is a relative newcomer to the grouping, coming to the UK at the start of the twentieth century, when other, older groups were already beginning to decline (Historic England, 2016).

Banks also points out that female Members of Parliament (MPs) did not really have an identity in their own right and were more likely to follow their party line on issues, rather than take a feminist stance; indeed she claims, ‘it is only very rarely that women MPs […] have united to form a common front’ (Banks, 1981, p. 175). With Grenfell’s Aunt Nancy Astor as Britain’s first sitting female MP, this is hardly a surprise, as although a fierce supporter of women’s rights, with her lavish lifestyle and caustic and critical tongue, Astor was hardly a unifier of the people. This fits well with Ryan’s account of post-emancipation politics in the US, where she suggests that, both, the activities of female congresswomen, and the voting patterns of the new women voters, ‘it turned out, did not vote much differently than men, even more disheartening, to a large extent, they simply did not vote’ (Ryan, 1992, p. 35). Indeed, Astor entered politics, it has been argued, to retain a familial voice in the Houses of Parliament after her husband, Waldorf Astor, was made a peer and therefore had to relinquish his seat in the House of Commons. This was the atmosphere within which Grenfell grew up.

Stansell, Ryan and Banks cite the Second World War as marking a sea change in attitudes to women and women’s attitudes to themselves. Stansell makes the claim that families,

not just husbands and brothers, had fought this war, 'World War II was seen as a mobilization of siblings, an arduous effort that pressed most heavily on men at the front, but also cooed on the courage and labor of women at home' (Stansell, 2010, p, 186). However, Ryan discusses the impact of women being 'thrown out [of work] at the war's end to provide jobs for returning veterans' (Ryan, 1992, p. 36). Both Ryan and Stansell discuss at length the statistics concerning the percentage of women remaining in some form of work while also dealing with the rise of 'neo-domestic ideology' (Stansell, 2010, p. 185). Both also cite the election and subsequent assassination of John F. Kennedy as catalysts in the birth of neo-feminism, largely because of his commissioning of the President's Commission on Social Welfare (PCSW) and its findings in *American Women* (Stansell, 2010; Ryan, 1992). Grenfell addresses these issues in two of her sketches, 'The Wedding is on Saturday' (1967a) in which a mature woman has enormous doubts about getting married and the expectation that she will give up her job, and 'Telephone Call' (1959), where another, probably mature, single woman has to balance the demands of her boyfriend, ailing elderly father and selfish sister.

Banks talks fluently on the influence of arguments and moves on contraception, marriage and divorce rights, and abortion had on the later neo-feminist movement, but is quick to point out that these were not seen as feminist issues at the time, whereas the current feminist movement at the time of Banks' writing claims a strong ownership on all these issues (Banks, 1981). Stansell, meanwhile, discusses the influences and parallels between feminism and the Civil Rights Movement, particularly the inclusion of Title VII. This, to all intents and purposes, ended the need for separate women's equality legislation in America, as it added women to the list of people entitled to those equal work opportunities in the enactment of the Civil Rights Act 1964 (Stansell, 2010).

Stansell is important, largely because she takes the discussion far beyond the realms of pure historical narrative, and includes a deep and wide ranging discourse on two influential pieces of feminist literature, *The Second Sex,* by Simone De Beauvoir published in French in 1949 and first translated into English in 1953 and Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963). However, this greatest strength is also Stansell's greatest weakness; while her critique of both books and the personalities of both women is witty, well written and engaging, it is clear that Stansell is a De Beauvoir fan and a Friedan critic. There are many reasons that this may be justified; after all, De Beauvoir is philosophically and psychologically strong, while Friedan writes in a more journalistic style. It is this that leads to Stansell's dislike and, one could argue, intellectual snobbery. *The Feminine Mystique,* she argues, 'was a New York book, not a Washington book' (Stansell, 2010, p. 206), with a certain amount of disdain. By this she means that Friedan was presenting a book aimed at culture, with a certain populist/journalistic feel, rather than an intellectual appeal to the legislature based in Washington. While admitting that Friedan was an engaging speaker, she further reveals her personal dislike of the woman, recounting how she had introduced Friedan at a Princeton University event in 1980 and that Friedan had 'maundered on […] But, as rambling and banal as she was, she held an audience of several hundred young women rapt for over an hour' (Stansell, 2010, p. 214). Even if Friedan could have been considered somewhat naïve in her theoretical underpinnings, her public engagement on paper and in speeches was likely a greater catalyst to feminist consciousness-raising than any number of peer-reviewed articles in academic journals.

However, Stansell is not the only author who has concerns about Friedan and the way her work was and is perceived. Beaumont (2015) raises the question of whether Friedan represented and reflected the lived experiences of 1950s and 1960s housewives

accurately. She argues that much of the way the public and academia imagine the role of women at the time is based on Friedan's representation, succumbing 'to a dominant ideology of domesticity' (Beaumont, 2015, p. 63). Earlier, Meyerowitz had suggested that Friedan projects a lopsided view, with American post-war magazines and books rather promoting the 'ideal marriage as an equal partnership, with each partner intermingling traditional masculine and feminine roles' (Meyerowitz, 1993, p. 1471). This is important; if, as Johnson and Lloyd claim, Friedan has, in effect, contributed to creating 'a myth of a myth' (2004, p. 11), then the feminist narrative as we understand it through Friedan's eyes is skewed, as is any historical judgement based upon it. This gives weight to my methodological approach, treating all materials based on the merits of their content, rather than foregrounding documents based on who wrote them in the first instance.

The works of Pugh (1992) and Harrison (1987) must be treated separately, as they come from a markedly different angle to the three authors already discussed. It is possibly splitting semantic hairs to observe that Pugh's title, *Women and the Women's Movement in Britain 1914-1959*, takes the reader in a new direction, and this is, perhaps, reflected in the context and content of the book. It also conceivably chimes more with how Grenfell herself reflected upon the role and place of women. Of particular note is his concern for the housing situation of women, both in domestic service and in their own homes. This was also a matter of concern for Grenfell, both in her work with the Infant Welfare Centre, and in a more general way in terms of the housing of her own domestic staff and the role of her father as an architect. Pugh discusses the refreshing approach of the Labour party in the 1920s, who actually consulted working class women in the design of municipal housing (Pugh, 1992, 132), while Grenfell comments with appalled hindsight on the independent flat her father designed for the staff at St Leonard's Terrace in the 1930s, as 'small and poky

and the bathroom [was] damp and windowless, with no heating of any kind' (Grenfell, 1976, p. 69).

While Pugh's is largely a socio-historical text, and Harrison's a collection of biographical essays, these books hold in common an ability to make the women involved in the Feminist movement at the time feel very real. While the other books discussed may be more academically solid, these two are more accessible, and hold much in common with an article by Thompson (2005) about his mother, Marion Thompson, who was not for most of her life a Feminist Activist, although she was certainly a welfare feminist. In both the Thompson article and Harrison's book there are the beginnings, for this reader at least, of what will become a sort of location map and friendship tree of significant feminists. Both Thompson and Harrison mention the Manchester University Settlement as influential on their subjects (Harrison, 1987; Thompson, 2005). The Manchester University Settlement was part of the reformist social movement begun in the 1880s, geographically based around the university 'with the goal of getting the rich and the poor of society to live closer together in an interdependent community' (Manchester Settlement, 2018). The Settlement continues as a charity to the present day.

Meanwhile, Thompson, Pugh and Harrison all highlight the importance of two organisations which are rather taken for granted today – the Women's Institute, founded in 1915 in Wales (The WI, 2020) and the Townswomen's Guilds, founded in 1929 in Hayward's Heath (Townswomen's Guilds, 2020). It has perhaps been largely forgotten, amongst the general public at least, that these organisations were founded in the heart of welfare feminism and were designed to enable and emancipate women in the truest sense of the word, outwith the direct political aims of more purely political organisations such as

National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship (NUSEC). Both Nancy Astor (first British Female sitting MP and Grenfell's aunt) and Grenfell were members of their local WI, although Astor was not very active. Indeed, Grenfell was president of her local branch in 1938 (Grenfell, 1988) and she always credited the Women's Institute with the inspiration for her very first entry into professional revue work, 'Useful and Acceptable Gifts' in 1939 (Grenfell, 1979, p. 134).

Both Thompson and Astor also formed small clubs or organisations where women could safely discuss their political concerns. Thompson formed a Discussion Group which met for many years (Thompson, 2005, p. 159), and Astor created the short-lived (1922-1928) Consultative Committee of Women's Organisations, which Harrison suggests were polite and sociable occasions, where the order of the evening was food, non-intoxicating drink and socio-political conversation (1987).

The role of these domestic organisations is further highlighted by Beaumont (2015) in her challenge to the perception of domestic submission in the post-war years as characterised by Friedan. She points to the complexity of women's lives, which was not captured by contemporaneous magazines, and suggests that the various women's groups, the WI, Mother's Union and Towns Women's Guilds, provided a forum for women to engage with a wider world because of their domestic responsibilities. Just as alluded to throughout this thesis, these groups, Beaumont asserts, did not self-identify as feminist, but were part of a wider women's movement which encompassed a wider range of concerns, all promoting the status of women (Beaumont, 2015). She describes these organisations as active, intelligent and responsible, but points out some lop-sidedness, as while white middle-class British members became leaders, those who had immigrated to the UK were less welcome.

Thus, we can see here a lack of representation that is prevalent in many feminist movements, and a different attitude towards non-British women throughout the period, while indigenous women are expected to be mothers and wives first and workers second, immigrant women were considered a useful economic unit first, yet were still criticised as bad mothers if they went out to work and were not supported by the state. However, while Beaumont acknowledges these inconsistencies, she also acknowledges and praises the work of women's organisations in supporting middle-class women to be both mothers and financially active in the world of work.

Pugh's emphasis is on the impact of the Women's Movement, on those who probably were not that active in the political branch of feminism, possibly because they were at work or, at home, ordinary women who perhaps felt the result of the work undertaken by the women Ryan, Stansell and Banks focus upon. There are several areas discussed in-depth by Pugh which resonate in Grenfell's autobiographies. The idea of women and work was the subject of much controversy both for feminists and anti-feminists between the wars, although not so much after the Second World War. Pugh cites the demobilisation and subsequent economic depression as reasons for the controversy. Women were legally obliged to stop working in the factories, and in white and blue collar jobs, in order to make way for the returning men, sometimes even to give up their jobs for men who had never worked in that role prior to the war. Pugh pays a great deal of attention to attempts to preserve the role of women in the Police Force and the fudging of responsibility for its demise. Eventually, it became the discretionary right of each police service to decide whether to retain women or not; 'in the mid-1930s 49 women were employed by the Metropolitan Police, 103 in the English borough and county authorities, and 22 in Scotland against a national total of nearly 65,000 male police officers' (Pugh citing NCW pamphlet,

1992, p. 118). Astor was active in the campaign to preserve the female element of the Police Service, 'Her files of the 1920s bulge with campaigns to expand the women police' (Harrison, 1987, p. 77), and here we see the most direct link with Grenfell and the Feminist movement, as Astor's parliamentary secretary was Ray Strachey. In addition to her role with Astor, Strachey had previously been editor of one of the two leading feminist magazines of the inter-war years, the *Woman's Leader.* The other was *Time and Tide* (Clay, 2016.) It is hard to establish from the available texts whether Grenfell and Strachey ever really knew each other, but Grenfell makes reference to being contacted on her aunt's behalf by her secretary with regard to entertaining foreign dignitaries at Cliveden, part of the unwritten conditions of having Parr's Cottage rent free (Grenfell, 1976). Thus Grenfell was, at this point of her life, embroiled in political matters whether she wished to be or not, while also maintaining quite a traditional female role on her aunt's behalf.

Whatever the anti-feminists' views on women at work, Pugh makes clear that the inter-war period was a time of great change for women with regard to work. The demographic of those working changed, with more women continuing in employment after marriage as the period progressed, but also the nature of the occupations changed. Pugh attributes the breadth of employment opportunities available to women during the First World War as the main reason why there was a noticeable drop in the number of women willing to take on domestic work in the years immediately after the war. He also comments on the depression as a cause of many working class women becoming unemployed, as the belief of the anti-feminists was that a working woman took a job from a man. He paints a picture of the pervasiveness of the belief that women worked for pin money, despite the economic realities, particularly amongst certain elements of the press (Pugh, 1992). He also comments that, at this time, many middle class women either remained in work upon

marriage or took work, perhaps for the first time, while husbands tried to establish themselves in careers or their own businesses (Pugh, 1992). Grenfell was certainly one of these women; she commented ‘Reggie worked for companies his father managed, but they were precarious and we lived from crisis to crisis’ (Grenfell, 1976, p. 118). Thus began Grenfell’s search for work. Bearing in mind the difficulty of finding good domestic staff and the pressure from magazines on middle class women to manage their homes more effectively (Pugh 1992), Grenfell expresses surprise that she did not feel the need to dispense entirely with domestic staff of her own, instead reducing the staff to one housekeeper. However, as both Grenfell and Pugh point out, the wages paid were so low as to have made negligible difference to the household budget and a lot more work for a not very practical woman (Grenfell, 1979; Pugh 1992).

It is important not to confuse anti-feminists with anti-suffragists, such as those which are the subject of Binard’s ‘“The Injustice of the Woman’s Vote”: opposition to female suffrage after World War 1’ (2014). This is a concise introduction not only to three anti-suffragist writers who continued to have some level of impact for years after female emancipation was well established, but an introduction to the idea that some women in this period could have taken such a stance. For many of us in the 21st century, it is hard to imagine that any woman would not want access to the vote. The kind of quasi-scientific arguments and the styles of writing of Arabella Kenealy, Charlotte Cowdray and Charlotte Haldane were most convincing, particularly considering their educated backgrounds and ability to move in scientific circles, including their interest in eugenics. Their shared concern for the supremacy of ‘the race’, and their shared belief that the role of motherhood should be held sacred above all other women’s roles can be discomfiting to the 21st century reader. However, Binard points to the crux of the matter in her conclusion; these women were not

anti-feminists, in fact at some point in their lives all three had identified as feminists or been part of a recognised feminist organisation. Kenealy and Cowdray benefitted from the education so hard fought and won by their predecessors (Binard, 2014).

It is perhaps a signifier of the fragmented feel of the time that such diverse views as those of Haldane, Grenfell and Dane (McDonald, 2013) could all be held more or less contemporaneously. McDonald characterises Dane as a middlebrow feminist writer 'consistent with the somewhat fragmented and multifarious feminism which emerged during the First World War' (2013, Abstract). This is possibly the most concise definition of the state of feminism in Britain between the wars, and reflects the position outlined in the other feminist history texts consulted. This also allows a great deal of flexibility in attempting to interpret Grenfell's position in this 'evolving feminist perspective' (2013, Abstract). It is interesting to consider that, given Dane's role as a radio broadcaster in the early 1940s, there is every possibility Grenfell would have critiqued one or more of her programmes before they met. One such article was published in 1942, when Grenfell commented on Dane's performance in the radio play *Women at War,* describing Dane's voice as '… a delight. It is unaffected, clear and both melodious and pleasantly strong.' (Grenfell, 1942). Given that Grenfell was quite cutting in many of her other radio reviews, this is high praise indeed.

McDonald suggests that Dane was constantly re-inventing herself, and bearing in mind the longevity of her career(s), this would seem to be necessary. The question can then be asked as to whether the same not be said of Grenfell, over an over-lapping period. Dane had an 'early reputation for feminist, liberal thinking and her ambiguous sexuality [… and] demonstrated a counter-cultural tolerance of racial difference and homosexuality'

(McDonald, 2013, p. 3), whereas Grenfell had to work through her views on these matters. As late as 1970, in her letters to Virginia Graham from the Aldeburgh Festival, she discusses in depth a conversation she had had with Cleo Laine, 17 years Grenfell's junior 'She is very 'realistic' about her situation and quite without any chip' (Grenfell, 2006, p. 60).

Grenfell's letters from Aldeburgh also provide some insight into her views on homosexuality at a similar period. On 11th June 1968 E.M. Forster and William Plomer dined next to the Grenfells in a restaurant in Aldeburgh, while Desmond Shawe-Taylor was also in attendance. E.M. Forster wrote *A Passage to India* (1924), among other books later said to have homosexual undertones, and had a forty-year relationship with Bob Buckingham, a policemen more than thirty years his junior (Roberts, 2012). Plomer, a poet, never publicly acknowledged his homosexuality, but 'privately he admitted that it was central to his life and work' (Maye, 2003) and Shawe-Taylor, the music critic, was part of the bohemian set that included Edward Sackville-West. Again Shawe-Taylor discreetly had a number of long term homosexual relationships (De-La-Noy, 1995). It is hard to decide whether it is with a sense of irritation or amusement that Grenfell comments 'The place hisses with the sibilance of highly intellectual non-marryers. They seem to swarm here, all shapes, sizes and ages.' (Grenfell, 2006, p. 42).

Binard draws more attention to the still mainly unspoken subject of homosexuality, pointing out that Vera Brittain was strongly opposed to Haldane's classifications of non-mothers as ranging from 'normal' to 'masculine sub-normal' (Binard, 2014, p. 393), yet managed to avoid 'the question of lesbianism that is ever present in Haldane's book' (Binard, 2014, p. 394). Haldane may well have been thinking of people such as the gender-free and masculine clothes wearing painter, Gluck, who defied the gender conventions of

her era (Michalska, 2018). Brittain and Haldane were writing in the 1920s in this instance, but Grenfell's delicate treatment of Dane's relationships, right up until Dane's death in 1963, suggests that this avoidance of female homosexuality remained a touchy subject, if not largely taboo throughout the period. Thus a contextual understanding of the attitudes towards homosexuality in the environment within which Grenfell was working, but this is not referred to in any direct way in Grenfell's sketches, being more reflected in her private writings and work 'as herself'.

Returning to the pro-feminists, both Pugh and Harrison draw strong pictures of the women involved in the feminist movement at this time. For now, attention has largely been turned to Harrison's chapters on Astor and the Stracheys, as this is where, so far in the research, the links to Grenfell are strongest. The picture drawn of Astor is of a woman who accessed politics in 'a decidedly non-feminist route' (Harrison, 1987, p.79), in taking her husband's seat in the House of Commons upon his accession to the peerage, and of a woman whose transatlantic ways and lack of self-control really limited her political career to that of a backbencher. It is interesting that Harrison portrays her as really not very bright, and very much reliant on the sister-in-law team of Pippa and Ray Strachey, and Eva Hubback (Harrison, 1987), all of whom acted as her political secretaries at one point or another, for her feminist awareness and direction. It is also interesting that where Banks, Ryan and Stansell rather dismiss Astor's type of welfare feminism as having somewhat lost focus on the main prize, that of equality in terms of pay, Harrison and Pugh portray it as the pragmatic way forward.

Harrison analyses the amount of time Astor spent speaking in the House on Feminist issues as ratios compared to the other 36 female MPs who sat between the wars. Astor took up

a sixth of the female vocal contribution, of which the majority concentrated on questions affecting women. Harrison claims that ‘only Rathbone surpassed her total parliamentary contribution in this area’ (Harrison, 1987, p. 75). Pugh, Harrison and Stansell all consider Astor to have been conservative, if not outright frigid, in her attitudes towards sex (Harrison, 1987; Pugh, 1992; Stansell, 2010), and therefore portray her as a reluctant and pragmatic supporter of birth control. To an extent, while Astor was a moralist, she was also hampered in her public views by the fact that ‘reticence on sexual matters was still expected from women in public life’ (Harrison, 1987, p. 77). Ray Strachey, on the other hand, was a charismatic character who enjoyed building her own ‘rammed earth’ (Harrison, 1987, p. 169) home from mud bricks and was perfectly aware of and pragmatic about her husband’s three affairs.

Thus, male writers appear to do an effective a job of bringing to life the characters of those in the feminist movement. This is important in not only understanding feminism as Grenfell would have experienced and identified it, but in gaining insight into the nature of these women, with whom she came into contact in her formative years to a greater or lesser extent. Another male scholar who is successful in achieving this is Harold L. Smith, who over an approximately 15-year period between 1981 and 1996 produced at least five articles centred on the struggles of the feminist movement directly relating to pay, the labour force and pensions between the 1930s and the late 1950s. These articles re-use many of the same resources across their content to focus on different areas, particularly those involving the Second World War years, and a sense of strong characters experiencing great frustration is the overall impression made. It could be interpreted, indeed it has been interpreted by Smith himself, that the feminist movement in this time was largely ineffectual and somewhat fragmented (1981, 1984, 1994, 1996).

Smith has also demonstrated the lack of gender loyalty shown by the political parties: however, ineffectual and fragmented is not the same thing as dead or dormant, and the fact that Smith has so much material with which to work suggests that the feminist movements, as they should more accurately be called, were very much alive and kicking. Many of the movers and shakers discussed by all those writers already mentioned are still in play as the focus moves into and past the war years. Smith characterises Ray Strachey and her colleagues as being 'privately very pleased' (1996, p. 105) at the extent to which the House of Commons had supported equal pay by 1936. Like Binard, he draws attention to the complexity of the Equal Pay and Equal Pension issue, with both having real logistical complexities concerning the ethics of the marriage bar and its impact on the opportunities for both married women in work and single women with regard to a pension. The marriage bar appears to have begun as an expectation, rather than a rule, as women began to enter professions such as teaching and the Civil Service at the end of the 19th Century, indeed, early Civil Service records indicate that the Postmaster General decreed, 'we do not punish marriage by dismissal' (Martindale, cited in Stanley, 2020). However, the practice of requiring women to resign or retire upon marriage had become ingrained in many industries, and required legislation to remove it. The marriage bar was based on the premise that it was a man's responsibility to support his family and therefore a married woman working was depriving another family of a potential income. Smith is most effective in painting a portrait of a thorny ethical problem which was not resolved for many years.

Much of that discussed so far has revolved around the formal feminist and anti-feminist movements and therefore is largely, perhaps only background noise to Grenfell's world. It is, perhaps, now time to turn attention to the more socio-historical evidence. The authors heretofore have largely argued that Suffrage and the Second World War stopped feminism

in its tracks for nearly fifty years. An alternative stance needs to be considered; that women were too busy doing feminism; going to work in 'men's jobs', keeping the home running without the aid of a man to do the paternal roles and, in Grenfell's case, entertaining the troops and becoming a very successful businesswoman, to be spending time lobbying, campaigning and demonstrating for their rights.

The existing literature for this period, and this type of woman's movement, as opposed to classic Feminism, provides a different challenge. Much of it comes into the class of social history and is published in that format which can be damned with the term 'coffee table book', thus requiring more leaps and inferences in understanding than the work previously discussed. This does not mean that those leaps are not achievable.

With female conscription, women had perhaps no more choice than men in the roles they played during the Second World War, but the letters and diaries quoted in Virginia Nicholson's *Millions Like Us: Women's Lives in War and Peace* (2011) and the anecdotes re-told in Mavis Nicholson's *What Did You Do In the War, Mummy?* (2010) show clearly that this was, for many women, although not all, a special time of opportunity and different rules, a period after which many fought successfully to stay in the previously male dominated world of work. Even for those who returned to their domestic lives, a new sense of awareness of women's capabilities appeared to have been born. Mavis Nicholson's collection of interviews and reminiscences are delightfully accessible, but, averaging around 12 pages per case study, they are frustratingly brief and lacking in detail for the academic's purposes. However, some strong themes can be drawn out. In the interview with Vera Lynn, it becomes clear that Grenfell was not the only female entertainer to go out on her own to very dangerous areas of conflict. While Grenfell concentrated on

working to entertain the men of Persia and Iraq (PAI) Force, Lynn went to Burma, among other places (Weedman, 2005). Mavis Nicholson suggests that the war meant that, not only did women find out what they were capable of, but that they were expected and asked to do things only previously asked of men (Nicholson, 2010, p. 11). This being asked to undertake 'men's work' is important as although it could be, and certainly had been, argued that they were only being asked to do such things because men were not available, it does show a recognition that women were capable in a way not previously recognised. Both Nicholsons go on to recognise that, while women took on many of these roles, pay disparity was still an issue, and the male resentment in many working environments was made clear (Nicholson, 2010; Nicholson, 2011).

What is most striking in both books is not the adjustment in men's attitudes, but that of women's attitudes. Repeatedly, the women interviewed by Mavis Nicholson attribute their later careers to their experiences in the Second World War. These include Pauline Crabbe, who went on to work in broadcasting and then to become a significant board member of the National Council for the Unmarried Mother and her Child (Nicholson, 2010) and Helen Brook, who later went on to found the Brook Advisory Clinic (Nicholson, 2010). Brook's experience and attribution is crucial to understanding the importance of lived and embodied feminism to this thesis. As discussed earlier, women's right to control and understand their own bodies is a defining characteristic of Second Wave Feminism, and without the process of war, which Brook acknowledges made her more brave and willing to argue for what she believed in, one wonders if the course of Family Planning would have taken the same path. Brook states that she had been quite timid and obedient prior to the war, but 'emerged […] a fully equal human being so that when my husband returned […] he found a force to be reckoned with' (Nicholson, 2010, p. 110).

Of interest in Virginia Nicholson's account is the theme of choice and its enabling impact. It could be argued that with the introduction of female conscription in 1941, they had no more choice about their war jobs than their male colleagues. However, it is of significance that a large number of women volunteered at the earliest opportunity, as it gave them choices in terms of what type of work, and therefore indeed, the type of professional training they might receive. It is true that for some women, these choices were made on not much more than the comparative attractiveness of the uniform, 'Admittedly, the ATS uniform lacked pulling power […] the WAAFs suffered from the same defect where pockets and belts were concerned, accentuating hips and bottoms (Nicholson, 2011, pp. 144-145). Grenfell wore her ENSA uniform only a handful of times, finding it uncomfortable, ill-fitting and entirely unsuitable for the climates in which she was working. For others, such as Phyllis Noble, the training provided by their national service led to a wider interest in education and training, and 'encouraged Phyllis's latent interest in feminism' (Nicholson, 2011, p. 116).

For the likes of Helen Forrester, a sense of sexual freedom and sexual equality with men is a theme that comes through strongly, both in Forrester's later autobiographies and in memoir collections such as those by both Mavis and Virginia Nicholson. For both civilians, such as Forrester, and women in uniform, it became much more acceptable to have sex before marriage or, indeed, with no intention of getting married, at least in the minds and diaries of the young women concerned. Of course, the risks remained different and of greater consequence for women than men. In addition to the increased risk of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs), contraception was very much the woman's concern and an unplanned pregnancy was not just a matter of public scandal, but had severe consequences, particularly for women in uniform. Virginia Nicholson gives multiple

examples of women giving birth unexpectedly or trying to hide pregnancy from commanding officers. Upon discovery, discharge with dishonour was the inevitable result (Nicholson, 2011). The statistical increase in the number of children born out of wedlock during the war and the social, moral and career impact for their mothers, may have had some influence on Helen Brook's later work (Nicholson, 2010). For some, the reverse was also true. Virginia Nicholson reports that certain branches of the female uniformed services, particularly those supporting the army, had a sleazy reputation (2011); however, Christina Kirby recounts to Mavis Nicholson her experience of meeting an army girl who had joined up to try and escape a life of prostitution (Nicholson, 2010).

While the work opportunities outlined by these two authors are encouraging, what is striking is that women still had to win men over within the workplace. Their presence in the workforce, both military and civilian, caused consternation at best for their male colleagues, and they were on the receiving end of outright discrimination at worst (Nicholson, 2011). Mavis Nicholson gathers stories of pilots trying to shake the plane about so much that they made the women sick, for no other reason than that the pilots came from fishermen's families who believed that having a woman on board was bad luck (Nicholson, 2010). She also recounts stories of male surgeons who gave grudging respect to their female assistants for the length of a single difficult procedure and no more (Nicholson, 2010). Therefore, despite men's unwillingness, the role of women and how they were perceived was changing and, although less formal, the women's movement was very much alive.

However, the measure of the success of any feminist activity is not the right of men to judge alone. Far fiercer a judgement can come from women themselves. Nella Last is

perhaps not the first person considered within the feminist framework, but her Mass Observation diaries, published much later and dramatized by the undoubtedly feminist Victoria Wood (2006), show a sense of self-reflection that the diaries and letters of the younger girls (as they preferred to refer to themselves) lack. Virginia Nicholson uses excerpts from Last's diaries to demonstrate the continuation of a thread that Stansell and her colleagues, discussed earlier, would recognise as social feminism. Last is very concerned with the preserve of women as being just as capable as men, but with different responsibilities. The sense of pride Nella and her friends exhibited in 'contemplating the bottled raspberries on their larder shelves, or wearing their refashioned coats made from army blankets, Nella and all those other women gained a sense of value, a satisfying awareness that their contribution had a tangible meaning.' (Nicholson, 2011, p. 293). It is this sense of satisfaction in a job well done, a sense of being part of something bigger, that links these women to the more widely recognised waves of feminism, that came before and after them. It will continue to be demonstrated that these women used the same skills that the suffragettes had used before them, and the Greenham Common women used after them, to do their bit for the war. In doing this, they also furthered the cause of feminism, it was simply too busy a time and would have been inappropriate under the circumstances for them to be marching and writing in the same way as their predecessors and successors. Without the war, it is unlikely that young ladies such as Phyllis Noble would have come into contact with Amber Blanco White and realised that she was, at heart, a feminist (Nicholson, 2011). Such education is not widely reported, and the reasons for this lack of reportage are probably also connected to the ambience and environment created by The Second World War and the subsequent reconstruction.

In addition, post-war attitudes to women and work are, in much of the literature surveyed so far, considered from a fairly general historical point of view. An alternative, sociological treatment is provided by McCarthy (2016), who recognises a new breed of sociologists, not just as observers of the changing roles of women, but as influencers of these changes. Post-war, she argues, Viola Klein, Pearl Jephcott, Judith Hubback, Ferdynand Zweig, Nancy Seear and Hannah Gavron (only Zweig was male) came to understand and promote the 'dual role' of married women with older children as both home makers and income generators, usually part time, not just because of economic pressures, but because they welcomed the challenge for their social and psychological needs. An interesting and relevant part of McCarthy's article is her acknowledgement that there is a dispersal and repositioning role which happens when academics meet the outside world via the press. She argues that it was the broadsheet and tabloid presentation of their work as authoritative facts or truths, rather than opinion, that led to a public collision 'with pre-war, class based understandings of married women's labour as the product of economic pressure, as well as post-war anxieties about children's emotional wellbeing' (McCarthy, 2016, p. 272). As intimated by the literature surveys involving articles on the inter-war women's periodicals, here is addressed one of the main points and features of lived feminism. The average woman did not encounter these sociologists first hand, just as they would not have encountered the feminist theorists first hand, rather the busy working mother would have encountered the simplified, interpreted and repositioned versions the newspapers presented to them.

Thus it can be seen that, if one measures feminism by numbers of pieces of legislation passed, or marches and demonstrations undertaken, the Wave format familiar to academics and activists alike is broadly accurate. However, it has been argued here that a more meaningful measure is what women felt enabled and empowered to do and say, and

how they felt able to respond and behave. By this measure, the period between 1928, throughout the Second World War, Reconstruction Britain and into the 1970s, was a period of extremely active lived or embodied feminism, of which Grenfell, it will be argued throughout the rest of this thesis, is a prime example, and by which she was surrounded, whether she was consciously aware of it or not.

This chapter, then, has presented a broad literature review demonstrating a socio-historical survey of the period, with more recent historians and commentators beginning to examine the existing historical narrative from a different, more challenging lens. While the earlier writers throughout the 1990s and 2000s have produced a factually accurate survey, their acceptance that feminist activity was the exception rather than the rule presents a somewhat depressing outlook to those of us who see women as more spirited, yet pragmatic, beings. The more recent articles offer a more refreshing, lively approach, placing the activities of female workers, academics and community groups at the heart of the period and acknowledging that the road to female equality throughout this period was pot-holed but well-travelled.

The next chapter begins the active analysis phase of the thesis, concentrating on Grenfell's monologues that are narrated by, or have as their central subject, women who are paid for their work.

Chapter 4: Grenfell’s Working Women Warriors

In this chapter, I will present analyses of a significant number of Grenfell sketches in which she explores some of the issues facing working women. I will create a co-textual reading with a variety of factual sources and take into account the concept of the role of women as examined by Simone De Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* (1997). A co-textual reading is one where documents other than ‘literature’, in this case the monologues, are used to interrogate and inform the main sources on an equal footing. I will acknowledge that the wider public’s understanding of the role of women in the 1950s and 1960s is not necessarily the same as De Beauvoir’s, particularly with regard to how married and unmarried women are treated. Within the concept of unmarried women, the status and treatment of widows is complicated, While it is important to note that they are subject to different expectations compared to divorced or yet-to-be-married women, as none of the sketches discussed here focus on a widow, it is not necessary to delve any deeper at this point. There are however, the subject of some of the monologues in Chapter 5, ‘Reactive Relatives’, so this issue will be examined there.

The purpose of the analyses presented here, set against a context (or co-texts) of papers addressing relevant concerns of the period and Grenfell’s memoirs and private correspondence, is to attempt to evaluate the value of these sketches as socio-political commentary and feminist resources, with a wider background exploration of whether any claim can be made that Grenfell herself embodied feminist attributes or goals, as a separate but connected issue.

For De Beauvoir, the route to freedom is not only in taking actions to gain freedom for oneself, rather it lies in the willing and active co-operation in pursuing the freedom for

others, as demonstrated in the various translations of the last paragraph of *The Second Sex* (1997) discussed in Chapter 2. However, for many street level or ordinary feminists this is a secondary goal, in the periphery of personal freedom, which is, at most, extended to one's friends. By street level feminists, I mean those members of society who recognise that in both work and domestic society, we continue to live in a patriarchal hegemony, whereby it is not really possible for a woman to succeed in an unqualified manner. A woman's success can be limited by many things, but the two which De Beauvoir most readily identifies is this lack of co-operation across the sexes and the ineffective yet innate alliances we make, with the greater likelihood women will ally themselves with men, who may oppress them, either consciously or subconsciously, rather than like-minded women.

I will show that, time and time again, Grenfell gently exposes the underbelly of the patriarchy, the concept that women have to accept, expose and even amplify the image of ditzy blonde, in metaphor, if not in actuality, in order to maintain a level of control or power. I will thematically expose the probably entirely unconscious (Riviere, 1929) elucidation in Grenfell's work, of De Beauvoir's concept of woman as 'other', isolated from her fellow women by the heteronormative household 'attached through residence, housework, economic consideration and social standing' (De Beauvoir, 1997, p. 19), into forming strong allegiances with men as a matter of instinct, to survive and succeed. While Grenfell exposes this truth, she fights shy of De Beauvoir's conclusion that the only way to deal with the patriarchy is to form these allegiances and support other females in this way, while also garnering the co-operation of men in this mission.

Thus, it is this wider concept, this 'sisterhood', or more accurately from a De Beauvoirian sense, 'brotherhood' (De Beauvoir, 1997, p. 741) or solidarity, which can be hard to locate

in some of Grenfell's work, and in the day to day individual struggle for female equality. In the original French, the last word of the book is 'fraternité' (De Beauvoir, 1949, p. 654). While the direct translation is indeed brotherhood, it of course is loaded with cultural meaning from the French Revolutionary motto of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity and the Marxist tendency to refer to colleagues as comrades or brothers. Herein, then, lies clues to the literal meaning of De Beauvoir's word choice.

There will also be reference to a Foucauldian understanding of power/knowledge as a single concept which Grenfell predates chronologically, but plays with constantly. I will demonstrate that while the men in the sketches here appear to hold the power on the surface, once a deep dive is undertaken, their hold on that power is precarious, often because the women have, or appear to have superior knowledge, thus taking ownership or control, at least of that situation. However, there is always a price, as the women are forced to give up something significant to achieve their goals. In its very acceptance that work success and domestic happiness are in binary conflict with each other, Grenfell exposes the cost to women of what is now referred to as 'emotional load', as society, or individual members therein elicit a price, no matter how limited the success. The sketches in this chapter have been selected because the women in them are working for pay, mainly in service or assistance jobs, but exhibit varying levels of devotion to the tasks they are paid to perform. An analysis of women who are undoubtedly displaying working attitudes, that of carrying a burden of work, but are in unpaid roles can be found in Chapter 5, 'Reactive Relatives'. Together, these analyses provide a potential platform for feminist comedy writers and female comedians to reframe their view of Grenfell's work and the war/post war era of both comedy and feminism as a useful theoretical, critiquing and writing resource to consider whether this period really was as devoid of feminist activity and

exploration as is popularly believed. Therefore, both this thesis, and the monologues it addresses, are useful tools for the feminist historian of the war/post-war era. For a critique of some of the issues with the wave model of feminism, the most widely discussed and understood model, and some of the ways in which it has been challenged, see Chapter 2, the Theoretical Literature Review.

The concept that the public did not necessarily see the role of women and their route to equality in the same way as De Beauvoir is key to this reframing of Grenfell's work; indeed, the fact that many of them may not have even been aware of De Beauvoir is significant. Although De Beauvoir's views are important, so are the opinions, ideals and socio-political values and theories as they would have been expressed from parents, friends, in literature and particularly, through the eyes of the media with their responsibility to impart information as well as attract readers, and therefore profits for their shareholders. All these have an impact on the social construct and contract into which we all enter. It is this interplay between theory and lived experience, a somewhat New Historicist approach, that creates the validity of the discourse shaped here. Bearing in mind that this thesis is set against a broad background of discourse analysis, the role and impact of the public sphere is important; Grenfell was influencing her audience, but her audience also influenced her, it is an ongoing conversation and shifting relationship of power/knowledge. Therefore, if Grenfell, or indeed any other comedian, pushes outside the boundaries of what society *en masse* considers acceptable, if they damage their reputation as an authoritative, skilled comedy performer, they lose their audience and their livelihood. So much of being a successful entertainer is in exercising judgement about what an audience will pay money to see, the framework of the audience's boundaries, and what they will not tolerate. Misjudging this can be financially damaging to one's career trajectory. Therefore, in

considering whether Grenfell's work is appropriately feminist enough to allow the label, one must also remember that she was a businesswoman, with responsibilities to her 'customers' – the audience, to deliver the product they had paid for.

This is the conflict that Grenfell balances in her life and reflects in her sketches; although self-employed, she was not answerable only to herself, but to her husband, her aunt, Nancy Astor, who held the power/knowledge concept in terms of domestic security (she decided whether Grenfell and her husband had a home in the early years of their marriage) and every one of her millions of 'customers', her fans. This same conflict can be seen in every one of the sketches analysed here and the characters Grenfell has drawn. The Foucauldian premise of resistance from the subject towards the dominant power/knowledge dynamic still allows for the identification of strategic goals and that 'Ongoing statements have to respect the set of rules which is inherent in [the] context of preceding statements' (Diaz-Bone, Bührmann, Gutiérrez Rodriguez, Schneider, Kendall and Tirado, 2007, p. 4). The consequences of failing to judge this correctly can be seen in the damage to the careers of people such as Roseanne Barr and Russell Brand when they have misjudged the mood of their audience. Barr had her show cancelled and Brand was removed from national radio, now working mainly on stage and via the medium of podcast. It is against this background that these sketches have been analysed. Some comedians, such as Brand, are able to turn their transgressions to their advantage, with Brand able to re-launch his career via his best-selling autobiography, embracing, acknowledging and addressing the traits and personality that are both his trademark and his potential undoing. However, this is not always the case.

It is important to remember that the sketches have been split across the chapters by theme. This first analytical chapter addresses sketches where the women are in paid

employment. The second analytical chapter, Chapter 5, 'Reactive Relatives' addresses women who are working, yet are not being paid, whether that is a caring role, some form of voluntary work, or simply because they cannot find somebody to pay them to do the work. A third chapter analyses Grenfell's sketches set during wartime and is contextualised against her wartime experiences and those of her fans. In these first two analytical chapters, then, Grenfell explores the issues of work and retirement, the role of the woman in the family and the workplace, views on sexually active women and the impact of emigration upon the women left behind.

The sketches in this chapter were mainly written between 1954 and 1957, with an outlier in the form of 'The Wedding is on Saturday' (1967a)[1]. They are analysed in chronological order, as a practical choice; where themes can be linked across sketches, the reader will be prompted to bear this in mind. The concentration of paid work based sketches in this period perhaps reflects Grenfell's own experiences, as this was her most active period of work, with a move away from performing monologues and acting, and towards more appearances as herself through the late 1960s, with retirement, in some official capacity in 1973. I argue that Grenfell never truly retired, as her work for charities and supporting her friends never stopped, rather like many of the women who will be discussed in Chapter 5, 'Reactive Relatives'. Across the four chapters which form the majority of the analysis many monologues analysed involve some kind of life transition, as will become clear. The sketches both reflect and challenge many commonly held perceptions, from the mid-1940s to mid-1970s, about the roles of women across all classes and backgrounds. Thus, in

1 Page numbers given in reference to published scripts refer to the year of writing as stated in *Turn Back the Clock* and the page number in that publication unless otherwise stated.

selecting work covering a 30-year period across the four chapters of analysis, it is possible to show a narrative of changing and developing socio-political circumstances in this so-called quiet period in the development of feminism, and fits well with the image mentioned in chapter 2 of a hand-created wool skein, with all its imperfections and interesting textures. It must be borne in mind that the wave model of feminism presents issues, and this has been discussed in the Theoretical Literature Review, with further discussion below. Throughout all the sketches, Grenfell's acute observational skills are evident and her work is re-framed to address this alternative approach to feminist socio-political history as well as providing inspiration to women in today's comedy scene.

The perception of the Second World War and Reconstruction era created by the Wave Model of Feminism is that there is a stagnation or even death of feminism; indeed Stansell refers to the post-war period as a period characterised by the rise of 'neo-domestic ideology' (Stansell, 2010, p. 185). There are a number of versions of the Wave Model, in which the rough dates of the first wave appear to be the only commonality. Whichever version of the Wave Model pre-dominates, in leaving a gap between the acquisition of the vote and the 1960s, the implication is that women were happy to have been granted the vote and, therefore, apart from playing their part in offices and munitions factories during the War, were content with their lot. However, a closer reading of articles by H.L. Smith (1981, 1984, 1992, 1995) among others, show that some issues remained and, indeed, took a more prominent position. These issues included: the discontent women felt at being pushed out of their war jobs in order to make room for the returning soldiers, regardless of capability; equal pay for those who retained or attained comparable jobs and appropriate pension rights, and the balance of domestic and working life, with its attendant child-focussed challenges. There are aspects of all these issues which are present in both

the second and third wave of feminism, and even the possibly fourth wave into which some scholars would argue we have now entered (Munro, 2013). Thus, in analysing these scripts and performances, it is possible to address feminism not as a Wave Model, but rather as a wool skein with varying degrees of width, thickness and texture; while the issues may change, the broader background of the fight for equality remains constant throughout.

The problem in many of these sketches is identified by De Beauvoir in the introduction to *The Second Sex* (1997); these women, while obviously unhappy, are comfortable in their roles, they know what to expect and what is expected of them, 'it is an easy road' (De Beauvoir, 1997, p. 21), that is, these women are in a rut, and to break free from that rut 'would be for women to renounce all the advantages conferred upon them by their alliance with the superior caste' (De Beauvoir, 1997, p. 21), and that could well be beyond many women's imagination. There is also the issue of divided loyalties. As De Beauvoir points out, women's shared history is not with each other, but with their families, and therefore the men of those families. This, it can be argued, makes the women's movement unlike the American Civil Rights movement, or the issue of dealing with anti-Semitism, or indeed any other rights movement, including that of disability rights. In a Foucauldian sense, the women in these sketches are not in a position of resistance; they are, perhaps, paralysed rather by a 'disciplinary' (Pickett, 1996, p. 445), or paternalistic society. For Foucault, this 'is derived from the ancient *patria potestas* […] just as he had given them life, he could take it away.' (Foucault, 1979, p. 135). While this may be a strong reading of the situation, this means an evolution in the power relations of the situations is unlikely. However, the narratives presented demonstrate many small acts of rebellion, even if only in the narrator's and, potentially, the audiences' minds. For Grenfell's audiences, the concept that the traditional family unit was the only acceptable one would be largely unquestioned;

De Beauvoir’s comment about ’a totality of which the two components are necessary to each other’ (1997, p. 20), applies not just to society as a whole, but to most households at this time. So, the poor spinster in ‘Telephone Call’ (1959), caught between her father and her boyfriend, living largely in isolation from other women, barring her sister, who is caught in the same familial loyalty dilemma, is emblematic of De Beauvoir’s summary of the problem, that due to spending most of their time with men, mainly brothers, fathers, and later husbands, women are more likely to ally themselves with men, their oppressors, and are therefore complicit in their own subjugation (1953, p. 19); see Chapter 5 ‘Reactive Relatives’ for a deeper analysis of this.

The narrator in ‘Teacher’ (Grenfell, 1951), is one of few Grenfell characters who, in addition to not really being very good at their paid jobs, seems to be genuinely unhappy in it. Most of the other paid workers in the sketches analysed here seem to excel, to not care whether they are successful, or to be blissfully ignorant of their ineptitude (see analysis of ‘Wibberly’, below). ‘Teacher’ (1951) was originally performed by the actor Diana Churchill, eldest daughter of Winston Churchill, in the Laurier Lister revue *Oranges and Lemons* (Britain Today, 1952). This spoken sketch has been analysed on a textual basis only, as a performance recording could not be located, despite the fact that Grenfell later absorbed this sketch into her own performance repertoire (Hampton, 2002a). The narrator reflects on her choice of profession as a teacher, how she imagined she would be inspiring the next generation, and the realities of her day to day work environment ‘thirty seven girls in the form I teach’ (Grenfell, 1951, p. 75). It is unclear who her imagined audience is, it could be a friend or colleague, but the text has the feel of somebody talking to themselves out loud. From this point of view, the monologue anticipates Alan Bennett’s *Talking Heads* (1988-1998), and while the narrator is talking directly to the audience, there is a feeling of

isolation and frustration common to both Grenfell and Bennett in many of their direct address pieces. There are many pressures placed on the narrator which would be all too familiar with many of today's teachers, regardless of gender. Like many teachers, she thought that love of her subject would be enough to inspire and connect with her pupils, but she has found out that this is not the case, especially when there are a large number of factors contributing to less than optimum learning conditions.

In addition to teaching so many young girls in a room designed for eighteen (Grenfell, 1951, p. 76), the Teacher is constantly bombarded by external noise, from buses, from road repairs and from the Pallidrome cinema across the street. She has a curriculum and lesson plan to work to, meaning that even when the girls have performed poorly, 'there won't be any time to tell them why they are awful' (Grenfell, 1951, p. 77). To top it off, the girls simply want to go out to work. The school leaving age had been raised from 14 to 15 in 1947 (Sabates and Duckworth, 2010), so many of these girls would have entered school with the expectation of leaving school at 14 and going to work. Parallels can be drawn here with some of the frustrations teachers have encountered since 2013, when the school leaving age began to be incrementally raised to 18 in England and Wales and the behaviour and expectation management challenges this has produced within the sixth form classroom. There is a cigarette factory close to the school in the sketch, promising 'Clean Congenial Work, Good Wages, Canteens, Music'. With post-war austerity strong at this point, many girls felt the need to get out of school and into jobs as soon as possible to contribute to the family income, but also, as the girls tell their teacher, 'to be 'free''. The girls in this teacher's classroom would have spent their early years under the wartime regime, and would probably have seen most of their mothers undertake some kind of work for the war effort, therefore they would have witnessed and may well aspire to the

freedoms of work and relative financial independence in a much more real way than previous generations; the sense of loss when women were forced to give up their jobs on the demobilisation of the troops is discussed in the literature review, but it can be said that these girls would have very different life aspirations from those their mothers had at the same age. Here then, Grenfell has captured some of the new aspirations to social, financial and psychological wellbeing as laid out by sociologists such as Zweig, Klein and Jephcott in this period, an acknowledgement of 'women's orientations to paid work that were located in larger framing questions about the changing conditions of women's lives in self-consciously "modern" societies' (McCarthy, 2016, p. 277). The pre-war born narrator's sense of frustration that they do not understand the freedom literature can give the imagination is palpable, she is focussed on a more abstract form of freedom which, due to her work, not only is she unable to impart to her students, she appears to have lost herself.

Both these points suggest that the narrator is working in a secondary modern school, with its tendency to specialise in training 'in line with the needs of the local labour market' (SESC, 2017). At the same time, there was a mismatch in environmental experience, as many of the teachers came from a middle class, and therefore grammar school background (SESC, 2017). The teacher-narrator rather unfairly compares herself to the fictional Miss Lilly Moffat, played by Bette Davis in the 1945 film *The Corn is Green*, but later relents, pointing out that even Miss Moffat 'Only opened the door to one boy as far as I know. Still I haven't even done that' (Grenfell, 1951, p. 77). When she realises that one of her pupils has gone on to study psychology and have a poem published in *The Observer*, she then dismisses it '[…] I didn't like it very much./So I don't think you could count Alison Weaver.' (Grenfell, 1951, p. 77). Purely because of her dislike of the poem, then, the inspiration cannot, by her reasoning, have been sufficiently impactful.

This sketch is contextually and socio-politically interesting for a number of reasons: as well as giving a snapshot of some of the issues impacting on the young secondary school teacher narrator, it resonates with teaching issues today, particularly with the recent rise in the legal education leaving age to 18 in England and Wales and the impacts this has had on disaffection among older learners, the tendency of women to dismiss their achievements and criticise themselves. Grenfell revisited these concepts multiple times later in her career, in the much more successful Nursery School Teacher sketches, which deal with a different age range of children, but much more effectively demonstrate the trials of the teaching profession than this sketch does by having the teacher talk about them. In the Nursery School Teacher sketches, Grenfell presents her character as actually working in the classroom, delivering a lesson, interacting with a cast of unseen small children, which is much more effective, and funny, than this sketch. The Nursery School Teacher sketches are both more effective and more popular because they put the audience in the classroom with the children, rather than simply hearing about them.

The measure of the comparative success, or perhaps more accurately described, popularity, of the 'Nursery School Teacher' sketches can be seen in the existence of multiple recordings of them, both audio and televisual, and their inclusion in Lipman's tribute to Grenfell, *Re:Joyce,* whereas it has not been possible to source a recording of 'Teacher' for analysis. This comparison demonstrates not only a growth in Grenfell's techniques and level of craft, but the changing tastes of the audience towards profundity coated in humour. In the 1970 *Bow Dialogues*, Grenfell expressed the view that 'the artist and the audience are the same thing' (Grenfell and McCulloch, 1970), and further explained this in 1973 'I can only bring out what is already there and in fact we're looking at each other' (Grenfell and McCulloch, 1973). Thus, if we accept what Grenfell says is her

truth, her audience has aged with her, and this leads to a more thoughtful performance and response. ‘Wibberly’ (Grenfell, 1957) on the other hand, shows a different sort of technical awareness by Grenfell and reflects how much more television work she had done by this time. Yet this knowledge was only partially accepted and respected by the engineers and entertainers giving evidence to the Pilkington Committee, as will be seen in Chapter 8.

‘Private Secretary’ (Grenfell, 1952) is, like ‘Teacher’ (1951), much more in the mould of an Alan Bennett *Talking Heads* monologue in its feel, despite its relative brevity. Unlike many of the Grenfell sketches analysed here, it appears that, after the initial few lines, the narrator is talking to herself rather than an external intended audience, and there appears to be little requirement or room for pauses in the script for imagined answers. This gives the piece a much more meditative quality than, for example, the ‘Eng. Lit’ sketches discussed in Chapter 6. The sketch is lightweight, poignant and thoughtful, as opposed to funny, and there appear to be few easy one-liners throughout.

The ‘Private Secretary’ of the title begins with a fairly obvious scene setting, a series of responses which place her as the assistant to Sir Edgar, the subject of the piece, and give a general air of a beleaguered woman. Once Sir Edgar has left the room, the monologue proper begins, and can be read as an exploration of Foucauldian power/knowledge relations and dynamics. The narrator’s age is not revealed, but a clue is given, ‘I am his Private Secretary and have been for years-without-end-amen’ (Grenfell, 1952, p. 80). This not only implies that she is at least middle aged, but that there is a certain level of unity between her and Sir Edgar, she has been with him since ‘he was about half way to the top’ (Grenfell, 1952, p. 80) and has observed most of his rise to power. Grenfell appears to understand the relationship between trust, power, and both being and appearing useful,

and lists the power relationships, both formal and informal, that Sir Edgar has utilised to attain his position: ‘He lunches to meet the P.M., informally, of course./He drops in for a drink at the club, the pub or the Ritz,/Dines at Claridge’s to meet anyone you can think of,/And weekends with the aristocracy – the *Tatler* and *Sketch* aristocracy that is’ (Grenfell, 1952, p. 81).

These lines reveal much about Grenfell and the chameleon character of Sir Edgar. In referring to *Tatler* and the *Sketch*, Grenfell is making a reference, clearly understood at the time, to a certain type of aristocracy. These journal-magazines were very much the place to see and be seen, she had appeared in the March 15, 1950 edition of *Tatler* (National Portrait Gallery, 2018), a magazine which reported on fashion and society, and indeed still does.

Therefore, Grenfell is speaking a language which places her, and Sir Edgar, in a network of well connected, well to do, beautiful people. However, Sir Edgar appears equally happy socialising at the Club, a reference to a private members’ club, often with considerable membership fees and rules, the local pub, possibly a left over from his days as a grocer’s boy, and the Ritz. Later, she lets slip that Sir Edgar is a member of the Savage Club, which states itself as a ‘Bohemian Gentlemen’s Club’ and goes on to describe its style as the 'pursuit of happiness — a quest made infinitely more agreeable by the fellowship of members who are [traditionally] known to each other by the sobriquet ‘Brother Savage’ (The Savage Club, 2018). It is perhaps of note that while eligibility criteria are available on the club’s website, nowhere is anything as vulgar as fees discussed. The Ritz itself is a significant emblem of power relations, as it was founded by Ritz, Echanard and Escoffier, following Ritz and Escoffier’s dismissal from the Savoy for treating the hotel as if it were

their own, running up lavish bills by entertaining their friends in the dining hall, in short, treating the Savoy as if they held the power, rather than its owners, the D'Oyly Cartes (Taylor, 1996). The word 'ritzy', Taylor claims is derived from Ritz's surname, meaning 'high class and luxurious' but also 'ostentatiously smart' (Concise Oxford Dictionary cited in Taylor, 1996). This once again gives credence to the idea that not only does Sir Edgar have excellent connections across the classes, but that he is happy to be seen exercising them.

There is, however, a feeling that although he performatively mentions his working class start, he has distanced himself somewhat from that class. The root of his power and current network is that 'He was very useful in the war.' The Private Secretary is too discreet to say how he was useful. This approach to business and social networking has Foucauldian overtones, while also demonstrating a sort of Actor-Network Theory (ANT), which posits that nothing can be achieved outside of relationships and that 'power relations [are built…] as it were from the bottom upwards and outwards' (Fox, 2000). If we accept this, then neither power nor knowledge can exist, or certainly be of any use, outside of relationships, which appears to reflect the practice and, therefore, implied beliefs of Sir Edgar. In the relationships Sir Edgar forges, he is able to adjust his impression of power/knowledge to suit politics, industry and social networking through the discourse Grenfell allows him to pursue.

The Private Secretary can be perceived as quite jealous of Sir Edgar's family. This is clear by the phrase, 'So she's all right' (Grenfell, 1952, p. 81) referring to the situation of Lady Plumgrove, with her place as the mistress of 'a 1910 Baronial Hall at Wimbledon' (Grenfell, 1952, p. 80) with a couple of pedigree dogs and 'an Italian maid' (Grenfell, 1952, p. 81) and later, 'They're all right' (Grenfell, 1952, p. 81) in reference to the Plumgrove children and

grandchildren, when it is in fact she, the Private Secretary, who remembers their birthdays and ensures Sir Edgar takes appropriate action. Finally, she says it of Sir Edgar.

However, it is in the second half of the sketch that power relations are directly discussed. This begins at the point when the Private Secretary admits that Sir Edgar is ‘not very nice really’ (Grenfell, 1952, p. 81) and comments on his quest for more and more power and connections ‘Upwards ever upwards./ And he never overplays his power,/ At least not in public’ (Grenfell, 1952, p. 81). She goes on to describe a technique to elicit power, or at least influence, that Grenfell gives to her narrators in other sketches. Where in ‘Canteen in Wartime’ (1940) the narrator exerts power by drawing attention to her frailties, with the phrase ‘I’m most frightfully silly’, Sir Edgar trades on his lowly working-class roots, ‘Look, I’m only a grocer who’s been lucky, / So don’t listen to me’ (Grenfell, 1952, p. 81). Foucault argues that ‘to make visible humility […] these are the main features of punishment’ (Foucault, 1982), and goes on to link acceptance of punishment as a sign of penitence. The purpose of penitence, surely, among other things, is to achieve or regain acceptance or forgiveness and, therefore a right to be heard. Therefore, in this instance, and in Grenfell’s other uses of a portrayal of humility, the speaker is in their very denial of their right to be heard, asserting it. Alternatively, one can consider that Sir Edgar is addressing head on any ‘tribal’ stigma created by his working class roots.

Erving Goffman defines stigma as ‘the situation of persons who are […] disqualified from full social acceptance’ (Goffman, 1963, p. 154). Performative stigma then, is the act of self-acknowledgement or performatively addressing that stigma to deflect the negative power associated with that stigma. In this case, in referring to his roots as a grocer and utilising false humility, Sir Edgar transforms himself from working class upstart to the expert man

of the people, thus creating a new power/knowledge paradigm for himself and increasing the chances of safe passage into the upper classes. The Private Secretary goes on a few lines later, 'And he does very well out of it from sheer naturalness'. This naturalness is something of which the Wife of the Vice Chancellor of an Oxbridge University is accused in 'Eng. Lit. II' (1967b) and can be linked to an acceptance and feeling of comfort in one's position, or portion of power in society.

The Private Secretary continues, describing all the different guises Sir Edgar can perform, capitalising them as if they were character names in a play or a television programme 'he switches on the styles like light and does it damned well'. The concept of naturalness extends to the performer, as Limon (2000, p. 6) asserts that comedians are 'not allowed to be either natural or artificial'. Limon argues that this has a pervasive effect on both a comedian's professional and personal life and, in seeking to become unencumbered by their characters in their private life, they may well end up living as a performance. This can be seen in the carefully managed persona Grenfell creates for herself, with support from her husband, whereby it is hard to find any contradictions or inconsistencies in Grenfell's/her various presentations as herself, as if these are as much part of her professional life as the characters. This reinforces the question in the audience's collective mind of where the person begins and the character ends and vice versa, and is key to the performer's ability to hold power over their audience; a direct clash between stage and private persona can lead to a question mark over integrity that undermines the power/knowledge dynamic. This performative self has become a standard part of the work of many stand-up comedians, as Double explains (2000) in relation to Billy Connolly; 'the view is that comedians present themselves on stage as a "naked self"' (Double, 2000, p. 1) we believe that if we know the work, we know the person but, of course, this is all part of

the managed persona. Grenfell ascribed to liking most of her characters and therefore the chances of an inconsistency of ethics and power/knowledge between the personal and the professional is smaller but does still exist.

It is at this point that the real twist in the power relations of this piece occurs, as the Private Secretary acknowledges that Sir Edgar is aware that she knows all this information about him 'And it worries him a bit' (Grenfell, 1952, p. 82). Due to this concern, Sir Edgar behaves in a fairly petty way to keep the Private Secretary in her place, 'Keeps me late when he knows I have tickets for a theatre,/ And makes me change my holiday at the last minute' (Grenfell, 1952, p. 82). The impact of work on home life in terms of being a good mother are the narrow parameters upon which most historical literature has concentrated, however, Murray's 2017 article examines the crossover and impact of the specific role of Private Secretary throughout the 1950s. Initially, and on surface level, the role of secretary was seen as very similar to that of wife, a support role, she claims, particularly in regard to shouldering the burden of emotional labour. Citing Gurley Brown, she says that the role of secretary can be seen as a management role – managing the emotional load and workings of the office to free the way for the Boss to be the focus in the same way a wife does at home, so that the two roles inform each other.

However, Murray takes things much further, 'there […] is room to understand how the skills women learned as secretaries inform the construction of the secretary and the housewife as ideal types of womanhood' (Murray, 2017, p. 63). The Private Secretary is a professional, rather than a woman who works, with the respect that goes with it, and therefore the power that goes with assumed knowledge, and therefore a sense of status. By the 1950s, it was accepted that Private Secretaries were women who were 'able to take

full control of the office… deal with personal as well as business matters' (Murray, 2017, p. 69), indeed take on the emotional labour, rather as a work wife.

The knowledge the pair have of each other appears to have become quite a game of strategy, but the Private Secretary has the final card to protect herself, for she has been in love with him throughout their working relationship, a fact that she has guarded carefully from Sir Edgar because 'He's never going to have that little bit of power'. Her love for him already allows him to treat her quite badly; she has listed the ways in which he exerts practical power, in creating disturbance and disruption in her personal life. However, without the knowledge of her love for him, this is a type of general watered down sovereign power, he has no additional agenda he can operate over her. If he had this last piece of knowledge, he would have significantly more leverage. It is unclear whether the Private Secretary is married, but this is of little relevance; it is clear that the Private Secretary has some form of cordial working relationship with Lady Plumgrove. Were Sir Edgar to know that the Private Secretary is in love with him, he could use that information to destroy other of her relationships, including the one she has with his wife.

Here, then, is the essence of a complex power/knowledge relationship. First, we must remember that Foucault understands the power/knowledge concept as a dynamic entity, not a static state of being (Rouse, 2005). There is the professional power of Sir Edgar, which can be recognised as a microcosm of the great institutions as described and challenged by Foucault, 'monarchy, the state with its apparatus […] rose up on the basis of a multiplicity of prior powers and to a certain extent in opposition to them… if they were to gain acceptance, this was because they presented themselves as agencies of regulation, arbitration and demarcation, as a way of introducing order' (Foucault, 1979, p. 86). This is

the obvious and traditionally accepted power of the workplace hierarchy; Sir Edgar, if we were to create a staffing plan, is in charge, sets the tasks and is the person to whom the rest of the staff, particularly his Private Secretary, are accountable. In turn, he is accountable to his superiors and clients in their professional positions of power; the dynamics of these relationships hinge on his professional knowledge or, at least, the appearance the players create of professional knowledge. In turn, this raises questions as to whether these power hierarchies are legitimate (Rouse, 2005). This legitimacy is perhaps challenged, or shifted, by the Private Secretary's retention of emotional power in keeping the knowledge of her feelings towards Sir Edgar a secret.

In truth, the Private Secretary already has considerable professional power in the daily interactions with which Sir Edgar engages; she is the gatekeeper, the one through whom all diary entries, telephone calls and professional correspondence must pass, and if she chose to abuse this power, bearing in mind she knows him so well and is in love with him, she could. The balance in the relationship has long been recognised as a fine one. In 1932, Katherine Kramer offered the following advice: 'she must remind her employer of the many details that come up during the day and be able to take care of most of them herself […] Friendship is necessary but familiarity is taboo.' (British Pathe News, 1932). If then, we accept Pinderhughes' statement that 'power originates […] from people's relationships as they negotiate with one another in pursuit of group goals' (2017, p. 3), in retaining this piece of emotional power, or more importantly, not allowing Sir Edgar to have that emotional power over her, the Private Secretary keeps the Power/knowledge relationship dynamic and flowing. The question is then raised of whether this is a feminist act. In and of itself, it falls short of that, rather it is an intelligent piece of female self-preservation. As part of a performance, it may become a feminist prompt, if a female member of the

audience recognises herself in the character, as Grenfell asserts they do, and collects the practice of consciously balancing power dynamics for herself.

The 'Women at Work' (Grenfell, 1954) trio again examine power play, and power relations, but they do so in a much more subtle, gendered way than 'Private Secretary' (1952), even when the unseen customer is a woman. De Beauvoir claims that women tend to ally themselves with the men with whom they spend every day, rather than the women who live next door to, and these sketches show that the men do not have to be husbands and fathers, they can be business partners and bosses (De Beauvoir, 1997), although one has to question the allegiances of the narrator in 'Women at Work 2 – Behind the Counter' (Grenfell, 1954b) to anybody other than her own immediate interests. These sketches, all spoken, were written for Grenfell's first solo show in 1954. The term solo is a misnomer in this case, as she was joined by dancers and a pianist. While the dancers did not feature after this point, the pianist remained, and Grenfell was rarely truly alone on stage. It is also notable that while these sketches were originally designed as a trio, only the third, 'Writer of Children's Books' (1954c) is readily available as a recording, and the best candidate for mining for feminist material. Perhaps popularity and the sense of shared lived feminist experiences are linked in and for Grenfell's audience.

Lived or embodied feminism is here defined as the actions taken as a matter of course that demonstrate feminism and is the crux of this thesis. It follows a relatively new trend in challenging popular assumptions and reframing women's lived experiences in the post-war period within feminism (Tinkler, Spencer and Langhamer, 2017). The argument is that during what is considered a dormant period in the Wave Model, a number of women, largely those stepping up into war work, were too busy doing feminism to be writing,

talking or marching about it. In Grenfell's case, this is demonstrated by her role as a female entertainer and businesswoman throughout the reconstruction era and beyond, her war work in some of the most dangerous parts of Persia and Iraq, and her quiet but steadfast support of the careers of other women such as Viola Tunnard and Janie Hampton.

The first two sketches, 'Antique Shop' (1954a) and 'Behind the Counter' (1954b) offer up rather less important material and, it could be argued, are in danger of running towards anti-feminism. However, if we believe Grenfell's comments about feeling affection towards all her characters, a gentle ribbing, and casting of the spotlight on uncomfortable female behaviours, can be seen in these sketches. It is an indication of changing audience tastes that by the mid-1970s, some *Guardian* readers considered Grenfell, whether in character, or as herself, both 'coy' and 'patronising', in this case referring to an episode of *Face the Music,* upon which Grenfell appeared fairly regularly (Fiddick, 1974). If, however, what Grenfell stated in the *Bow Dialogues* (Grenfell and McCulloch, 1973), is true, and she really did see the audience and performer as reflections of each other, perhaps the reason why these uncomfortable female behaviours resonate so strongly is because we see our own behaviours exposed in Grenfell's performances.

In the first sketch, the narrator appears to be the owner, or possibly manager, of 'one of those very small antique-cum-interior decorator's shops.' (Grenfell, 1954a, p. 83) Again, we see the theme of false humility, presumably in a bid to garner praise or trust. Psychologists such as Gordon have argued that having power, while belabouring the inconsequence of that power or the power holder, is, in and of itself, an expression of power (Gordon, 2018). In the first line, the narrator describes the shop as 'my terrible little dump' (Grenfell, 1954a, p. 83) and her working relationship with her (presumably) business

partner as 'he does all the hard work and I just encourage from the side lines' (Grenfell, 1954a, p. 83). She later goes on to apologise for the congestion of the shop, courting an alliance with her potential customer over a feminine concern, 'one does so hate ladders [in her stockings] doesn't one?' (Grenfell 1954a, pp. 83-84).

The narrator of the first sketch is the joint proprietor of what Grenfell characterises as an antique shop, but appears to be more of a junk shop combined with a wannabe interior designer's studio. There are two unseen characters onstage with Grenfell: the interior designer is called Micky, and they have a potential customer, Mrs Medlow Sims, who appears to be known to them. The first problem for a feminist reading is the narrator's false modesty in referring to her shop as her 'terrible little dump' (Grenfell, 1954a p. 83). Deutschmann (2003), however, suggests that the rate at which one apologises can be as much linked to social class and age as it is to gender, in the first instance. Deustschmann suggests that in the 0-24 year old category, females apologise 91.96 times per 100,000 words spoken, against a male apology rate of 86.99 times per 100,000 words. However in the upper age ranges, 25 to 44, and 44 years and over, females apologise less often than men. According to class, younger middle-class females (0-24) apologise at a rate of 107.75 occurrences per 100,000 words, compared to younger middle-class males apologising at a rate of 86.84 times per 100,000 words. The same gender reversal was true of the upper age ranges. However, on average, middle-class people apologised at the rate of 93.07 occurrences per 100,000 words, compared to the much lower 42.96 apologies per 100,000 words for working-class participants (Deutschmann, 2003, p. 111). The use of 'one', rather than 'I' in the script suggests a middle-class background for our narrator, or an intention to give the impression of coming from the middle classes.

The narrator also, perhaps, gives too many trade secrets away, commenting that the piece that Micky is working on was 'picked up for nothing' (Grenfell, 1954a, p. 83) and asserting that 'He does all the hard work and I just encourage from the side lines'. She later claims to be poor at maths, a key part of a shopkeeper's trade, yet appears quite happy to charge 'nine pounds, nineteen and six', equivalent to 2018 prices of £268 (Bank of England, 2019). This discontinuity of discourse leads one to believe that the narrator is being somewhat disingenuous. Further, the narrator comments on her own dislike of hard sell, but does a remarkably good job of being over-attentive to Mrs Medlow Sims throughout her visit, despite giving permission to wander freely.

This is, in some ways, reminiscent of Riviere's (1929) concept of the feminine masquerade, in which women, particularly those who appear on the surface to be very comfortable with their professional personae, put on an act of flirtatiousness or of submission in order, Riviere argues, to forestall or deflect men's anger at the woman's encroachment into their masculine space. Riviere raises the question of whether it is possible to distinguish between 'genuine womanliness and the "masquerade"' (Riviere, 1929, p. 3) but goes on to suggest that it is neither possible nor helpful to do so. In this sketch, it is impossible to tell whether the narrator began this self-effacement to further her working relationship with Micky, or whether it is so habitual to her now it has become part of her general persona, unaware that she is using the same tactics as sales pitch. This womanly masquerade can also be seen in moments in 'Career Girl' (Grenfell and Addinsell, 1954b), which is discussed later in this chapter. The goods on offer are dubious to say the least, and while it is unclear from the script, one can imagine that the antlers on offer may not be a pair, with the artist possibly gesticulating in turn as she delivers the line, 'we think that is probably a moose and that is probably a stag' (Grenfell, 1954a, p. 84).

The work of Micky showcased throughout this sketch demonstrates that a kitsch sensibility would have been quite fashionable among bright young things at the time – as Calinescu argues that this form of 'pseudoart' (1987, p. 225) was very popular in the post-war era, and embodies a desire to take the traditional, re-imagine it and make it new, which is not to everybody's taste. When Mrs Medlow Sims finally agrees to trying one of Micky's hip-bath reading nooks, one cannot help feeling that she is simply succumbing to the least-worst option and the narrator's false humility has led to a pity sale.

The Foucauldian concept of power/knowledge is in little evidence in this sketch, other than in the narrator's constant undermining of her own power and knowledge as power-play. While amusing at first glance, there is a sense of cynicism in the actions of the narrator and Micky that suggests that they assume the customer, Mrs Medlow-Sims, is even less knowledgeable than they are. Further, the narrator's allegiances are not those of sisterhood with her female customer in the De Beauvoirian sense, there is no attempt to emancipate her customer from cheap and shoddy goods, she is not even a very good saleswoman, only tenacious. Thus, it can be said that if this sketch is to be seen as feminist at all, it is only when one remembers that Grenfell cut her radio performing teeth on the *How* radio series (1943 to 1949) with Stephen Potter, which can rather more accurately be described as comedic instruction in how not to. These radio programmes had titles such as *How to Talk to Children (including How not to and How they used to)* (1943) and mainly concentrated on illuminating good approaches to a subject by demonstrating how not to go about the subject in question via satirical sketch work. If a female entrepreneur is looking for a guide on how not to run an antique/interior design shop, this sketch may be a good example.

‘Women at Work 2 — Behind the Counter’ (1954b), the second of the Women at Work sketches, is very short and is a familiar scene to anybody who has tried to get the attention of a sales assistant engrossed in talking to a friend. In ‘Women at Work 2’, the power relations are much more class based than gender based; however, it is worth noting that it is impossible to tell whether the customer is male or female; as far as the sales woman is concerned, the customer is largely irrelevant. Even without a recording, it can be gleaned from the language patterns, that the woman behind the counter is almost certainly working class, such as by her repeated use of ‘must of’ instead of ‘must have’ and ‘come’ instead of ‘came’. She is determined not to be interrupted by notions of making a sale. Three times, she interrupts her description of what appears to be a wedding dress only long enough to say ‘I won’t keep you a moment’ (Grenfell, 1954b, pp. 86, 87) before finally at the end of her story, uttering the ultimate red rag to any customer. ‘I’m sorry I can’t help you, it is just time for my tea break.’ There is no reference to the accent used, but it is fairly safe, from examining Grenfell’s similar sketches, that she would have used a generalised London/south-east working class accent. On the page, Grenfell also denotes the insignificance of the imaginary customer, as any lines addressed to them are placed in brackets; that is, they are treated as an aside.

This is a display of street level bureaucracy or working-class power relations at their most typical. While the term ‘street level bureaucracy’ (Lipsky, 1969) was originally coined in regard to the discretion front facing public servants have and utilise in their interactions, such as a police officer choosing to issue a warning rather than a speeding ticket or vice versa, the same potential for graciousness and pettiness is available to the shop worker, and may, for the most junior members of staff, be the only power readily available to them. Here we can also see a link to the concept of street level or lived feminism; in both cases,

this is the manifestation of the theory in real people's lives, and it does not perfectly match the theoretical models. The key power play here is that the counter assistant is simply not going to serve her customer. It is difficult to make any gender political comments as there is no indication of whether the unseen customer is male or female, young or old, or even what the goods on sale are. There are power/knowledge conclusions that can be drawn here, in the form of the street level bureaucracy mentioned above.

The third of the three sketches, 'Writer of Children's Books' (1954c), as mentioned earlier, was much more successful and remained in the Grenfell canon for a more considerable time. Here the text, a Grenfell audio recording and Lipman's 1998 audio recording will be analysed. It is, perhaps, a measure of the success of this sketch that of the three that make up the 'Women at Work' triptych, this is the only one Lipman utilised. Perhaps one of the reasons this sketch resonates is that, not only can the narrator be reasonably counted among Grenfell's monstrous women, she is instantly recognisable as a version of the popular and prolific children's author Enid Blyton, who, once she had found her successful formula, stuck to it for the rest of her writing life, varying only the number of children and the location, to the extent that the clue was in the titles of the books, with *The Famous Five* and *The Secret Seven* being among her most successful series. Kushner (1999) suggests that there are many issues of gender and race politics within Blyton's work, especially from the 1960s onwards; she was heavily criticised for the subservient characterisation of Anne, the youngest, and Georgina, who simply did not accept that she could not become a boy, and would therefore never be as good. Notwithstanding, Blyton was also a childhood staple well into the 1980s.

Grenfell's imagined audience in this sketch is laid out in the scene-setting introduction, which Grenfell delivers as herself. The narrator is a writer of children's books, who has finished a book signing and is now giving a talk to her young fans. During the sketch, she makes clear that the children are not on an educational trip or similar, they are accompanied by their mums and 'Growly Bear Daddies at the back' (Grenfell, 1954c, p. 88). Grenfell's narrator has a similar formula to Blyton; in her creative process she describes repeatedly having three main child characters, two boys and a girl, with the youngest boy being referred to only by a nickname acknowledging his size or age; the setting is always rural or coastal and there appears to be a hard-working father in a noble profession. Upon listening to the recording, made in 1964 (EMI, 2000), there is even a sense of rhythm and formula to the narrator's delivery of her description of the children; there is a sense that she has given this talk many times before and is really reciting a script in a slightly disconnected way. For instance, not only are there two boys and a girl described for each book, but the syllabic relationships in their names is quite similar, with the two older children, in both cases, having double barrelled names in the text (Grenfell, 1954c, p. 88) or what sounds like two word names in the recording (EMI, 2000). The older boy in both books has a variant of John in his name. In both the published scripts, the description of the youngest child is the same 'and the little one is called…' (Grenfell, 1954c, p, 89), while in the recording, there is slightly more detail, 'and there's a little one at the back and he is called […]' (EMI, 2000). These turns of phrase that the narrator is using would be familiar to the children in the audience, as they are very similar to the formulaic sentences used in children's stories. In essence, the concept of finding a formula that works for earning a living is not to be criticised; however, there is a feeling of world-weariness in Grenfell's characterisation of the narrator-author which creates a wariness towards the character.

One area of performance that is noticeable in this recording is Grenfell's use of accent and intonation, which allows the attentive listener to draw some conclusions about the socio-economic background of the narrator. There is a certain brittleness to the Received Pronunciation, particularly on 'how' and 'hidey-hole', pronounced even more correctly than Grenfell's natural accent, which prompts the listener to postulate that, perhaps, the narrator has attained her position over time, and acquired the accent to go with it; it does not quite sit naturally on her, perhaps she has a touch of imposter syndrome. There is the suggestion that this writer is living out a mask that she has taken on unconsciously (Riviere, 1929), fulfilling societal expectations of both the writer and the female, so as not to alienate those who buy her books, the parents. This may be partly related to the fact that it is not Grenfell's natural accent as about the characterisation, of course, but the suspicion remains.

Grenfell's reference to a 'hidey-hole', or room, in which the narrator shuts herself up to write also draws further parallels with Enid Blyton, who, while having a fantastic relationship with her young fans, and participating, indeed instigating many book events similar to this one, had a cold and distant relationship with her own children, begrudging time away from her writing to play with them, yet utilising her income to furnish all her children's physical needs (Mclaren, 2007). This inconsistency between Blyton's public and private persona is very different from what the evidence suggests about Grenfell, and leads to questions about Blyton's own impact, how she informs the debate, prevalent throughout the 1950s and 60s, on the 'dual role' (McCarthy, 2016), of women and the potential costs, both to working mothers and their families. There are hints that Grenfell's writer has a similarly strained relationship with her children, which will be discussed in more depth below.

Once again, we see a Grenfell character denigrate her own skills: she does not write the stories, ‘a book is writing itself for me’ (Grenfell, 1954c, p. 88). The narrator does not describe her process as a creative one; instead she casts herself as the transcriber of a film she sees unfold in front of her closed eyes, rather as a closed caption writer would do today. In avoiding the concept of having to think of the story, the narrator casts the role of writer as a rather pleasant, relaxed way of life, circumventing the notion of work or labour. Further, she never re-writes nor reads what she has written, which either implies a very careless approach to writing, or an assumption that children will accept a relatively low quality of work. In the recorded version, Grenfell has the narrator use the rule of three to reinforce this point: ‘I never revise, I never re-write, and I never read what I have written.’ (EMI, 2000) It is important to note here that this is in response to a question from her imagined audience, demonstrating a level of interaction that the real audience has to fill in for themselves. The rule of three has been in existence since ancient times, to the extent that its origins cannot really be traced. While not the first to observe this, Hannah Gadsby (2019), a successful and ground-breaking 21st century comedian, suggests that, for years, the art of the storyteller, comic or not, has been grounded on the rule of three, which can be three alliterative words, as in this instance, three ideas or three contradictions. Gadsby goes on to challenge this now-traditional formula, but in this case, Grenfell reinforces it. She also rather obviously uses the rule of three in ‘Three Brothers’ (1954) and in a more sophisticated way in ‘Career Girl’ (1954b).

Finally, there is the fact that the narrator has been able to supply ‘Hidey-Holes’ (Grenfell, 1954c, p. 89), homes, for all her children, who also appear to be erring towards a career in writing, and one for her husband, where he ‘adds up’ (Grenfell, 1954c p. 90). This has implications of a woman who has facilitated a trap whereby she needs to continue to

provide financially, while her husband focuses on the profits. It also has discomfiting allusions to the Grenfell marriage, whereby Grenfell's letters to Graham suggest that Reggie was far more aware of what she earned than Grenfell herself was, and while he continued to have mining interests, eventually took on many of the aspects of being Grenfell's financial or business manager. Initially, therefore, the writer of children's books appears to achieve De Beauvoirian emancipation for herself at least; she is not financially dependent upon her husband; however, in allowing herself to become responsible for the financial wellbeing of her children, it could be argued that she has limited their need, and therefore motivation, to reach their own independence and emancipation. In providing so well for her children then, she has limited their chances and failed to reach the standards of sisterhood that the true feminist, by De Beauvoirian standards, might be expected to meet. De Beauvoir argues that 'it is high time she be permitted to take her chances in her own interest and in the interest of all' (De Beauvoir, 1997, p. 724).

Surely then, in removing the impetus to earn their own money and make their own way by providing for them so well, the narrator has inadvertently committed an anti-feminist act. Further, it is marked that in discussing the feminist cause, the word sisterhood is so culturally linked with De Beauvoir, particularly in regard to her joint founding with Robin Morgan of the Sisterhood is Global Institute in 1984 (The Sisterhood is Global Institute, 2013). Yet both the 1953 Parshley translation, and the more highly regarded 2009 Borde and Malovany-Chevallier translation use the word brotherhood in the closing statement of the book. However, while neither Parshley nor Borde and Malovany-Chevallier use the word 'sisterhood' at all in their translations, they do, on several occasions, use the word 'sister' in the figurative rather than the literal, blood or legal sense of the word. This perhaps then reflects De Beauvoir's hopes and stance as a Marxist first and foremost at

this stage of her life. In either case, we see that what De Beauvoir is advocating is solidarity amongst the oppressed (in this case women) not only to achieve their goals of equality for themselves, but that true freedom can only be found when all are free, or at least aspiring towards freedom.

The concept of writing as a career also has classist undertones; after all, as Virginia Woolf pointed out, ‘a woman must have money and a room of one’s own if she is to write fiction’ (Woolf, 1929). Therefore, Woolf’s argument suggests that in order to have a career as a writer, one must not need a career as a writer. There are other of Woolf’s ideas that can be traced in this sketch. Woolf describes how a Beadle of the college aggressively returns her to the path, ‘I was a woman […] Only the Fellow and Scholars are allowed here; the gravel is the place for me’ (Woolf, 1929, pp. 2 and 3). Consider, our writer only writes children’s fiction, she has not transgressed onto the grass of adult fiction or factual writing. Woolf goes on to explore, through the allegory of an Oxbridge College and all the areas of it that are barred to a woman, all the reasons why, if all one needs is a room and some money, there are not a greater number of successful women writers. In a light-hearted way, Grenfell tentatively explores the same ground; the writer here must stick to her formula, despite her obvious boredom with it, as her children and husband are now reliant on her income from children’s fiction. To veer away from this path would not only potentially incur the wrath of the protectors of the male world of serious fiction, it could lead to a loss of the money stream that is necessary. This also reflects Grenfell’s choices, as she is restricted to light drama and comedy for most of her working life; it is only when she is much older, when she has gained the perceived authority of age that she begins to write as herself, and present herself as knowledgeable and influential in areas of faith, charity work and caring for others.

Compared to other Lipman interpretations of Grenfell work, her version of ‘Writer of Children’s Books’ is much closer to both the published script and the Grenfell recording, but there are still noteworthy differences. One of the striking similarities is the closeness in timings; Grenfell’s version is 3 minutes 56 seconds long, whereas Grenfell’s/Lipman’s is 3 minutes 59. Even with delays for audience response (Lipman’s recording is made with an audience, Grenfell’s without), this shows a far faster delivery than many others of Lipman’s versions of Grenfell’s material, for example, ‘Telephone Call, where Lipman’s version runs at 4 minutes 30 seconds, compared to Grenfell’s 3 minutes 45 seconds (for further discussion on performance pace, see Chapter 5, ‘Reactive Relatives’). There are only three occasions when Lipman departs from the published script, whereas Grenfell ad libs considerably. This raises questions as to whether Grenfell wrote the script, then made variances, or whether the published version is a much later, unified, version of all Grenfell’s performances. However, a practical choice has been made here to concentrate on comparing the published text versions wherever possible; the comparison to working copies at the Bristol Theatre archive is a separate research project to be addressed at another time.

As with most of Lipman’s performances of Grenfell’s work, there is a cynical or resigned edge, a conscious acknowledgement that the female’s lot is not quite what it should be, which Grenfell somehow makes subconscious in performance. Lipman’s accent throughout the sketch is much more consistent, perhaps this narrator has always had the privileges of class that Woolf alluded to, or perhaps this simply demonstrates the thoroughness of Lipman’s full attendance at LAMDA (LAMDA, 2019), compared to Grenfell’s one term at RADA (Grenfell, 1976). This cynicism about a woman’s role is clearly communicated to the audience, who appear to share Lipman’s suspicion as to why the narrator’s husband may

have great joy in the narrator's success and has given up his day job 'to add up', which, one suspects, translates as to enjoy and manage the money his wife has earned through her writing. However, Lipman's performance of a children's writer differs in one key feature, the concept that she actually likes children and is on their side is a lot more convincing. When Grenfell appeals to the 'Growly Bear Daddies', the ambience is that she needs their protection and is jollying them along somewhat, whereas one feels that Lipman's narrator is enjoying watching the men squirm as much as their children are. Perhaps in that moment, the narrator understands that she has the upper hand in the power dynamic, the men cannot interrupt her without upsetting their children, so she uses it. Here then, we see both a Foucauldian power/knowledge play and possibly, just possibly, a kind of De Beauvoirian attempt at sisterly support, for if the women in the audience, both real and imagined, can realise what she is doing, in the same way this analysis has, perhaps they will have a moment of awakening and do the same thing.

The narrator of the next sketch for analysis, 'Career Girl' (1954b) reflects a greater need and desire to have a meaningful work life in a more outward facing world. 'Career Girl' (Grenfell and Addinsell, 1954b) was originally sung by Elisabeth Welch in the Laurier Lister revue, *Paying the Piper*. An American actor and singer, this mixed race entertainer made her home in London between the 1930s and 1950s (English Heritage, n.d).This was not one of Lister's most successful productions; neither Grenfell nor Max Adrian were in the cast, and it was the revue debut for Elsie and Doris Waters, who were really Music Hall Artists, rather than Revue performers (Bourne, 2005). This division of artistic style is small, but crucial to understand, and can perhaps be exemplified by Lister's selection of the pair, plus Sally Steward to debut 'The Whizzer' (Grenfell and Addinsell, 1954c). While both include music and humour, and perhaps a melodramatic item or two, Music Hall was designed, and

priced, to entertain and resonate with the working classes, while Revue served the same purpose for the middle and upper classes. One important distinction between earlier revue and Music Hall is that dance was not acceptable in Revue prior to approximately 1910, while it was a feature of Music Hall (Koritz, 1990). As can be seen in Grenfell's mention of dancers in her company for *Joyce Grenfell Requests the Pleasure,* this distinction had faded by the 1940s and 1950s. However, Westover (2013) characterises revue audiences as 'high-paying' (p. 4).

The links between Revue and highbrow art and scholarship is much stronger, with the sons and nephews of 'serious' composers, performers and scholars often working in Revue, such as Donald Swann, of Flanders and Swann, the nephew of Alfred Swan, who worked as a translator of books from Russian, including works by Medtner (Medtner.org.uk, n.d.). Put rather crudely, Revue can be considered the educated person's plaything. However, Revue and Music Hall have more in common than, perhaps, devotees of either genre would prefer to admit; the patter song appears in both genres as well as other entertainments, such as that put on by the Sitwells in 1923, simply called *Façade: an entertainment* (Hammill, 2015). In common with the Sitwell's form of entertainment, Revue, particularly those produced by Noël Coward, made reference to masquerades and pantomimes, which have much longer histories, with the former characterised by decadence and expense (Hammill, 2015), having origins in court entertainment. Music Hall, on the other hand, can be traced back to entertainments provided in taverns and pubs (Victoria and Albert Museum, 2019).

The analysis here is textual only, as no recordings have, thus far, been found. Therefore, it is necessarily less multi-dimensional than that undertaken where recordings are available. 'Career Girl' is a piece which manages to be of its moment, yet relevant to the modern day

at the same time. While the concept that a young woman can have both a career and a romance should be perfectly normal by now, the perceived pressures to choose and 'settle' in one or other regard are still very real. In this sketch, in which the singer directly addresses the audience, the narrator is a true Career Girl. Unlike many other of Grenfell's working women, she is not in a supporting role; early on she makes it clear that she has responsibility 'For Taking Decisions and signing the Deal' (Grenfell and Addinsell, 1954b, p. 126), and towards the end of the song, her relationship with her secretary is crucial to the plot twist. The use of capitalisation in the text of this sketch is interesting; it only appears in the first stanza, and the words capitalised, in addition to those already mentioned are 'Sought after – Important – a Success', 'For Conferences – Meetings – and Interviews', and finally 'I'm Important – Successful – Complete' (Grenfell and Addinsell, 1954b, p. 126). Bearing in mind that in sung performance, it would be very difficult, even impossible, for an audience to differentiate between a capitalised and lowercase word, this begs the question of why Grenfell would make this distinction in the script. *New Hart's Rules* (2005), a significant guide for writers and editors, suggests that capitalisation can be used to personify concepts, but that it is also acceptable to use them for emphasis as well as to create proper names. It also states that 'Capitals are sometimes used for humorous effect in fiction…' (Ritter, 2005, p. 90), while many grammar websites point to the allowance of capitalisation to denote importance, as long as it is not used excessively, which is considered rude. With Grenfell's first professional work as radio critic for *The Observer,* there is a good chance that she would have been familiar with the 1904 edition of *New Hart's Rules*¸ but this cannot be proved from the sources consulted here. So, it can be extrapolated that the use of capitalisation in this text acts rather like a stage direction; it is saying that these words are important to the characterisation of the part. The emphasis on

these areas of the role the ‘Career Girl’ is undertaking, particularly, the Conferences, Meetings and Interviews is significant, for the ‘Private Secretary’ (1952) would have diarised and organised these. This character is attending or even leading them. She is personifying herself as capable of undertaking tasks more usually, in the period, undertaken by men. One could even go so far as to say that in the use of capitalisation, Grenfell is suggesting to the performer that it is important that they play the part as if a Career Girl is the essence of who the character is, not simply a job the character performs; it is who she is, not what she does.

However, this sung sketch addresses the dual nature of the woman’s challenge to having it all, a career and a relationship. When ‘he’ calls, she becomes silly, distracted and tractable. Even in writing these words, an awareness of a feminine loading of meaning sits uncomfortably on the page. For the sake of a man, despite only five lines earlier claiming she is ‘Important – Successful – Complete’ (Grenfell and Addinsell, 1954b, p. 126), she cancels her appointments and leaves the office, she describes the whirlwind of emotions she feels and the sense of urgency to get to her meeting with the man who has summoned her. When she arrives, she is ‘Only partially alive,/ He’s not there.’ (Grenfell and Addinsell, 1954d, p. 127). This scenario plays out twice, with three sets of repeated lines to emphasise, in turn, the urgency of the need to leave work, the sense of failing in her duty to her career and perhaps most tellingly, the damage to their relationship, ‘Now, no man can do that to a girl, Not too often that is’ (Grenfell and Addinsell, 1954b, p. 127). This cycle is repeated once more, before the narrator has had enough and decides to move the balance of power. Prior to taking the discussion any further, it is perhaps worth spending a moment considering Grenfell’s use of the Rule of Three in this sketch. As its basis, the rule of three is an accepted phenomenon that is considered more effective than other

numbers. This can be applied to any number of approaches or items, it can perhaps be summed up in the algebraic statement three-X, by which three can be whatever it is required to be. In this sketch, then, we can see its application in the use of three adjectives, or repeating a line three times throughout the piece, as described above. Grenfell uses repetition in other sketches, such as “Three Brothers”, discussed in chapter 5.

However, let us return to the last two lines quoted. Of note is the juxtaposed usage of the words ‘man’ and ‘girl’. For many women, the use of the word ‘girl’ is a controversial one. Some groups of women may choose to call themselves girls, perhaps predicated on a sort of gang or group dynamic based on when they met, for example, more mature women referring to the group of female friends they made at University as ‘the girls’. However, this is a claiming of a word for themselves in a very specific set of circumstances. It is perhaps also acceptable that a mother may also refer to her offspring as ‘girls’ and ‘boys’ long into their adulthood. Grenfell would have been quite familiar with the use of ‘girls for brown women, indeed her Aunt Irene was the original ‘Gibson Girl’ (Fox, 2000), and the performers at the Windmill Theatre, known as the ‘Windmill Girls’ are briefly discussed later in this chapter. However, this infantilization of women, as compared to men, appears to be continuing long past Grenfell’s era, with televised sport being a particular culprit. In 1993, women in sport were called ‘girls’, ‘young ladies’ or by their first name only in over 52% of the time in commentary, compared to only 7.8 per cent of instances for male players (Messner, Duncan and Jensen, 1993). The infantilization of women can also be seen, sometimes in an ironic way, in the titles of books and songs, for instance Larsson’s *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*, whereby the title serves to create an image of youth and fragility for the titular character, Lisbeth Salander, which is mainly disingenuous. Consider also the popular song, ‘Here Come the Girls’ (Toussaint, 1970), where the original lyrics

centre on the ownership of all women by men. The use of the chorus ('Here come the girls') by a Boots advertising campaign coupled with images of strong, free women throwing off a variety of societal expectations, aided by the promoted products, leads to an ironic reclamation of the term 'girls' away from infantilization and powerlessness, which is not problem free. This campaign, by advertising agency Created by Mother, ran for nearly five years, until 2012 (Chapman, 2012).

If one makes the same comparison with songs and books with the word 'boy' in the title, while a young image is created, it is not one lacking in power and choices, consider Cliff Richards' 'Bachelor Boy; (1963) and Marty Wilde's 'Bad Boy' (1953), which embrace an image of empowered young men acting as they will, either with society's blessing or despite its approbation. Books with 'Boy' in the title by and large tend to be about children of the male gender, such as Boyne's *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas.* Thus then, it can be said that this unequal use of infantilising terms, or the lack of their use across sport, literature and music, has a pervasive impact on the way the genders are viewed and constructed, both across and within the genders themselves. It can be argued that this analysis above has elements of post-feminist critique about it, a stance which is not otherwise much present in this research. If we are to consider whether Grenfell's work can be utilised as feminist material and socio-political commentary, there is a certain merit in acknowledging a post-feminist lens at particular points, this being a case in question.

In using this juxtaposition, Grenfell does two things; she reflects acceptable linguistics of the day, and she lays out the balance of power in the relationship, despite the narrator's status as a successful career woman. Immediately after this dynamic is underlined due to the repetition of these lines, the second time with the word '*too'* in italics, the narrator

makes a power play, offering the man a subtle ultimatum. When he phones the office, she asks her secretary to lie and tell him that she is leaving early, not only for the day, but going away from the area. It is easy to envision a gender alliance here, if the assumption is made that the secretary is also a woman, but there is no textual gender referencing at all. The assumption that the secretary is a woman provides some gender challenges; the concept of secretarial work being open to women, or even female dominated had only really begun with the necessity to hire women in the 1930s and 1940s when men were called up to fight, having begun after invention of the typewriter in 1867, as it was believed that women's fingers were more dextrous than men's (Evans, 2019). At this point, then, there is a 95% chance that the secretary is a woman, despite a history of males dominating the field going back to ancient times (Chicago Tribune, 2006).

Note also, that the 'Career Girl' has access to a secretary, probably not a Private Secretary, the roles are slightly and subtly different, with the role of Private Secretary being a slightly higher grade in some respects. Murray points out that right through the twentieth century, a Private Secretary would be drawn from the middle classes, whereas a typist would largely come from the ranks of the working class (Murray, 2017). If she worked hard and took evening classes she might make it to the level of secretary, differentiated from the role of Private Secretary in that she was responsible for the general running of the office, as opposed to the Private Secretary role, dedicated to one director or senior executive (Davies, 1982). Suddenly, the secretary has the power and uses it to provoke a reaction in the man, he leaves his office, in exactly the same state of urgency and frustration as she has done. While her cab driver 'drives as if he was insane' (Grenfell and Addinsell, 1954b, p. 128), he 'tells the man to race it,' (Grenfell and Addinsell, 1954b, p. 129), but gets stuck in traffic. However, when he arrives, 'And he runs up seven flights — /I'm there.' (Grenfell

and Addinsell, 1954b, p. 129). This ending provides a sense of completion, but it also is the cause of some conflict in the analysis. On one hand, we have a happy ending and a sense of moral victory: the man has been taught a lesson and now knows what the narrator means to him, but there is also a sense that a woman is held to a higher account than a man, by the woman herself. She has not let him down twice first, she has not sunk to his level, rather, she has shown him where the line that cannot be crossed is by ensuring she does not commit the same offence. She has retained the moral high ground, but we do not find out whether this modifies the man's behaviour towards her in the long term. Therefore this sketch helps us recognise that female equity is not a simple goal, it has implications and inconsistencies within itself, and in achieving some aspect of it, we may inadvertently cause compromise elsewhere. This sense of compromise continues in the next monologue presented here for analysis.

The monologue 'Wibberly' (1957) appears, according to online sources, to have been first performed in the 1957 solo show *A Miscellany* (Harris, 2019), but while the date of writing is confirmed by the Bristol Theatre Archive, the occasion cannot. It can be imagined that the part of the Announcer in this spoken two-hander was played by Grenfell's accompanist for this show, George Bauer, while Grenfell took the main role of Lady Wibberly. Grenfell appears to have had a friendly, but more distant relationship with Bauer than Addinsell, Blezard or Tunnard, he warrants only a few mentions in her second memoir, *In Pleasant Places* (1980), despite the fact that they appear to have worked together off and on for around ten years. The imagined audience is just that; a television audience. It soon becomes clear that while our host has bags of enthusiasm, she has a clear idea of the image she wishes to portray, of herself and her home, but little idea of how to achieve it. In this respect, there are certain formal phrases and attitudes that are reminiscent of the speaker

in Grenfell's first sketch 'Useful and Acceptable Gifts' (1939). Again, no recording, either audio or audio-visual, has been available for this monologue, so this is a textual analysis only.

The situation is a live outside broadcast (OB) between a studio and the location, Wibberly. By 1957, the BBC OB units were quite well established, having begun in 1937, with a break for the Second World War, when all OB vans were pressed into service for military purposes. However, the amount of planning and logistics that went into these ventures was still huge compared to today, and the scuppering of such live events by technical difficulties or other variables was relatively common (Gilbey, 2013). In this case, perhaps, the situation is rescued by technical breakdown. After a short introduction, the camera turns to Lady Wibberly, who immediately betrays her lack of experience and nervousness, by talking to the onsite director while live on air. She shouts her introduction, and is plunged into consternation at the reaction of the crew; 'I needn't do it quite so loud? Oh, I see, I mustn't do it quite so loud' (Grenfell, 1957, p. 140). While a recording has not been secured, familiarity with Grenfell's delivery suggests that the word 'mustn't' would be emphasised in a slightly chastened, yet hopeful tone, maybe even with a hint of wonder.

Our hostess launches into a tour of the castle and it becomes clear that Wibberly is not her family home, but her husband's family home. This raises the question of why Lord Wibberly is not presenting the tour, and perhaps this fits with the idea that the gentleman would be busy running the estate or working in London, while the lady plays the gracious hostess, to friends and paying guests alike. Papanek (1973) introduced the concept of the 'two-person single career' (p. 856) , discussing those occupations where the wife has certain unspoken duties and expectations placed on her in direct relation to her husband's role, even though

the value of this is never acknowledged and wives 'can expect to be paid for their work only vicariously through the husband's income' (Papanek, 1973, p. 863). This OB, as it progresses, has the strong feel of one of these situations. It can also be argued that the Grenfell marriage took on many of these characteristics in reverse. Indeed, the inclusion of 'Wibberly' (1957) in this chapter, rather than in the next, is a debatable point; while Lady Wibberly is helping to ensure her family's income, there is no evidence that she herself is receiving a salary. She has this in common with the Wife of the Oxbridge Vice-Chancellor, (Eng. Lit. sketches), which are featured in Chapter 5. Thus, throughout these chapters begins to appear a theme of whether the differentiation between paid and unpaid women's labour is real or a false delineation and this will be explored further at the end of Chapter 5 and in the Conclusion.

However, while Lady Wibberly may be willing and well mannered, her lack of knowledge of the pieces of art she is trying to discuss is soon revealed; in showing the audience the statues, she say 'And this one is… Well, I know this one is Apollo and somewhere we do have Mercury with his little feathered hat. Never Mind' (Grenfell, 1957, p. 140). Lady Wibberly is on safer ground when she moves into personal reminiscences of the house, and these are perhaps the most interesting parts of the sketch. In the first anecdote, she discusses the use of the statues she has just failed to recognise as extra coat stands on visits to Wibberly as a child. This anecdote is possibly triggered by Grenfell's memories of house parties at Cliveden or at Ford in her childhood and teens. While her memoirs and letters do not recount this incident exactly, there are many instances of large groups of young people nettling her aunt Nancy Astor by treating her possessions with rather less reverence than Astor would have liked (Grenfell, 1976; Grenfell, 1979) There is a very subtle cultural reference here too, to one of the most iconic photos of the fifties 'we have

in here – somewhere – a grating through which comes hot air and I know of nothing pleasanter on a cold winter's day than to come in here and stand over the grating.' (Grenfell, 1957, p. 141). This immediately reminds the audience of the iconic 1955 Marilyn Monroe image, taken on the set of *The Seven Year Itch* (1954) by Sam Shaw, now the subject of much conjecture as to whether it is an example of objectification of women (Feuerherd, 2017) or of female pleasure. Farran (1990) argues that in order to analyse the Monroe picture, one must think outside the picture, to consider what Monroe experienced or believed at that moment, which she admits is partly conjecture, as we cannot know what happened immediately before the photograph was taken or what Monroe was thinking about; for example, was she, just like Lady Wibberly, simply appreciating the warmth given off by the vent on a cold day? (Farran, 1990, p. 265). Melissa Stevens, Shaw's granddaughter, reminds us that Monroe's reaction in the film is 'Isn't it delicious?', yet the implication in her article is that this line was not scripted (Stevens, 2019). This is, perhaps, where the comparison to Monroe ends, as there is no indication that Lady Wibberly was, while standing over the grating, posing for publicity shots or any other audience, thus any sexual or other warming pleasure is purely for the narrator's enjoyment.

The second anecdote demonstrates close female bonds between the current Lady Wibberly and the previous Lady Wibberly, her mother-in-law. It also has common themes with 'Eng. Lit. I' (Grenfell, 1965b) in that it recalls an older, upper class woman with an obsession, in this case, for painting hollyhocks; 'thirty-seven studies' of them (Grenfell, 1957, p. 141). Perhaps there is a further underlying comment about acceptable work for upper class women here, if one accepts the dating clues suggested below and extrapolates that the previous Lady Wibberly would have been working, or at least active, in the 1920s and 30s, a period in which the number of female botanists and botanical artists is

significant (Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, 2018). This suggests then, that for women exploring new avenues to earning a living, the education polite young ladies were given in the womanly arts, such as drawing, needlepoint and observation, lent themselves to socially acceptable careers in this field. Further, there are parallels with a similar relationship in 'First Flight' (1969b), whereby the narrator has forged a good relationship with her Afro-American daughter-in-law, discussed in more detail in Chapter 5. Perhaps then, it is possible to see Grenfell exploring some of the ideas of active alliances and allegiances between the women De Beauvoir discusses (1997), even when the relationship is not entirely expected, in order to ease their lot, increase their independence, and give them more room for manoeuvre around, or despite of, the men with whom they also appear to be allied.

There are other parallels with the Eng. Lit sketches in terms of the female narrator defending and displaying her husband's territory as if it were her own by right and birth, rather than by marriage. At this point, our host returns to her more formal tour guide role, and points out a juxtaposition of history and practical choice which is probably cost driven, 'The plasterwork is sixteenth century, and the fluorescent strip-lighting is rather more recent.' (Grenfell, 1957, p. 141). Once again, her lack of experience breaks through, as she has to take guidance from the crew on how to proceed into the next room, as 'I don't understand television. We haven't got a set I'm afraid. We can't afford it.' (Grenfell, 1957, p. 141). Both the comments about strip lighting and the lack of a television set help date the sketch, as fluorescent lighting did not become commercially viable or popular until the 1930s (HH Fluorescent and LED Products Inc, 2015). Although television broadcasting had existed since the 1920s (National Science and Media Museum, 2019), the costs of owning a set were far more prohibitive than they are today. While the calculation of modern day

cost equivalency is not an exact science, one source suggests that in the 1950s a television cost the equivalent of between £2000 and £6000 (Castle Cover, 2019), a truly prohibitive price if running the family estate is already challenging. Grenfell was more than aware that many of her friends either could not afford or chose not to have a television set into the 70s; her penfriend Katherine Moore and she often discussed it in their correspondence (Grenfell and Moore, 1981). Therefore, this sketch is likely to be set at some point between just before the Second World War and the 1950s. Indeed, the cost of televisions and radios, and the implications of the cost of advancing technology formed part of the debate in Grenfell's work for the Pilkington Committee in the early 1960s.

Further evidence of the Wibberlys' straitened circumstances can be found in the next paragraph, as Lady Wibberly explains why the Banqueting Hall is no longer used for meals, 'It is four hundred yards from the kitchen and only one maid – one never had a hot meal' (Grenfell, 1957, p. 141). Again, the assertion that the room is used for ping pong in wet weather, it can be argued, is directly inspired by one of Grenfell's childhood holiday homes, Ford, which belonged to her Aunt Pauline Spender Clay, where wet weather meant games of Racing Demon and other activities in the library (Grenfell, 1976). These autobiographical details, and Grenfell's habit of drawing on them as resource for this sketch, are helpful to the analysis of the sketch, as they assist us in drawing some wider conclusions about how much Grenfell may agree with the views and frustrations expressed by the character. While not conclusive by any means, we can, perhaps, form a picture of Grenfell and her own position and socio-political views. Here we can say that both Grenfell and Lady Wibberly have a nostalgia for a past way of life. This might suggest that Grenfell is naturally of a conservative and nostalgic bent, rather than a more forward thinking feminist activist. This view is further reinforced by the turns of phrase Grenfell, appearing as herself, used in the

Bow Dialogues in the 1960s and 1970s, where constant references to 'young people today', 'the problem nowadays' and other somewhat conservative phrases present her as somewhat cautious towards progress and changes during this period. However, the use of conservative linguistic does not necessarily reflect a conservative frame of mind, rather the linguistic within which one grew up. The relationship between any feminist actions of Grenfell as herself, and those of Grenfell's characters is further explored in Chapter 8, 'Grenfell as herself' and the Conclusion.

The weakness of the Wibberlys' claim to historic impact is further undermined by the lack of evidence that Cromwell's button really is Cromwell's button, and the final straw is when Lady Wibberly singularly fails to demonstrate the echo in the Echo Chamber. Mercifully for all concerned, at this point the OB cuts out and the audience is returned to the studio. Without a visual recording it is not possible to say whether Grenfell imagines the action to be a real break at this point, or an intervention by the presenter in the studio. However, the overarching theme in this sketch is the choices made by the aristocracy in order to try and preserve or adapt their lifestyle and status. Again, this reflects Grenfell's acute observational skills on the impact of changing definitions of modern life around her. The National Trust was founded in 1895 (National Trust, 2019), indeed, Cliveden, the house in which Grenfell had spent so much of her childhood was donated to the National Trust in 1942, on the condition that the family could live in the House for as long as they wished (Cliveden House, 2016). This last condition had an indirect impact on Grenfell, and she moved out of Parr's Cottage in 1942. However, the extent of this as an influencing factor cannot be gleaned from Grenfell's private correspondence; any concerns Grenfell expressed about their tenancy at Parr's were more related to her Aunt Nancy's disapproval

of her entertainment work than any perceived threat created by the transfer of ownership to the National Trust.

Taken with the 'Countess of Coteley' (Grenfell and Addinsell, 1947) and 'Hostess' (Grenfell, 1954e), Grenfell's acute observational skills employed here reflect the demise of her class, particularly with regard to the impact on the women within it. It is true that the men are barely mentioned in these sketches, though in the case of 'Mrs Mendlicote' (Grenfell and Addinsell, 1954a), it is likely that the pressure is such that Mr Mendlicote has cut and run. This lack of concern for the men, except where they have failed to cope can, it might be argued, demonstrate a level of male 'othering' by Grenfell. The men she portrays are occasionally cruel, but more often ridiculous, clueless and weak.

This attitude is reminiscent of De Beauvoir, who portrays men as sleepwalking into and through the patriarchy, and women as unaware of the reality of their husbands: 'Men may reproach women for their dissimulation, but his complacency must be great indeed for him to be so easily duped (De Beauvoir, 1997, p. 492) This suggests that, in her creations at least, Grenfell demonstrates a slight condescension towards men, and on multiple occasions she turns the tables on her male characters, wresting power from them and almost infantilising them, so that we feel sorry for them in the same way we might be amused by a small child throwing a temper tantrum. This is not an attitude that comes across in Grenfell's private writings. She has genuine and strong male friendships, in addition to her forty-plus year marriage, she supports men who have had impact on her life, not only Britten and Pears, but faithful retainers, respected writers and politicians. However, there is no doubt that in terms of publication, at least, Grenfell's back catalogue concentrates on her relationship with women; primarily her mother, her Aunt Nancy Astor,

with Katherine Moore and with Virginia Graham. This may be partially down to the impact of the Grenfell Estate, who control copyright on Grenfell's works carefully, and the influence of Janie Hampton, who as Grenfell's sole biographer, editor of several volumes published posthumously and goddaughter, has been in a position to influence, shape and protect Grenfell's image. Hampton is the daughter of Verily Anderson, a British author and screenwriter, who was supported by Grenfell in many practical and emotional ways, to the extent that shortly after they met, Grenfell bought the family a house. Grenfell's support, it can be argued, gave Anderson the financial space and security to launch and extend her career, and the children, including Hampton benefitted significantly from Grenfell's quiet largesse. However, while examination of Grenfell's private letters to and from men show warmth, affection, and humour, it is to women her most intimate thoughts are shown. It should always be borne in mind that Grenfell stated firmly that true friends should not be burdened and that she tried to ensure that all her confidences were happy ones. The confidences in the next monologue for analysis are less happy, certainly in the first instance.

'The Wedding is on Saturday' (Grenfell, 1967a) is a spoken sketch featuring a middle-class spinster who is, as the title suggests, getting married on Saturday. The analysis undertaken here is a combination of a textual analysis of the script as published in *Turn Back the Clock* (Grenfell, 1998) and performance analysis of an undated audio performance found on the *George, Don't Do That* CD, released in 1994, along with the Maureen Lipman audio recording taken from *Choice Grenfell* (1998). The monologue begins with the narrator having a heart to heart discussion with her married sister, Anna. They are in Anna's kitchen and the narrator is in a state of some distress. The theatre or televisual audience is therefore eavesdropping on a conversation of which half is in their imagination. The trigger

for the narrator's panic, imbued in the statement 'I'm not going to marry Alan' (Grenfell, 1967a, p. 247) appears to be the act of clearing her desk at work; she presents a much more independent, liberated woman than many of the women Grenfell chose to portray. Contrast this with the unpaid drudgery of the narrator of 'Telephone Call', analysed in Chapter 5, 'Reactive Relatives', who is almost completely dominated by her aging father and selfish boyfriend.

By 1967 the marriage bar had been completely repealed, there was no legal reason for the narrator to give up work: indeed, Grenfell herself had not taken up work until she had been married for several years. Yet the familial and societal expectation on this woman is that she will give up work, and thus she has elected to do so. The narrator's married sister's main source of concern appears to be that she will continue to be burdened with a spinster. The implication here is that, to an extent, a married couple are expected to take responsibility for the spinster members of the family, as if they are somehow less than, because they have not achieved the status of marriage, yet the narrator has been economically independent and living in her own flat for some time. Anna's real shock, as opposed to concern for responsibility, comes when it is revealed that her sister, the narrator, will not go to her marriage bed as a virgin. The links between changes in attitude towards sexual activity and its implications in the Second World War are well documented; Nicholson states, 'In the first two years of the war new cases of syphilis in men were up 113 per cent, in women 63 per cent. With the arrival of the GIs such diseases reached almost epidemic proportions' (2011, p. 227). Such was the concern about sexually transmitted infections and unwanted pregnancy that significant propaganda resources were expended by both the British and American military medical support systems (WW2 US Medical Research Centre, 2017), yet here at the height of the so-called swinging sixties,

the married sister, Anna, is still making a judgement. As a Christian Scientist, Grenfell would have held the idea of pre-marital sex as less than the way of faith. Articles in the *Christian Science Sentinel* from as late as the early 1970s discuss the dangers of sex before marriage in terms of a breach of moral code, and 'Morality is the first stepping-stone from physicality to spirituality' (Ansley, 1970). Thus, it is likely that while Grenfell writes the narrator's lines with empathy and realism, she had some sympathy towards Anna too, perhaps even shared some of her shock.

Anna is mystified by her sister's reasoning towards the man with whom she had sex; 'he wasn't very nice, and he wasn't very attractive, he was only sort of fascinating' (Grenfell, 1967a, p. 248). Anna's reaction and judgment was not uncommon; Doris Barry, a song and dance girl at the notorious Windmill Theatre, and her colleagues, were also mainly of a more conservative persuasion, in common with the narrator's sister. The Windmill Theatre and its Windmill Girls had a risqué reputation, as it was the first theatre in London to have nudity as a regular part of its shows. The assumption was that the girls would be equally relaxed about removing their clothes in their private lives, but this was not the case at all. Doris Barry recalled that when nudes were introduced the girls were very reluctant, but were persuaded by the manager, Vivian Van Damm, partly by his argument that 'it's better that these men come here than go into brothels (Nicholson, 2010, p. 211) There was still an aspect of moral code between the women who worked at the Theatre and there was judgement for those who broke it; 'A kiss was a really big event, yet here we were on the stage, dancing around. One or two girls liked going out, and liked whatever came after [sexual activity]. But the rest of us used to think, oh, how could they?' (Nicholson, 2010, p. 211). This then, is an example of a clash between the public aspect of Windmill Girls' jobs and a much more demure private persona. This war memoir reflects Anna's attitude, even

though one might make assumptions that the attitude towards wartime sex might be closer to the narrator's. Yet, despite being the sister who lost her virginity during the war, the narrator claims that she is not a very modern woman; perhaps this is why she is willing to give up her job, despite the fact that she has no legal obligation to do so, only a societal expectation.

While perhaps of less dramatic impact, there are other aspects of this sketch which give a detailed portrayal of the life of both married and unmarried women in 1960s Britain. Anna may not go out to work, but she still has a demanding role. Dinner must be on the table on time, yet Brian, Anna's husband, does not appear to be an unreasonable man. The spinster sister's feelings of guilt are not just about letting Alan down, but also about the fact that, in getting married, she would no longer have been the responsibility of Anna and Brian.

In many respects the spinster narrator portrays herself rather stereotypically 'I've been on my own for so long I nearly suffocated. Well, perhaps I've been on my own for too long, leading my own tidy little life in my own tidy little way and now that I've got a chance to get away from it, it all looks beautiful and orderly and it's mine!' (Grenfell, 1967a, p. 249). There is, however, something very historically telling in the happy ending to this sketch; the narrator is suddenly brought to her 'senses' by the thought of the paint drying on their newly shared shelves. There is no thought that a happy ending could be the runaway bride excited at returning to work, or renewing her acquaintance with spinsterhood; only the realisation that 'I must be dotty' (Grenfell, 1967a, p. 249) and the narrator leaving her sister to find Alan and tell him that it will all be all right can lead to a happily ever after. In 1960s Britain, even the late 1960s, only such a heteronormative conclusion would have been acceptable to Grenfell's upper-middle class audience.

This somewhat safe ending may reflect some of Grenfell's views expressed in the April 1973 *Bow Dialogues* with the Reverend Joseph McCulloch, in which she stated, that 'you can only get out of an audience that which is already there' (Grenfell and McCulloch, 1973). To an extent, this reflects some of the broad-brush stroke approaches to Reception Theory and suggests that an audience will not respond to something they find alien or too uncomfortable. Contextually then, there is a limit to how far Grenfell can push her discourse, and must respect that which has gone before her, as suggested by Foucault (Diaz-Bone et al, 2007). Foucault makes this critiquing element plain, 'A critique is not a matter of saying that things are not right as they are. It is a matter of pointing out what kinds of assumptions, what kind of familiar, unchallenged, unconsidered mode of that the practices that we accept rest[…]' (Foucault, 1988). This does not entirely remove the responsibility from Grenfell, but does go some way to explaining the slightly unsatisfying ending of this sketch. There is a very neatly reassuring happy ending, which from a feminist point of view feels like Grenfell has stopped short of challenging the status quo; however, by taking this route, Grenfell remains included within the establishment and therefore able to challenge in a more subtle way.

This monologue allows the contemplation of sex and loss of virginity as a pleasurable experience, the timing of which women can take ownership, and suggests that marriage is not a happily ever after, that it comes at the cost of compromise, and that compromise is largely on the side of the woman. In laying all this out, even though Grenfell has the narrator deciding that her love for Alan is worth that compromise, Grenfell allows her audience of the time to perhaps shed any shame they may retain over any pre-marital sexual encounters and consider the potential cost of any compromises they have made in their relationships. Rutter (1997) argues that the responsibility of reception lies with the

audience, and they can choose whether to laugh, delay laughter or refuse it. Perhaps this ending is a clear reference to the power relations between Grenfell and her audience. As Foucault points out, there needs to be resistance to make the inter-change of power relations, but here we see in action the position laid out by Diaz-Bone et al, (2007) that there is a limit to how far the envelope of subjective meaning can be pushed, within the boundaries of the rules and contexts laid down by previous discourse.

Billig (2005) argues that there are two major types of humour, disciplinary and rebellious, both of which have mocking qualities, disciplinary being innately conservative and therefore mocking those who try and break social rules. Rebellious humour, on the other hand, mocks those who abide by the rules with whole-hearted acceptance, and is often used by the subordinate to challenge the status quo. In agreement with Billig's theory, I would suggest that it is difficult to categorise an individual performer, or indeed an individual sketch, as one or the other, and it would be my argument that in highlighting the absurdities and injustices of gender and class politics, Grenfell obliquely challenges them in such a way that she does not damage her fee earning potential. Grenfell not only reached financial independence, she became the primary wage earner in her household and supported many other people, male and female, to reach their own independence and therefore emancipation. In the case of Tunnard, when she was no longer able to be independent because of ill health, Grenfell's actions at least ensure that Tunnard was able to live in comfort and dignity until her death. Billig (2005), in discussing racism and other discriminatory humour, also draws attention to the dangers of aggressive, or confrontational humour, which Grenfell carefully avoided, as she did in her private life. It assumes that the audience agrees with the reasons for confrontation and aggression and believes the subject of this confrontation deserves to be on the receiving end. This was the

mistake Ross and Brand made in the "Sachsgate scandal" (Kelly, 2010) and not one that Grenfell ever came close to making. Therefore, the challenge in her humour is of a more subtly persuasive variety, not the confrontational kind.

The Lipman version of 'The Wedding is on Saturday' (1998) provides a subtly different interpretation of the text. As in many of the comparisons, there is a markedly slower pace; Grenfell's delivery takes 4 minutes and 49 seconds, while Lipman's lasts 5 minutes and 58 seconds. In this instance however, there are only minor variations from the text as recorded by Grenfell and published in *Turn Back the Clock* (1989). One explanation for the difference in pacing, in this instance, is that the recording appears to have been made in front of an audience, whereas Grenfell's recordings appear to be largely closed studio based, and Lipman's pauses for audience reaction would have some impact on timing. The fact remains that there are differences in the tone of the delivery. While the work role of the narrator is still relatively traditional, where Grenfell comes across as sad and upset, Lipman appears much more in control of her emotions, yet at least partially resigned to the inevitability of what is to happen. The relationship between the narrator and her sister, Anna, is portrayed somewhat differently; where in the Grenfell rendition one felt that Anna, the married sister had the more dominant role, Lipman's tone towards her, particularly in the case of 'that's what sisters are for, in case you don't know' (Grenfell, 1967a, p. 247) is one of controlled anger and patience, as if explaining a simple task to a small child for the umpteenth time. This anger is again apparent when, through gritted teeth, the narrator says, 'I'm absolutely calm' (Grenfell, 1967a, p. 248), where in Grenfell's performance this appears more akin to controlled hysteria.

Lipman's performance of the narrator's discussion about the loss of her virginity portrays a much more philosophical attitude to the spinster's youthful exploits compared to Grenfell's; one feels that she is quite fond of her younger self, and has a much more pragmatic approach, changing Grenfell's admission of a lack knowledge of the man concerned, 'Nor did I, come to that' (Grenfell, 1967a, p. 248) to a more matter of fact, 'Neither did I, for that matter.' She appears much more amused by the concept of her younger self becoming a nursing missionary than Grenfell is. One feels that Lipman's version of the narrator is much more reconciled to the fact that Alan has been married before than Grenfell's version. Finally, when the narrator changes her mind and decides she will marry Alan after all, the sense is that of being in control, that she is reassuring Anna, Bryan, and will reassure Alan, or indeed that Alan will never know this conversation took place. In Grenfell's version, one cannot help feeling that while the narrator has done all the talking, she would attribute the reassurance to Anna and Bryan. Of course, Lipman still provides the audience with a heteronormative happy ever after, but if one takes into account all that has been detailed above, this is not surprising; Lipman's audience was still largely middle class; her publicity and broadcasts based around *Re:Joyce!* and the accompanying Grenfell revival work were centred on Radio 4 listeners, an audience characterised even today as of an average of 56 years old and 75% ABC1 demographic, socio-economically described as 'upmarket' (BBC Radio, no date).

In considering the power relations and otherness of all these working women, it is worth comparing and contrasting these monologues with the sketches to be analysed in the next chapter, which concentrates on women whose work and main occupation can be considered to be unpaid. Here, my analysis of a large selection of Grenfell monologues centring on women who are paid to work, has shown a range of ways in which Grenfell has

adopted and adapted feminist materials to demonstrate the point through humour and the power of persuasion, shining a light on the many inequalities in conflicting priorities, expectations, conditions, and concern for women who work outside of the domestic environment. A linked and innate ability to experiment with power/knowledge conception and dynamic has been synthesised, even though Grenfell predated Foucault and therefore would not have been able to term it as such. Certain resonances and conflicts with De Beauvoir have been exposed.

Returning to the stated purpose of this chapter, to establish the validity of these sketches as a socio-political commentary and potential feminist resource, it can then be clearly stated that these sketches do present a clear snapshot of a certain perception of women from different socio-economic strata. Potentially they can be used to highlight the differences and injustices in the way in which women have been treated throughout this part of the twentieth century. It has been shown, however, that the clarity with which Grenfell herself can be said to be any type of feminist has yet to be established, and much of this aspect will be addressed in Chapter 8, 'Grenfell as herself: Influencer, committee member and philosopher?'. In the next chapter, an exploration of whether similar conclusions can be drawn will be presented, following an analysis of sketches involving women who work without the benefit of pay.

Chapter 5: Reactive Relatives: Women working in unpaid roles

The last chapter addressed the role of women who, by and large, undertook paid occupation or directly depended on the income generated by their hand, and the Foucauldian power/knowledge concept as expressed by Grenfell. It examined the relationships with other subjects and the correlation between this and feminism as experienced at street level and through a De Beauvoirian lens. This chapter continues this analysis, this time along the theme of women who work, or have worked, in an unpaid capacity, whether that is through supporting the family domestically, doing some form of community work or simply rolling up one's sleeves and getting stuck in. The creation of the discursive field for this chapter has been largely developed along the concept of the primary theme; monologues such as 'Canteen' (1940a), sometimes called 'Canteen in Wartime' (Grenfell, 1940) could have been included here, but a choice had to be made, and it was felt more appropriate and relevant to Chapter 7, 'The Time of My Life'.

The analysis herein encompasses five sketches: ' 'Three Brothers', the published script of which is undated, but the Bristol Theatre Archive manuscript strongly indicates had its debut in *Joyce Grenfell Requests the Pleasure*, in 1953; 'Telephone Call' (1959), 'Boat Train' (Grenfell, 1959a), 'Lally Tullett' (Grenfell, 1965) and 'First Flight (Grenfell, 1969b). Thus, this chapter presents examples spanning nearly three decades of Grenfell's work. Again, non-monologue material has been used to provide co-text, and the Mass Observation Archives feature in this chapter. There is a noticeable increase in length of monologues in the 1960s, as well as a change of tone, away from sketches that are funny first and have a message second, and towards a more contemplative, whimsical style. This change of tone is not noticeable in the previous chapter, which concerned a much more compact span in

Grenfell's career, and at a period when her activity was at its height, if not still building. These sketches are the work of a woman settling into a more secure way of life, with more room to explore ideas and philosophies. Again, these analyses are presented in chronological order, largely to show development, but in this case, it also helps demonstrate the rise of this more considered approach and increasing willingness to broach more sensitive subjects, such as socio-economic shifts downwards and extra-marital affairs.

The impact of war on the number of women available for, and willing to do, domestic work is mentioned in discussion of the 'Countess of Coteley' (1947), in Chapter 7, 'The Time of My Life'. It is explored more fully in 'Situation Vacant' (1942a), a spoken monologue. This sketch was written for Grenfell's second foray into revue, *Light and Shade,* which was once again produced by Herbert Farjeon (Wilson, 1972). The analysis of this sketch has been undertaken at a purely textual level, as a recording has yet to be located.

In 'Situation Vacant', the narrator is an upper-middle class woman desperately seeking some domestic support in exchange for a salary. The unseen and unheard partner in the conversation is the owner or manager of a staffing agency, who is reluctant to take on the vacancy . The rise of other work opportunities for women had already created a significant shortfall in the domestic staff pool before the outbreak of war, and this created a double impact whereby there were fewer staff to choose from, and the need to roll positions together to advertise the unattractive post of maid of all work, though the term Grenfell uses is Housekeeper. This use of the term Housekeeper is interesting and, perhaps, reflects the desperation of the narrator. The use of that same term only a generation before would have referred to a house manager, with knowledge of household economics and an ability

to command a domestic staff on the mistress's behalf. By 1942, the title had come to be a polite euphemism for over-worked general maid. This sketch addresses a dilemma of feminism which exists to this day, and to which a solution remains to be found, that of sharing the domestic load. The narrator explains the cause of her domestic woes, 'You see, I'm out all day on my war job' (Grenfell, 1942, p. 34). We see here, then, a woman who is, to all intents and purposes, a single working mother. The narrator's husband is in Scotland and has left her to manage alone. She has therefore, until recently, been operating in a heteronormative, two-parent household; however it is clear that domestic management is left largely to her, that is, she is carrying the burden of emotional labour. De Beauvoir argues that no matter how productive a woman is, she cannot be equal and free until she is 'only incidentally bound to domestic work' (De Beauvoir, 2011, p. 89). This is unlikely to happen for the narrator during the exacerbated situation of the Second World War.

The narrator is realistic about her chances of securing domestic help; she has been having trouble even getting the vacancy put on an agency's books. She uses the fact that she is away at work all day, her husband is in Scotland, and her children largely cared for by her mother to try and make the case for the role being an attractive one. Childcare was a major issue during the Second World War, particularly for those who had children under five years old. Summerfield (1984) demonstrates the changing attitudes towards those who needed outside help with childcare, and the government's initial reluctance to step in to offer solutions. By 1941, and with the imposition of female conscription, eighty per cent of married women were employed in what was considered essential work (BBC, 2014). Before the Second World War, state childcare provision was only available for those who were seen as incapable of caring for their children properly (Summerfield, 1984), but this gradually changed over the course of the hostilities. Although some sources make the

changes in attitude to childcare provisions sound very simple, with the introduction of flexible working hours, workplace or local authority nurseries and other options available (BBC, 2014), Summerfield (1984) paints a picture of a much more reactive situation, with the government only really getting involved at the request of employers, rather than the mothers who were being called on to take up war jobs themselves.

Reports suggest that the facilities created were often cramped and in unsuitable buildings, and brought their own issues of staffing, as the Ministry of Health insisted on having qualified nursing staff in order to ensure that infectious disease amongst nursery using families did not become an issue (Summerfield, 1984). Of course, there was a level of suspicion among mothers about these new provisions, so it is not surprising that our narrator, along with many other mothers, preferred to make other arrangements, whether that was, as in this sketch, involving women who were post-conscription age, or asking paid domestic staff to take on some of the responsibility. Grenfell herself took on two evacuated girls in 1939, but, as discussed in Chapter 1, much of the responsibility for these children fell to her housekeeper, the very position the narrator of this monologue is trying to advertise.

The narrator is aware of the loneliness of the role she is seeking to fill, both in terms of the fact that the post-holder would be working alone and the location of the house in the country, 'but there's a market town only five miles away with a *huge* cinema and wonderful shops' (Grenfell, 1942, p. 34). The detail that the bus to travel to this market town can only be accessed by crossing 'a couple of fields from us and over a potty little stile', or a rather longer walk along country roads 'when the field gets flooded' (Grenfell, 1942, p. 35) is slipped in, almost as if the narrator hopes the staff bureau officer will not notice. The

narrator goes on to list the many attractions of the clubs in the market town, the most exciting to a young housekeeper being a ‘MIXED choral society’ (Grenfell, 1942, p. 35, capitalisation Grenfell’s), which does not really hold out a lot of hope for excitement in reality. There are indications that middle-class homeowners looking to fill domestic staff posts in rural areas were at an even greater disadvantage than those in the towns and cities. The shortage of potential candidates meant that they could pick and choose posts and those who had staff struggled to retain them, particularly if they had evacuees or soldiers billeted with them, ‘some, who had earlier encountered difficult house-guests, were wary of going through the experience again’ (Elcock, 1999, p. 333). In some households, there was a major power shift, as the servants felt able to make threats about neglecting certain tasks or even leaving (Elcock, 1999). Here then, we see a working example of power/knowledge in action, as the knowledge of the staffing shortages gave those previously considered lower in the hierarchy more skills and actions with which to operate resistance.

At this point in the sketch, the unseen and unheard employment bureau officer appears to query the scale of the house and duties, and asks what accommodation is available for the housekeeper. The narrator, in answer, describes the house as tiny, but it becomes clear that there are at least ten rooms, possibly more, for which the housekeeper must care. While the housekeeper’s rooms appear more luxurious than the ones Grenfell herself was able to offer in her London home (Grenfell, 1976), they are not a refuge from work; the narrator appears to see it as a convenience and advantage that within the bath-sitting room ‘there’s a sewing machine and an ironing board, just supposing she sort of felt, well, maybe, like doing a little something to my underclothes’ (Grenfell, 1942, p. 35). Thus, we can see that what the narrator really wants may be dignified with the title housekeeper,

but is more accurately described as a maid-of-all-work. The post the narrator has in mind has all the hallmarks of the reasons why domestic service became less and less popular after the First World War; there would be a lower rate of pay, little free time, and little chance of privacy (Noakes, 2014) compared to most other wartime opportunities, just as had been the case in wartime/ the First World War. In August 1941, writing to Graham, Grenfell, reports that pressure is not just coming in the form of finding staff, but also how it looks in desiring to have them,

> I've just eavesdropped on a good conversation as to whether 'it looks bad to advertise for a footman these days?' […] As the footman is wanted to feed chickens, lug coals, do heavy chores no female can and will be welcome at any age over 15 and unfit at that, I cannot think Florrie need feel ashamed to want him.
>
> (Grenfell, 1941).

Ultimately, all the narrator wants, in addition to cooking, cleaning, mending and the ability to take messages via the telephone, is somebody who will 'not get called up' (Grenfell, 1942, p. 35), and she knows that if that person 'happens to be honest and sober' (Grenfell, 1942, p. 35) the mistress of the house will be doing very well, such was the shortage of domestic staff at the time. These concerns can be seen in Grenfell's correspondence with Graham throughout the War, although sometimes this correspondence can seem quite petty. In May 1940, Graham and her mother 'evacuated' to Claridge's as all her staff but one had walked out 'in a fine flurry' (Hampton, 1997, p. 75). While one can hardly believe that staying at Claridge's was a hardship, it was an indicator of greater changes to come. In April 1941, Graham also reports that family friends have no servants left at all, so the wife, 'Joan cooks for 14 people, — 2 evacuee women, 7 children & her own brood & Oofah [the

father] buttles' (Hampton, 1997, p. 80). While both Graham and Grenfell have a habit of seeing the lighter side of difficult situations, there is no doubt that for households of their socio-economic status, this was a challenging situation, with a marked move in the power/knowledge balance in favour of those seeking to obtain employment

Finally, the narrator in 'Situation Vacant' (Grenfell, 1942a) resorts to a sort of weak bribery, or resistance to the power the bureau officer has been handed, saying that another agency has been able to put forward 'an unrestricted Croat of sixty-five' (Grenfell, 1942a, p. 35) but seeing that the woman speaks no English and appears to be unable to cook after dark for religious reasons, this only underlines the narrator's desperation. Such is her relief when the agency finally agrees to put her vacancy on the waiting list to go on to their books, she is overcome and has to ask for water. The discourse Grenfell presents here is one of a woman on the edge, striving to be head and manager of the household against the odds. She enters with the assumption that the employment bureau staff hold the authoritative knowledge, thus she has acknowledged the power this woman holds over her immediate life. There is nothing that leads us to believe that the narrator knows that the employment bureau will be reluctant to take her vacancy; this assumption has been created by her experience at other agencies, and relies on the 'reciprocal legitimation' (Weiler, 2011) of the two roles. The narrator has assumed that, because the officer works in the field of recruitment, they are an expert in that field and will therefore hold the power in that aspect of the discussion. It is also clear from the responses she makes to the officer's questions, unheard by the audience, that there is an expectation that she has thought through the role, and that she has a clear understanding of the post she is attempting to advertise. It is apparent that the narrator is so desperate to get some support in the house that she is no longer clear where the lines of the role might be, so that the balance of the

power/knowledge struggle rests with the officer. This helps create a sense of the receipt of beneficence when the vacancy is taken. Thus, it can be argued that, to an extent, the narrator has swapped an allegiance to her now absent husband for an allegiance to the bureau officer, her collusion or allegiance (De Beauvoir, 1997) is successfully transferred once the vacancy is placed, she has become, 'in every material way [at least in the context of this vacancy] dependent' (De Beauvoir, 1997, p. 494).

This theme of allegiances and collusion is strong throughout the next sketch for analysis, 'Three Brothers' (Grenfell, no date).[2] If we accept that De Beauvoir's main theory in *The Second Sex* is that women have a long-standing situation of oppression and collusion as man's 'other', largely formed in childhood (De Beauvoir, 1997), the language of 'Three Brothers' is telling. However, De Beauvoir makes a key point that is crucial to the interpretation of this sketch, 'It is not too clear what the word *happy* really means, and still less what true values it may mask. There is no possibility of measuring the happiness of others, and it is always easy to describe as happy the situation in which one wishes to place them' (De Beauvoir, 1997). So, a question that can be held in the foreground throughout the analysis of this song-monologue is whether the narrator is truly happy in her situation and what values she is espousing.

Prior to entering the main thrust of analysis, it should be pointed out that a slight variation of methodology occurred in regard to this sketch. When the initial analysis was undertaken, early in the research process, a copy of the script was not available to me, so the initial stage was to transcribe an audio recording; it was only later that a text version of the script

[2] The date here refers to the printed script, which is undated in the 1978 publication, *Stately as a Galleon'.* However, as mentioned above, it is likely that the sketch premiered in 1954 and the recording analysed is undated but released as part of the collection *Joyce Grenfell Requests the Pleasure: Original Recording 1939-1954*, released in 2007 by Nostalgia Naxos.

(Grenfell, 1978) was procured. In this instance then, the analysis was undertaken in reverse and possibly has had a moderate impact on the focus of the results; there is, perhaps, a deeper analysis of the relationship between the musical aspects of the sketch with the discourse than there are in the work undertaken on other musical items.

The narrator is an upper-middle-class spinster, and it is possible to suggest that, if the sketch setting is contemporaneous with when it was written, she is around forty to fifty years old. This judgement can be made based on the countries to which her brothers have emigrated (South Africa, Ceylon – now Sri Lanka, and New Zealand), and other cultural references, such as the presence of tennis courts and cricket pitches on the property, a common feature of Grenfell's own 1920s childhood. This dating is somewhat loose, however, as there are no historical events mentioned throughout this sketch, and it would be safer to assume that the childhood of the narrator is somewhere between the 1890s and the 1920s, and the 'now' of the monologue somewhere between the 1920s and 1950s. The major difference between Grenfell and her character in this sketch, in general then, is that Grenfell was married. The narrator's brothers are the mainstay of her life, but they have all emigrated.

'Three Brothers' is the only musical piece amongst the sketches analysed in this chapter; an analysis of the juxtaposition of the lyrics, against a jolly waltz tune with a highly romanticised bridge section, composed by Richard Addinsell, as many of Grenfell's songs were, creates as much of a spotlight on the difficult issues posed as the lyrics themselves. Grenfell's narrator is 'allowed to field for them, to bowl to them, to score' in games of cricket as a little girl. Presumably the fun bit, batting, is real man's work, and therefore she is excluded from this part of the game. She is also 'allowed to fetch and carry' for the boys

during her childhood and young adulthood and, later in the song, for their children, with no reference to what her brothers do for her in return. She is 'allowed to wait on them' and 'work for them', while she is 'allowed to slave' for the boys initially and for their daughters a generation later. However, on two of the occasions to which slavery is referred, this is followed by the idea that this made life 'sweet', that serving her brother and their families was a privilege. The musical style is an AABA form with variations and is reminiscent of Rodgers and Hammerstein, whose work is largely written from the male perspective, with women in the caring role, much as in this sketch, for example *The Sound of Music* (1959) and *The King and I* (1951). Consider the five most successful works of Rodgers and Hammerstein, *Oklahoma* (1943)*, Carousel* (1945)*, South Pacific* (1949)*, The King and I* and *The Sound of Music*; all bar *Carousel* result in heteronormative marriage. Even in Carousel the ultimate happy ending, heteronormative marriage, is only thwarted by the ill-advised actions and subsequent death of the male lead.

While there is no evidence that Grenfell and Addinsell were directly making a point in their choice of musical style, the irony here, in the use of this popular musical style against the words of the spinster, is apparent. Noticeably, the first instance of the phrase 'I was allowed to' in each verse sits on a musical phrase with an increasing number of shorter notes, giving the illusion of an increase in tempo. This could be taken to denote feelings of gladness or happiness in the narrator, thus strengthening the sense of the ironic between the word 'slave' and the sense of joy conveyed in the music at this point. The *Oxford Handbook of Music Psychology* (Hallam, Cross and Thaut, 2009) suggests this very thing, that an increased tempo, or densely clustered notes over a short period of time, are connected as a musical signifier or trope with 'expressions of activity/excitement', 'happiness/joy'(Gabrielson, 2016, p. 218), in this case, playing cricket as a child. The

repetitive use of a phrase, while not uncommon practise in a song, also underlines the power relations in this piece and the repetitiveness of the life it is telling; perhaps the sweetness in the often menial tasks presented to the narrator is not in the tasks themselves, but the trust they signify the brothers have placed in their spinster sister. This is also reflected in the music, with a rallentando (slowing of pace) and probable fermata (instructed pause) on the word 'sweet', which Gabrielson suggest indicates 'expressions of calmness/serenity, peace' (2016, p. 218).

The narrator is reminiscent of a woman Grenfell met during the course of her work with ENSA in Bangladesh, who portrayed herself as the family skivvy, yet, Grenfell suspected, defined herself and her authority through making herself indispensable in this way. Over a series of diary entries in 1945, Grenfell reports staying with 'a character called Miss Hodson' who is physically reminiscent of many of Grenfell's film parts 'She is doggy, sporting, team spirit and backbone of the Empire' (Grenfell, 1989, p. 324). Hodson agreeably complains about her family and the rather eccentric house she manages for them, including her brother, 'a bull of a man according to Colonel Garner. He [Eric Hodson, the brother] is quoted at us a good deal and we see that he is a god to Miss H' (Grenfell, 1989, p. 327). There is also an Aunt Margaret, 'a Theosophist [...] I'm not very clear what a Theosophist is, but it makes Aunt M. into a vegetarian and keeps her busy doing kindnesses.' (Grenfell, 1989, p. 328). By the end of their seven day stay with the Hodsons in Dacca, it had become clear to Grenfell that for all Miss Hodson's complaining and monstrous characterisation of the family, she holds significant sway over them and defines her success by their wellbeing.

Trust is a position of power, engendered by the appearance of relevant, or presumed knowledge, and the narrator's influence over the girls is also potentially powerful. Thus, we can see that within a limited, domestic setting, the narrator may well hold the advantage in this power/knowledge situation. The presumption of knowledge is made by the brothers, and therefore they give permission for their sister to speak truth in this context. In a Foucauldian sense, it is the process of resistance, as portrayed in the irony of the music against the words, that gives the narrator, 'the subject', the space and confidence to 'tell the truth about itself' (Foucault, 1988, p. 38). Trust has also been linked to happiness, most significantly in a family setting (Leung, Kier, Fung, Fung and Sproule, 2013), and if this is true, it leads us back to De Beauvoir's question of how we measure somebody else's happiness. The question has to be asked whether the narrator would be any happier if she were not so taken for granted by her siblings, or whether both throughout her childhood and towards the present, at the end of the sketch, she has achieved contentment.

Yet, on first inspection, for the narrator's brothers in this piece, the spinster sister is very much as De Beauvoir describes the woman's role; she '…is the incidental, the inessential, as opposed to the essential' (De Beauvoir, 1947, p. 16). They rarely return her letters, contacting her on average once a year, and finding her useful to look after their nine daughters during the school holidays, instead of looking after their children themselves in their respective countries. Admittedly, in the 1950s, this would almost certainly have involved a return journey by ship, taking at least 12 days each way, and therefore not entirely practical in the school summer holidays, even taking into account the generous eight to ten week holiday allocation of private schools. However, there is no evidence that the brothers give their spinster sister any recompense for caring for their children. It is

telling that Grenfell chooses for the men to have all female offspring. This can be viewed in one of two ways; either by leaving them to their downtrodden aunt's care the girls are doomed to be the next generation of inessential beings, or in entrusting them to the loving care of their supportive sister, the men are putting their daughters into a nurturing and empowering environment from which they can benefit in the way they did as boys.

Therefore, the interpreted reading of trust or knowledge and power here is crucial to the meaning gained. In a Foucauldian sense, the balance of the power/knowledge paradigm has potential to be shifted by the resistance instigated through the aunt's empowering of her nieces. In handing their daughters over to their aunt every summer, the brothers offer a potential vulnerability; as they attribute to her an authoritative knowledge of how to raise girls, they give her the attendant power to influence them, to teach them the ways of resistance. Heller reminds us that in the Foucauldian conception of resistance, 'the possibility of forms of individuality […] are not the exclusive "property" of the dominant ensemble of power relations' (Heller, 1996, p. 99). As a childless spinster, the narrator has no more authority on the subject of bringing up girls than her brothers, but they have made the culturally constructed assumption that simply by being a woman, she is better placed than they, and therefore they have given her an opportunity to subvert the existing power/knowledge relationship, away from themselves and towards the girls and their aunt. There is no evidence that this is deliberate on their part, in fact, the tone of the song suggests that the narrator may not be aware of this opportunity. She seems to have an affinity for her nieces; she finds contentment, indeed joy, in caring for her them.

There is also potential for a De Beauvoirian sense of solidarity, both between the narrator and her brothers, and the narrator and her nieces, in this in loco parentis arrangement. De

Beauvoir argues that the allegiance between men and women, or rather the collusion between the Othering and the Othered is not a conscious act, but one of habit and necessity; we 'live dispersed among the males' (De Beauvoir, 1997, p. 19), so that 'women lack concrete means for organising themselves into a unit which can stand face to face with the correlative unit' (De Beauvoir, 1997, p. 19). Yet, by handing over their nieces to their unwed sister, the brothers are giving their daughters an opportunity to grow up in a female-led social grouping. When one considers that this is coupled with their attendance at boarding schools, which would most likely have been female-led, here was an opportunity for the young girls in this sketch to form different allegiances and resistance points to their aunt.

De Beauvoir exhorts men to actively give women their freedom and their solidarity; as discussed in Chapter 2, there are a number of ways to interpret (both in terms of translation and meaning) exactly how De Beauvoir envisages this. Parshley translates it thus, 'To gain the supreme victory, it is necessary, for one thing, that by and through their natural differentiation, men and women unequivocally affirm their brotherhood.' (De Beauvoir, 1997, trans Parshley, 1953). Borde and Malovany-Chevallier offer a very similar version, 'Within the given world, it is up to man to make the reign of freedom triumph; to carry off this supreme victory, men and women must, among other things and beyond their natural differentiations, unequivocally affirm their brotherhood' (2011, pp. 862-863). Schryer (2020) offers a more literal and yet more active and conscious interpretation. I will again intertwine Schryer's literal and interpretive translation together, with the latter in brackets:

> What one needs to hope for is that on their side men assume without restriction the situation that is being created (so, men need to realise and be accountable for what is happening); and then, and only then, the woman could live this independence without falling apart[...] When will we give each other a real hand shake (treat as equals)?' (Schryer, 2020).

Here then, we see an emphasis not only on an intention for cooperation and support as human beings, but on acting on this intention in practical ways. All three interpretations emphasise a conscious and active recognition of women's equality by men in order for women to reach their full potential independence and empowerment. The narrator's brothers fall short of this, they have not deliberately created these opportunities, yet quite unwittingly they have created space for a new interpretation of independence and womanhood for their daughters. However, there are some costs for the narrator aunt in potentially achieving this.

There is a sense of déjà vu in the words used to describe the care the narrator gives the nieces in the later lines of the sketch, reflecting the wording at the beginning, referring to her brothers, and a strong sense of history repeating itself; however, one wonders whether the life chances for these girls will be more broad than those of their aunt. The inferred setting means that the nieces would be growing up in the early 1920s to the late 1950s, with a different set of attitudes to the role of women around them. Dixon (2011) comments that while single women were characterised in the press and media as 'Other', the aftermath of the war saw an unbending in attitudes towards single women who chose to work in the 'long 1950s', especially in the context of those who worked until marriage. This was a gradual process, but the nieces may well have benefitted.

Prior to taking in the nieces, the choice of a guest house as an income generating use for the family home, provokes layers of questions too. The spinster sister is left behind in the UK, but it is unlikely that the family home belonged to her; primogeniture as a legal conclusion in the absence of a Will was repealed in the Settled Land Act of 1925 (Jamoussi, 2011), but the custom of favouring the male line among the middle and upper classes remained, and indeed remains. Such is the nature of the application of the custom that no final answer can be reached, but there is a strong possibility that while the narrator's home is her livelihood and business platform, it belonged to one of her three brothers (the eldest) rather than to her, unless her father left specific provision in his will. To continue to imagine the particular circumstances of this fictional spinster runs the risk of extreme conjecture; however, with the knowledge that Grenfell and her contemporaries would have been familiar with the laws of primogeniture, indeed many of her relatives would have experienced them first hand, there is a subtext to be understood here. The narrator is, in effect and in actuality, highly likely to be a guest in her own guesthouse, at least from a legal standpoint, or indeed, subject of her own state. Therefore, with the understanding that her audience would also have this knowledge, this aspect can be read as a comment on the precarious position of spinsters and their increased vulnerability compared to bachelors or their married sisters. That is, their otherness and subjectivity is clear.

As such, this point leads to a deeper consideration that the general public's understanding of feminism, of the fact that the role of women is not generally formulated by the likes of De Beauvoir, or if it is this formulation, it does not happen contemporaneously. For the masses, De Beauvoir's influence is still filtering through, and it is unlikely that more than a small percentage outside the world of academia will ever read her work first-hand. That is not to say that De Beauvoir has no influence, rather it is a trickle-down effect in the feminist

discourse, along with other feminist theorists. It is unlikely, however, that the direct influence is attributable to De Beauvoir in a conscious, active manner.

Thus, in general, in trying to establish the formulation of the perception of the public, one must turn to scholars from at least a generation previously, to the contemporary press and magazines and other sources. The influence of Hippocrates can be traced in the treatment of women as 'other' through the medicalisation of reproduction, both professionally and in the wider community, from Greek times right up to the 1990s (King, 1998). Considerable attention should be given to the way that spinsters and unmarried mothers are seen as more "other" than other women, both single by other means such as widowhood, and married women, a distinction De Beauvoir does not make. Alternatively, one must consider that if the public had any awareness of De Beauvoir, Wollstonecraft, or any philosophical writer, it would have been in the diffused, diluted and inaccurately twisted way that comes from an exposure to radio, newspapers and magazines (Dixon, 2011), and to a growing extent throughout Grenfell's career, television. This concept of diffusion and re-positioning by the media is underlined by McCarthy (2016) in her discussion of how the media presented the 1950s work of early female sociologists like Viola Klein, Pearl Jephcott and Judith Hubback and their interpretation of the role of working women, and is crucial to this analysis of Grenfell's work. While the theorists are the major reference point, this is done in the knowledge that theory would not have been the primary thought for Grenfell's audience, except in an interpreted format.

In her memoir *Stop the Clocks*, (2016) the journalist Joan Bakewell recalls how her grammar school had welcomed the news of her achieving a scholarship place at Cambridge, 'Remember, girls, however pleased we are for Joan, the true calling of a woman's life is to

be a wife and mother,' (Bakewell, 2016, p. 128). Dixon and Bakewell reinforce each other's points, from very different perspectives. When Bakewell's scholarship was announced to the school, in approximately 1950, it was expected that even for a grammar school girl, paid work was 'what women did between leaving school and marriage.' (Bakewell, 2016, p. 128), and this was expressed even in the naming of the school houses, in that all bar one was named after a successful, spinster women. They were portrayed to the girls at Bakewell's school as having been successful as a substitute vessel for their energies, a consolation prize for the bad luck of enduring spinsterhood (Bakewell, 2016).

Dixon's more academic approach both holds up a mirror to the portrayal of women in the popular media of the long 1950s and, in a way, bolsters De Beauvoir's assertion that in seeking alternative routes through femininity, including spinsterhood, prostitution or lesbianism, women do not escape otherness, they just embrace a different subsection of that otherness. What Dixon addresses however, is the Otherness that these roles seem to carry with them, not just from men, but from other women.

It is unlikely that, when the narrator of 'Three Brothers' sets up the family home as a Guest House, this is entirely the kind of work-based autonomy, the entering of 'public industry' (De Beauvoir, 2011, p. 89) that De Beauvoir had in mind in her proposed solution for women to be able to transcend this role of otherness to freedom.

While almost certainly failing by De Beauvoir's standards, in mentioning this need and desire to run a business, Grenfell addresses a significant issue for women in the 1950s; with a markedly higher number of women than men (ONS, 2012) as a result of the carnage of the Second World War and therefore the option of marriage as an economic strategy being more remote, the need to earn a living, even among the upper-middle classes, where this

woman appears securely positioned, was a real and pressing issue. With no census taken in 1941 due to the Second World War, exact figures are not available, but an extrapolation can be made showing that between 1930 and 1951, the male population of the UK was approximately 22 million, whereas the female population was approximately 28 million (ONS, 2012), leaving a six million surplus of women as single, widows, or otherwise unattached. However, in running a Guest House, the narrator is continuing to fulfil the domestic subservient role that has become so natural to her through the expectations placed on her by her brothers, while also taking a powerful position of trust as caretaker, not only of her brother's children, but of the house, and the paying guests. We tend to live in male led social groupings, yet, by handing over their nieces to their unwed sister, the brothers are giving their daughters an opportunity to grow up in a female led social grouping. When one considers that this is coupled with their attendance at boarding schools, which would most likely have been female led, here was an opportunity for the young girls in this sketch to form different allegiances and resistance points to their aunt.

There are more socio-political issues relevant to this spinster and other narrators in these sketches, particularly 'Boat Train' and 'First Flight', the primary one being emigration, or rather the impact of emigration of the women left behind; much of the feeling of 'otherness' and inessentialness in 'Three Brothers' is caused by the brothers moving away as young men, leaving their dedicated sister behind.

There are also more ways of leaving people behind and isolating them, which Grenfell addresses head on in 'Telephone Call' (1959). The analysis herein addresses three versions of the monologue, which is spoken; the original published 1959 script written for Bettina Welch to perform in Sydney (Grenfell, 1959), the Grenfell televised performance from

1961, and the Lipman audio performance from 1998. The spinster in this sketch is placed in an impossible situation by the social demands of the period; her married sister expects her to care for her elderly and infirm father, her boyfriend, Ken (possibly her fiancé) wants to spend more time with his girlfriend (the narrator), and her father simply wants his tea. This sort of unpaid work is a state with which many women would have been familiar. Some were lucky, they got paid for this work, if a family was wealthy enough to employ somebody for the role. In February 1941, the *West London Observer* carried an advertisement for a 'Housekeeper Wanted; willing person as working housekeeper; three in family good home, wages'.

However, in working class and lower-middle class families the role fell to the unmarried grown-up daughters, as in this woman's case. Grenfell is not the only one who has concern for these women; Nella Last felt strongly for her sister in law, Mary, who 'left school at fifteen and a half: "clever and gifted" as the teachers said, but leave she had to. Her duty was to her father, and not to be gallivanting off […]' (Last, 2006, p. 228). This also has commonalities with the school's attitude to Joan Bakewell mentioned above, when they made it clear that work was only something one did until the more important and noble role of taking care of a man (in that case a husband) came along.

It is interesting that when Maureen Lipman played this sketch in the 1990s, she chose to set it in Australia, and played the role as much more assertive and angry, whereas Grenfell plays it as resigned and then rather desperate. When one reflects that Bettina Welch, for whom the sketch was originally written, was a New Zealander who primarily worked in Australia, Lipman's choice here takes on a deeper meaning. A more in-depth analysis is presented below. There are parallels to be drawn with 'Three Brothers'; both narrators

have a strong sense of duty. The telephone call begins positively enough, although it is clear from the opening lines that the narrator wants to keep her relationship with her boyfriend, Ken, a secret from her father, 'you know it is so difficult to find a time when Dad's not near the phone' (Grenfell, 1959, p. 173). The sense of the need for secrecy is again made explicit in the last line of the monologue, when the narrator lies to her father, claiming it was her married sister with whom she had been having a telephone conversation. The narrator obviously sees her prime role and responsibility as being to care for her father, and her potential future happiness must come a poor second. The conversation is punctuated by her father's querulous demands for information on the progress of the tea, although he does appear to be able to operate the wireless autonomously. Perhaps technology is an acceptable male duty, while the spinster daughter is restricted to the female role of tea maker. This aspect of the familial expectations of male and female also has parallels with 'Three Brothers' (1954), whereby there was a clear delineation between the sporting roles the brothers and sister could undertake.

Yet there is also a powerful expectation from Ken, the narrator's boyfriend, that the narrator will devote herself to him; he is obviously very disappointed that she will not go to the cinema with him, and he appears to accuse her of being 'noble' and, with implied sarcasm, 'a little ray of sunshine' (Grenfell, 1962 – Grenfell performance version). It can be considered that Ken may suspect the narrator of playing the martyr, indeed in the published text version of the script, the line reads, 'No, I'm not being a "noble martyr"' (Grenfell, 1959, p. 174).

Alternatively, using De Beauvoir's framework, it may be that the narrator is complicit in her own oppression because she cannot imagine an alternative and feels safe in this role, even

if she is not content or stretched in any positive way. As De Beauvoir, translated by Parshley points out, ‘They lived dispersed among the males, attached through residence, housework, economic condition, and social standing to certain men – fathers and husbands – more firmly than they are to other women. If they belong to the bourgeoisie, they feel solidarity with men of that class, not with proletarian women; if they are white, their allegiance is to white men, not to negro women’ (De Beauvoir, 1997, p. 19). Borde and Malovany-Chevallier have a very similar version, ‘They live dispersed among men, tied by homes, work, economic interests, and social conditions to certain men - fathers or husbands - more closely than to other women. As bourgeois women, they are in solidarity with bourgeois men and not with women proletarians; as white women, they are in solidarity with white men and not with black women’ (De Beauvoir, 2011, p. 28).

A nuanced, but crucial difference is Parshley’s ‘housework’ versus Borde and Malovany-Chevallier’s ‘homes, work’, whereby the former demonstrates a patriarchal assumption that women get some form of satisfaction only domestic work can supply, while Borde and Malovany-Chevallier emphasise the need for residential security. Pascoe (2020) gives a third reading, ‘They (females) live amongst men, attached by homes, work, money, and the social conditions of certain men - fathers or husbands - more closely related to them than other women. Women of the Bourgeois class, they are tied to the other bourgeois and not to women who are manual labourers; whites are tied to white men, and not to black women’, which aligns tightly to Borde and Malovany-Chevallier, once again emphasising home and work as separate entities that demand loyalty. Thus, there is evidence of far more regular contact with her father, with whom she lives, and her boyfriend, with whom she is talking, than her rarely present sister, and therefore these are her natural alliances, regardless of the ‘othering’ the men appear to perform.

Again, in this sketch there is the displayed expectation that this is the lot of the unmarried sister. Lettie, the married sister, has been asked if she could come over so that the narrator can go out, 'but, well she's got the kids and Frank and, [well] it's a hellova way over here and they do take him out in the car every Sunday' (Grenfell, 1959, p. 174, parentheses indicate variance in Grenfell, 1962 performance compared to published script). The role of the spinster, the Other, is not cause for concern until it impacts on the man, 'I expect it is bloody hard on you' (Grenfell, 1959, p. 175), she says, yet the real hardship is hers as she is caught between the expectations of these two dominant men in her life.

If we consider the amount of work to care for her family the (presumably) retired matriarch in 'Boat Train' says she is not going to miss (discussed below), the clear themes of a woman's work being primarily in the home are clear, and the tensions caused are obvious in this sketch; by the end of the 'Telephone Call' our poor narrator no longer has a boyfriend, while her father remains demandingly oblivious to her exhaustion, both physical and emotional.

Lipman's 1990s reading of 'Telephone Call' (2005) is very different from Grenfell's and, it could be argued, is as much a social commentary on the unmarried woman's role in that period as Grenfell's was of the 1950s. Lipman's papers, lodged at the University of Sheffield make reference to tours of *Re:Joyce!* from 1988 to 1995 and again in 1998, along with notes from rehearsals throughout this period (University of Sheffield, 2017). When a comparison is made of manual transcriptions I made of the two performances, the first feature which is apparent is that Lipman's adaptation is four lines shorter, yet the recording runs to approximately 4 and a half minutes, compared to Grenfell's 3 minutes 45 seconds.

While it is to be acknowledged that Lipman is performing using an Australian accent, which tends to use slower speech patterns than an English accent, this suggests a woman who feels a much greater right to speak than Grenfell's characterisation. Lipman's script changes are slight, and many are incidental, made to address the speech pattern issue. However, many minimising words have been removed or replaced in Lipman's version. Where Grenfell is 'sorry to bother' Ken, Lipman is sorry to 'call you now', and while Grenfell reminds Ken that he knows her father is difficult, Lipman states it as fact. Grenfell uses 'look, dear', while Lipman uses the stronger, 'look, Ken'. Where Grenfell's narrator remonstrates with Ken for wishing her father dead, it is beyond her imagination, 'You couldn't', Lipman's narrator is more forceful, issuing an instruction, 'You mustn't'. Lipman removes all reference to the possibility of a housekeeper, which, combined with the Australian accent and more direct approach, seems to lift the setting of the sketch into a more modern era.

At the end of her row with Ken, there is no reference to the father calling the narrator in Lipman's version; she is going because she knows it is a pointless conversation, with nothing more to be added, not because she has been interrupted again. Thus, it can be seen that while the differences in the two scripts are subtle, a comparative analysis of both the text and recorded performances have a very different timbre. In and of themselves they are socio-politically valuable, as they reflect some aspects of the performers' backgrounds and their understanding of their audiences' expectations.

The narrator of 'Telephone Call' in both versions is undoubtedly isolated, lonely and exhausted, and she has few or no allies to fight her corner. In presenting this sketch, with its poignancy as well as a few ironic laughs, Grenfell presents to her audience the plain

facts of isolation experienced by many carers, and is perhaps ahead of her time. In post-war Britain, one soldiered on, with little culture or opportunity to reflect on the impact of such isolated living patterns and responsibility for the spinster. The first organisation to promote and protect the rights of carers (unpaid relatives who care for an older or disabled relative or friend) in the UK was founded in the 1965 by Rev. Mary Webster, a congregationalist minister, and grew into what is now Carers UK, but its initial focus was on gaining more financial benefits for carers; it is only more recently that the welfare of Carers has come to the fore (Carers UK, 2014). In 1954, Webster had given up her vocation to care for her elderly parents, and in January 1963 wrote to the national press, stating that women like her were, to all intents and purposes, ‘under house arrest’ (Henwood, 2015). These sentiments are clearly seen in ‘Telephone Call’ and remain part of the situation for many in our society today.

The narrator of ‘Boat Train’ (1959a) shares some experiences with both the narrator of ‘Three Brothers’ and of ‘Telephone Call’, or more accurately, she is about to share some of those experiences and emotions, but these are caused in slightly different ways. Her grown-up son and his family are emigrating, she is moving towards the end of her life and, despite obviously having huge amounts of energy and a very positive attitude, the impact of her imminent alone-ness is quite clear. This spoken monologue is held in the Bristol Theatre Archive and is described as song lyrics in the radio scripts collection catalogue, yet there is no music. It is more a rhyming monologue than a song, and there is no composer credit in any of the records. However, there does appear to be further confusion, as the Bristol Theatre Archive dates the script to 1957, whereas the published script is dated as 1959. The 1959 published version is that used here, along with the audio recording listed as having been copyrighted in 1958 (Grenfell, 1994). As early as the 1940s, emigration was

a cause for concern for Reconstruction Britain. For example, an undated report from Bristol University entitled 'Reconstruction Research Group' (Reconstruction Research Group, n.d.) suggested that up to 15% of BAC workers (the forerunner of BOAC) were considering emigration.

However, this left thousands of, often female, family members behind, and in 'Boat Train' Grenfell explores many of the concerns and fears those women had. At around the same time, the Windrush generation came to the UK, answering the call to fill the void left by the British migrating workers, no doubt leaving their wives and mothers behind with similar fears. The narrator is a brave soul; in the introduction to the sketch in *Turn Back the Clock* (1989) Grenfell claimed that selfless generosity was the human quality she admired most. The narrator appears to be widowed and of retirement age and her life to this point has been dominated by taking her grandchildren to their activities and appointments, impromptu babysitting and other family based requests. Throughout the sketch, there is no mention of a husband, so it is reasonably safe to assume the narrator is a widow. Victor, Scambler, Bond and Bowling (2000) directly link migration as a significant factor in increasing feelings of isolation and loneliness for people in later life, particularly for those who are widowed. Our narrator, despite a sense of desperation conveyed in Grenfell's intonation, assures her family that she has lots of plans to fill her time, yet there is little detail as to what those plans might be. There are lots of other hints as to the way her family have taken her for granted, and how inessential she has appeared to them, despite how obviously they have depended on her and handed her power through trust, such as her veiled desire to be able to have some say as to what programmes she can watch on the television.

Grenfell wrote this sketch, as mentioned earlier, in 1957; ITV had been launched in 1955, and by 1960 had gained such popularity that the top 10 most popular programmes were made by ITV, not the BBC (Hampton, 2002, p. 269). However, Grenfell would probably not have been aware of this at the point of writing, as she was not invited to sit on the Pilkington Committee until 1960. The impact of the launch of ITV appears to have been welcomed by the narrator of this sketch, which does not reflect Grenfell's own views; she was distinctly conservative in this regard and refused all work on commercial networks within the UK throughout her career. Other commentators were decidedly underwhelmed at the launch. On 22nd September 1955, launch day, Diarist no 5338 wrote 'I suppose I should note as an item of interest that Independent TV starts today. It doesn't really interest me – except that I'm afraid it might increase the enthusiasm of all my neighbours and so make the interference with sound radio even worse.' (Diarist 5338, 1955). Thus, the narrator's mention of her newfound autonomy in regard to the television, points to a need to cling to the automated replacement for company. The elements of veiling the emotions of the narrator in this sketch are much more apparent in the recordings, rather than as revealed in a simple textual analysis.

The brittle brightness in Grenfell's voice in her characterisation, is clear indication of the narrator's deep sense of loss, and she ensures that her family are safely out of sight before breaking down in tears. Grenfell does not mention any other social network for this woman to rely on once her family have departed; the narrator talks of attending whist drives, but also makes reference to the fun she is going to have 'on me own', and there is an implication that this woman has been too busy running around after her family to have any real social life of her own. The alliance made by this woman, therefore, is male-driven; her loyalty and focus has been on the needs of her son and his family and this reinforces De

Beauvoir’s concept that even to their own detriment, women forge alliances with the men in their lives (De Beauvoir, 1997). Now that the son and his family (Grenfell introduces the people using this phrase, she does not say they are the narrator's grandchildren) are emigrating, they have effectively ‘othered’ the narrator and she is bereft. As De Beauvoir points out, ‘men profit in many more subtle ways from the otherness, the alterity of woman.’ (De Beauvoir, 1997, p. 25); in othering both his mother, and possibly his wife, in not counting their emotional needs in his financial decision to seek work abroad, he is able to justify the economic reasons for the move and underline the ‘inessentialness’ of the women in his life.

Therefore, not only has the narrator confirmed De Beauvoir’s theory, she will now need to make a new set of alliances, which is not easy as a woman beyond retirement age. This chimes with an informal interview conducted with a woman in her early 60s, who asked to remain anonymous and whose brother emigrated to Canada. She said, ‘My mum’s generation never cried […] so it had to be a significant event […] the times I saw her cry was when her mum died and when Ronnie emigrated.’ And later ‘My mum had to say goodbye not only to her son, but to her eldest grandchild.’ This experience of a sense of loss is not a phenomenon restricted to the post-war years, indeed, much of the extant literature concentrates on emigration since the turn of the 21st century, for example Mosca and Barrett (2014). The obvious fear of the negative impact on the mental wellbeing in the form of both isolation and loss of role on those left behind is clear in Grenfell’s voice in this sketch. Grenfell then, gives the members of her audience an opportunity to reflect on a very real phenomenon in the 1950s and 1960s. Her audience was largely made up of the skilled classes, in great demand overseas at the time, with many opportunities to work and live abroad. Here, then, Grenfell provides an opportunity for her isolated audience

members, perhaps listening to a radio broadcast of this sketch, to find solidarity with her and comfort in knowing that they are not alone in their situation. Conversely perhaps, she allows those contemplating emigration to take into account some factors they may not have thus far considered.

The theme of the impact of the actions of the male head of the household can also be seen in the next Grenfell sketch, but for other reasons, connected to the othering of women through infidelity. 'Lally Tullett' (Grenfell, 1965) has a very different tone to many of her other sketches, more similar to the poignancy of 'Boat Train', which has just been analysed, than the big laughs of 'Nursery Teacher' or 'Shirley's Girlfriend', yet the last of the 'Shirley's Girlfriend' series was written in 1964, just a year before this monologue. Rather than being a direct play for laughs, 'Lally Tullett' is amusing rather than funny; whimsical, thought provoking and very tightly drawn. There are no belly laughs provoked in 'Lally Tullet' but there are wry smiles of recognition and points to ponder. From this point of view, it can be seen to be more aligned to 'First Flight' (Grenfell, 1969b) than Grenfell's earlier work, and Grenfell may have considered this one of her 'straight' monologues (Grenfell and Moore, 1981, p. 22), meaning her focus is on engaging with other emotions of the audience, rather than making them laugh.

Grenfell was fifty-five years old at the time of writing 'Lally Tullett' (1965) and, perhaps, moving into a more philosophical period of her life. She had been performing in one woman shows for eleven years, had gained financial stability and a significant reputation as an entertainer, so perhaps this gave her more freedom to develop a deeper story line than the clever, but consistently upbeat, revue formulae found in much of her earlier work. This sketch tackles difficult ground, which is another theme it has in common with both

‘First Flight’ and ‘Boat Train’. Where, however, ‘First Flight’ (discussed later in this chapter) deals with issues of racism and inter-racial marriage, ‘Lally Tullett’ addresses themes of reputation, fidelity and duty. Further, it addresses the different standards to which men and women are held.

Grenfell rarely comments in detail on the formation of her monologues, but this sketch is an exception. In both her autobiography and *Turn Back the Clock,* there is quite a full explanation of how this sketch came to her, fully formed, one Saturday afternoon while her husband watched sport on the television, something Grenfell loathed. The narrator is sitting on her porch in the American Deep South, on a hot summer’s evening, talking with her long-time friend Charlotte, who the audience cannot see, but must imagine. Unusually, the narrator is named, ‘Hetty’, but this is not revealed until the monologue is at its very climax. The tightness of the characterisation and reminiscing style is such that, although Charlotte is the only other character present in the moment, the additional characters, Lally, the narrator’s husband Dan, her four children, and other community members, are nearly as clear in the audience’s eye as they are in that of the narrator’s mind. Again, this is different from many of Grenfell’s earlier sketches, for which the supporting cast are often only roughly sketched in.

Grenfell does not give the setting of the sketch a clear date, and there is no newsworthy event mentioned, but her eye for historical fashion gives a very clear indication of the period. The newspaper report she reads of Lally’s death triggers memories of ’fifty-five – fifty-six years ago’ (Grenfell, 1965, p. 208). Her description of Lally’s suit for work, ’a cream-coloured linen suit with white braid trim on it and a white shirtwaist’ gives a strong fashion clue which dates Lally’s time in the town to approximately the turn of the 20th Century and

early 1910s (Encyclopedia of Fashion, 2020). Interestingly, while this costume was originally the preserve of the working classes, or working women, it was made popular more widely by its use in portraiture and fashion work by Dana Gibson, who married Grenfell's Aunt Irene. Thus, Grenfell seamlessly works in her innate knowledge and American South heritage. Based on this fashion evidence, the narrator's conversation with Charlotte is probably begun approximately ten to twenty years before the date it was written, that is somewhere between 1945 and 1955. However, as the monologue is a reminiscence, the ambience and setting created are strongly of the Deep South just prior to the introduction of Prohibition, dating the action of the sketch at around 1920.

While on the surface, the main character of this sketch is Lally Tullett, there is at least one other candidate who could be said to be the lead. Certainly, Lally's impact on the town, and on the narrator's marriage, is the driving force of the monologue. The narrator is surprised to find that Lally was older than her, and describes her with admiration 'She was very… not really pretty but kinder interestin' lookin' […] you had to look at her twice […] she had *style.*' (Grenfell, 1965, p. 208, Grenfell's italicisation). The visual emphasis on the reminiscences in the opening lines of this sketch are very similar to Grenfell's style when writing 'as herself' in her memoir, *Joyce Grenfell Requests the Pleasure.* She concentrates on her parents' clothing to help us get an understanding of them, describing her father's hats 'black mostly —had dash, with brims broader than was usual in London W.1' (Grenfell, 1976, p. 32). While she attempts to describe her mother's physical features, she gives up, 'it's no good, I can't get her into focus that way. Perhaps her legs may help' (Grenfell, 1976, p. 17), but she cites one of her mother's young admirers in describing Nora's mother's disposition prior to marriage as 'hung on wires with a heart like a hotel' (Grenfell, 1976, p. 17). The narrator has similar difficulties describing Lally, 'not real pretty but kinder

interestin' looking. Sometimes she was prettier than paint and sometimes plainer'n hell…' (Grenfell, 1965, p. 208).

Lally comes to town as the school teacher. As it is not possible to say exactly where in the Deep South this sketch is set, it cannot be said with certainty that a marriage bar applied in this state, but in all likelihood, this was the case if not in law, then in expectation (Burstein, 1994). Therefore, Lally's reluctance to enter the home of Dr Kinton to listen to his piano playing may be seen as an avoidance of an entanglement that may have led to her having to give up her job. It may also be seen as an avoidance of gossip, or a tactic to preserve her reputation, as to be seen entering the home of an unmarried, talented professional would almost certainly have led to unwanted attention and speculation. While the narrator refers to their community as a city, it has a small, backwater feel and, thus, in her determined avoidance of socialising outside of work, Lally avoids wagging tongues.

The suspense element of the monologue is added at this point. As soon as we hear that the exception to Lally's no fraternisation rule is visiting with the narrator and her husband, Dan, the audience's suspicions are aroused, especially when the narrator hears that Lally and Dan do not appear to get on, 'Lord, they'd argue about anything: politics and women's rights. She was kind of radical and it riled him.' (Grenfell, 1965, p. 209). It should be noted that this is the only direct reference to a woman discussing women's rights to be found in Grenfell's sketches selected for this thesis. Dan and Lally argue to such an extent that, initially, the narrator projects the idea that if Lally cannot be nicer to a man, she will not get one. When the narrator speculates that Lally already has her eye on a young man, Lally becomes 'brusk. Closer than a clam' (Grenfell, 1965, p. 210). Initially, the narrator is amused by this reaction and decides to wait and see what happens. Here, then, there is

the moment for dramatic irony, that moment when the observant, thinking audience member may well be aware of the potential for a plot twist, the suspected infidelity between Lally and Dan before the narrator herself has that dawning understanding.

It is only when the narrator sends Dan and the children to a picnic at another family's house that she realises the truth, that Lally and Dan may be involved. At the same time, although the fear and anger at what she has realised causes her to reduce the children to tears while she tries to get them to bed, 'I was so shocked. I couldn't be sweet to 'em' (Grenfell, 1965, p. 211), she ensures the words are never spoken out loud. While she and Dan are both perfectly aware of the presence of this event in their lives, she is really clear that, once uttered aloud, the situation will be spoken into truth and there the impact on her marriage and her relationship with her children will be unremitting. 'Dan', don't you say anything that's going to make it impossible to me and you to get right back to where we are now' (Grenfell, 1965, pp. 211-212).

There is a Foucauldian narrative here, a moment of resistance to the patriarchal heteronormative household, as it is those who hold power who get to decide who can speak truth, in this case, quite literally. Foucault suggests that in terms of the concept of seeking truth, it is not what is spoken, but who gets to tell it that is the primary driver in discourse, 'My intention was not to deal with the problem of truth, but with the problem of the truth-teller, or to truth-telling as an activity: […] who is able to tell the truth, about what, with what consequences and with what relations to power' (Foucault, 1983, p. 65). In this case, then, there is a Schrodinger's Cat aspect to the unspoken; by forbidding Dan to speak on the subject, the possibility that Dan has cheated, and that he has not, at one and the same time true, is a situation that our narrator appears to be able to cope with.

Thus, in forbidding Dan to speak his truth, she allows her version to become the lived truth of both of them, there is no evidence that he *has* been unfaithful, only that he has spent time alone with Lally. When one considers the way the Deep South is constructed throughout fiction and the historical record, for example in the novel *Gone with the Wind* (1936), the interplay between that apparent patriarchal, hierarchical system and the lived matriarchal workings is a familiar set up, and Grenfell plays into these stereotypes in some respects. It was her lived experience that her Southern Belle Mama, while of a completely different socio-economic class to the narrator of this sketch, held significant sway in the way the household was run, and there is no doubt that when Grenfell's mother, Nora, returned to Little Orchard, her home in Tryon, North Carolina, with her new husband Leftie Flynn, it was she who managed and owned the property for the rest of her life, not Leftie.

Thus, the narrator in this sketch runs, leads and manages not only the home but the marriage in which she lives, and it is she who controls the inter-marital power, it is she who fences off the knowledge of her husband's dalliance so that it never gains the authority demanded once spoken into being. Even while rocking on the porch, all those years later, now that Lally is dead, she cannot permit the words to be spoken, 'I knew… that Dan and Lally… don't ask me how I knew… I just knew it, that's all.' (Grenfell, 1965, p. 211,). It is worth noting that this is one of the few instances in the published scripts that pacing is explicitly stated in the use of the ellipses, thus slowing down the performance, and allowing the audience to gather the importance of what the narrator is saying. It is perfectly clear to the audience and the reader what the narrator knew, and her level of certainty is unequivocal, but even then, she does not speak the words.

However, in ensuring that this truth is not spoken into being, Grenfell allows the narrator to create another discourse which is not so favourable to her gender. Consider where her loyalties lie and who the main character of the monologue is. This sketch could easily have been written with Dan as the transgressor, but it is clear that as far as the narrator is concerned, the power tussle for his affections is between her and Lally. As synthesised above, Lally is charismatic, attractive, mysterious and independent, while the narrator appears strong, loyal, patient, kind and most importantly, married to Dan. Lally and the narrator are very much cast as foils to each other, whereas Dan is barely drawn at all; we do not ever discover his job and there is no physical description of him. Lally is described in loaded language; she does not walk, she 'saunter's, she is 'young and pretty enough' (Grenfell, 1965, p. 209), while Hetty is pregnant and tired, and it is a very hot summer. The narrative discourse here is that the responsibility for the whole incident lies with Hetty and Lally, the weather and the circumstances, but certainly not with Dan. Again, this concept of the Deep South scarlet woman is not a new one; Elder (2012) recounts how in 1825 in Georgia, Patsy Phillips was charged with fornication, but her lover's involvement, Jesse Parnell, was seen as 'being secondary concerns flowing out of the first' (Elder, 2012, p. 602). Thus, the predominating discourse Grenfell has used is that it always the woman's fault and men are not to blame for being too weak to resist. The two intertwined discourses give a complex reading of a societal commentary on the role of women. It could be argued that in creating this discourse Grenfell is exposing it to the criticism I have just made of it, thereby highlighting the hypocrisies therein, but in this case there is less evidence for any sense of gender injustice.

It is clear that Dan and Hetty manage to recover at some level from this moment; in the opening paragraph she mentions 'little Dan hadn't even been thought of.' (Grenfell, 1965,

p. 208), so it is clear that the couple were able to rebuild their relationship to a functional level at least. Lally Tullett leaves town and is never discussed in their house again, and the narrator claims that she had not thought of Lally at all in the intervening fifty-five years. She claims mainly to have been jealous of Lally's cream linen suit, but 'Do you know somp'n, Charlotte? She never did get married…' (Grenfell, 1965, p. 212). This ending can be read as feeling sorry for Lally, that she never got over her affair with Dan, or victoriously, in that the narrator has achieved something Lally did not in retaining Dan for herself and going on to have children, thus fulfilling society's expectations of her.

Societal expectations are part of the theme in the next monologue for analysis, 'First Flight' (Grenfell, 1969b), although the more obvious link is back to 'Boat Train' and its theme of emigration and mothers left behind. Grenfell herself recognised this link, characterising it as that of 'selfless mother-love' (Grenfell, 1998, p. 267). Grenfell also commented on the sensitivity with which the material in both monologues needed to be treated. Thus, with both these sketches, and indeed many of the other more whimsical items, there is a danger that, performed by a less skilled artist, they might come across as worthy and rather heavy going or maudlin. This is one of the reasons that analysis of performances has been restricted throughout this thesis to those of Grenfell and Lipman.

The theme of the impact of emigration on the women left behind perhaps remains the dominant one in 'First Flight', the narrator of which has not seen her son for five years, and has never met her daughter-in-law and grandchildren. The analysis here extends through a textual analysis and of performances by both Grenfell (1972) and Lipman (2004). The imagined audience is the man sitting next to the narrator on a plane bound for New York, as she travels to visit her son and his family. To an extent this trip gives the narrator a

theme in common with the spinster sister in ‘Three Brothers’ (Grenfell, no date), who does not appear to have met her sisters-in-law. However, try as she might, the narrator in ‘Three Brothers’ has no more than surface level relationships with her sisters -in-law, whereas the narrator in ‘First Flight’ seems to have had more success in forging a relationship with her daughter-in-law. This appears to be Grenfell’s first attempt to address what she would have known as mixed marriage and what this generation might recognise as a tentative nod to intersectionality. The narrator comments on the cultural solidarity formed by and with her daughter-in-law ‘an African American girl, a black girl’, which she found missing in her relationship with her own mother-in-law:

> She calls me ’Mother Comstock’, my name is Mrs Comstock and she says ’Dear Mother Comstock,’ I like that, I think, you know, It is kind of lively. When I think of my mother in law, I never called her anything for twenty-five years. Well, you know, sometimes ‘dear’ in a time of crisis. Now and then I’d say Mrs C. and she liked it. I should have done it more often. (Grenfell, 1969, p. 271).

The names people call their in-laws give an interesting and often amusing insight into how we perceive these relationships. The intonation used by Grenfell in this sketch makes it clear that the narrator delights in the relationship she has with her daughter-in-law, yet is, in a way, surprised by it, considering their very different backgrounds, while she viewed her own mother-in-law with a sense of duty at best, dread at worst. These lines take on a cyclical aspect as the narrator looks at her current relationship with her African-American daughter-in-law and her previous relationship when she was the white English daughter-in-law. There is a sense of development here which could even be projected to consider

what the narrator's little mixed-race granddaughter will call her mother-in-law when she is grown up.

It is worth noting that the last two sentences of this passage from the published script, 'Now and then I'd say Mrs C. and she liked it. I should have done it more often,' are missing from the Grenfell performance (1972), but not from the Lipman recording (2004). While one must consider that the 1972 recording was right at the end of Grenfell's professional career and there is other evidence throughout this hour-long performance that she had lost her place, particularly in 'Eng. Lit. I' (1965b), there does not appear to be any micro-expression or vocal hint that this is the case here, rather a more deliberate culling of the lines. In reading the text and in comparing the performances, there is no doubt that the laugh comes on 'Well, you know, sometimes "dear" in a time of crisis' (Grenfell, 1972), but the completion of the phrase as outlined in the text version and performed in the Lipman version gives a different dimension, less passive-aggressive and more generous to a woman who was, it appears, difficult to love.

By the 1970s, Grenfell was well travelled and had encountered people from many cultural and racial backgrounds, and she had developed a clarity on how she felt about matters of race in general, and the role of imperialism in terms of creating these issues. While her language can be seen as archaic, her views on the withdrawal of white leadership in Rhodesia, where Reggie had mining interests, are clear in her letters to Katherine Moore in 1966 (Grenfell and Moore, 1981). On a personal level, Grenfell's encounters with ordinary British and American inter-racial relationships and the children of those relationships are less well documented in her letters. She did encounter a wide number of

people from different backgrounds in her work and in her patronage of the Aldeburgh Festival.

For example, Grenfell met the jazz singer Cleo Laine at the Festival in 1970, the year after ‘First Flight’ was written, and she found the young Laine charming. In a letter to Graham, Grenfell wrote that Laine was ‘very realistic about her situation and quite without chip. She said too much fuss is made about colour and ‘difference’ and if it could be left alone it would happen naturally that people would get to know each other as people, and that is the way to heal this separation and fear’ (Grenfell, 2006, p .60). In a way, Laine’s views on race, here, are comparable to De Beauvoir, quoting Marx, on how men and women interact, ‘the relation of man to woman is the most natural relation of human being to human being’ (De Beauvoir, 1997, p. 741), there is a sense of similar optimism. In the same letter however, Grenfell goes on to describe Laine’s physical appearance in ways that would not be acceptable today, but at the time were perfectly normal vocabulary; she says ‘She is actually very pale, though her hair is entirely African, but her eyes are light grey green, her mouth sensitive and wide’. In this sketch Grenfell tackles the issue of inter-racial marriage head on, a brave move in the early 1970s.

Grenfell goes one step further in the sketch ‘Nicodemus’ Song’ (Grenfell, 1967), when she actually takes on the persona of a Black South African male driver. Grenfell herself acknowledged that she had never seen or performed anything like it before or since, but felt so compelled by the words and attitude of her driver, on a trip to South Africa for Reggie’s work, that she simply had to write the monologue and perform it, complete with a hand and lap tapped complex rhythm, three beats in the right hand against two in the left; known as cross rhythms, it is challenging for non-drummers, and is associated with

jazz and other black culture originated musical styles. Not only that, but it was performed with completely different lighting to all Grenfell's other monologues, which tended to run to a fairly jolly, high intensity straw/blue combination. This sketch was down-lit with only a couple of spotlights which gradually guide the audience's eyes to concentrate of the performer's hands and lap. It is notable that Lipman and Roose-Evans did not include 'Nicodemus' Song' in their discursive field, and it is suspected that, were a white British artist to attempt such a performance now, it would be considered cultural appropriation at best, and in bad taste and racist at worst. In 1967 however, the sketch gave Grenfell an opportunity to comment on the restrictions and injustices applied to Black South Africans in their own land.

In 'First Flight' (1969b) and in 'Nicodemus' Song' (1967), socio-politically, Grenfell did not necessarily mesh with the views of the general public; less than a decade earlier, a Mrs Towler, writing in the Mass Observation Diaries, tells of a friend whose adopted daughter had run away with a Chinese student from Hong Kong and did not seem to mind 'as long as she doesn't come back' (Diarist 5445, 1961). In 1965, Clifford Hall wrote *How Racially Prejudiced is Britain?* after receiving death threats in reaction to his statement on radio that he would have no objection to his white daughter having a relationship with a black man (Webb, 2017). Again, there is much evidence of public perception being swayed by the power of the media, with a writer in the *Contemporary Review* condemning the uncivilising influence of Afro-Caribbean music and culture, and the risk it posed to the young British girls who may be attracted to it (Wynne-Tyson, 1959). Most of the concern appears to have come from white British parents of girls; there appears to have been much less written in the press about the concept of a white British man marrying a non-white woman (Webb, 2017). While inter-racial marriage has never been illegal in the UK, as it was

in the United States, the social stigma and emotional pressure for those couples who chose not to bow to the disapproval of family and friends was significant, and can be seen in the preponderance of sociological psychological evidence and research which is continued to this day, such as that by Bratter and King (2008).

From a discourse framework approach then, Grenfell has shown some elements of the critical thinking required to form effective resistance and speak to power. In both 'Nicodemus' Song' and 'First Flight' she identifies and challenges assumptions about race and inter-racial relationships, and is aware of the context she brings to her performances, as well as the context her audience brings with them (Brookfield, 2012). In 'First Flight' (1969b) she presents some alternatives (Brookfield, 2012); the narrator is friends with her Afro-Caribbean daughter-in-law, going against the flow of both racist and mother-in-law tropes familiar at the time through such programmes as *Til Death Do Us Part*, starring Warren Mitchell, which ran from 1965 until 1980, the satire and anti-racist elements of which were lost on many of its audience members. It can be argued then, that throughout the text of these sketches Grenfell does not shout out a call to arms, rather she whispers that the possibility of a different world exists.

There are noticeable differences between the Grenfell and Lipman performances of 'First Flight', the latter recorded in 2004 as part of the televised version of the stage play *Re:Joyce!* (2004). The first obvious difference is the length of the performances, Grenfell's performance, transcribed, runs at 1303 words and 6 minutes 52 seconds, including applause and transition time, compared to Lipman's 1065 words and 7 minutes and 9 seconds, also including applause and transition time. Simple arithmetic therefore shows a much slower delivery by Lipman. Throughout her portrayals, Lipman tends to move and

speak in a much larger way than Grenfell, she has a much more mobile mouth and face. Performed lap belted in an airplane seat, the movement differences are less noticeable in this sketch than they are in others, such as ‘Hymn’, which is analysed in Chapter 6, ‘Belonging, Class, Space and Place’. A comparative analysis of the variation in the transcribed performances shows that the difference in the word count and pacing is achieved by Lipman’s removal of the section where the narrator is offered her companion’s postcard for her grandchildren, plus almost all reference to the narrator’s father. It is difficult, on the evidence of one published recording, to say why those choices were made; these could include timing limitations for the production of a television programme, therefore making a performance unique to this recording, but it is impossible to say. However, other possible reasons could include a working knowledge of attention span in a 1990s audience, or a simple decision to leave sections out through personal taste. Lipman also varies the order slightly, with the only reference to the narrator’s father appearing much later and in the context of the mention of God, rather than in the context of adjusting to change, as Grenfell does.

Perhaps the most relevant differences discovered in the analysis occur when Lipman retains the material largely as originally written, but with small changes. Initially one might discount Lipman’s reference to lunch, where Grenfell refers to dinner in the opening lines, but this change helps with the date and time of the sketch, as well as the region in which the performer resides and was brought up, against where they have placed the home of the character. Grenfell was a southerner through and through, never living north of London, whereas Lipman was born and raised in Hull. Her normal speaking accent reflects her upbringing and schooling in the relatively affluent Hull suburb of Cottingham, being rather more middle class than other Hull accents. Brinjes (2019) suggests that neither

performer is completely secure in her accent, with Grenfell producing a generalised Yorkshire accent, and Lipman's being more Doncaster based, which is significantly south and west of Lipman's home town. Grenfell has a particularly inconsistent pronunciation of the word 'buttons' with the u sound pronounced ʌ rather than the Yorkshire ʊ (phonemicchart.com, 2018). The ʌ sound connected with the letter u simply does not exist in any current Yorkshire dialect (yorkshiredialect.com, 2020).

It is somewhat ironic that Lipman, the middle-class Jewish Hull girl by birth, refers to Lunch, while Grenfell, the upper class southerner chooses the term dinner. While it should be noted that Hull is technically within the county of Yorkshire, the residents of Hull do not necessarily consider themselves residents of the county, considering Hull to have its own identity (Young, 2019). Rodriguez Gonzalez (1993) initially claims that this use of terms is primarily a class issue, with the more middle and upper class choosing lunch and the working classes choosing to use the word dinner, but his deeper analysis suggests that those in the north are more likely to use the word dinner, regardless of class, than those in the south. Perhaps it is through Grenfell's education and awareness of class issues, which she would have gained through a thorough drilling at finishing school and her debut season, that leads to her choice of the word 'dinner' to help place the narrator both geographically and in terms of class.

Later, when describing the narrator's daughter-in-law, Grenfell uses the term 'an African American girl, a black girl' whereas Lipman says 'an Afro-American girl, a coloured girl'. An in-depth literature search has been somewhat frustrating and has revealed little, but what there is all agrees that by the time Lipman made her recording, the term 'coloured' was not acceptable. However, if one considers the Oxford Living Dictionaries' assertion that it

was ’the accepted term until the 1960s’ (2019), Lipman has perhaps made an understandable error by using the word to date the sketch; she is portraying a more antiquated attitude than Grenfell herself does, indeed the language sits more with the woman at church than the narrator. To be clear, the statement is not being made that Lipman is somehow racist in her choice of words, but that if her decision to change the language has been made in order to date the sketch, she has not been successful, as her language choice is neither entirely consistent with the era nor the character she is trying to portray.

There are further word choices that vary from Grenfell’s performance, but the most telling is possibly the last line. Where both the published script (1969) and Lipman, (2004) say ‘I just want to do it right’, Grenfell’s performed line (1972) is ‘I just want to do it all right.’ The selection or omission of one word here changes the meaning entirely. Both the printed script and Lipman’s delivery carry the suggestion that there is a wrong way the situation could be handled, they are laden with judgement and duty. Grenfell’s performed version suggests a much stronger focus on family and comfort, that she can make everything well, comfortable and cosy for her yet to be known family. It is unclear when Grenfell changed the line but her performed version seems more consistent with the character portrayed so far and the intent and explorative journey of the sketch.

The narrator of ‘First Flight’ is the widow of a gardener; the type of work she had undertaken is not clear, but she has obviously invested much effort into her family and the raising of her son, of whom she is very proud. She also appears to have served, and continues to serve, her community via her church, and is comfortable talking about God. This kind of work is that which many people think of when they consider mature women

of Grenfell's era. However, by the early 1970s when this recording was made, in academic and philosophical terms, the concept of God and how we relate to him, or ideas of him, were beginning to change. Foucault argues, 'Discourse is not life: its time is not your time; in it, you will not be reconciled to death; you may have killed God beneath the weight of all that you have said; but don't imagine that, with all that you are saying, you will make a man that will live longer than he' (Foucault, 1980, p. 211). Grenfell then, in this characterisation, shows a difference between her construct of God, viewing all beings as equal and united, 'in the sight of God, we are all equal, absolutely the same — I am absolutely sure of it' (Grenfell, 1969, p. 270), and a Foucauldian discourse on power/knowledge whereby to resist the power of the church is to potentially kill God. Grenfell's ease with theological discussion about God is on an individual basis. In this instance then, Grenfell's socio-political and religious views gel to resist a more conventional view of God, or probably more precisely certain players within the church, as judgemental and blindly powerful. This appears to be the work that her narrator has chosen to undertake, one of many different types of unpaid work presented by Grenfell and analysed here.

Thus, this chapter has shown a deep socio-political awareness of the issues facing a variety of female characters over a thirty year period; together with the previous chapter, analyses have been presented of monologues featuring women who work, whether that work is paid or not. These chapters have addressed Grenfell's commentary on women's roles in the home, at work, and the impact the professional and personal have on each other, using, among others, the Mass Observation diaries as co-texts. While the chapters were split by paid and unpaid work, it is apparent that this was a largely practical choice and the lines between the two areas are blurred. There have been issues of power/knowledge and truth-

telling in both fields, and this will continue in the analyses in the next chapter, whereby we turn to Grenfell's commentaries on class and belonging.

Chapter 6: Belonging, Class, Space and Place

The aim of this chapter is to explore the context and impact of class, space and belonging on Grenfell. Further, it will address the impact her interpretation of these had on her audiences, and the socio-political picture she presents with particular regard to women, from the perspective of the present day. This will be achieved by analysing 'Hymn' (Grenfell and Addinsell, 1965[3]), the three 'Eng. Lit.' Sketches (1965b, 1967a and 1968) and 'Mulgarth Street' (1973). These sketches were chosen as they vary greatly in terms of their socio-economic settings.

The prompt for this chapter was the positioning of Grenfell as the upper-middle class daughter of Paul Phipps, a very successful architect to the upper and middle classes. Phipps trained Grenfell to hone her keen sense of observation from the age of about four years, when he would take Grenfell out on Saturday afternoons using the buses to show her numerous areas of London. On these trips, he pointed out not only architectural features but how design impacted on people's everyday lives. Grenfell would go on to rely on these observational and analytical skills throughout her professional life, and she recalls in her autobiography, 'My father taught me to look at things with more understanding than I realised I had […] We explored museums and art galleries. We looked at buildings and objects and he made me see why an object that perfectly does the job it is designed to do has its own beauty – a key, a bridge, a wooden spoon, a pylon, a tea-pot[...] I learned to recognise Grinling Gibbons carving and developed a feel for Christopher Wren.' (Grenfell, 1976, p. 41) Grinling Gibbons (1648-1721) is credited by the National Portrait Gallery as

[3] The date for 'Hymn' is somewhat difficult to establish; it is undated in *Turn Back the Clock* (Grenfell, 1998), while the Bristol Theatre Archive lists its date as '1965?'. Thus, a compromise has been created here, using the date provided by the Bristol Theatre Archive, but the page numbers from *Turn Back the Clock.*

being Britain's greatest decorative woodcarver, with a good reputation for stone sculpting too (National Portrait Gallery, 2018a). Architecture and buildings appear to trigger something in Grenfell's work, often connected to class, and these monologues are directly related to their surroundings. Buildings are also often signifiers of power/knowledge, the grander the property, the more the assumed authoritative knowledge, and this will be explored throughout this chapter.

The chosen sketches have a strong socio-political theme running through them; not only does Grenfell portray the buildings around her with very few props and only minimal costuming, she also portrays and critiques community, geographical and political transition, and territorial attitudes in both the upper and lower classes. Further, she draws out some of the particularly female concerns and frustrations of the women she is portraying. It should be noted in the following analysis that, while audio-visual recordings of 'Hymn' 'Mulgarth Street', 'Eng. Lit I' and 'Eng. Lit III' were available and therefore analysed in at least two of the three ways mentioned in Chapter 2, thus providing some sense of multi-layered analysis, only a paper script of 'Eng. Lit II' was available for scrutiny. This has some impact on the depth of analysis undertaken.

As soon as one starts to consider an influential woman and a sense of space, place, class and belonging, one has to acknowledge the context within which those issues sit. It is relatively easy to consider Vita Sackville-West's writing room at Sissinghurst, and Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* (2017). Sackville-West's writing room is well away from the main building at Sissinghurst, on the top floor of a tower. The house itself, Oram argues, was just far enough away from London to give Sackville-West the isolation she craved, while still being close enough to access her publishers (Oram, 2012), while the tower itself was a

‘sanctum’ (Nicholson, cited in Oram, 2012, p. 544) where she was ‘isolated from outsiders’ (Nicholson, cited in Oram, 2012, p. 544) to give her the optimum environment to complete twenty books there.

In 1929, Woolf stated clearly ‘a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction’ (Woolf, 2017). She goes on to outline the reasons behind the need for this room, away from the demands of men to force women into their place, in the form of the Beadle remonstrating with her for trespassing on the Fellows and Scholars’ Lawn, the librarian barring her path to an independent use of the library (Woolf, 2017) and so on. For Woolf, then, a place to work and a little money is not isolation from the demands of a capitalist heteronormative world, but freedom and escape from it. Woolf originally wrote of these challenges and longings for space in 1929, the year Grenfell married Reggie. These concepts and images sit alongside De Beauvoir’s concept that women are formed as ‘other’ and therefore separate from men somehow, and in our heads and hearts, they tend to give a sense of loneliness. De Beauvoir argues that this emotional isolation can do strange things to a woman, and cites fictional characters who have taken refuge and become ‘intoxicated’ (2011, p. 407) in a sense of isolation, living a double life between their true selves and that which they present to the world. De Beauvoir cites the character of Beryl in *Prelude* (Mansfield, 1918), but one could equally consider the impact of isolation on *The Lady of Shalott* (Tennyson, 1832).

This is not the framework within which Grenfell works, either in her characterisation or in the actuality of her creative process. Rather, she repeatedly portrays most of her almost exclusively female characters as lynchpins of society, the matriarch, the publicist, the defender, and not always in binary opposition to a male. When she does, if the man wins

the power/knowledge battle, it is normally at some cost to himself, as is perhaps most clearly demonstrated in the 'Eng. Lit.' monologues. In terms of physical space, Grenfell preferred to write in bed or at her dining room table, not separated from her husband's living space at all. Her autobiography and private letters show that she could work on the train, the plane and in the back of cars being driven by her army drivers, real public spaces, very different from the places of otherness cited here. Grenfell's work was based on observation, so she worked in amongst what she was observing, including academic settings, people's homes and church buildings.

The analysis of 'Hymn' (Grenfell and Addinsell, 1965) comprises a script analysis, and performance analyses of sung performances by Grenfell (1972) and Lipman (2004). The imagined audience for the piece is the narrator's husband, with the fervent wish not to be overheard by the other members of the congregation, or worse, the minister.

While Grenfell was a Christian Scientist, the setting could be any reasonably mainstream or traditional church on any Sunday morning, indeed Grenfell would often worship in the local Anglican church if she could not get to a Christian Science congregation. The narrator and her husband enter as the first hymn starts and take their places. Initially this presents as an observation on the normal, a not quite awake rendition of a hymn by a congregation member who enjoys singing and has a pleasant voice but is not, as such, trained and has a relatively short attention span. Where Grenfell (1972) sings the melody in a fairly 'straight way' gazing around the congregation during the first verse, flexing her fingers and acknowledging those she knows, Lipman (2004) plays with the music, swooping from note to note as she gazes around the imagined congregation to see who else is present. As the verse goes on, Lipman fidgets an ankle, as if she has a stone in her shoe. The upper body

shot of Grenfell during the same passage does not allow for such characterisation, but there is a stillness about her which implies that the singer is on automatic pilot; she knows the hymn and words without really thinking about their meaning.

Suddenly, the narrator pauses in the middle of a line. Where the published script read 'So undisturbed the view I see,/ Unclouded is the […]' (Grenfell and Addinsell, 1965, p. 221), followed by a stage direction '(Suddenly struck dumb by a terrible thought)', both Grenfell and Lipman actually sing 'Unclouded is the view I see,/ And undisturbed the' before Grenfell stops dead, eyes wide and horrified, while Lipman makes a clicking noise or other non-linguistic verbalisation of being stopped in one's tracks, before breaking away from the words in the hymn book. The combination of the words 'And undisturbed the' and an interruption by obviously troubling thoughts leads to great comedic impact for the audience and therefore, I would argue, a good performance choice by both artists.

It is at this point that reference must be made to the skill of the composition of Richard Addinsell and the performance of the accompanists, Bill Blezard for Joyce Grenfell, and Denis King for Maureen Lipman. The sketch hangs on the ability to make it sound as if they continue to play the hymn tune as 'written' in the hymn book, yet it is incumbent on the accompanist slowing down and reacting to the delivery of the lines by the singer. In truth, at this point the music appears to have moved away from hymn structure and moved towards an Anglican chant structure, as the reciting chord (Le Huray and Harper, 2001) is held for significant numbers of syllables before resolving the melody on the end of each phrase. The moment at which King slows down to allow Lipman to deliver the lines at an understandable pace is more marked than Blezard's interpretation, nonetheless, both do

the job masterfully. It is therefore quite clear that this piece is one of the truest collaborations of composition and performance amongst the Grenfell catalogue.

The reason for the stunned pause is that it has struck the narrator that she has forgotten to turn the gas off under a saucepan on the cooker before she left the house. As the verse progresses, she lists the consequences of this momentary slip on her part, including the potential loss of the house through fire. It is marked that neither of the lyrics presented by Grenfell or Lipman exactly match the published script. Indeed, even with the adjustments by the accompanist, the lyrics as published simply do not scan from a musical sense point of view. This is most noticeable in the penultimate verse. Where the script narrator raises the question of what she should try to save, Grenfell and Lipman start listing the valuable items in the house. In this verse, the second line of published script reads 'Thank goodness I'm wearing my engagement ring and my watch'; both Grenfell and Lipman sing 'I might be able to rescue the drawing that is supposed to be by Picasso', a completely different meter in musical terms. Indeed, the verse is a full line shorter in performance.

Equally, the published script makes no break in the litany of concerns, whereas in both performances, the 'real' hymn breaks in between the antepenultimate and the penultimate verses, 'No troubled thoughts confuse me now […]' It is once again this insertion in performance, this juxtaposition between the concerns and the lyrics of the hymn, that provide the irony and biggest laugh of the whole piece. Both Grenfell and Lipman are more faithful to the published script in the last four lines, enquiring if the unseen husband had perhaps turned the gas off, indeed both reflect the printed word exactly. However, while Grenfell turns away in resignation as she sings, 'No, I was afraid you wouldn't have done', it is Lipman's glance of pure anger toward the unseen husband

as she exits the pew 'A-a-excuse me, men.' (Grenfell and Addinsell, no date, p. 222) that makes the double meaning of this last syllable clear. Grenfell sings the line as if it is simply an extension of a standard antiphon, but Lipman, in one syllable, sums up all the issues of mental load that women in a heteronormative household have to deal with. This suggests an othering from Grenfell; the husband is not even asked for his input into the situation until the very end, probably because the wife already has a clear and uncomplimentary opinion of what the answer will be. The term mental or emotional load is a relatively recent one, but it has been a matter of concern for women in the western societal construct for some time. De Beauvoir offers some solution to this, reminding us to treat all human beings as human beings, to generously and equally interact with each other, according to their need (De Beauvoir, 1997, citing Marx), but it would appear that the narrator's husband is not aware of this.

In terms of belonging, architecture and buildings, there is little to give us many clues in the text of 'Hymn' (Grenfell, 1965), whereas the staging for both the Grenfell and Lipman performances suggest a middle class congregation; lighting and backdrops suggest beautiful stained glass, both are provided with traditional, solid pews, and the one line heard in both performances is also not presented in the typed script. It is a spoken line, 'We will now sing hymn number three hundred and forty-one' intoned in the well-educated tones of an Oxbridge background Minister, again, in truth, probably King or Blezard. Both Lipman and Grenfell wear hat and gloves, there is an expectation that they are wearing their Sunday best, such is the social construct of their congregations. However, in failing to shoulder the emotional or logistical labour, or ensuring the house is appropriately safe prior to leaving, a role that falls to the wife, the narrator now has to undergo the social indignity of leaving church at the end of the first hymn.

The Eng. Lit. sketches also portray a woman who is societally respected, managing her responsibilities for emotional and logistical load, but in a very different setting. These are Grenfell's examinations of the role of an upper-middle class woman, in her home, defending her patch, both literally and metaphorically. The sketches were written in 1965, 1967 and 1968 respectively.

The narrator here is the wife of the Vice-Chancellor of an Oxbridge University. Notice Grenfell's phrasing here; she is not the Vice-Chancellor's wife, she is the wife of the Vice-Chancellor. This linguistic differentiation is important, as while the character is defined by her husband and his university, by placing the word 'wife' first, she is putting the emphasis on her role, not that of his in relation to the university, she is staking her place and her right to truth-telling.

Both Grenfell's performances of sketches one and three begin with a masterclass in how to set a scene with a cardigan, one finger and a few well-chosen words. Therefore, one can fairly safely make the logical assumption that the middle sketch is set up in much the same way. Prior to taking on the persona of the narrator, as Grenfell puts on the cream cardigan that signifies the wife of the Vice-Chancellor, she explains to the audience that we are in a book lined study and, with split second timing, describes the space, including window frames, demonstrating with a carefully tracing finger before looking into the camera, pausing and uttering one word, 'gothic' with a smile. Grenfell is confident, in that smile, that her audience knows the significance of the ability to live in a property with gothic arches in socio-economic terms.

This returns us to the knowledge and enjoyment gained on Grenfell's Saturday trips with her father into London; Grinling Gibbons sits firmly in the Gothic 'spirit' of wood and stone

carving common in the early years of the restoration (Tipping, 1914, p. 25). As herself, Grenfell goes on to elaborate on the ornaments in the room and the decoration over the doorway, pointing out the classic intellectual/sport ambience; 'a pair of crossed oars', with the o in 'crossed', normally sounded as ɒ, drawn out into the extreme ɔː sound so that it rhymes with 'oars' (English Live, 2018). While Grenfell naturally spoke in received pronunciation, this emphasis helps the audience place our narrator among a particularly rarefied intellectual elite prevalent before the boom in red brick universities. Her affectionately satirical attitude towards her own class is clear as she breaks into a beaming smile before she finishes her introduction and assumes the voice and manner of her character.

In sketch one, 'Eng. Lit.', the narrator is having a very friendly meeting with an unseen TV interviewer to explore whether she would like to appear on his show. The other, occasional, unseen member of the cast in these sketches is Mrs Finley, who appears to be a kind of housekeeper-maid. It becomes apparent that the interviewer is perhaps not among the top-flight interviewers of his generation, he is not about to threaten the talents of Robin Day, and therefore our narrator has some questions of her own. These questions reveal a few of her own prejudices, particularly about how she sees herself and the world around her. Her first and most natural question is whether the interviewer, Mr Wimble, has read the book about which he will be interviewing her. When he (unseen and unheard) answers in the negative, her response, 'No, I know, it's so difficult to find time to read what one really wants to' (Grenfell, 1965b, p. 215) is withering, and signals to the audience that the interviewer is not going to have an easy ride from here on in. The narrator is not going to let him forget that not only is he on her hereditary territory physically, he's there intellectually too. 'Were you up at this University?' she asks, and again this is a signal to the

audience that only the answer ‘yes’ will do. Sadly, this is not the response the narrator receives, and to make matters worse, she does not know of the educational establishment he attended. As a side note, it is worth mentioning that the recording used is from the BBC series *Joyce Grenfell*, made in 1972, three years after Grenfell had begun to ease herself into retirement; she was already beginning to be bothered by the eye trouble that would eventually be revealed as cancer and lead to her death, and this may explain why this is one of the few sketches with evidence of a mis-step in her lines. There are other sketches where one can see that Grenfell may have gone off track slightly and looped round but, at this point in the sketch, there is a definite verbal or memory stumble. Even so, with more than 30 years’ experience on the stage and screen, Grenfell recovers her thread and her composure rapidly.

The wife of the Oxbridge Vice Chancellor continues to place herself apart from her interviewer intellectually, ‘[…] of course, that’s why I’ve called the book *The Long Result of Time*, which I don’t have to tell you is Tennyson. I expect you have *Locksley Hall* by heart, and I so wish I had’ (Grenfell, 1965a, p. 216). The documentary *Heroes of Comedy: Joyce Grenfell, OBE* contains vintage footage in which Grenfell claims that this was her favourite character because ‘she’s the kind of person I really admire; she’s very well read, she’s literate, she’s articulate, and she assumes you know as much as she does.’ (McLean, 1995). However, it is in this absolute conviction that the interviewer has this level of knowledge that she makes her class and education clear, while also displaying a level of naivety in her expectations of others. While later studies have shown that there is little link between social class and status and attitudes to reading (Mikulecky, Leavitt Shanklin and Caverly, 1979), in the 1960s, measurements of social class still used ‘reading habits’ as one of the markers. Thus, this sketch, perhaps, portrays the attitude that this level of wide reading is

a luxury that few ordinary people could afford in the 1960s. Perhaps, for the modern viewer, a mote of cynicism creeps in as well; unless one knows Grenfell's reputation for kindness and generosity, the same lines can be heard to mean exactly the opposite; indeed, this was my reading until I discovered this documentary. This underlines the importance of context in any discourse analysis, as discussed in Chapter 2.

The narrator marks her status further, when she remarks on her intellectual heritage, comparing her grandmother's family, which is after all hers, to the 'great families of Darwin and Huxley'. To compare oneself to 'the Darwin-Huxley lot' takes a great deal of intellectual and emotional confidence, which it is clear our interviewer does not share. There are noticeable links here to evolution theory as well, not just in the reference to Charles Darwin and Thomas Henry Huxley, but in the discussion of the narrator's grandmother's relationship with a squirrel, Edwin, 'I suppose if you had Greek, you could call him Skouros, couldn't you? I expect you've got Greek, I wish I had. Well, I have a, you know, a little bread and butter Greek, just enough to go through Greece [...]' (Grenfell, 1965b, p. 217). Her grandmother's approach to this squirrel was 'scientific' and includes the possibility that he is the re-incarnation of a relative. There is a noticeable difference in the delivery of this line from the printed script in Grenfell's 1972 performance; where the 1965 printed script has '... just enough to go through Greece, but alas, in no way classical Greek' (Grenfell, 1965b, p.217), the 1972 performance stops as outlined at 'go through Greece' before Mrs Finley interrupts proceedings. This give the audience more time to appreciate the line and take in the absolute complacency with which the narrator treats her education and intellect.

Having established her own intellectual abilities, however informal, the wife of the Oxbridge Vice Chancellor later points out that her father was also a master at this college,

and here she asserts her right to her place at this university, if only through her connections via the male line. This is, perhaps, the only chink in this character's armour, as despite her enormous intellectual abilities and sense of class status, she is fully aware that she is not the Vice-Chancellor, indeed she has had no academic career at all, amusing herself by writing a series of 'lives'. Her place in this world that she so naturally inhabits has been at the behest of her father and then her husband, and she is dependent on their success for the continuation of her status. She is also aware of the importance of her public image, not only for herself but for her husband. Her concerns for the televised interview at first appear frivolous, she questions what clothing will project the image she wishes to portray, and whether she should wear a hat, 'Alas, I do not possess an informal hat' (Grenfell, 1965b, p. 218), but she has done her research on her interviewer. As mentioned earlier, this reference to a hat would not be so insignificant to a 1970s audience as to a 21st century audience; now available from a few pounds, the use of a stylish head covering is, these days, entirely optional, indeed rare, while accessible to most members of society. As Crane (2000) points out, while a head covering was expected dress from the turn of the century until the late 1970s, having a hat, or even hats to choose from, was the preserve of the middle and upper classes, and denoted not only the level of the wearer but the formality of the occasion, hence the concept of an informal hat causing a level of consternation.

Mr Wimble, by this point, one cannot help feeling, is sure he has a nice, unsuspecting candidate for teasing and condescension without her even noticing, so the end of the sketch must come as a bit of a shock to our imagined interviewer. The wife of the Vice Chancellor asks him, 'are you very cruel to the people who come on to your television programme? (Pause) I see. (Pause) And um, do they like that? (Pause) Oh, it's the viewers who like it? Well, I wonder if I should?' (Grenfell, 1965b, p. 218., pauses from 1972

performance) A few lines later, the killer blow is dealt, 'something has just crossed my mind. Mr Wimble, what would happen now, supposing I did come on to your programme and I was to be very cruel to you?' (Grenfell, 1965b, p. 218).

The power/knowledge balance in this sketch has several push/pull factors attached to it. There is, in the Wife of the Vice-Chancellor's manner, an implication that she is seeking advice and information from the interviewer; she is allowing him to believe that he has the authoritative knowledge in terms of his experience of what the viewers will like, the types of things they might discuss and what she might wear. However, at the same time she is subtly and constantly demonstrating her authoritative and inherited knowledge in the most polite of manners. There are constant references to her learning, which, like Grenfell's, appears to be innate and natural, rather than formal, via mentions of her understanding of literature and languages. The narrator therefore asserts not only her place in the intellectual elite via not only her husband but her father, but makes it clear to Mr Wimble that she has more weapons in her intellectual and status arsenal than he does. The character has no consciousness about this though, there is no feeling of unsettlement or conflict in this sketch. This is a power/knowledge dynamic at its most polite.

The second Eng. Lit. sketch 'Eng. Lit. II: An Event' (1967b), is the only one of the three whereby the narrator is acquainted with her visitor, John, a nephew home from Africa. Therefore, he is the only visitor with whom she discusses her domestic arrangements directly and who is potentially on the same end of the power/knowledge continuum. While her fondness for her housekeeper, Mrs Finley, is obvious in all the Eng. Lit. sketches, it is only to John that she acknowledges the challenges of having staff, an issue with which the lady in 'Mulgarth Street' will never have to deal.

In this sketch, the wife of the Vice-Chancellor asserts her place not only by discussing Mrs Finley's battles with the new electric cooker, but by making reference to her husband's secretary, Mrs Brittle, without whom the Vice-Chancellor could not manage his appointments, and by recounting her experiences on a television programme, which has come about as a direct result of the interview she was considering in Eng. Lit I. This establishes the narrator as a woman who is building up and using her own network of contacts. However, in her supporting role as the Wife of the Vice-Chancellor, she minimises the significance of this event, which she and her nephew will watch together; 'It's a sort of discussion programme between so-called "intelligent people"' she says, as if she has been mis-labelled. She goes on to describe her experience 'Well, I know so little about Elementary Sex in Schools – or was it Sex in Elementary Schools? […] I thought it rather a bore' (Grenfell, 1967b, p. 239).

She has found the producer's compliment 'You are *so* natural' confusing, 'as if there was a possible alternative. I felt I must have erred in some way' (Grenfell, 1967b, p. 240). Yet she goes on to comment on the image portrayed by another member of the panel, personifying him as an 'egghead' and 'a very, very devout agnostic, than which there are few things more bigoted' (Grenfell, 1967b, p.240). She explains to her nephew the broadcasting principle of Fair Balance, 'so if you have a Labour then you have to have a Tory' (Grenfell, 1967a, p. 240). Her unseen nephew, presumably, asks what balancing feature she is there to provide. 'Oh, I was there as a *woman.* There always has to be a woman for reasons of provocation and/or common sense and, alas, I think I know which I was there to represent' (Grenfell, 1967b, p.240). This last comment is interesting, as, over the three sketches, it becomes quite clear that the Wife of the Vice-Chancellor is quite capable of both common sense and provocation. This is best seen in her later encounter with the egghead, Dr

Barstin, supposedly the draw of the show. Dr Barstin has asserted that animals are far superior to people, and 'that in his opinion people are always *much* less beautiful than horses.' The narrator recounts 'I couldn't resist saying: "What about Greta Garbo?" And you won't believe the depth to which he descended. He said: "What *is* a Greta Garbo?" Laughter in Court' (Grenfell, 1967b, p. 241).

This encounter between the Wife of the Vice-Chancellor and Dr Barstin is illuminating for several reasons. Greta Garbo was undoubtedly beautiful and in his failure to acknowledge her beauty, Dr Barstin writes off an entire tranche of women, who display both beauty and brains and went some way to advance the role of women in Hollywood and in the film world, while also causing some controversy within the feminist movement. Rumours around Garbo's sexuality remain a matter of academic debate, (Dever, 2010) and in his dismissal of her, Dr Barstin positions himself not only as an academic egghead, but ignorant of much of popular culture and perhaps a denier of the women's issues of the day. By her retirement in 1948, Garbo had addressed gender issues in *Queen Christina* (1933) and women in men's jobs in *Mata Hari*, (1931) as well as several other convention challenging roles (Tóth, 2008). Additionally, Grenfell acknowledged the equine lines in her own features, inherited from her mother (Grenfell, 1976), so this may be a very veiled joke at the Barstin character's expense.

One of the most interesting fleeting remarks in this sketch is actually about the interviewer featured in the previous monologue, who, on this occasion, the Wife of the Vice-Chancellor no longer appears to view as a yet to be categorised threat. When the interview was recorded, she recounts, 'the man who did the interview was very encouraging and so pretty. He had lovely clean hair, and he had on a psychedelic tie and, what's more, he

treated me almost as if I were his equal' (Grenfell, 1967b, p. 238). There is significant ambiguity in these remarks. When one considers the very traditional language Grenfell uses to set up the sketches, and then otherwise gifts the character, the use of the word 'pretty' is somewhat jarring and presents a challenge to traditional views of masculinity; in neither his features, nor his dress, does the interviewer present a heteronormative view of male looks, he is not rugged, handsome or chiselled; she does not comment on his suit, haircut or shoes. Further, the use of the phrase 'almost as if I were his equal' prompts two reactions to Grenfell's positioning of her character; she could equally well be referring to his social class, where she is undoubtedly higher up the class ladder than him, or his gender, in which case, the allusion is to his outranking her. As De Beauvoir makes clear, women are not only other; they are less than, or 'inessential (De Beauvoir, 1997, p. 353). De Beauvoir argues that, in Victorian England, women were deliberately isolated in the home , claiming that a late eighteenth century scholar had stated, 'Women are not only not part of the race, they are not even half of the race but a sub-species destined uniquely for reproduction', (cited in De Beauvoir, 2011, p. 175) though she does not name the scholar, and a search has not revealed a name. However, even if the quote is apocryphal, De Beauvoir's claim gives weight to the comments of the Wife of the Vice-Chancellor.

The balance on the panel alluded to by the Wife of the Oxbridge Vice-Chancellor is one of gender, but within a Foucauldian framework, it is also a tussle of authority. As has been alluded to several times, Foucault's lack of definition of the knowledge in the power/knowledge concept allows for a power to be held by those with the greatest appearance of knowledge, but there are other ways of creating this appearance than gaining many qualifications. While Dr Barstin holds the honorific title, thereby displaying his knowledge, it may well be that with her 'naturalness', the narrator has exercised a

strategic power relation through communication. She has engaged with the audience on a level of humour, thereby engendering trust, and as the 'othered' member of the panel, she is able to provide an example of 'situated and embodied knowledges' (Haraway, 2007 p.117), allowing her a moderate chance of intervention in ways that would not otherwise be available to her. Thus, she is able to exercise relationship via the television screen, as Grenfell does to provoke thought and confidence in the audience, once again, subtly undermining the source of more obvious authority.

Just as Grenfell has referred back to the first Eng. Lit. monologue in mentioning the young interviewer again, she signposts forward to the third sketch in this series in the very middle of the second, when she refers to the meeting her husband is attending, precluding him from watching the panel show with his wife and nephew. When asked what kind of University business her husband is on, she replies 'Protest, no doubt. It usually is' (Grenfell, 1967b, p. 240). As the third monologue was published a year later, it is possible that Grenfell envisaged the three sketches as a triptych from the beginning, but no evidence for this can be found either way.

In the third Eng. Lit. sketch (Referred to variously as Eng. Lit. III or More Eng. Lit.) our narrator is under a much greater threat; a real, physical break in, unwelcome and alarming. However, she's not going to let it show, her status depends on it. She has a role to play and she's going to play it, however alarmed she may be. Again, Grenfell sets up the sketch with the same minimal visuals, again the extreme north vowel in 'crossed oars' which denotes the former, now largely defunct, upper-class received pronunciation (Hurwitz, 2018), this time adding that the antimacassars on the sofa and armchairs are 'chintz by William Morris, and it's probably original' Therefore, from the very outset, Grenfell is placing the class

allegiances of our narrator. There is a sense of irony in Morris's products being a signifier of the upper classes, which may or may not have been appreciated by Grenfell's largely middle-class audiences. William Morris was a member of the Socialist League, along with Eleanor Marx, valuing craftsmanship over the evils of consumerism (Brown, 2012), yet less than 80 years after his death, his textiles were being used as a signifier of status. Given Grenfell's broad and eclectic education, while it cannot be proved, it is entirely likely she would have been aware of this, especially given her father's occupation.

The clash of cultures in this third sketch is the biggest threat and, while our narrator controls the situation so that she is never in any physical danger, the situation could have turned out very differently. This also gives credence to Victoria Wood's assertion that Grenfell was 'just a very, very good person…[with] warmth and generosity' (McLean, 1995), as she does not allow her imagination to place her favourite character in real danger. It could be argued that in failing to do so, Grenfell does not address some of the grittier areas of feminism that remain of deep concern today, with the #MeToo movement, in increased coverage of sexual harassment and actual assault on women. Rape and assault have been an issue for concern in feminism for some time. Donat and D'Emilio (1992) argued that through the work of feminism, the 1960s saw rape and assault recast as 'a mechanism for maintaining male control and domination' (Donat and D'Emilio, 1992, p. 3), after Brownmiller, who argues that rape is ' an expression of manhood [...] a mechanism of social control to keep women in line (Brownmiller, 1975, p. 288). This is an issue which Grenfell does not directly address here. However, there is also a counter-argument to be made, in that this could potentially make the audience very uncomfortable and switched them off from her message. Grenfell herself evidenced this audience reaction in her letters to Virginia Graham on 29th August 1965. In describing her experience of Beryl Reid's performance in the stage version of *The*

Killing of Sister George the previous evening, Grenfell says, 'It is extremely well written, directed and played, and horrible. R. hated it, felt sullied and slightly sick I think' (Grenfell, 1965a) She goes on, 'I laughed quite a lot, but it is a painful and horrible play about a tiny world of extreme Lesbians who do indeed exist in a tiny animal world of jealousy; vicious and cruel' (Grenfell, 1965a). Thus, one can see that Grenfell is at risk of dismissing the import of addressing the subject matter as it can only apply to that 'tiny animal world' she has outlined (Grenfell, 1965). By keeping her own work in Eng. Lit III much lighter, and with only imagined dangers, Grenfell leaves her audience more open to pondering how they would handle the situation and consider the dangers to women. She also allows her audience to examine the skill required to handle the break-in by an anarchist.

In this, the third of the Eng. Lit sketches, the wife of the Vice-Chancellor is about to 'plunge into the uninviting ocean of correspondence' (Grenfell, 1968, p. 256), when she is confronted by an intruder in her study. If we take at face value Grenfell's assertion that the narrator is kind and generous, the script suggests that she could be genuinely pleased to see her surprise visitor; however, in both the performance and the words, as the sketch progresses, a growing sense of unease and of two cultures clashing, becomes apparent. She has first to address the gender of her visitor, which is not entirely clear. In 1960s Britain, while there was some awareness of non-gender specific clothing, for example in the work, dress and lifestyle of the artist Gluck, the linguistics available and commonly in use would have been limited (Michalska, 2018). This may be the first time the narrator has met somebody whose gender is not clear from their dress, and it is clear that her sense of curiosity and her ingrained good manners are wrestling with each other. This reflects Grenfell's own curiosity about the concept of anarchy. On August 1964, Grenfell wrote to Graham, ' On Sunday, I think it was, Malcolm Muggeridge was on BBC 2 talking to a group

of young anarchists. At first they seemed to be the usual weirdy-beardies in clouds of unsuitable hair. Then they began to emerge as actual thinkers. Their view of what anarchy is amazed me because it turns out I'm one too! [...] Instead of making me rage, as I'd expected it to do. I was astonished' (Grenfell, 1964). Grenfell goes on to outline the similarities between Christian Science and anarchy as she understands it, emphasising the belief in common that they share in terms of allowing humans to reach their full potential.

The issue of belonging and the differences in class, or indeed political belonging, is evident from the moment she requests, 'It's rather difficult to see you under the floppy brim. I think, it's friendlier to take it off, since we are in the house' (Grenfell, 1968, p. 256). This custom of a man removing his hat in the house is probably not being observed by the intruder with his anarchical outlook. The tradition of taking one's hat off when entering a building may come from the older tradition of doffing one's cap to the master, which would not fit with the cause of anarchy. Corfield demonstrates that the refusal to remove one's hat, particularly in a church setting is a symbol that the wearer does not recognise the authority of the requestor (1989, p. 64). However anarchic the intruder may be, he is also a student, and therefore probably from a middle-class background and obedient to being asked nicely by a more mature woman. He holds his line to an extent though, by refusing to reveal his surname, 'Mervyn will do' (1972 performance variant), lying down on the couch with his sandals on while talking to his host, and flicking his ash around the property in a fairly uncaring attitude. Grenfell almost certainly borrowed this last unattractive trait from an early collaborator, Stephen Potter, who claimed that the worst casualty of this nonchalant approach to ash 'was an entire sofa' (Grenfell, 1979, p. 127). He also uses bad language. Contextually, 'bloody' would have been considered swearing in the 1970s, and therefore, in complaining that running the anarchist newspaper, PSST was 'b....y hard work'

(Grenfell, 1968, p.257, in the 1972 performance, Grenfell actually says the word) Mervyn is showing great disrespect in his host's home. Bearing in mind Grenfell's views on independent television, discussed in Chapter 8, this use of any profanity by Grenfell is clearly to demonstrate the insubordination Mervyn is displaying. McEnery says that the BBC 'took a determinedly middle class approach to broadcasting [...] bad language, construed as a token of working-class status was barely allowed on the BBC' (McEnery, 2004, pp. 104).

Throughout this sketch, Grenfell makes reference to a perceived vulnerability as a female in a very subtle way. She does not confront Mervyn for breaking into her house, rather, she passively aggressively both blames her husband and tries to cover her own fear and anger through diminution and deflection; 'my husband really is too absent minded about doors, he simply sesames through them with never a backward glance, and you know the insurance people aren't at all fond of it' (1972 performance variant) And a side note, 'Nor am I, because it does make for drafts, doesn't it?' (1972 performance variant). Thus, Grenfell links the narrator's vulnerability with an eye for the practical as she shoulders the emotional load of running the house efficiently.

For Foucault, the question of social class and the interactions across the classes is at the centre of the power/knowledge tussle, and therefore an interaction in all relationships, For a class to become a dominant class, for it to ensure its domination and for that domination to reproduce itself is certainly the effect of a number of pre-meditated tactics operating within the grand strategies that ensure this domination (Foucault, 1980a, p. 204). However, he argues that this is not imposed on the working classes by the Bourgeoisie, rather there is a 'reciprocal relation of production' (Foucault, 1980, p.204). This is very similar to the

collusion described by De Beauvoir between the othered woman and the men with which she allies herself (De Beauvoir, 1997). That being the case, one wonders to what extent Mervyn will promote his threat, as to be successful would make him redundant. Certainly, by the end of the sketch, Mervyn has become complicit in the class system to an extent, having been talked into accepting an invitation to Sunday tea.

In Eng.Lit. III then, we can see a threat to the way of life both of the Wife of the Oxbridge Vice-Chancellor and the wider University. In the next sketch for consideration, that threat has come to fruition.

'Mulgarth Street', written in 1973, and often referred to as 'Old Mulgarth Street', takes the form of a poem, and its song-like, chirpy rhythms belie the distress the narrator feels in this sketch, as she has been ripped away from her familiar tenement building, or slum, to a new high rise flat in an undisclosed location. The set up for the sketch is most simple; Grenfell puts a green mac over her evening dress (her usual stage costume, based on a design by Victor Steibel, Dick Addinsell's partner) and places a green scarf round her head, tying it under her chin, as if she were protecting her hair from the rain.

This use of a scarf also helps establish the working-class credentials of our narrator, as the use of a hat belongs to the middle classes. As a more modest investment than a suit, the addition of a hat, it has been argued, was adopted by the aspiring middle classes in the nineteenth century, continuing until the 1960s, whereas for the working classes (Crane, 2000), a piece of cloth was more adaptable, thereby being more cost-effective to the working classes. A piece of cloth can be used as a head covering, but can equally well be fashioned into an additional bag, sling, or many other useful items. As our narrator ties the scarf, she invites us, the audience, into her flat, beckoning with arm and head as well as

voice. Despite the initial description of the flat as 'beautiful', it is clear from her tone at the outset that our narrator is not happy here. The setting places the sketch in any year from the passing of the Housing Act 1930 onwards, but the construction of tower blocks, as envisioned here, began in earnest in the 1950s and 1960s (University of the West of England, 2008).

Tunstall and Lowe (2012) have undertaken significant research into the impact on communities of the slum clearances that occurred between the 1950s and the 1970s. They challenge the idea that those who were moved felt ripped out of their communities and hated their new accommodation or locations, as suggested by Young and Wilmott in 1957, but they also say that there is very little other contemporaneous academic research into the societal impact of the slum clearances. In this, however, Tunstall and Lowe may be mistaken; G.W. Horobin's 1957 article makes clear the links between location, occupation and community, using the Hessle Road fishing community as a case study. Horobin outlines how the fishermen residing in Hessle Road, Hull were 'a group apart', with their community and way of life defined by their occupation as well as where they lived. The place of residence for most of those who worked in the catching and distribution of fish was mainly very close to the fish dock, and was both convenient for work and affordable for the wages paid. He goes on to link the survival of the fishing community to the 'general theory of Town Planning' (Horobin, 1957, p. 351) and warns that the President of the local Fishing Vessel Owners Association had already seen a negative impact on the numbers of available fishermen, partly due to a depression in the industry after the Second World War, the impact of National Service and, most notably, the rehousing of approximately 30 per cent of the fishermen outside the fishing area in the 15 years from 1957 to 1972.

Horobin uses this to warn against creating 'balanced neighbourhoods' of the type to which the narrator of 'Mulgarth Street' appears to have been moved. He asks 'Would the balanced neighbourhood break down this clannishness? More important, do we want to break it down?' (Horobin, 1957, p. 353), and goes on to talk about the risk to social bonds, arguing that rather than improving the range of social contacts, by moving the fishermen away from members of their common industry, the opportunities for a social life would be narrowed. Horobin proved to be remarkably accurate; there is no fishing fleet near Hessle Road, the area is dominated by retail estates and houses that are in need of care despite gentrification attempts. The Dover Sole Pub, for many years the heart of the community, is derelict, after years of closure (Kemp, 2017); The residents of Hessle Road no longer know all their neighbours by name or work with them on a daily basis. That being the case, one wonders whether Tunstall and Lowe (2012) would have drawn different conclusions if they had considered the Horobin article and 'Mulgarth Street', as Grenfell appears to sum it up nicely, in the middle of the clearance period. The initial goals of slum clearance were perfectly logical to visitors to the tenements; the problems as described by Grenfell and many others were obvious, 'We lived there for thirty years or more./Terrible dump, old Mulgarth Street,/Most terrible dump I ever saw./Wallpaper peeling off, it was dark and damp,/And there was rats, and always that smell of, you know, and gas, and cats' (Grenfell, 1971, p. 272).

Grenfell's narrator goes on, indignantly, to describe all the things she finds difficult in her new home; she feels that she has been 'stuck up here' with little regard for her wishes, and she is lonely, missing her friends from the tenement, their shared background and challenges. A particular complaint is a lack of neighbourly trust; there is nobody to ask 'Can I borrow a dab of marge, pay you back pay day?' (Grenfell, 1971, p. 272), and of course, on

the sixteenth floor, there is little communal background noise, as there is no through footfall, as there had been on the street. She enumerates the people and sounds she misses, including the ice cream music and the dustman. For those of who live quite separately from their neighbours, her comment ‘we all knew what went on, and where’ (Grenfell, 1971, p. 273) may feel rather invasive, but it is in this that our narrator had found her security and, to an extent which is difficult to measure, her identity. This brings out resonances with Horobin’s observations of the Hull fisherman, even though the identity is not linked so strongly to industry.

Health issues in the tenements were rife, and this is well documented, not only in academia, but in popular and well-written memoirs of those who worked in these areas, such as the *Call the Midwife* series by Jennifer Worth (2002), whose work as a midwife also covered what might now be considered district or community nursing. Worth recounts not only stories of slum clearance, but also some of the well-meaning, but disastrous, impacts of the new care homes for the elderly, created in partnership between the new NHS and social services. In all these accounts, there is a sense of dislocation and disassociation. As Grenfell comments, ‘People keep theirselves to theirselves in flats/And this is a toffee-nosed address’ (Grenfell, 1971, p.273).

Throughout the sketch, Grenfell acknowledges the conflict between head and heart; all the logical reasons for the flat to be preferable are there, including, no doubt, the first time the narrator has had access to an inside toilet. Our narrator is clear about the privations of living in Mulgarth Street, ‘it was hell on earth’, she says, ‘it was a scandal, it was a disgrace,/ Talk about slums!’ (Grenfell, 1971, p.273). Worth confirms this, recounting how Cable Street was scheduled for demolition in the 1950s and, with a focus on new builds, was

neglected by the local authorities so that it gradually slipped further and further into decay until the 1970s, when families awaiting rehousing were living in properties without such basic necessities as a roof (Worth, 2002). It is unclear whether our narrator was the owner of her property in Mulgarth Street, or a tenant; it might be assumed that the main portion of those who were impacted were the latter; however, many home owners had bought unsuitable properties between the end of the war and slum clearance, and financial hardship was also caused, with compensation initially running to £50 for properties which may have cost 'scarcity prices' of up to £500 to buy. Such was the concern among the government that in 1955 the Housing Minister asked for permission to increase this compensation significantly (Crown copyright, 1955). This was granted in an Act of Parliament in 1957, but such was the extent of slum clearance, that this supplementary payment facility had to be further extended in 1965 (Crown copyright, 1965). Therefore, not only were families being removed from communities they knew and loved, it was often at a financial cost. The narrator of this sketch makes no reference to whether she lives with anybody else in her high, horrible, beautiful modern flat; however, the tone suggests that she lives alone, and therefore the sense of isolation is significant.

Our narrator lists the issues she has with the flat, and there is a strong sense of intellect and emotion or sentiment in conflict. She knows the flat is well appointed and has benefits, her comments on the state of Mulgarth Street, as quoted above, directly contrast with the list she does not make, but is implied, in the flat. For many of those moved to blocks of flats, this may have been their first encounter with high rise accommodation, and as she says 'Up here? Looking out the window makes you feel so queer!/ You can't see what goes on from here, looks like a lot of ruddy ants down there' (Grenfell, 1971, p.273). So now, not only is our narrator excluded from her community, she cannot even see or hear what is

going on. Despite all the advantages, it is Mulgarth Street she sees as 'civilised', not her current location. As the narrator summarises at the end, 'where's it gone to, all that friendliness, all that fun?/ It must be somewhere?' (Grenfell, 1971, p. 274). Grenfell could be accused of a touch of upper-middle class nostalgia, but both Horobin and Worth point to the strong sense of community which existed in these less than ideal living conditions.

We can see a direct link to the role of women and feminist concerns in this sketch, with the Office of National Statistics suggesting that around 50% of women aged 16-64 were in full time employment in the late 1960s and early 1970s, compared to 92% of men. Women were therefore 'other' in more than one sense of the word in this slum clearance – incomers to the area, used to a different sense of community, and excluded from the workplace as an alternative source of kinship. It was not until the introduction of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 that this situation changed. The concept of equal pay had been made a legal requirement under the Equal Pay Act of 1970; The Sex Discrimination Act made it illegal for a woman to be barred from being offered a job on the grounds of gender alone, and introduced equality of terms and conditions, and of opportunity for training, promotion and transfer (Crown Publications, 1975). Much of both these pieces of legislation was the culmination of protests by working women, going back decades, but which were largely catalysed, among others, by the efforts of the women workers at Ford Motors, both in Dagenham and in Halewood. Dagenham is an interesting case in point, not only because the women remained responsible for arranging childcare and domestic duties, with the majority of them working part time, giving rise to the need not only for equal pay and more flexible working hours (Stevenson, 2016), but for its significant role in the concept of community. Becontree is, arguably, one of the larger council housing estates in the UK, begun in 1921 as a 'cottage estate' which became instrumental in rehoming many of the

residents of the Limehouse slum clearances (Hidden London, 2020). Ford opened its plant in 1931 and, eventually, most of the residents of the Becontree estate became dependent on Ford for work, either directly or indirectly. Thus, it could be argued that the broken community of Limehouse was re-forged into a Becontree community, centred around Ford, which was then fractured when Ford began to significantly scale back its operations there in 1990.

The link to mental health and high rise living is also hinted at by Grenfell multiple times throughout 'Mulgarth Street', and it has been suggested, as early as 1974, that women are particularly susceptible to mental health issues through isolation in flats, often because childcare keeps them in the home, as mentioned in connection to Dagenham. Prams provide a particular challenge in a block of flats, especially if there is no lift, or it is poorly maintained. This sense of isolation has been found to be particularly true of women who have been moved into flats in a manner out of their control, such as the wives of those serving in the military (Moore, 1974). Moore's research cites other research going back to the early 1960s, so there is a chance that Grenfell would have been aware of some of these concerns, if only from her regular reading of the newspaper.

In these cases of enforced movement and dispersal of communities, 'Mulgarth Street' and Hessle Road, we see the action of Foucauldian power/knowledge coupled with a paternalism that sees the various 'authorities' exercising a presumed knowledge of what is best for the communities they are moving. Certainly, in terms of health and safety, and to an extent economic viability, the moves in every case make sense, but they have impacts in terms of who gets to speak their truth. What the narrator of Mulgarth Street is railing

against is not in fact her new flat, but her lack of a voice in the decisions being made about her home environment, her impotence in the power/knowledge balance.

In examining these sketches, I have demonstrated not only Grenfell's observation of the brittleness of class position, but also the socio-political nature of being a woman of those classes. All the women are vulnerable to a patriarchal society. It is a male-dominated town planning regime which has created the slum clearances and marooned our working class woman in her 'high, horrible, modern, beautiful flat' and it is to her husband, her interviewer, her nephew and her intruder to whom the Wife of the Vice Chancellor has to entrust her position, her reputation and her safety. Further, I have demonstrated the perceived otherness and inessentialness of women as portrayed by Grenfell in these sketches, who are in fact central to the smooth running of the home, the University and the communities portrayed.

In the next chapter, I will examine Grenfell's empowerment through her war work, of her characters and herself, and the impact this had on those around her. Throughout the course of the chapter, while analysis of war time monologues will take place, increasingly the discussion will begin to focus on Grenfell as an individual and the influence she exercised on those around her.

Chapter 7: *The Time of My Life:* Grenfell and the Second World War

Grenfell's war work falls into two sections: the voluntary work she did at Cliveden which her aunt had once again turned into a hospital, and the entertainment work she undertook with the Entertainments National Service Association (ENSA). She began with domestic tours for troops recovering in convalescent hospitals and training bases, but eventually undertook three tours of PAIForce (Persia and Iraq Force), in January to May 1944, September 1944 to March 1945, and a further tour in 1953 (Grenfell, 1989).

Similarly, this chapter is formed of two parts: an analysis of the sketches 'Canteen in Wartime' (1940), 'Travel Broadens the Mind' (1945) and the 'Countess of Coteley' (1947); and a wider discussion of the public and private memories Grenfell, her friends and fans, shared of the war. These memories were not widely published until the early 1980s, so their contextual re-presentation of conditions during the Second World War are directly related to the framing of feminism as alive and well in an era when the Wave Model dictates that it was at its quietest. To be explicit, in the latter section of this chapter, I aim to demonstrate that one of the reasons the Wave Model gives a false impression of Reconstruction Britain as a dormant period in feminist history may be because documents such as these were not widely available until the 1980s. Indeed, some of the documentation used in this chapter has never been published outside of their archives and rarely examined within them. This is also true of much of the material analysed in Chapter 8, Grenfell as herself: influencer, committee member and public figure.

I argue that in rolling up their sleeves and getting on with life, whether at home, or in supporting the war effort abroad, Grenfell and her contemporaries were a living embodiment of feminism as it was experienced by the ordinary woman at this time. In

demonstrating the influence Grenfell and the men and women she encountered had on each other, it is argued, then, that this chapter is a direct encounter with discourse analysis at the individual relationship level. The sketches are of note as the three main instances within which Grenfell discusses the impact of war. The first two, Grenfell admitted**,** were somewhat autobiographical, whereas the 'Countess of Coteley', written only two years after the war**,** has a more meditative, reflective tone and a significantly more mature narrator.

The sketch 'Canteen in Wartime' (1940), originally called simply 'Canteen' (1940a)*,* first appeared in Bertie Farjeon's topical revue, *Diversion*, which ran at the Wyndham's Theatre from late 1940 to 1941. At the beginning of the Second World War, the government had ordered the closure of all theatres, swiftly enacting the Prohibition of Public Entertainments (Defence) Order, 1939 and as late as 16th September 1940, Farjeon gloomily wrote to Grenfell, 'My opinion is that there will be no more theatres now till the war ends so far as London is concerned'. Despite this, the theatre was shut for only three weeks and Grenfell returned to the stage, initially in *The Little Revue,* in which she had made her debut and whose run had been interrupted by the outbreak of war. Farjeon had obviously not seen the Home Office memo of 1st September 1939, which stated that 'there is a proviso that the chief officer of police may grant exemptions with or without conditions (The Home Office, 1939). *Diversion* opened on 28th October 1940 (Grenfell, 1988). The Government's directive to close all places of entertainment whereby entrance was gained by payment (ARP, 1939) was made on the basis of the idea that a large gathering of people would cause great risk to human life in the event of a bombing raid, and was initially universal. The memorandum accompanying the order made it clear to the owners and managers of theatres, cinemas and other places of entertainment, that a re-opening would

be allowed as soon as possible ‘at any rate in those districts which are found to be least exposed to the risk of attack’ (ARP, 1939, p. 1). London was not deemed to be a place of low exposure and, thus, before even considering permission to re-open, managers were required to demonstrate suitable reinforcement to withstand an air-raid, or very close proximity to an appropriate shelter, as well as considering training in first aid for all members of staff. Ultimately, no paid entertainment venue could re-open without the permission of the relevant Chief Constable. There was also a complete forbidding of outside illuminated signage (Home Office, 1939).

However, from the very earliest, there was an acknowledgement that the need for physical safety against bombing and the morale of the general public needed to be weighed against each other, so within weeks, public lectures and other improving occasions, such as concerts, were being permitted in a limited capacity. It should be noted that churches and other places of worship were never closed. When theatres were re-opened, there were also tight controls on the times by which performances had to be completed, to allow a safe and swift dispersal of people back to their homes. The greater population of London meant that for a time, the West End had to be closed by 6pm, whereas wider areas required an 11pm finish, presumably reflecting the density of the population and the pressure placed on public transport by dispersal (The National Archives, HO 186/1411).

Many underground stations were adapted to double as Air Raid Shelters, in addition to which, eight enormous deep-level shelters were built between and under the Underground network (Hornak, 2016). There were also strict rules about children’s performances, which were initially outlawed. The stated reason for this was around the protection of the next generation (The National Archives, HO 186/1411); if a bomb hit a theatre during a

performance aimed at children, the fear was that a significant number of children could be hurt or killed, with few adults to protect, care for and calm them. While, as has been stated, the discretion for re-opening lay with the relevant Chief Constable, the volume of correspondence made directly with the Home Office, from Trades Unions, church groups, and other organisations, including a certain element of what can only be couched as tale telling, the reporting of contraventions of the order, suggest that the general public held the belief that the Home Office had the ultimate authority on such matters. The questions raised suggest a belief that the Home Office had access to knowledge that site managers, Chief Constables and even organisers did not have (Parliamentary Debates, 1939). The responses and surrounding correspondence strongly suggest that this was not the case.

This provides a Foucauldian power/knowledge conundrum (Foucault, 1979). In failing to communicate the lines of decision-making more clearly, the government, it could be argued, created a false demonstration of supposed knowledge, and thus paternalistic power in keeping people physically safe, while a slow and gentle re-opening of the theatres, once the level of threat became clearer, shows a knowledge of the benefits of entertainment to morale, thus maintaining public confidence, and therefore power, as if the government retains the confidence of the public, it is easier to maintain control of them. As the war progressed, it becomes clear that this lack of clarity gained the status of nuisance, until pleas for press releases about the proper channels are found, in order to end the deluge of correspondence to the Home Office. To an extent, this undermined confidence in the government among some circles, but this had limited impact, as it only appears to have disturbed those directly involved in organising public events, rather than those attending them. However, there are other ways of demonstrating and exploring power/knowledge and this can be seen in many of Grenfell's sketches.

‘Canteen in Wartime’ (1940/‘Canteen’ (1940a) is one of only four Grenfell sketches extant in the archives that can be seen to directly reference the war. As the change of title suggests, it remained in Grenfell’s repertoire after the war ended. It should also be noted that ‘Canteen in Wartime’ (1940) is the published version, while ‘Canteen’ is the annotated, working version held at the Bristol Theatre Archives. They are subtly different, and where necessary these differences are denoted. The vast majority of the analysis, however, was made against ‘Canteen’ (1940).

To have such a time-and-setting-specific piece is quite unusual compared to many other Grenfell sketches: for example, ‘Eng. Lit. I’ (1965b) or ‘First Flight’ (1969b) could both be set at any time within at least a 50-year period. Having said that, ‘Canteen’ (1940a) is not specific to The Second World War; this type of canteen was also a feature of the First World War (Watson, 1997), which Grenfell could just remember, as well as the Second. Another unusual feature of this sketch is that a recording of it is not publicly available, neither is it published in either of the readily available collections of scripts. The copy analysed here was accessed via the Bristol Theatre Archive. ‘Travel Broadens the Mind’ (1945), also analysed in this chapter, along with the ‘Countess of Coteley’ (1947) appear to reference the Second World War only.

Prior to ‘Canteen’ (1940a), Grenfell’s entire professional repertoire totalled three sketches, all of which remained in her resource pack for the rest of her career. These sketches were: ‘Head Girl’, ‘Useful and Acceptable Gifts’, and ‘Different Kinds of Mothers’. ‘Canteen’ (1940a), then, is in a very different style to the work that went before it, reflecting the new experiences that the Second World War brought into Grenfell’s life. Much later, in 1957,

another sketch, 'Committee' revisits many of the themes of 'Canteen' (1940a), in that both are dominated by a strong, organising woman.

From the outset of 'Canteen', the narrator commands her team, in a slightly querulous manner: 'Mrs Boller… Mrs Boller', she calls, and immediately demands the attention of the women surrounding her. The major difference between the narrator in 'Canteen' and that in 'Committee' is that their intentions vary hugely; the 'Canteen' leader is trying to unite her team in order to benefit the troops they are serving, whereas the 'Committee' leader is trying to remove a member of her team in a fairly underhand way. The canteen leader has a very specific way she wants to work, but she understands the power of persuasion and engagement, rather than command and control, so her manner is much friendlier than the 'Committee' Chair, whose mission is to remove a singer from the alto section of what appears to be a women's choir, whose voice 'didn't ought to have been let in in the first place'(Grenfell, 1957a, p. 139).

To be plain, our narrator in 'Canteen' has a better grasp of people management skills and knows that she needs to keep her team on board under tough circumstances. She mixes these appeals to a better nature with a plough-like energetic forging forward that does not allow for a negative response or lack of committed cooperation. This concept of a tough, but engaging, leader can also be seen in *Housewife, 49*, a television film interpretation of Nella Last's Mass Observation Diaries, written by Victoria Wood, first aired on ITV in 2006. Wood cites Grenfell as an early influence (Jeffries, 2016), and parallels can be drawn between our canteen leader and Wood's version of Mrs Waite, who gradually learns from Last that sheer abrasiveness is not the way forward. It is interesting that Wood draws Mrs Waite as a character who softens under Last's influence, whereas, in Last's own diaries,

published under the same name, *Housewife, 49,* the influence shows a mutual effect and sharing of strength between Waite and Last (Broad and Fleming, 2006). Last recounts that Mrs Waite calls her a 'mental tonic' (Broad and Fleming, 2006, p. 14), suggesting that Mrs Waite is just as good at knowing when to compliment and when to remonstrate as our 'Canteen' leader. Both women, then, are capable of building up other women to achieve more than they believed themselves capable, and this is a key part of a De Beauvoirian definition of feminism.

From a Foucauldian point of view, much of the balance of power relations is not necessarily resting on consistently having power and knowledge, but on knowing when to use it and having the courage of one's convictions to do so. In being confident in when to praise, when to share information, one maintains or takes power because one is reinforcing two things: the image of having the knowledge, and therefore the right to share that information or bestow the praise, and the right, and therefore power, to make those choices in the first place. Hartsock suggests that 'Foucault's is a world in which things move, rather than people, a world in which subjects become obliterated or, rather, recreated as passive object, a world in which passivity or refusal represent the only possible choices' (Hartsock, 1990, p. 167). However, in giving and taking their knowledge and power between themselves, both the women in this sketch, and those in Last's group**,** are able to strengthen their contribution to the resistance towards the Germans. There are also Actor-Network Theory (ANT) elements at work here, as it is clear that our canteen leader understands that nothing of value can be achieved outside of relationships (Fox, 2000).

There are parallels that can be drawn in terms of the impact of the women's movement and innovations in women's rights between the First and Second World Wars. Julie Gottlieb

(2014), argued that the women's suffrage movement was delayed in achieving its goals by The Great War, as women who held the suffrage cause dear got diverted into either the pacifist movement or into preparing for war, and holding the fort at home. The suffrage movement had been at one of its most active periods immediately before The Great War, but the outbreak of conflict meant that, except for a few notable characters, many of the women diverted their energies to causes more directly related to the War. Here, one can arguably see the manifestation of a similar argument about The Second World War. Admittedly, the feminist movement was much less cohesive at this time, but as can be seen in the literature review chapter, action on women's issues such as childcare, the marriage bar, and widow's pensions, was being taken vigorously. Ironically, the Second World War meant that, temporarily at least, these goals were achieved, only to be removed again after the end of the conflict. Thus, the advancement of women's rights throughout this period was dependent upon the benefit such changes reaped for the government. This has De Beauvoirian overtones, in that women are at the mercy of men, of the essential, for any changes to their inessential existence (De Beauvoir, 1997). The narrator can be seen throwing her heart and soul, though not necessarily her physical energy, into running a wartime canteen.

Grenfell was familiar with these canteens, having been heavily involved with the National Gallery Lunchtime Concerts, run in the basement from very early on in the war, with the first concert taking place on 10th October 1939 to an audience of around one thousand people, despite almost no advertising (The National Gallery, 2019). Prior to one concert, Grenfell was part of a team who buttered and filled seventeen hundred sandwiches, and would have made more, had the bread not run out (Grenfell, 1972). Grenfell was involved in these concerts through her friendship with the pianist Myra Hess, who was a moving

force behind their inception. These very quickly became a boon to the shocked citizens of London at the beginning of the war. Here then, was the coming together of two significant female *tours de force* against the background of a wider team. We see an intersection between Foucauldian theory and the old saying, ‘It is not what you know, but who you know’, as it is not only intellectual knowledge that allowed Hess to lead and dominate the creation of this concert series, but her knowledge of the human need for inspiration and entertainment, of music, and of her significant network of contacts in London. Through both the re-opening of the theatres and the massive attendance numbers at these concerts, the people of London were able to demonstrate, in continuing their daily activities in as ordinary a way as possible, a level of resistance to the ravages of the Blitz and other external attempts to dominate their existence.

The National Gallery Lunchtime Concerts can, in some respects, also be seen as a manifestation of the workings of the Foucauldian power/knowledge concept; the lack of communication when the restrictions on performances were lifted and public spaces began to be re-opened has already been discussed in this chapter, but a microcosm of it can be seen in the re-opening of the National Gallery, hinging on the need to demonstrate suitable reinforcement and protection from flying glass, and whether precious works of art should be returned from their safe storage sites. This would have some impact on Grenfell’s work at the concerts, as the negotiations between Kenneth Clark of the National Gallery and various representatives of the Home Office and Treasury about the maintenance and reinforcement of the Gallery roof and its costs rumbled on throughout late 1939 and into 1940, and impinged on the way the concerts were undertaken (The National Archives, HO186/466).

Starting in September 1939, letters between the management of the Gallery and the Home Office raise the question of whether the National Gallery had enough shelter opportunities for the size of the audience. While the letters are all couched in the most affable terms, there is an air of unwritten threat from the Home Office and Treasury, that they could, at any time, notify the local Chief Constable, with whom the power officially sat, and have the concerts stopped. For example, John Beresford of the Home Office wrote to his colleague Mr Wood, ‘ I do not know how far your Department are interested in this question [of opening for concerts and special exhibitions] from the standpoint of public safety. I do not myself see that supposing limited reopening were found to be desirable [...] any new principle affecting public safety would be involved’ (Beresford, 1939). The implication was always that there might be an objection from another quarter.

It is clear from a letter of 30th September 1939, that the appearance of understanding, the perception of knowledge, and therefore where trust and power are placed, was important in negotiations for the starting of the concerts. Patrick Duff, of the Office of Works, writes to Sir George Gater, of the Home Office: ‘You may feel […] that anything held in the National Gallery might be taken as having the Government’s imprimatur and that cinemas which are not allowed to open in the centre of London would have an additional grouse’ (Duff, 1939). Initially the size of the audience was a sticking point, with negotiations ranging between the Home Office’s offer of a two hundred person limit and Clark’s request for permission for an audience of five hundred. Finally, on 5th October, permission was given for Clark to use his own discretion as long as audiences were manageable, which is just as well, considering the size of the first audience (around one thousand people), just five days later.

Further power/knowledge wrangles can be seen in communications regarding the structural alterations required to accommodate the sandwich bar Grenfell worked in. In April 1941, the proposal to move the concerts upstairs under the glass dome, in order to allow larger audiences and better light for the performers, led to a power/knowledge tussle that drew in other parties. The cost and practicality of reinforcing the glass doors and windows became the source of many attempts to move the balance of power versus responsibility in terms of the fact that both parties insisted the work needed to be done, but that the other should be paying for it. This began in April 1941 and ran for a month or more, drawing in other factions such as those who felt that if the concerts could be moved to a more vulnerable position, on the ground floor, under the glass roof, there was no reason for the cinemas to remain closed. At this point, we can see, then, that power/knowledge is not a binary concept or happening, but can easily become multi-interest and multi-faceted (The National Archives, HO186/466). The 'Canteen' Leader in the sketch however, does not have quite such large battles to fight.

The narrator of the sketch has gathered around her a team of willing workers to deliver a mountain of food to the ravening hoards; these seven women are under a tireless whirlwind of a leader, who is very good at making herself look busy. From the off, our narrator rules with a rod of iron, doling out tasks in a gushing flow of compliments and backhanded insults, such as 'your sausage rolls have come and they are lovely! Almost as much sausage as roll.' (Canteen, 1940a) A consideration of these lines reveals a reference to meat rationing, which had been introduced in 1940. At the time, and in the war-themed revue *Diversion*, this would have been an obvious reference. In terms of re-contextualising the women's sphere in the Second World War from a latter day perspective, however, the

subtlety of this comment can be lost. It is a stark representation of wartime privations for both civilians and the military.

Having an unseen visitor or a new member of a group is a regular Grenfellian device and it is one she uses here, as her narrator shows the new girl, Mrs Tinsley Hatton, the ropes. This technique is particularly common in Grenfell's spoken sketches; we are not being spoken to, we are observing a conversation; she allows us, the audience, into the edges of the imagined environment. In 'Canteen' (1940a), the introduction of the new member to the group gives the narrator the opportunity to say things about characters who have just moved out of earshot. Here, she tells Mrs Tinsley Hatton, whose name she struggles to hold on to, that Mrs Boller, responsible for the sausage rolls, is very reliable, 'And the men absolutely worship her – all that lovely grey hair'. This places the canteen firmly in a location where the armed services were in regular attendance, as does her concern as to the quantity of sandwiches which should be made, 'well, they [the soldiers] absolutely wolfed them last night. I saw one lovely Canadian have four' (Canteen, 1940a) Many Canadian soldiers came from the province of Manitoba, the bread basket of Canada, and were used to wide open spaces and plenty of food. The Canadians were boisterous men, and the realities of rationing and English behaviours were a challenge for these newly arrived Commonwealth soldiers to deal with. Grenfell was not the only one to take note of their enormous appetites. Vance (2012) recounts many cultural issues between the British civilians and Canadian soldiers, which were really only resolved when the Americans joined the war, as the locals found the Americans even more brash. Some of the Canadian soldiers were issued with *A Guide for Guys Like You* (Canadian Royal Artillery, 1943) to help them understand the British sense of humour, class issues and variations in appropriate language. Of note is the instruction that if 'the host exhorts you to "eat up – there's plenty

on the table", go easy. It may be the family's rations for a whole week spread out to show their hospitality'.

While food was undoubtedly short, the tendency towards comparison occasionally worked in favour of the British hosts; Vance comments that 'men from rural areas still marvelled at British farming techniques, wondering how they produced so much food with methods that seemed, at least to them, to be fifty years behind the times' (Vance, 2012, p. 174). It was, perhaps, this seeming table of plenty which led to the behaviour that has so astonished our narrator. It is at this point that the lack of a Grenfell or other professional recording somewhat inhibits the analysis; the natural interpretation in my reading of the line is a tone of aghast marvel at the soldier's appetite, but it could equally be performed with a tone of disgust and horror, or veiled pride at providing such vast quantities.

The device of an unseen companion is again employed when the doughnuts run out, a disaster at any gathering where food is a feature, let alone a wartime canteen. Mrs Boller saves the day by finding the boy with the flans, but the whispered aside, 'They are so horrid', would not be possible without Mrs Tinsley Hatton in tow**,** and demonstrates the make do and mend attitude of women during wartime and Reconstruction Britain. This was often underlined in the correspondence between Grenfell and Virginia Graham, by a 'grin-and-bear-it' attitude with which they occasionally grumbled and gossiped. In her commentary accompanying their letters, Hampton describes the stock that the best friends laid in at the beginning of the war; for Grenfell it was 'six pairs of silk stockings, two new sweaters and a black skirt. Virginia ordered two cases of Bromo lavatory paper, which turned out to be so much that it became her standard Christmas present for several years.' (Hampton, 1997, p. 73). To be fair, 'make do and mend' possibly had a different

connotation to Grenfell and Graham, as Graham was still treating Harrods as a local shop in October 1940 (Graham, 1940). However, by February 1941, she was commenting to Grenfell, ‘It is practically impossible to buy anything except baked beans or sardines.’ (Graham, 1941), and by 1944, Grenfell was buying a meat paste sandwich which was ‘knitted-vest in texture, nil in taste’ (Grenfell, 1989, p. 3).

The array of women portrayed in this sketch is also representative of the role of women in wartime, cutting across social and societal barriers. We have Mrs Boller, whose class background is unknown; Mrs Tinsley Hatton, whose double sectioned surname strongly suggests that she is upper-middle class; Cissie, probably somebody’s maid, is dragged along whether she wants to be there or not. Alternatively, she could be the spinster sister of another member of the team. These conclusions can be reached because she is the only member of the team mentioned by her first name. Finally, there is Lady Bucket, a member of the aristocracy. This again reflects realities of wartime groupings that are also discussed in Nella Last’s diaries. During 1939 alone, Last refers to her fellow Women’s Voluntary Services (WVS) Centre regulars as including a retired school-teacher (Broad and Fleming, 2006 p. 17), a machinist (Broad and Fleming, 2006, p. 8) and ‘a body of women who attend the Chapel’ (Broad and Fleming, 2006, p. 15).

It is about half way down the first page of the annotated script that an encounter is made with a classic Grenfellian characterisation, meaning that the narrator can join the ranks of Grenfell’s gallery of ‘monstrous women’. She introduces repeated phrases or themes guaranteed to ensure her new team member will co-operate, ’I’m most frightfully silly’, followed by ‘but’ or ’and’. The narrator uses variations on this phrase three times. In the first instance, ‘I’m most frightfully silly and I cannot listen when I am introduced and I

cannot remember what you said your name was' makes it the new member's responsibility to forgive the lapse, rather than the narrator's to correct it. On the second occasion, 'I'm most frightfully silly but I do feel that if one has a system one does get done in half the time' and on the third occasion, 'I'm most awfully silly, Mrs Tinsley Hatton, but I'm not allowed to carry things.' These last two are a study in power relations; in prefacing each comment with a reference to silliness, the narrator taps into the audience's better nature, thereby making her quite strict instructions and significant demands sound like appeals from a rather fragile woman. In the last case, this is coupled with the concept that she is not 'allowed' to lift and**,** later, the same statement is made regarding getting wet and therefore delegating the task of washing up. Thus, in asking for assistance, the narrator builds a sense of noble service in her team, which if couched as an instruction might have built resentment.

This technique is now recognised as a problem in the business community and is discussed in the media (Amarillas, 2018) and runs the risk, in a performance setting, that the audience will laugh at, as well as, or even instead of, with the narrator. Grenfell uses this repetition technique reasonably frequently, in all cases to reinforce the image of a woman who either has little power, or is in control through promoting the image of having little power. Further discussion of these effects can also be seen in 'Three Brothers' and 'Telephone Call' discussed in Chapter 4, 'Working Women Warriors'. The use of this technique in and of itself does not further the feminist cause; however, in Grenfell's consistent use of it, she draws attention to it; it is uncomfortable viewing and listening and, therefore, perhaps highlights the lengths to which women have to go in order to gain power. It can be argued that in the use of this technique in 'Canteen' to manipulate other women, Grenfell may be undermining the De Beauvoirian ideal of solidarity, of sisterhood and, therefore, be

detracting from the cause of women, but perhaps in simply shining a spotlight on it, she provokes the audience to ask themselves whether they are guilty of such behaviours and examine whether they are, in fact, like this character, complicit in their own oppression, as also suggested by De Beauvoir. We must accept that women, however noble their intentions, are occasionally flawed in terms of their words and deeds, as we all are, particularly when under pressure, as this 'Canteen' Leader is, or rather as she appears to perceives herself. In a group of traditionally otherwise disempowered individuals, in manipulating the team, and creating sub-groups of loyalties within the team, the canteen leader has one way of achieving and maintaining some form of power for herself, and this is reminiscent of other female groupings that create their own hierarchy within themselves; there is a human imperative to have leadership. Thus, in having our narrator fall short of the ideal feminist response, Grenfell allows her audience to recognise and perhaps forgive their own less than perfect feminisms and behaviours, while also creating a pause for thought about possible strategies for gaining and maintain power and/or a voice and the positive and negative repercussions of them.

This brings matters of gender politics and language into the discussion; of particular relevance are a number of French Feminist theories of the 1970s. Xavière Gauthier, Marguerite Duras and Chantal Chawaf all hotly debate the role of language in the women's movement. While they are primarily discussing the written word, their comments can be applied to speech too. Chawaf argues that 'we need languages that regenerate us, warm us, give birth to us, that lead us to act and not to flee' (Chawaf, 1976, p. 177). Grenfell's use of language, her chameleon-like ability to portray a range of women, certainly warms us. However, this raises the question of whether Grenfell's use of language to provoke feelings of protection and sympathy in this sketch is feminist, or anti-feminist, if relevant

to women at all. I would argue that Grenfell's consistent use of language is very feminist; she imitates the linguistic tricks of women who are trapped in a patriarchal society yet still manage to have energy and influence; this shines a light on the strengths and limitations of their standpoints, allowing honest, yet kind self-reflection. This also fits much of what Cixous argues when she encourages women to write themselves (Cixous, 1976, p. 250) and what the Editorial Collective referred to when they said that all writing, including 'a lampoon' (1977, p. 212), can be theory. Grenfell, I would argue, is aware of the power of her word choice, and in constantly exposing these types of language to ridicule and satire, she allows the audience to theorise about whether they want to play this linguistic game for their own ends too.

Grenfell said that she wished she had not been born with a need to fix things (Grenfell, 1976), and 'Canteen' presents an exposition of her assertion that she wrote what she saw around her, and in herself, so she has her narrator say 'I do feel if one has a system one does get done in half the time. I'm sure you'll get used to it.' The narrator is strict about the need for method and cleanliness, haranguing her team about the state of the urns 'she cannot keep her urns clean, and I always feel the men notice it. Mais c'est la guerre!' (Grenfell, 1940a). The underlining used here is directly taken from Grenfell's own working script. While this could easily be dismissed as the work of a monstrous woman, here it can be seen as an allying by the narrator, not with the women on her team, but with the men they are serving. This returns the analysis to the realms of De Beauvoir (1997) and her belief that one of the problems women face is that they are more likely to ally themselves with the men who surround them and keep other women in the role of other, rather than the women who need their support, due to the heteronormative nature of most family units at the time, 'They live amongst men, attached by home, work, money, and the social

conditions of certain men – fathers or husband – more closely related to them than any other women' (Pascoe, 2020). This is problematic in the pursuit of solidarity, as it undermines the power/knowledge potential when women pool their energy and resources. Alternatively, this desire for cleanliness for the sake of the men can be seen as a clever re-direction of this alliance; by having such high standards without the direction of a male leader, while still acknowledging the pleasure it might give the male users of the canteen, the canteen team are showing that they can set their own standards and reach them. This sense of excellence, to some extent, can be seen as showing personal integrity in serving the canteen customers and giving them pleasure in an otherwise nasty, dusty world of war. The narrator, it turns out, by the end of the sketch, has successfully delegated every aspect of the operation, including the washing up and shining of the urn, and leaves her team to go for a little lie down. One must ask, then, has she shirked her responsibilities or empowered her team to excellence? Perhaps in raising this question in the audience's mind, Grenfell is asking women to consider changing both their behaviours and their allegiances.

Grenfell referred to many of her characters as members of a gallery of monstrous women, and this concept of monstrosity is quite a loaded one. On one hand, as Grenfell is contemporaneous with the great rise of Disney classics like *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves* (1937), *Cinderella* (1950), and *Alice in Wonderland* (1951), the concept of monstrosity can bring with it images of wizened old crones, wicked and cruel, who disempower the young maidens and over whom victory has to be won, 'but from a female point of view the monster woman is simply a woman who seeks the power of self-articulation (Gilbert and Gubar, 2000, p. 79). These are women who attempt to control a situation, and/or others through wit, guile or sheer personality. De Beauvoir herself was

cast as a 'Dark Lady, the only girl in the gang, fighting off competition from her rivals' (Showalter, 2000, p. 137). This reflection of a woman both empowered and empowering, while with an undercurrent of insecurity and a need to be top of whichever ladder they have chosen to climb can be seen here both in the Canteen Leader and Doreen's Act Partner in 'Travel Broadens the Mind' (Grenfell, 1945) . The 'Countess of Coteley' (1947) has other areas of status which pad and soften her insecurities, making her a character with whom it is easier to empathise, but the fact remains that she survived the war, and harnessed its ability to empower her life, despite its relative diminution of her status and world, through willpower and not much more, as will be shown shortly.

As mentioned in the opening of this chapter, Grenfell's war work fell into two parts, and it is likely that this is because her aunt**,** Nancy Astor**,** did not approve of Grenfell going back on the stage when the theatres re-opened. Therefore, Astor made it a condition of the Grenfells continuing to live in Parr's Cottage, which she and her husband Waldorf owned, that Grenfell volunteer at the Canadian Red Cross Hospital at the main house at Cliveden. This was at least the second time the house had fulfilled the role. Grenfell took a ward on, as a volunteer, writing letters for the soldiers, keeping them company, running errands and taking the more able ones on outings. As time went on, Astor put pressure on Grenfell to expand her work at Cliveden, and she took on duties for a second ward and arranged some concerts to try and lift, not only the spirits of the recovering troops, but also the range of art to which they were exposed.

By March 1942**,** Grenfell was beginning to feel unsettled by Astor's demands, but she kept this largely to herself. It was Virginia Graham who wrote 'Maria is staying here and she tells me that your Aunt Nancy is indulging in that blackmail stunt peculiar to her [...]' (Graham,

1942). Grenfell and Graham knew that they would be called up sooner or later, and the kind of war work they might be expected to undertake was a matter of great concern to them; women had to choose between the armed forces, in some form of support role, farming or industry (The National Archives, 2020).

As Christian Scientists, Grenfell and Graham felt strongly that they were called to do their bit, but could not bring themselves to work in a munitions factory, or any other role which would directly lead to a person's death. The position of Christian Scientists on war and pacifism is complicated, and despite in-depth reading of many of the Christian Science Monitor journals (the Christian Science equivalent of a newsletter/lectionary and sermon guide rolled into one), a clear directive cannot be found. In 1941, Martha Wilcox's Association Address argued that there was no warfare because the only war is that 'between Truth and error' (Wilcox, 1941). Wilcox argues that Christian Scientists must take responsibility for their role in allowing the war to happen, 'Much of this eventuality is the result of work done in Christian Science, and the chemicalization produced should have been cared for by Christian Scientists'. Baker Eddy, the founder of Christian Science, defines chemicalization as 'the process which mortal mind and body undergo in the change of belief from a material to a spiritual basis.' (Baker Eddy, 1934, pp. 168-169). The best that can be gleaned therefore is that, as Christian Scientists believe that the material body is secondary to the health and spiritual honesty of the mind (Whittenbury, 2019), the issue of whether one should fight or not therefore becomes somewhat irrelevant. Indeed, Wilcox goes on to discuss a Canadian Christian Scientist who had enlisted and been dreadfully injured. Her concern is for his moral and faith fitness, and his body appears to have healed itself. Wilcox directs Christian Scientists to concentrate on God and not get distracted by earthly things, which possibly could mean that they should refrain from

fighting or contributing to death, but this is not clear (Wilcox, 1941). While she encourages people to take supportive actions, such as knitting warm clothes for those fighting**,** she makes no direct reference as to whether Christian Scientists should or should not bear arms themselves. Graham reflected the conundrum in her letter to Grenfell on 3rd November 1941: 'I am very fretsome these days — torn between the urge to go & make munitions [...] and realising that spiritually, that is doing less than nothing! [...] If one starts to think about it scientifically [applying the principles of Christian Science] , one wouldn't do anything at all [...] oh dear, sometimes the right & the wrong get so confused' (Graham, 1941b).

Graham had joined the WVS and did large amounts of driving, including around the Bristol area, which, as a port town, suffered heavily in the bombing raids. The sense of humour and of rowing in and adapting is clearly visible in the best friends' letters to each other. Graham recounts 'I expect Maria told you of the horror of her day here, of how she tried to light a primus stove in a trailer in which I drove her, swaying like a ship!' (Graham, 1940a). At the same time, Grenfell had already begun doing occasional concert work in hospitals, as she had committed to touring to troop camps with *The Little Revue* (Hampton, 1997, p. 76). It is telling, however, that it is Graham who was concerned and traumatised by the sights Grenfell must have witnessed when, in 1941, she performed at the plastic surgery hospital for burns patients in East Grinstead. 'How *awful* that hospital must have been! I know how foul it is suddenly to come up against the war, one can be so untouched by it' Virginia wrote on 20th March (Graham, 1941a). Grenfell appears to have made little or no comment about the state of the young men she visited until much later, either in the public record, or in the private collection held at the Lucy Cavendish Archives. Grenfell was more concerned with performing at her best for the soldiers she entertained, and bad

pianos became a running theme; in August 1941, she wrote to Graham, 'All adored "The Gent" which I rendered very nicely, although I couldn't hear the pianist who was six feet below me at a faulty upright.' (Grenfell, 1941). Thus, at the time, on can see that Grenfell minimised or made light of the impact of her experiences.

Much later, however, Grenfell remembered the impact the wards had on her, and she had on them, in the *Bow Dialogues,*

> 'I remember [...], during the war my job was er, working in hospital wards, entertaining in hospital wards and sometimes you would go into the ward and [...]you would sometimes meet a man who did not want to take part, did not want to be entertained, did not like you being there, resented your presence and at first this was terribly daunting, erm, you'd see him turn away from you, in fact sometimes they picked up the newspaper and read it right in your face and at first I was offput by this and then I started to think, but who the hell am I? Why should he? Why should he like me, erm, if I am going to react instantly to his animosity?'
>
> (Grenfell and McCulloch, 1973).

The level of injury to the men, and the lasting mistrust is evident in this reminiscence, as is Grenfell's and Tunnard's efforts to reach them. This is perhaps Grenfell's only direct acknowledgement that the war and her work in it had any difficult impact on her.

It was probably Nancy Astor's increasing demands that finally persuaded Grenfell to take up the offer to work with ENSA as her 'called up' job, and she began with a domestic tour of military hospitals and training bases, including Ireland, where she recorded a sense of delighted guilt at enjoying an environment with more food. On October 8th, 1942, she

commented in a letter to her mother on a luxury lunch of scrambled egg and tomatoes followed by ’roast beef with *four* veg!’ (Grenfell, 1942d). Touring in Ireland was difficult due to company jealousies, but a reprieve was granted with a few days in the Republic before returning to York. Here Grenfell felt incredibly conflicted; as a neutral country, the Republic had ‘no black-out, plenty of food, Germans mingling with the Irish… Part of me could not help enjoying the creature-comforts of a country not at war, but the other half resented very blazing light, helping of cream and the sight of those Teutons walking free’ (Grenfell, 1976, p. 176). Again, this is one of Grenfell’s very few references to feeling animosity towards anybody due to their race or religious views.

When Grenfell agreed to do her main overseas tours in 1944 and 1945, she took a very different approach to work with ENSA compared to many of the other entertainment parties. Perhaps she had learned from her Ireland tour, where she had travelled with a company of around half a dozen artists and a manager. The trip had been seriously marred by back biting and jealousy over who was to sing Handel’s *Largo*, the ‘guaranteed show-stopper’ (Grenfell, 1976, p. 174), and this was further inflamed when Dick Addinsell, Grenfell’s regular accompanist, joined them for the last few dates of the tour. It became apparent that the rest of the company, largely regional and semi-professional artists, were incredibly threatened by the combination of Grenfell and Addinsell, who had both found success in the West End. Finally, on the third night after Dick joined the party, ’For the first time we [Addinsell and Grenfell] really deserved our success for we were good! And because of this – or just plain ugly jealousy - I was attacked by Gwen [resident pianist], … for doing “unnecessary” stuff in the programme.’ (Grenfell, 1942c).

Therefore, upon going abroad, Grenfell resolved to keep the tour party as small as possible. In doing so, she avoided the majority of the power struggles that made the Ireland tour so exhausting. She found an accompanist, Viola Tunnard, as Richard Addinsell was not passed fit, and they, along with a few other adventurous artists, such as Vera Lynn, targeted the small venues, often quite close to the front lines, or in obscure locations that larger groups either would not or could not access. To be clear, Lynn and Grenfell did not tour together, rather, they adopted a similar strategy. Grenfell and Tunnard built up a loyal following, and while initially, they rehearsed upbeat, showy numbers that could be sung along to and raise the spirits, Grenfell records that sad songs, sung very slowly, seemed to have had a greater therapeutic effect on the patients. There are a few letters written by servicemen, or their families, both from prior to the PAIforce tours and during them, which demonstrate the impact and lasting impression Grenfell made on the troops she entertained, and on those who supported her, particularly her drivers, Sid Whetherall and Gulam Mohd.

The work and image of ENSA tour parties is reflected in the second sketch for analysis here, 'Travel Broadens the Mind'. It has some similar elements to 'Canteen', in that there is a strong narrative by a woman who is confident in her role, but the cast of immediate characters is much smaller, at four including the narrator. Another commonality is that it has not been possible to procure a recording of this sketch. There are, however, a number of marked differences. The women in the duo are professional entertainers, for the purposes of the war at least, not volunteers or amateurs, and the narrator is recounting her wartime exploits from recent memory, rather than commenting on an event which is taking place. Also of note is the date of this sketch; it was written for the Noël Coward-led revue *Sigh No More* which opened in 1945 and closed in 1946 (Dramaonline, 2018). Not

only does this sketch have an end of the war feel, it also closely mirrors Grenfell's observations and experiences of two tours with ENSA.

The sketch begins with the arrival of a reporter. This motif of welcoming a visitor to a home or work environment is something of a Grenfellian device, as can be seen in other chapters, and serves much the same purpose as the new team member in 'Canteen' (1940a). The device allows the audience to feel both informed of the setting and welcomed there quickly and without a feeling of artifice. In most cases, the visitor is a man, and this is true here. This may be because, at the time, it was still relatively rare to have a female newspaper journalist. In naming and gendering all the cast members, Grenfell quietly underlines the power relationships involved in this sketch. The reporter, Mr Pool, has power as he is the professional, yet he is reliant on his female hosts for the information he requires, and it is clear from the outset that the narrator is only going to share the pieces of information she feels are relevant. The narrator understands that the reporter may want some clear facts, so she gives them to him within the first quarter of the sketch, 'Statistics are as follows: we were away for over two years, we visited fifteen countries and I sang the Ave Maria over six hundred times' (Grenfell, 1945). The narrator hints at giving power to Doreen, her colleague, and the journalist on several occasions, by fact checking with Doreen 'It was *West* Africa, wasn't it, Doreen?' (Grenfell, 1945, p. 41). The narrator goes on to describe much of the duo's route around Africa and Europe, which is largely illogical, and reflects a similarly ludicrous journey to that which Grenfell and Tunnard undertook, the many men with whom the characters became friends and many of the souvenirs with which the pair returned.

The narrator positions her power in relation to her colleague, Doreen, and Mr Pool, the journalist, in a number of ways. As a performer, she underlines the importance of maintaining her voice by avoiding smoking. Contextually, it is worth noting from this reference, that at the time of its writing and performance, the dangers of passive smoking and the damage done to the human voice and lungs were not yet really understood, indeed, advertising claimed some brands were healthy well into the 1950s (Klara, 2015).

Later, the narrator comments on the dignity of her costume, 'Just a very simple, white, draped gown' (Grenfell, 1945, p. 43)and, having done so, relegates her colleague Doreen's work to the rank of 'novelty number'; 'she wears just a little red, white and blue brassiere and panties and a pillbox hat at a jaunty angle' (Grenfell, 1945, p. 42). This is juxtaposed with the narrator's next comment, 'It is very sophisticated, it's quite West End' (Grenfell, 1945, p. 42). Neither the outfit, nor the men's reaction to it can accurately be described as sophisticated.

This whole ambience is reminiscent of the attitudes Grenfell encountered on her Irish Tour, as discussed above. Grenfell comments in letters to her mother on the bafflement of both American and Canadian troops, caused by any performance of 'serious' music, 'To them the classics mean Victor Herbert, the "Road to Mandalay" and the "Indian Love Call" from *Rose Marie*!' (Grenfell, 1942b). Grenfell also observes the reaction of an international audience to British humour as displayed in her monologues, 'My sketches are received with puzzled incredulity. They haven't the least idea what is going on' (Grenfell, 1942b), while in letters to Graham, Grenfell admits faux pas which did not help relations with the rest of the company, 'Oh Lor, I've just announced the soprano's solo and forgot its name which isn't going to help her confidence any! She's the very sensitive barrage balloon I told you

about.' (Grenfell, 1942e). It is perhaps this affectionate bluntness in her reality that allows Grenfell to reflect these power relation tugs of war in this sketch. The narrator constantly wields what she knows as a way to assert her dominance in the group: the journalist needs her for his article, and therefore she controls the flow of information. It is worth noting that Foucault does not equate power with truth, but knowledge; Foucault does not differentiate between knowledge which has been verified and that which is a common belief. In essence, then, for Foucault, truth is that which is put over according to the individual society's construction of authority; 'Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true' (Foucault, 1980, p. 131). Therefore, until or unless this knowledge is resisted or challenged, the narrator will remain the most dominant character in the sketch.

The journey undertaken by the narrator reflects Grenfell's own experiences; the narrator and Doreen appear to have doubled back to North Africa at least twice, and an attempt to plot their fictional route shows a certain lack of geographical awareness in the planning, as they zig-zag across continents. Grenfell's route on her 1944 tour, as interpreted from the maps in the front of *The Time of My Life* (Grenfell, 1989) was Liverpool, Gibraltar, Algiers, Malta, Bari, Naples, back to Malta, Cairo, Gaza, Amman, Haifa, Beirut, Aleppo, back to Beirut, Baghdad, Maquila, back to Cairo, then on to London, all in less than five months. Her letters to her mother and Virginia Graham express the frustration and exhaustion this lack of sensible logistics prompted. Of note is the reference in 'Travel Broadens the Mind' to Beverley Nichols' book on India; by this the narrator almost certainly means *Verdict on*

India, published in 1944. Beverley Nichols only spent one year in India during The Second World War, but this book appears to have gained some popular influence. Chapter titles such as 'Heil Hindu' and 'Hate Founds an Empire' chime with the only area of religious disapproval or intolerance to be found in Grenfell's published memoirs and letters. Grenfell admitted to a dislike of followers of the Hindu faith. Beverley Nichols' description of Gandhi is nothing less than damning, impassioned and inflammatory, referring to him as the 'elderly *prima donna* of the Hindu political stage' (Beverley Nichols, 1944, p.156). Grenfell had read *Verdict on India*; she discusses it in her journal on 14th January 1945, commenting that Beverley Nichols writing style is 'full of gardenish path mannerisms and a little too facilely readable' (Grenfell, 1989, p. 305). While this refers to Beverley Nichols' style as similar to that in *Down the Garden Path* (Beverley Nichols, 1932), she assesses his take on the conflict between Muslims and Hindus in India as 'a fair picture' (Grenfell, 1989, p. 305). She goes on to give her own view on the 'Hindu aspect which strikes terror into the soul by its ephemeral jiggery-pokery and vice-like grip on simple superstitious minds' (Grenfell, 1989, pp. 304-305).

This anti-Hindu attitude is uncomfortable reading and shows a flaw in Grenfell's character rarely perceived; it is perhaps explained, but not excused, by her acknowledgement that she does not really understand Hinduism (Grenfell, 1989, p. 318), despite having witnessed a Hindu funeral and her distaste seems to have grown after she had read Beverley Nichols' text. Her description reveals a sense of reluctance, rarely seen in Grenfell's work and letters, to acknowledge any positivity or honour in the event. Some of her dislike may come from the juxtaposition of the flamboyance of Hindu artwork as symbolism 'a shoddy figure of Ganesh, badly painted pillar-box-red [...] and a goddess of knowledge, I think, with her

tongue out' (Grenfell, 1989, p. 316) and Grenfell's own experience of faith, with the Christian Science call for 'meekness, temperance' (Baker Eddy, 1932, p. 115).

This squeamishness on the part of the modern reader reflects Foucault's views on the making of histories. He refers to 'recurrent redistributions' (1979, p. 5), whereby every re-reading of events, connections and hierarchies is framed by the current knowledge of the investigator, thereby creating multiple interpretations of power relations and the characters driving them, coloured by the knowledge and experience not only of the current era, but the individual interpreting them. Therefore, in this case, while Grenfell's outright distaste of the Hindu religion is framed by colonial influences, our distaste of her and Beverley Nichols' views is framed by a significant post-colonial re-adjustment of attitude and reading. Thus, we can see here an intersection of Foucault's understanding of how histories are built, and Marks and de Courtrivron's assertion that 'we read differently' (1981, p. 4).

The narrator of 'Travel Broadens the Mind' (1945), having demonstrated her wider reading and the way she has applied it to her attitude in her travels, then goes on, just for a second to offer some solidarity to her act partner, Doreen, 'why don't you tell this nice person a bit about yourself?' (Grenfell, 1945, p. 43) before charging straight on, giving neither Doreen nor Mr Pool chance to speak. Despite Doreen's presence, a few lines on, she says 'I'll tell you about Doreen. Not only does she dance, but she plays the accordion as well, gipsy style…' this overriding of Doreen, even though she is present, is reminiscent of a parent boasting about their child, thus bringing credit to themselves, even though that child is present, infantilising her and stripping her of agency in the conversation. The sketch closes shortly after, with 'I can show you my Den, and I'll make Doreen talk. I'll make her

tell you about the time we were in Greece and she had to be a tap dance on the Parthenon' (Grenfell, 1945, p. 44). This last line makes whatever Doreen might have wished to say about the incident somewhat redundant. Thus, like the canteen leader, the narrator has manipulated both Mr Pool and her professional ally into hearing and saying what she wants them to say, thus ensuring that she retains the power, with the unfortunate effect of disempowering them.

Empowerment and disempowerment is perhaps the overarching theme of these war based sketches, and reflects the lived experiences of conscripted women and those who volunteered; while we can see that many, including the 'Countess of Coteley' (1947) were somehow built up and strengthened by their wartime experiences, and in turn, may inspire others to confidence, others, like Doreen, however varied from their peacetime lives, did not perhaps reap the full benefit of the opportunities, partly because of other, less generous women.

The third sketch for consideration here is 'Countess of Coteley' (1947). Grenfell originally wrote this piece for the Revue *Tuppence Coloured*, and she acknowledged the social commentary aspects of this piece, however moderate, when it was published in the collection *Turn Back the Clock* (Grenfell, 1998). However, perhaps the social commentary that can be garnered is not the one Grenfell had in mind; she stated, 'Labour had just swept into power and to suggest that there was some worth in the old order may have seemed risky…' (1998, p. 47). This piece has been selected as it tracks a titled woman's unlikely emancipation from a stuffy tradition due to the impact of the Second World War on her home, her family and her position. Perhaps, then, Grenfell is pointing out the surprising

adaptability of women of the ‘old order’, in much the way she personally adapted over her own lifetime.

Unlike most Grenfell sketches, the narrator is not the main character in the sketch, despite references in the preamble to the costuming as that of the Countess, or at least a member of the aristocracy. This preamble, written in the style of a short memoir in the published version, makes reference to resembling a 1910 Singer Sargent painting, rather like the one of Grenfell’s grandmother, Jessie Phipps, which currently resides at the Smithsonian (Smithsonian Institute, 2018). Coteley is referred to as ’she’ throughout. The feel of the piece is much more reflective and biographical than either ‘Canteen’ or ‘Travel Broadens the Mind’, despite being written only two years after the end of the war. The key event in the sketch is the Second World War, yet the narrator presents a full biography in the future tense by constantly relating every part of the Countess’s life to this event. Despite speaking in the third person, Grenfell portrays the living portrait of the Countess, showing her aged thirty-three years at the time of painting, meaning that the Countess is by far the oldest of Grenfell wartime women, being seventy years old when the sketch was first performed.

The sketch opens with seven factual statements, reminiscent of the kind of introduction to a painting one might receive on a gallery guided tour. By the end of this section, we know who we are looking at, her age, to whom she is married, the number and gender of her children, and the number and location of her husband’s residences. It is of note that the Countess has done her aristocratic duty, producing an heir, two spares, and a daughter to be married off in a strategic match. This is not an environment where feminism can flourish. However, our narrator/guide claims that, in the portrait, the Countess is at her ‘zenith’, and in terms of looks, position and wealth, this would appear to be true. So the question is

asked: ‘Is she happy, would you guess?/ The answer to that question is, more or less’ (Grenfell and Addinsell, 1947, p. 48).

It soon becomes clear, however, that this measure of happiness is somewhat shallow, as the Countess of the portrait is rather flimsy, unskilled, unaware of public affairs, and with varying relationships with her twenty-seven staff and four children, in that ‘She is worshipped by her butler, tolerated by her cook’ (Grenfell and Addinsell, 1947, p. 48), and her happiness seems to be predicated upon ignorance. The relationships the Countess of the portrait has are somewhat cursory, ‘her husband treats her nicely, and he’s *mostly* on a horse’ (Grenfell and Addinsell, 1947, p. 48), while the children are the concern of the nanny. This mirrors Grenfell’s own early childhood, when, she remembers in her autobiography, she loved her mother, but in a far more remote way than she loved her nanny, Lucy, upon whom she absolutely depended until puberty (Grenfell, 1976). The Countess’s relationships, then, are characterised by being made happy through absence, she does not have to deal with the realities of life. Grenfell refers to the ‘future that is waiting’ (Grenfell and Addinsell, 1947, p. 48), but one cannot help feeling that the Countess is also waiting to be fulfilled.

Grenfell does not shy away from the realities of the changes that will befall the Countess throughout her lifetime, but the war presents many unforeseen opportunities for her, as it frees her from many of the traditional expectations of the female aristocrat. The Countess must learn to ‘be a sort of typist in the W.V.S’, and ‘to woo her grocer’, as the increasing demands of the call up means that she no longer has a cook to do it for her (Grenfell and Addinsell, 1947, p. 48), having to make do with a ‘Czechoslovak cleaner’ (Grenfell and Addinsell, 1947, p. 49) who ‘may pop in from twelve to two’ (Grenfell and Addinsell, 1947,

p. 49). All these moves in staffing, as women moved on to war work, suggests that the war provided opportunities for women of all classes to explore their capabilities in new ways.

Grace Lees-Maffei (2007) reflects upon the need to adapt to such circumstances, whereby upper and middle class women not only were required to start taking on work after The Second World War, but also had to learn to be home maker, while still fulfilling the entertaining and other duties of the wife of a prominent man. The Countess also takes on a sort of a teaching role, lecturing on 'Make-do-and-Mend to Women's Institutes' (Grenfell and Addinsell, 1947, p. 49). Grenfell not only references the experiences of many women who had to learn a whole new range of home economic skills, she also creates an in-joke for her loyal audience, as her first public sketch was 'Useful and Acceptable Gifts' (1939), a comic recreation of a Women's Institute talk on recycling materials into gifts that are 'not only easy to make, but ever so easy to dispose of'. The speaker in this sketch has a refined, Home Counties accent, but is never named. Perhaps she is the Countess of Coteley in an earlier guise. This self-referencing is also a subtle self-promotion, encouraging her audience, perhaps, to refresh their acquaintance with Grenfell's earlier work. While this reference is subtle to a latter-day audience, the impact and success of this sketch, which remained in Grenfell's repertoire throughout her career, is unlikely to have been missed by her contemporary audiences. One could argue that this is a small feminist act and a brave one at that. Rudman suggests that women who self-promote are at risk of 'reprisals for violating gender prescriptions to be modest' (Rudman, 1998, p. 629).

There is a sense of relief, therefore, when the Countess becomes a widow 'quite quietly', (Grenfell and Addinsell, 1947, p. 49) and the children leave home. In terms of possessions and status, by 1947, the Countess has lost everything bar a small flat on the Coteley estate,

now belonging to the National Trust, but she has been emancipated and empowered and appears to be a much stronger and happier woman, with a love for Vera Lynn and an ability to cope with 'quandaries' that are 'absolutely hell' (Grenfell and Addinsell, 1947, p. 49). Perhaps the Countess's most significant act of self-emancipation is the handing over of the estate to the National Trust. The responsibility for an expensive estate was acknowledged to be an onerous one by the 1950s, and the National Trust offered an opportunity for many aristocrats to enjoy the benefits of living in familiar surroundings, albeit in a diminished capacity, while ridding themselves of the financial and logistical burden (The Country Seat, 2010). Grenfell had some limited experience of this, as her departure from Parr's Cottage, on the Cliveden Estate, loosely coincided with the Astor family donating the Estate to the National Trust. Therefore, in this sketch Grenfell has given a characterisation of a woman who has become a feminist by lived experience, as argued throughout this thesis.

The wartime sketches analysed here then, show the impact of a changing world on women who have themselves been empowered by the opportunities presented by those changes. All three sketches have an autobiographical element; we can see events in Grenfell's life that could be drawn on as direct inspiration, far more so than is the case in many of the monologues discussed in Chapters 4 to 6. It is perhaps this immediacy that the soldiers she entertained felt, and led to the influence Grenfell had on individuals' lives, in the close proximity of a war hospital and onwards. It is to this the discussion now turns, both to try and evaluate that aspect of Grenfell's work, and as attention turns to Grenfell 'as herself'.

The influence of the Second World War continued; Grenfell's Indian Driver, Ghulam Mohd wrote to Grenfell, in 1947; he had arrived in London and was looking for work. His obvious pride at acting as Grenfell's driver during the war is clear in this letter, and he says, 'I am

really very sad that British people are leaving India [...] now British are coming to their homes so that officer's club will be finished [...] and he [Mohd's father] will be out of a job' (Mohd, c. 1947). Mohd wrote of the family tradition of working for the British Forces. Mohd, along with a significant number of other Indian servicemen, appears to have viewed the Second World War as their last great duty before the beginning of the break-up of the Empire. He appears to have experienced bewilderment and a feeling of loss of role (Mohd, c. 1947).

There are many other letters Grenfell received, both during the war and after, as she continued doing work with military hospitals, either with ENSA or independently, until at least 1953. Among others, she visited Preston Hall in April 1949, then and still one of the largest British Legion convalescent centres in the UK. Like Cliveden, Preston Hall was an estate house which had been used as a military hospital in the Great War, and again in the Second World War. Between the wars, land connected with the Estate was purchased to create a 'colony' for soldiers who had contracted tuberculosis, and thus began its association with the British Legion, who took over the colony in 1925. The Royal British Legion Village standing on the site today is the home of Royal British Legion Industries, where many soldiers are retrained for careers in civilian life, after extreme mental or physical injury sustained in the services (Weston Homes, 2018). After her visit, a recovering soldier, Peter Ling wrote to Grenfell, and his letter reflects a deep desire for contact with the outside world, 'Yesterday, I wrote and asked if you could possibly look in on us for a minute or two, and you gave us a glorious twenty minutes' (Ling, 1949). It was perhaps this excitement and gratitude that kept Grenfell committed to her military hospital visits and tours.

The letters of thanks from soldiers and their families all over the country continue until at least 1960. Further letters Grenfell received show a sentimental side to the troops that comes through in other existing wartime archives, and this is made very clear in the respectful and affectionate tone in which they are addressed. The letters discussed here are held at the Bristol Theatre Archive, but do not appear to have been utilised in any other publication in regard to Grenfell.

As early as 1940, 'A Sapper on Leave' wrote to Grenfell, after seeing her in *Diversion.* 'You have provided a delightful memory to take back to duty from a dear, and hard hit London. This memory will certainly be cherished for the long time' (A Sapper on Leave, 1940). The rank of sapper is the equivalent to a private, for one of the Battalions of Engineers (Oxford English Living Dictionary, 2018), so there was every chance he was a working-class man, not the audience one immediately associates with Grenfell.

However, there is evidence that Grenfell had an impact on soldiers who didn't even see her. Her radio work continued, either through existing connections or through ENSA. On 17th March 1943, having heard one of these programmes, *Intermission*, Corporal Norman Rodgers wrote to Grenfell from a field hospital, about the impact her performance had on the ward, 'Then you started to sing, and there was amazing change in the atmosphere […] Fellows struggled up from semi-somnolent positions, and listened more intently than I've even seen them do before. Even the most ardent of Vera Lynn fans had to admit that your voice "had something"' (Rodgers, 1943). He went on to ask Grenfell for a photo. Fred Walmsley wrote of a January 1945 performance in Upper Assan, 'I'd seen other artists, but none so friendly, so intimate or sincere as you, and you really brought a breath of England into that Ward' (Walmsley, 1945).

Where Vera Lynn had become the British Forces' sweetheart, Grenfell had arguably become the Forces' girl next door. At 35, by the time she went overseas with ENSA, she said 'I could represent mum, auntie, the wife or the girl-friend and I didn't need, though I got, wolf-whistles and other signs acknowledging my sex' (Grenfell, 1976, p. 187). Corporal Derek Godner wrote to Grenfell, telling her how he had nearly slit his own throat running down the stairs mid-shave to try and find out the name of the lovely voice coming from the radio in his landlady's parlour (Godner, 1944).

There are letters from servicemen's families who had heard, from the boys abroad, of Grenfell's work with ENSA on the PAIForce tours. There are two letters where family members have laboriously copied out or adapted, by hand, chunks of the correspondence they have received to forward on to Grenfell with their own thanks. These are very nuanced, for example, 'She has toured the whole of the command twice!'. E.V. Dean (1945) reports her brother telling her, 'even stopping at little outposts such as I was on, where there were only four men, to give her show'. One of the things that is mentioned multiple times is the personal touch; Grenfell and Tunnard did not perform and go, but would spend hours going from bed to bed in the wards, both before and after shows, adapting and adjusting the next performance to suit the men's tastes and listening to their stories, promising to take messages home and making sure those promises were kept.

While much of what these letters contain is not new in terms of sentiment, they paint a picture of a woman who had a lasting impact on those she served, and a group of men and women who made a marked impression on her. The war had a long term effect on shifting the power relations between men and women, both at work and in the home, as can be seen from the sketches analysed here. Like many other women, Grenfell spent much of the

war around men who were not her husband; Reggie joined the King's Royal Rifle Corps in June 1940 (Grenfell, 1976, p. 148) and spent much of the war away from home; contact was snatched on leave if both were in the country at the time, and by letters, which were destroyed by Grenfell's request upon her death. When not entertaining the troops, strong female alliances come to the fore and the power relations forged continued long after the war, as the web of influence between and amongst Graham, Grenfell, Tunnard and other significant women continued to support their careers in a variety of ways. They also had an influence on the older generation, as the maturity Grenfell gained from her war experiences meant that, increasingly, her relationship with Astor became stronger and more respectful, bilaterally.

For the younger generation, it was, perhaps, this same maturity and generosity that inspired Verily Anderson to trust Grenfell with her children and living arrangements, allowing Anderson room to develop her career and power relationships at the BBC. Grenfell's relationship with Anderson is a prime example of feminism in action rather than in word. Grenfell utilised her privileged position to support her financially, buying the family a house in Norfolk, which took the financial pressure off Anderson, allowing her the mental room to pursue her writing career. Grenfell welcomed Anderson's conversion to Christian Science (Hampton, 1997, p. 342). While clear evidence cannot be found, it is likely that Anderson's acceptance by Grenfell and the entry into her circles had a direct impact on the opportunities presented to Anderson.

In this chapter, then, I have presented an analysis of three Grenfell monologues set during the Second World War, which reflect the empowering possibilities war work offered women, and the precarious nature of strong, or even monstrous, women working with

other women, the fine line between encouragement and discouragement. I have also examined previously unutilised fan letters to reveal both the uplifting impact Grenfell had on men and women alike, and the influence these letters had on Grenfell. In the next chapter I will present Grenfell 'as herself' and examine not only her influence and socio-political impact and commentary in certain contexts in the 1960s and 1970s, but consider whether any public appearance is ever anything other than a different kind of performance.

Chapter 8: Grenfell as herself: influencer, committee member, and public figure

Previous chapters have focused on Grenfell's creations, her fictional characters and the areas of her life which intersected with them. It is easy — and dangerous — to conflate the views of a character with the views of their creator, however similar they may appear. This chapter, then reflects the complex relationship between the two research questions, as it considers the various aspects of Grenfell the person, as opposed to her characters. If we are to get to any feeling of security in the answers proposed in Chapter 9 as to Grenfell as a socio-political agent, we must frame her scripts and performances against this wider world of Grenfell off-screen and off-stage. While this material helps with the question of feminism, and indeed whether Grenfell can be cast as any kind of feminist, it also throws light on her role as lay member of the Church of Christ Scientist and her concern for a certain type of morality and decency. As will be shown, while this material deals with Grenfell as a private citizen, there is still a strong feeling that her persona is carefully managed and curated. Thus, the conclusions reached are reflective of a complex and intelligent personality, fully aware of the level of attention her profile attracted.

Therefore, in this chapter, focus will be placed primarily on Grenfell's role as influencer, in her role on the Pilkington Committee (1960-1962) and in some of her many appearances as herself. These latter are too numerous to include more than a handful of them; therefore, selections have been made focusing on her conversations with Joseph McCulloch, the Rector of St Mary-le-Bow Church, in which Grenfell participated in December 1968, February 1970, July 1971, August 1972, April 1973, December 1974, June 1975 and May 1977. These recordings were made as part of a long running series of *Bow*

Dialogues, which McCulloch had with a variety of people he considered authoritative on a variety of political, philosophical and religious matters, although many also came from the world of entertainment and the theatre. Guests included Enoch Powell, Peter Cook, Margaret Thatcher and Germaine Greer, although there were more male than female guests overall. In examining these recordings, we are able to consider Grenfell in her dual role as a woman of influence and a Christian Scientist, which has been little addressed so far in this thesis. The Pilkington Committee's work will be addressed first, and the latter part of this chapter will be devoted to the *Bow Dialogues.*

The evidence presented by Grenfell's role on the Pilkington Committee has been selected because this is a significant body of work in which Grenfell is presented in an unedited format. The nature of the records of this kind of committee means that, within the technological limits of the time, there is no expurgation or editorialisation of the record. Every word uttered is recorded, hence why the records of such committees is kept confidential for such a long period of time. Thus, while her scripts presented elsewhere in this thesis present a curated socio-political commentary, with strong evidence for feminist readings, this material provides another side of Grenfell, still socio-political in nature, but with a more complex, interwoven relationship with faith, ethics, human decency and the role of women.

Whatever one's opinion of the results of the Pilkington Committee, its influence on British broadcast television far exceeded its original twelve-year mandate. The contentiousness of the report began before it was even published, with both *The Telegraph* and the *Daily Mail* publishing articles claiming to have insights into the findings of the report as early as January and February 1962 respectively. On 13th February 1962, the Daily Mirror headlined

that there were two sensational recommendations coming; ‘1: Britain should have Coin-in-the-Slot TV in addition to ITV and BBC programmes. 2: The BBC and not ITV should run an extra television channel’ (Davis, 1962). Only the latter point was an accurate reflection of the then-unreleased report and Davis’s article in turn led to a backlash against him in the television trade press, including the Television Mail and MP’s request in the House of Commons for an enquiry into the speculation (Birmingham Post, 1962).

When finally released in June 1962, the report shaped development in schools and other educational television and, therefore, had impact on teachers and students. The report influenced the education young girls were exposed to, and, it can be argued, indirectly opened the door to the formation of the Open University (OU), which revolutionized access to higher education for those who could not afford to devote three full years to learning, many of whom were women with young families, jobs or both. Even today, at undergraduate level, sixty percent of OU students are female (The Open University, 2016), three percent higher than the national average, and on a par for the national average of part time students (HESA, 2018). Both Wollstonecraft (1787) and De Beauvoir (1997) have laid importance on education for women, and the OU provided and provides ways for women to learn that are flexible and adaptable. Wollstonecraft devoted an entire treatise to the ‘important things with respect to female education’ (1787, p. ii) and went on to give the main areas in which a woman should be educated and the benefits thereof. De Beauvoir points out that ‘Plato […] proposed admitting a council of matrons to the Republic’s administration and giving girls a liberal education’ (De Beauvoir, 2011, p. 126) and emphasizes that it is, historically the woman ‘who oversees the children’s [early] education’ (2011, p. 128). Both bemoan the fact that it is assumed that a good education for girls is not required, since a woman’s primary aim, according to the patriarchy is to get

married and support the husband. The OU had mixed impact from this point of view; it allows women to access education around their domestic labours; it does not necessarily give them the tools with which to prioritise that education over those domestic commitments.

The Pilkington Committee also expressed a concern about the expansion of independent and commercial television, leading to a hiatus on this for a significant period of time, as will be discussed later in this chapter. Further, the recommendations made by the Pilkington Committee influenced some of the technical aspects of television; the Committee were shown a variety of options in terms of picture quality and technology, leading to the adoption of colour television on 625 lines and a licence fee to fund the BBC, a feature with which we are still familiar, and continues to be widely debated.

Grenfell was one of only two women on the committee, the other being Elizabeth Whitley, a Scottish youth worker and occasional journalist. Grenfell expressed surprise at being asked to join the committee, minimising her intellect as she often did. Hampton claimed that Grenfell was one of the most influential and best paid entertainers in the UK at the time, and the only person to lose money by being a member (Hampton, 2002), turning down lucrative engagements to work on the committee, whereas all its salaried members were seconded from their permanent roles and therefore paid the same rate as their usual jobs. The committee secretary, Dennis Lawrence, suggests that such was Grenfell's fame that one of the members of the committee, J. S. Shields, was so over-awed that all he really did throughout was to repeat Grenfell's views (Milland, 2005). My own research at the National Archives at Kew does not support Lawrence's view; if anything, Shields' interests ran towards the technical, whereas Grenfell rarely asked a technical question. It is also

interesting, and annoying, to note that although Elizabeth Whitley worked, she is listed on the original committee structure proposals as 'housewife' (General Post Office, 1960). However, in the oral evidence, Whitley also characterises herself as a housewife with a degree (Committee on Broadcasting, 1961).

The Committee was eponymously chaired by Sir Harry Pilkington, of Pilkington Glass, who had also chaired the Federation of British Industries from 1953 to 1955. Educated at Rugby and Cambridge (University of Warwick, 2020), Pilkington was considered by Grenfell to be an affable but firm hand on the tiller of the committee. Richard Hoggart is considered by some to be the most influential member of the committee (Petley, 2015). Hoggart later stated that the work of the report went far wider than broadcasting, suggesting it became an exploration on 'freedom and responsibility within commercialised democracies. It touched on the interrelations between cash power and the organs for intellectual debate; it had to do with a society with is changing rapidly and doesn't understand its own changes' (Hoggart, 1970, p. 189). Hoggart was the grandson of a boilermaker, and the son of a housepainter (Ezard, 2014), who had won a rare scholarship to Leeds University before creating a very successful career as an academic, pioneering aspects of sociology.

Harold Collison had been the General Secretary of the National Union of Agricultural Workers since 1953, became Chairman of the Trade Union Congress in 1964, and went on to represent the Labour Party in the House of Lords, taking the title Baron Collison. He later Chaired his own commission, examining the role of Supplementary Benefits (Boddy, 1996). Dr Elwyn Davies, a Welsh language speaker, was Secretary to the Council of the University of Wales, and brother of Hywel Davies, the BBC's Welsh Programme Director (Briggs, 1995). E.P. Hudson (later Sir Edmund Hudson) was another industrialist/agriculturalist, the

Managing Director of Scottish Agricultural Industries, who had become a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 1948 (Royal Society of Edinburgh, 1948). J.S. Shields, the brother of Lord Reith's first secretary (Briggs, 1995) was the headteacher of Peter Symonds school in Winchester, now a post-16 college, and had previously been headteacher of a Grammar School in Basingstoke (University of Southampton, 2020). R.L. Smith-Rose was an expert in electrical engineering and had led significant research in radio and radar work from only shortly after the end of the First World War, through the Second World War (Nature, 1948) and into the 1950s. Although he retired in 1960, he immediately went into service on the Pilkington Committee and became President of the International Scientific Radio Union (Proceedings of the IEEE, 1964), therefore it can clearly be seen that it was his technical expertise that made him useful to the Pilkington Committee, and this is reflected in his areas of interest in the evidence surveyed.

W.A. Wright was better known as Billy Wright, a footballer who played his entire professional career for Wolverhampton Wanderers. Despite his youth, Wright was very aware of his responsibilities on the committee and when asked by a reporter for the Daily Mail at the beginning of the work of the Committee whether he would like to see more sport on television, answered, 'I'm keeping an open mind. Of course I have an edge towards sport, but have not been told that I have been chosen to advise on that.' (Briggs, 1995, p. 269). Three members resigned in the early months of 1961, serving less than six months, including Peter Hall, who cited his growing workload as a theatre director. John Megaw, a legal expert and former Rugby Union International resigned when he was appointed as a High Court Judge (Briggs, 1995), and Sir Jock Campbell, a Fabian and chairman of the food and wholesale conglomerate Booker Brothers, McConnell and Co Ltd (Grace's Guide to British Industrial History, 2016), resigned for health reasons. Belfast's first professor of civil

law (Sheridan, 1972), F.H. Newark, replaced these gentlemen on the committee from March 1961.

The Financial Times, on 9th September 1960, characterised the newly formed committee as 'well-balanced' with two ladies and two (male) members under 45 years of age. One of those young men, Peter Hall, then resigned. However, from very early on in its creation, the committee was criticised as being unrepresentative, with the Sunday Times commenting on 11th September 1960, 'It contains no-one who can be fairly said to represent radio or television, and no-one at all from the cognate worlds of the cinema, newspapers or publicity'. Bearing in mind that Grenfell had been active in radio, television and cinema in addition to her stage work for 20 years by this point and had begun her career as a critic for the Observer, one can only assume they meant that she was not a director, producer or advertiser. To be fair to the journalists, the notes prepared in the press release from the Post Office made no mention of Grenfell's audio-visual work at all (General Post Office, 1960).

Both the *Christian World* and the *Baptist Times* complained that there was nobody specifically appointed to represent the views of the church (Briggs, 1995), but as it would appear from the commentary of both Briggs (1995) and Milland (2005) that nobody had been appointed to specifically represent any area, rather to hear representations and apply their areas of expertise and experience, this seems rather an unfair criticism. In many ways, with the Congregationalist Pilkington, the Christian Scientist Grenfell, and the Church of Scotland Whitley, the interests of the church were, in fact, particularly well represented. The Committee was launched fairly close to the fifth birthday of the Independent Television Authority, (ITA), formed in 1954 to supervise and oversee the inception of Independent

Television, the first commercial television network in the UK. Perhaps this was felt an appropriate time to examine the progress and changes so far and start strategizing for the future.

In order to establish Grenfell's level of influence and whether her work with the Pilkington Committee can be considered a feminist resource or socio-political commentary, there are several questions to be considered, falling into two categories. The first category considers what the Pilkington Committee achieved, or failed to achieve, and Grenfell's role within those achievements. Secondly, one must consider whether she represented and encouraged a wider range of women's views in her questioning, treatment of witnesses, and contribution to the final report. This last aspect of the second area of questioning is hard to establish definitively; the first page of the report states plainly that the document represents unanimous opinions, but for those of us with a thorough knowledge of Grenfell's published opinions, there are areas in which an extrapolation of her views can be fairly safely made, such as the criticism of the populist content of the ITA and the strong hope and belief that any education content would be driven by the BBC. A survey of some of the oral evidence sessions will support these assertions, as will be seen below. As stated in the introduction to this chapter, the implications of the growth of adult education on the BBC can be seen in the formation and teaching methods of the Open University, founded in 1969, and continuing to work in a strong partnership with the BBC, although the relationship evolves.

Among the committee, there was a mixture of attitudes towards Grenfell – she and Richard Hoggart became great friends, while Lawrence found her to be a snob (Milland, 2005). This may stem from Grenfell's transgressions in trying to claim hotel and travel expenses that

far exceeded the stated parameters of the Pilkington budget. As Secretary to the Committee, Lawrence would have had to deal with these practical areas, which may have influenced his opinion.

When one considers her background and upbringing as an outlying member of the Astor family, privately educated and well-connected, it is not really surprising that Benjamin Britten and Noël Coward were more to Grenfell's taste than juggling and music hall, as can be seen in her writing and friendship circles. If one considers that every human being is the product of the environment into which they are born, Grenfell, it could be argued, was much less classist and elitist than might be expected. She reflects in her autobiography that the, now long dead, verse from the hymn 'All Things Bright and Beautiful' that goes, 'The rich man at his castle, the poor man at his gate, they made them high and lowly and ordered their estate' was one of the most unjust, untruthful loads of hogwash ever to come out of the church. This demonstrates Grenfell's egalitarian outlook, within a Christian Science setting. It is difficult to establish how Whitley felt about Grenfell from the oral evidence, as the questions were, after all, aimed at the witnesses. However, occasionally there is discussion between the committee members. There are numerous occasions where Whitley and Grenfell work in tandem to deepen or clarify a line of questioning, as will be seen throughout the more detailed evaluation to follow shortly.

Prior to a deeper examination of the material from the Pilkington Committee, it is worth spending a moment explaining the method employed to gather this data, as this has been carried out in the knowledge that Milland (2005) has already produced a comprehensive study of the character and work of the committee as a whole. It would be disproportionate to repeat much of this work in an effort to expose Grenfell's role on the committee, which

is, after all, only one factor in attempting to establish Grenfell's place in the reframing and re-examination of feminist history in this era. Therefore, a choice was made for reasons of scaling, to examine four of the thirty volumes of Oral Evidence presented to the committee[4]; the Minutes were considered, but an initial perusal showed that the Secretaries had done an excellent job of their primary responsibility of unifying and anonymizing the discussions, so these were largely put to one side. The four volumes were chosen arbitrarily, simply picking the first and last volumes, and two roughly equidistant from these two 'bookends'. This is a case of real-world pragmatism (Creswell, 2014), as the research required scaling proportionate to the portion devoted to Grenfell's committee work in this thesis. Therefore, the pages selected cover 845 pages of evidence (not including title pages) detailing a verbatim account of twenty-seven meetings, of which Grenfell attended twenty-five and Whitley all twenty-seven. Over the course of these oral examinations, seventy-four men were present as witnesses, and ten women gave evidence. This statistic alone gives pause for thought in terms of who is allowed to speak truth (Foucault, 1988). While any individual or organization was welcome to submit written evidence to the Committee, only those invited were able to speak directly to them.

Sir Harry Pilkington chaired the majority of the evidence sessions, with E.P. Hudson and Professor F.H. Newark taking the Chair when Pilkington was indisposed through ill health, mainly in June 1961. At no point does it appear that it was even considered that Whitley or Grenfell may have the skills or wish to Chair. Hoggart appears to be a vociferous member of the committee, and despite Milland's characterization, Grenfell only tended to speak to

[4] The proceedings of the Oral Evidence examined is referenced in the bibliography by meeting date, not the volume in which they are contained. The volumes consulted were: HO244/36, HO244/46, HO244/56, HO244/56 in the Kew archives.

raise detailed questions, as opposed to passing remarks or issues of clarification on a handful of occasions. Her main areas of concern appear to have been education, ethics and advertising, the payment of actors and producers and whether standards at the BBC were falling. However, occasionally she did ask questions of technical concision that are valuable to the conversation.

There is no doubt that Grenfell was somewhat disapproving of commercial television and radio, refusing ever to work on them in the UK. She had little choice when she was in America and other countries, and appeared on *The Ed Sullivan Show* on CBS, on the same evening as Elvis Presley, 28th October 1956. Grenfell was stunned at the size of the fees American commercial television was able to offer, on a previous Ed Sullivan appearance, she and her three dancers had split '5,000 dollars for us all. This is *small* but it's our first T.V. here!' (Grenfell, 1955). CBS was one of the big three commercial television stations in the USA at the time, and has always shown advertising.

The fact that a major part of her income came from the BBC, the very fate of which she was contributing towards sealing, never seems to have been mentioned as a conflict of interest, and reflects a level of naivety about the complexion and construction of committees that is not to be seen today. Grenfell's caution about commercial television was not isolated; it can be seen in the Ministry of Education's considerations prepared for submission to the committee, which included the concept that 'most responsible people will want to see it [educational programming] given to the BBC or to a new agency established for the purpose and free of commercial pressures' (Harte, 1962). There is no evidence or explanation as to who these 'responsible people' might be, or even if anybody from the Ministry of Education checked with them before speaking in their name. This aversion to commercial, or paid-for,

television made it through to the final version of the Pilkington Committee Report. Grenfell was strongly opposed to the idea; Channel 4 was not launched until 1982, following its approval by the 1980 Broadcasting Act.

Milland (2005) characterizes Grenfell as one of the most talkative members of the committee, yet after scouring a significant portion of the minutes, when questioners are named, which is not always the case, Grenfell's name appears far less frequently than Hoggart's. When she does ask direct formal questions, they appear to be supplementary and supportive, as well as imaginative. Even Shields, supposedly cowed by Grenfell's very presence, asks more questions than she does, according to the formal records of the Oral Evidence sessions. What we do not have recorded, of course, is the informal conversations between sessions.

On only one occasion in the evidence surveyed does either Whitley or Grenfell make a direct reference to what might be considered women's issues, and it is Whitley who raises the point of the role of women's organisations in their representations to the Committee. Interestingly, it is not a member of a women's organization who responds, but a member of the Advertising Inquiry Council, a Mr Cole, who says 'I hope that those chosen to represent the women's and the consumer's organisations would be those also capable of looking at the moral welfare as well as claims on domestic products.' (Committee on Broadcasting, 1961a, p. 21). Thus, it can be seen, that in Mr Cole's view at least, women's primary concern is the home and its attendant practical labours, with moral welfare as a supplementary area.

Grenfell occasionally comes over as argumentative or pedantic though, which may have contributed to Lawrence's view of her as a snob (Milland, 2005), as in an exchange on 2nd

May 1961 with witnesses representing the Arts Council of Great Britain (Committee on Broadcasting, 1961b). Grenfell becomes fixated on getting the name of the Grants Committee correct. In this exchange:

> Miss Grenfell: Is it the Independent Television Grants Committee? Is that how it is phrased?
>
> A: No, it is not.
>
> Q: (Grenfell): Is it the companies?
>
> A: Yes
>
> (Committee of Broadcasting, 1961b, p. 8).

Grenfell does show a level of pedantry, but also demonstrates her concerns about the influence the independent television companies have on the awarding of arts grants. This short exchange allows the Chair to enlarge the investigation, asking whether the Grants fund should be increased and made obligatory for all the independent companies to contribute. This is followed by a period of tandem questioning by Whitley and Grenfell about the relatively small proportion of funding then coming from the independent companies. In this instance, it is Whitley who asks the general questions and Grenfell who drills down to the detail. Perhaps then, this suggests a hint of Grenfell's suspicion towards the independent companies, that they are not pulling their weight in terms of charitable giving to the arts.

This is further bolstered by what can be viewed as a querulous exchange on Friday 30th June, 1961:

> Miss Grenfell: I do happen to know of one operatic concern that gets a grant from one of the companies, in great gratitude because it needs the money very much, but the grant happens to be £250 a year, which strikes me as pretty niggly.
>
> A: I wonder if that is the small part-time outfit called the New Opera Company?
>
> Q (Grenfell): No, it is not; it is a school.
>
> (Committee on Broadcasting, 1961c, p. 14).

On 30th June 1961, the issue of pay for artists is discussed, in which it is posited that the BBC is deliberately overpaying musicians in order to make it difficult for the independent companies to attract them. It is Grenfell who clarifies 'Over and above the Musician's Union demands?' (Committee on Broadcasting, 1961d, p. 14). However, on 26th June 1961, just four days previously, witnesses representing the Radio and Television Safeguards Committee had complained how difficult it was to negotiate with the BBC on pay and equipment; both Whitley and Grenfell played small, but catalysing parts in the debate. Whitley triggers a discussion of the differentiation between the various engineering roles, pressures and demands, while Grenfell, in asking 'The result is the important part?' (Committee on Broadcasting, 1961e, p. 11) in terms of Union negotiations, highlights that there had been little official recognition of the Unions by the BBC to this point, while the independent companies worked quickly and in a straightforward manner with Union Officials. Actors, of whom Grenfell counted herself one, on the other hand, had a very different experience of working with the BBC and the independent companies. On 15th June 1961, Grenfell asked representatives of Equity to characterise their working relationships with the commercial companies, from the point of view of employment and

pay. The representatives' response indicates that, at first, the wider market was good for performer wages and conditions, as it introduced an element of competition, but now (1961) that the independent companies were stable and 'making lots of money, and have never taken any view or pretence that they had any public responsibility except to make money for their shareholders […] in some respects our relations with the BBC tend to be happier because we know they have some sort of public spirit which we cannot expect of the others' (Committee on Broadcasting, 1961e, p. 21).

The meeting on 26th June 1961 is a prime example of Grenfell's, (and to an extent Whitley's) concerns over quality and standards of British television in general and of the BBC in particular. This is a multi-faceted concern for Grenfell, in this instance focussing on the dangers posed by British television producers making films 'with an eye to export?' (Committee on Broadcasting, 1961e, p. 21,). Grenfell continues to answer her own question, 'That, I think, is a grave danger and I ask how you think it can be safeguarded.' The answer confirms her suspicions, alluding to the casting of an American star in a British production in order to make it more saleable in the USA. However, the exchange between Grenfell and the witness then goes on to cite *Maigret* as an example of excellent British televisual exports. Mrs Whitley takes over the questioning to draw attention back to the potential impact on standards of this partnership working:

> Mrs Whitley: Would you say 'Robin Hood' represents British television, with his nylon shirts and so on? I certainly would not call it in English tradition, would you?
>
> A (Mr Croasdell): They wanted to employ an American performer to play the Sheriff of Nottingham and we said we would go on strike if they did.

(Committee on Broadcasting, 1961e, p. 22)

This exchange hints a little at the unions and the companies in their respective roles, as examples of the Foucauldian power/knowledge concept, and adds in the idea that there may be a third element to consider. The question that must be posed, at this point, is what the relationship between power/knowledge and the guardianship of quality, morals, values and ethics is. In the case of the above exchange, it can be said that the engineering unions have linked their guardianship of quality British television with the morals of employing an American actor to play a British role for the sake of raking in more profits, and decided that this would have an impact on the standard of the programme. In threatening strike action if this were to happen, they shift the power/knowledge dynamic in their favour, as they consider themselves superior arbiters of the definition of Englishness and are willing to defend this position through resistance.

There are other more obvious power/knowledge negotiations going on in the Pilkington Committee oral evidence, in the context of morals, ethics and standards, in which both Grenfell and Whitley play a part, and the two most important ones are that of religious broadcasting and advertising/sponsorship. If we take religious broadcasting first, of the information surveyed, 13th October was a significant day for evidence collected in this regard, as two of the three Oral Evidence sessions on that day featured religious broadcasting as their theme. The men giving evidence were Canon R. McKay, who appeared as an independent witness, but spent much of his time observing the practices and views of the Central Religious Advisory Committee (CRAC), and Reverend Dr Falconer. The men were interviewed separately, nominally because of train issues, but McKay repeatedly appears quite concerned to be present for Dr Falconer's interview, an offer the

committee repeatedly reject. It is, perhaps, an indicator of the Committee's exhaustion on the subject, that where Canon McKay gets 25 pages' worth of the Committee's time, Dr Falconer only has 15 pages' worth of evidence. Whitley and Grenfell are perhaps more involved in this discussion than many of the other Evidence sessions surveyed. Whitley initially takes the lead from page 10, asking whether CRAC does any work to 'initiate programmes which will reach people on the fringe of religious interests' (Committee on Broadcasting, 1961h, p. 10). When McKay replies entirely within the context of established or extremely large churches, Whitley pushes the point further, with the implication being that she is making a suggestion of something she would like to see – that is, she is using her position of power on the Committee to tell CRAC what she feels they should be doing; 'I really meant something moving outside the context of your church dogma.' However, Canon McKay sticks to his point, seeing his responsibility 'solely in terms of all the religious programmes we do, which include a great variety' (Committee on Broadcasting, 1961f, p. 11).

After a few questions from the Chair, which clarify that CRAC must advise both the BBC and all the independent companies, Grenfell begins to contribute to the questioning, asking whether competition is appropriate in religious broadcasting. McKay responds that competition in terms of style is a good thing in religious broadcasting, and Collison, another committee member, points out that this is not competition in the commercial sense, this is rather offering alternative presentations of a concept. As this discussion continues, Grenfell makes her bias in favour of the BBC apparent:

> Miss Grenfell: It has been admitted to us by the BBC that, in certain fields, the independent people have done a terribly good job in religious broadcasting. Do you

feel that the competition is in fact, working against the BBC rather than working against the ITA? Do you see what I mean, that good would come out of this thing if it were unified more for the BBC than for the ITA?

(Committee on Broadcasting, 1961f, p. 16).

It can be seen that there is an implication here that Grenfell does not believe that religious broadcasting is as safe in the hands of the ITA as it is in the hands of the BBC, despite the admission of a 'terribly good job'. Grenfell goes on to disagree with McKay, believing the status quo of CRAC advising organisations at their own discretion is reasonable. McKay, on the other hand, expresses the opinion that there should be one advisory organization for the BBC and another for the independent companies which has to be consulted, or one overarching advisory organization to whom all must subscribe. Grenfell is not the only one expressing her special interests when it comes to faith, however; in both this interview and that with Dr Falconer, Whitley expresses concern that the Church of Scotland, or the Church in Scotland, is not sufficiently represented in religious broadcasting. More broadly, she expresses the need for a reflection of regionality in both religious and educational programming which is, perhaps, not reflected in the final report.

Both women show interest in, and a concern about and for, children's programming and wider educational programming, particularly with regard to the pressures placed on these programmes by advertisers and sponsors from a moral and ethical point of view. Grenfell observes that only Equity appear to be in favour of any kind of sponsorship within programmes on the BBC (Committee on Broadcasting, 1961g). This concern from Grenfell and Whitley appears to pervade every aspect of the broadcast media, with Whitley asking whether it is mainly 'juveniles' purchasing transistor radios (Committee on Broadcasting

1961h, p. 13) followed by Grenfell asking about the quantity of radios sold. The witness observes that the primary question asked, when purchasing the radio sets, is whether they can pick up Radio Luxembourg, leading to a moral question about the type of music and commentary which appealed to the young people. There is much discussion about not only the moral, but production, quality and originality of television and film for children, and competition. Whitley, on 17th May 1961, expresses concern that two programmes she deems to be of quality, *Pathfinders to Venus* made by ABC and the BBC's *Saul of Tarsus,* are shown at the same time, leading to a conflict. The Chair takes up this line of questioning, raising the issue of whether there should be more co-ordination between the channels to ensure similar programmes are not aired at the same time. While the witness agrees that the 'public do not get the choice they are entitled to' (Committee on Broadcasting, 1961i, p. 20), there appears to be no logistically sensible way to make this happen, although it is suggested that the discussion should take place at ITA/BBC level, not among the individual independent companies, for reasons of unwieldiness. This leads to a question from Grenfell about network level responses and responsibilities around violence;

> Miss Grenfell: We are constantly being sent submissions about violence and other things, but the standard of behavior *[sic]* is very important. Do you have an opinion on that?
>
> A (ABC Television): Yes, indeed. I think the responsibility is so enormous. We have added our own rules. For example, in Westerns there are certain things that we would not have, such as hanging scenes. We have a house rule that any Western, which has a hanging scene, must be seen and approved by me. <u>Of course, I don't</u>

approve it. I think that we have got to impose our own code and a very stringent code.

(Committee on Broadcasting, 1961i, p. 52, underlining from evidence transcript)

Grenfell goes on to describe an advert, aired the evening before, that had caused her a great deal of concern, in which a mother watches her child receiving a prize, proud not because the child had achieved, but because she (the mother) had used a particular brand of detergent and was impressed with how clean her daughter's clothes were. Grenfell asks whether the witness approves of this priority. The Witness asks Grenfell why she objects to the advert, to the mother being happy that the clothes are clean;

Miss Grenfell: Because I think it is more important that the child should have done well. The inference is that it is not more important to do well.

Mr Davies: The inference is that the whiteness of the dress is more important than the occasion.

A: I do not see how you can sell a detergent in sixty seconds and get all these things over, of the importance of a child doing well, the importance of a child having a white frock, and all these things, I think it would be a little unfair to ask an advertiser to do the sort of things we do in the programme. We do have a strict censorship.

(Committee on Broadcasting 1961t, p. 54)

After some discussion of detail, Grenfell clarifies; 'This is an ethical question, is it not? [...] I think you have missed my point in putting this problem. The point is the attitude of mind and values… I think it is the attitude of mind that I am querying, because it goes right

through everything, not only advertising but presenting programmes' (Committee on Broadcasting, 1961i, p. 55). Here then, we see a complexity in Grenfell's sphere of influence; her concern is not for the role of the harassed mother but for the wellbeing of the little girl in the advert; while she has inadvertently made a feminist point regarding the role of mothers and how girl children are viewed, she is more interested in the mental and emotional wellbing of children, a moral stance really.

Again, Grenfell and Whitley return to the subjects of violence and values on 2nd May 1961, when questioning representatives of Associated Television, an independent television franchise. On this occasion, Grenfell is particularly concerned about invasions of privacy in programmes such as *Candid Camera*. The witness prefers to concentrate on violence as his subject matter, claiming that 'this is a matter of the subjective attitude towards violence. Every single person dislikes violence. I dislike seeing a scene in which anybody is whipped. I do not mind knuckle fighting.' (Committee on Broadcasting, 1961b, p. 37). Grenfell asks if there is a company rule on violence, which the witness confirms, going on to explain that it is an individual role to watch American programmes and remove the ones considered too violent for a British audience.

In the same Evidence session, Grenfell presses her point on values and standards:

> Miss Grenfell: This is a terribly difficult question to put, but we are again constantly being pressed on the point of the general acceptance of a lower standard of values today. Is this one of the questions on which you are exercised?
>
> A (Mr Birk): The question of lower standards of values is a strange one because it goes back to the point I made before. There are many intellectuals who seek to

> judge the masses on their philosophy and think they know better than the people know themselves what is of value to them. I think this is difficult. I do not know we lower standards of value at all.
>
> (Committee on Broadcasting 1961b, p. 40)

Grenfell and the witnesses from Associated Television debate this argument for some time, before Grenfell utilizes the authority lent her by the public interest as expressed in correspondence to the Pilkington Committee:

> Q (Grenfell): The point is being made to us the danger to young people – children – is very much stronger from this point (infidelity, smoking and drinking) than from the violence point of view
>
> (Committee on Broadcasting, 1961b, p. 41)

When the witness tries to minimize television's impact as no more than that of reading a book or listening to the radio, Grenfell simply states, 'It is more powerful' (Committee on Broadcasting, 1961b, p. 41), yet she provides no evidence for this opinion; it is said with the authority of the weight of public correspondence. This, perhaps, then suggests that Grenfell is both an operator and a pawn of the power/knowledge dynamic; the public have given her this perception, so she has taken it to be true and uses it to make her own point, despite what she will later hear from Dr Hilde Himmelweit, one of the leading figures in the, then, new field of social psychology.

This concern for morals by both Grenfell and Whitley pervades much of their questioning; in the very last set of Oral Evidence consulted, both return to this subject in the context of the television children are exposed to at home. In this case, the witnesses are, refreshingly,

both female, and both appear to work in child psychology or child welfare of some sort. Whitley refers to the witnesses speaking of 'children's natural good sense' (Committee on Broadcasting, 1961b, p. 3) with a certain amount of circumspection. Both she and Grenfell express concern about the television being used as an electronic babysitter;

> Mrs Whitley: What of the small children who are often left almost in charge of the television because their mothers are working and not troubling?
>
> Miss Grenfell: I have seen a great deal of evidence of that, unfortunately, very often in the home of my own friends, where the children switch it on far more often than the parents do… They do seem to have this natural good taste, this natural good sense…
>
> (Committee on Broadcasting, 1961b, pp. 3-4)

The witness, Dr Himmelweit, appears to believe that the concern for children's wellbeing, and damage done to them by television, is largely unfounded, rather suggesting, 'how much does television help in the same way as, if you like, the public library, in building up of taste which is better than that of the previous generation' (Committee on Broadcasting, 1961b, p. 4). It can be seen here, that while the over-arching subject matter is taste, there is an underlying and implicit discussion of moral and ethical influence. Whitley leads the conversation to a more overt discussion of this a few pages later:

> Mrs Whitley: I wanted to ask Dr Himmelweit what age do you think the children are taking in the sense of values - before they have developed their innate good taste?
>
> (Committee on Broadcasting, 1961b, p. 8)

It is perhaps clear in the phrasing, that Whitley is hoping that Himmelweit will agree with her, that values come before taste; however, the answer is not quite so reassuring; ‘I think is all slow and gradual. There is not a particular point at which values grow up’ (Committee on Broadcasting, 1961, p. 8). Himmelweit does however, acknowledge that adolescent girls who have televisions in their homes are more likely to worry ‘about adult life, marriage and its problems […] this arose simply because if you look at the women on television and the fate of adults on television, because it is drama it tends to be difficult and life is extremely full of complications.’ (Committee on Broadcasting 1961b, p. 9). In another session, Grenfell accuses ABC of risking trivializing infidelity and drunkenness (Committee on Broadcasting, 1961j, p. 61).

Whitley and Grenfell fully expose their concerns about advertising when questioning witnesses for Associated Rediffusion Ltd on 18th July 1961 (Committee on Broadcasting, 1961k), while discussing the influence of advertising on factual programmes. The witness recounts how a programme designed to help children judge for themselves how mass media affects them, was influenced in construction. Advertisers (sponsors really) at this point were able to negotiate the content of a programme so that the messages portrayed in it did not conflict with their branding.

> Miss Grenfell: […] On this question of making children think – as a point of education, how do you, in fact, make children think without distorting something to prove the point?
>
> (Committee on Broadcasting, 1961k, p. 11)

The witnesses express regret at the amount of advertiser influence:

> Mr Adorian: What I am very sorry about was that we tried to do this independent programme about advertising; it would have been exactly the same problem if it had been engineering, medicine or anything else. It just happened by coincidence that it was advertising, and I cannot help but feel, of course, that it has been used for a certain amount of political purpose.
>
> (Committee on Broadcasting, 1961k, p. 17)

There is also a power/knowledge statement to be made in the often 'tag-team' approach displayed by Grenfell and Whitley. While from a De Beauvoirian view of sorority and support, their alliance is to be desired, from a socio-political point of view, it is not necessarily a likely pairing. Grenfell had a very privileged upbringing, surrounded by famous and wealthy people, and was a Christian Scientist, a member of a small and little-known Christian Sect, with little formal education after finishing school and a world-wide platform.

For both Grenfell and Whitley, the matters of quality, standards and ethics appear to be very tightly intertwined; a thorough knowledge of Grenfell's letters and diaries suggest that this is strongly linked to her faith, both as a Christian Scientist, and against a broader Christian background. Grenfell's letters are peppered with references to people who she has the greatest affection for, but for whom she either feels disappointment that they have spiritually let themselves down, or who she feels would be more easily able to uphold their standards if they came to the Christian Science faith. For the Christian Scientist, their 'grasp on morality relates to our healing ability' (Clague, 2015), and Mary Baker Eddy wrote that 'it is impossible to be a Christian Scientist without apprehending the moral law so clearly that, for conscience sake, one will either abandon his claim to even a knowledge of this

Science, or else make the claim valid' (Baker Eddy, 1896, p. 261). These moral laws cover, among issues of physical and spiritual behavior, 'Evil beliefs disappearing' which covers, 'humanity, honesty, affection, compassion, hope, faith, meekness, temperance' (Baker Eddy, 1932, p. 115). As one aspires to the Spiritual, the third degree of a sort of improvement, one becomes 'man as God's image', Baker Eddy, 1932, p.116). It is to this that Grenfell aspired throughout her life. This naturally means that in respecting and loving others, she was duty-bound to try and guard their moral welfare, including the values and qualities they were exposed to on television and radio. This then explains Grenfell's interest in these areas in her work for the Pilkington Committee.

Similarly, Whitley was a member of the Church of Scotland, which is not simply the Scottish version of the Church of England. While the latter followed a Lutheran form of faith in the reformation period, the Church of Scotland is founded upon the Christian teachings of John Knox, who was himself a Calvinist; only two of Knox's sermons were ever published (Christianity Today, 2020). While many Calvinistic denominations are seen as incredibly conservative, the Church of Scotland has areas in which it is, if anything slightly liberal, being an early embracer of the concept of women in ministry a few years after the Pilkington Committee, in 1969 (Quigley, 2018). Whitley was a journalist, so perhaps Grenfell shared some skillsets with her, and Whitley perpetuated her concerns as a Minister's wife through her weekly column (The Scotsman, 2010). Whitley had also served on the Faversham Committee in 1958, addressing artificial insemination by donor (Rose, 2013), and would later stand in the 1970 General Election as an SNP candidate in Kinross and Western Perthshire against Alec Douglas-Home (The Scotsman, 2010). So, on paper at least, the women had perhaps overlapping views, but from very different standpoints and socio-economic backgrounds. Yet as one reads the Pilkington Committee reports, it is clear

that they appear to feel stronger together, to ask questions in succession in a way that broadens and deepens not only the debate, but their influence on the committee results. It is also clear that Grenfell's fame protects her from some of the attitudes of the more chauvinist witnesses. At no point is Grenfell subject to the 'little woman' attitude that Whitley occasionally received, most notably in an exchange with a witness on 17th July 1961, when, on daring to ask for clarification on a technical issue about the number of lines on the screen, Whitley is met with impatience and rudeness defined by her gender:

> Q (Mrs Whitley): I thought I understood you to say that change to 625 would help the manufacturers, but that is not what it says in the memorandum.
>
> A: Madam, in two places it says it would be an advantage if the 625 standard was adopted in respect of certain components – at the bottom of page 4 and the end of the colour television section.
>
> (Committee on Broadcasting, 1961h, p. 36).

In all the pages of evidence surveyed, neither Grenfell nor the men of the committee are ever shown any impatience or disrespect, only Whitley. At no point is Grenfell referred to as 'Madam', and certainly not at the beginning of a sentence, where it serves the same purpose as the phrase, 'now, look', implying a need to concentrate, as if Whitley is somehow struggling to understand. Whether this is because she dared to enter the male preserve of technical information, or because she is not rich and famous, is hard to tell, but it is clear that she was, on this occasion, singled out in ways the rest of the committee were not.

Rarely does one woman raise a question without the other speaking within a page or two. It is as if, together, they give each other energy and courage. Again, official records never show the coffee break talk, so our understanding of their relations, whether it ever developed into more than a work acquaintance for more than the season of the Pilkington Report, is impossible to establish at this stage. However, there does appear to be a greater sense of power/knowledge that, even when they disagreed, they were able, in pursuing their own points of interest or agendas, to progress the other's as well. This, then, begs the question of whether, when women are in very small numbers amongst a larger otherwise male cohort, they instinctively band together to increase their power/knowledge potential, despite De Beauvoir's conviction that their alliances will always naturally be made with a reassuring male figure (De Beauvoir, 1997, p. 19).

It can be seen that, throughout her questioning, Grenfell does not directly show any formal feminist leanings. She addresses issues of advertising power, moral and ethical standards, education and children's wellbeing. All of these, by the standards of Welfare Feminism, could be seen as feminist concerns, but this then portrays Grenfell as rather old fashioned, in feminist terms, by the early 1960s. All these issues can equally well be characterized as the legitimate and logical purview of a Christian Scientist, her position as such Grenfell was just beginning to actively discuss. She went on to make her first religious broadcasts in the late 1960s, including both radio and television appearances. It is against this background, then, that we turn our attention to the *Bow Dialogues*.

Grenfell participated in the *Bow Dialogues*, an occasional series of discussions, 12 times between 1968 and 1977. There are nine of these debates available on the British Library Audio Archive. On two occasions their theme was Christmas, but subjects included Man

and God, ideas of freedom, hope and, somewhat dispiritingly 'How people today cannot be pleased'. The concept of the *Bow Dialogues* was, in many respects, similar to that of the National Gallery concerts of which Grenfell was such a supporter during the Second World War. Every Tuesday lunchtime, between 1964 and 1979, Joseph McCulloch, the rector of St Mary-le-Bow church, invited a public figure to debate an issue. While many of these famous people were from the world of entertainment, like Grenfell, they also included controversial figures, such as Germaine Greer and Enoch Powell (British Library, 2019). Of relevance to this discussion, perhaps, is McCulloch's own feminist standpoint, being an early proponent of women's ministry and a regular columnist for *She* magazine (Lambeth Palace, 2013). The conversations were recorded for posterity and are now held at the British Library, but the quality of the recordings strongly indicate that they were not initially designed for broadcast in the fullest sense of the term. The only exception to this is the December 1968 recording, which has clearly been edited for either radio or television, with an appropriate studio announcer introduction and five minutes of vox pops from audience members, explaining why they value the *Bow Dialogues* and, indeed, Grenfell. It is hard to find evidence for the overall motivation McCulloch had for starting these discussions, but the content suggests that they were supposed to provide the public, parishioners or not, with an opportunity to get away from the routine and bustle of work and errands and provide a space for contemplation, thought and edification.

In his introduction to a collection of transcriptions, *Under Bow Bells*, McCulloch gives some idea of the objectives of individual conversations, 'Sometimes my guest would want to get something in particular said and to make certain points, but, on the whole, genuine communication happened best when the discussion was allowed to move freely, without lines too carefully laid down beforehand […]' (McCulloch, 1974, p. 17). McCulloch also

strongly indicates that the purpose of the *Dialogues* was to provide both the participants and the audience with an opportunity to challenge their thinking, or 'unlearn' what they already believed, as well as learning new points of view and information (McCulloch, 1974). While the environment was obviously one of faith, or at least religion, it is of note that the participants came from a wide variety of religious and political backgrounds, and although McCulloch speaks from a place of faith, there is no sense that there is a right or wrong answer, only one of thorough provocation and debate. Interestingly, audience questions were welcomed for a few minutes at the end of each debate. They also vary wildly in length over the years of recording, which may or may not suggest a different attitude to time management among both employers and employees, compared to today's hurried lunch breaks.

In terms of this research, the importance of the *Bow Dialogues* is formed in the fact that these are some of few instances of audio work where Grenfell is portrayed as 'herself', without the format of a game show such as *Face the Music* as the driving force. The use of the word 'portrayed' is crucial here; the format is not free form per se, and it is clear from comments made in several of the recordings that McCulloch and Grenfell had spent time prior to each one preparing their subject matter and shaping their conversation. Over the course of the years, certain remembrances are re-told as apposite to a number of topics, particularly one involving Grenfell and Walter de le Mare, which Grenfell tells in 1968, 1974 and 1977. There are also some comments about how Grenfell formed her characters, which have helped me differentiate between the question of whether Grenfell was a feminist and the separate question of whether her material can be used as a weapon in the feminist arsenal. What the *Bow Dialogues* make clear, as will be shown below, is that by this stage of her life, Grenfell had a concern for all people, This is different from the

materials selected and analysed in chapters 4 to 7, which demonstrate definite potential as a feminist socio-political resource. Indeed, in her constant references to 'nowadays' and 'young people today', often echoing McCulloch's language, Grenfell's presentation suggests that, even 'as herself', her image is carefully managed, but in this case, it is one of a conservative, cautious, mature woman. At times, Grenfell appears weary of the subjects presented. Note the use of conservative with a small 'C'; in one recording, 1970, Grenfell says, 'Well, I'm *not* a Conservative [...] I can look with equal interest, and a certain disinterest at all those leaders […] I'm that valuable thing, the floating voter' (British Library Sound Archives, 2019). It is also worth noting that, while these dialogues are presented as free thinking and free form, they are formed as part of McCulloch's duties to preach and care for his parish and surrounding areas, and therefore the theme is returned strongly to God either by Grenfell or McCulloch regularly. This is not to say that one cannot be both a feminist and a Christian, but that the focus of these discussions is the latter.

Despite all these concerns and caveats, the *Bow Dialogues* are a good forum to draw out material for some general statements about Grenfell's own views and standpoints. Consistently, there are themes of love, sharing, and concern for others. While these do not reflect any formalized version of feminism, they are underlying tenets that can be shared with feminism and that are, perhaps, not reflected in some of the sketches analysed here. The themes of sharing and concern are crucial for the qualities of sorority and desire for equality to be achieved for others that marks feminism as separate to and better than simply achieving it for oneself. Grenfell set much store on sitting down and talking with people, and she consistently portrayed that 'you can get on with anybody, even if you don't like them, you can get on with them if you're face to face […] you can find something good in absolutely everybody, you'll be surprised to know' (British Library Sound Archive, 1973).

In the same *Bow Dialogue*, Grenfell, underlined, 'you don't have to like him [a person with whom you are experiencing friction], you have to love him, and I learnt that, I learnt that and it very often worked'. In this context, Grenfell was referring to soldiers who did not particularly want to be entertained during the Second World War, but she goes on to expand the point to encompass a wider sense of inclusion and persuasion. In 1970, Grenfell had been even more emphatic, 'You can't only love those you like, that's the first rule.' (British Library Sound Archive, 1970). This is a sentiment many Christians will be familiar with, but also lays down a tenet upon which most conversations of persuasion are based. Grenfell takes these concepts of persuasion by inclusion further, 'I've come to a very humbling conclusion, […] that we've got to stop thinking of them and us and only think of us […]' (British Library Sound Archive, 1972). The problem with this quote is that it can be interpreted as a positive; we are all us; or as a negative, we must put ourselves first. Grenfell does not help to clarify her meaning, as she goes on, 'It isn't really self-centred to think that you've got to get your own little […] situation right, It is really the opposite because it is only, it can only build up from tiny, tiny, er, demonstrations if you like, that It is possible to love.' (British Library Sound Archive, 1972). At this point, it can only really be stated that Grenfell believes that approaching most situations from a point of Christian or agape (friendship) love is the most secure and successful approach. From this point of view, Grenfell's Christian Science based approach has many commonalities with the Marxist views displayed by De Beauvoir throughout *The Second Sex* (1997). Common among the two published translations and two private excerpt translations used throughout this thesis has been a sense that women's situations will only be improved when human beings, regardless of gender, generously and genuinely cooperate, with respect for each other as human beings. Christian Science, while being a Christian sect not always recognized as a

denomination by the major Christian groupings, is still a bible-based faith. The bible verse 1 John 4:16 ‘God is Love’ therefore becomes a fundamental verse in a Christian Science view of cooperation, ‘What impels a true spirit of cooperation? It transcends self-interest or even the urgency of circumstances […] coming together in cooperation is normal and natural, regardless of nationality, longstanding differences of any other factor’ (Carlson, 2016). While the impetus for this attitude of mutual respect and support is very different in the cases of De Beauvoir and Grenfell, Marxism and Christianity, respectively, the outcome, or desired outcome is much the same.

In 1972’s *Bow Dialogue*, Grenfell claimed, ’I was taught from a very early age, to think of other people […] sharing is such a glorious thing, it is because we both belong’. (British Library Sound Archive, 1972). In the same *Dialogue* Grenfell, probably unwittingly, suggests that there is no such thing as true altruism and, therefore, in doing something for somebody else, the individual gets a benefit for themselves, even if only ‘in the most basic way, if you are doing something for somebody else, you are not thinking about yourself for one heavenly moment.’ (British Library Sound Archive, 1972).

The *Bow Dialogues* therefore help crystalise many of the points alluded to in the analysis chapters differentiating between Grenfell as an individual and her body of work. In the way Grenfell presents and portrays herself in them, we are shown somebody who loves, but does not necessarily like, her fellow humans of either gender, and has a concern for the welfare and betterment of all. Even on the subject of test tube babies (1970), Grenfell does not address the impact on women of this scientific breakthrough, being more concerned to underline that all babies are babies, however they are made, and that our primary concern should be making sure they grow to reach their full potential. Therefore, on this

evidence, it can be said that while Grenfell's material can be used as a feminist resource, both as ammunition and for discussion, Grenfell herself did not display herself as a feminist in her words and views, though her actions as a successful business woman and entertainer who broke new ground, along with others, for female entertainers, in World War Two, suggests that she was quite successful at doing feminism on a small scale.

The analysis in chapters 4-7 suggests that Grenfell's characters are perhaps more feminist, but also perhaps more insular than Grenfell herself was. As has been explored in Chapter 7, and more intensely in this chapter, Grenfell herself focused on people in general, rather than women, although her acts of cooperation and generosity benefitted certain women, especially Viola Tunnard and Verily Anderson. In the *Bow Dialogues* Grenfell shows rather more conservative views than some of her characters, for example, her views on how children come into the world, preferably only in loving stable relationships, regardless of the mechanism of conception, perhaps do not quite agree with the narrator in 'The Wedding is on Saturday' (1967a), and the spinster daughter in 'Telephone Call' (1959) would have to make a lot more effort to meet people in love an commonality than Grenfell herself did.

In this chapter then, Grenfell's role as an influencer, committee member and public figure has been examined. Her impact via the results of the Pilkington Committee and her input to questioning of witnesses in order to get to those results has been analysed, along with the public version of her private persona displayed in her contributions to the 'Bow Dialogues'. While Grenfell would not have described herself as a feminist, and indeed the views espoused throughout this chapter do not particularly show any interest in women in the sense of welfare feminism, as defined in Chapter 3, however, in her actions on the

Pilkington Committee and the 'Bow Dialogues', we can see important speech acts that demonstrate a certain erring towards equality feminism, and a strong sense of egalitarianism. In the final chapter, the analysis, findings and narratives will be drawn together to allow a re-evaluative statement of Joyce Grenfell as a socio-political commentator.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

In this chapter I will draw together the arguments and analysis discussed in this thesis, leading to a conclusion answering the research questions laid out in the Introduction. This will be accomplished by surveying and recapping all that has gone before. In addition, suggestions will be made for further relevant areas of research, with some supporting arguments as to the relative importance and interest of this work, to academia, to feminism and the wider women's movement, and to the community in general.

The introduction presented the subject of this study, Joyce Grenfell, OBE, and laid out the structure of the thesis. Here, I stated my research questions as:

1. Can Joyce Grenfell's published works be considered a useful resource in a contextual approach to feminist history of the time and as socio-political commentary?
2. Can Joyce Grenfell be seen as having lived a feminist life, within a period hitherto considered dormant?

I introduced a hybrid methodology, centred in close reading and calling on the works of Simone De Beauvoir and Michel Foucault, in order to frame Grenfell's work against a feminist canvas and to inform a discussion of the power/knowledge dynamic displayed in

Grenfell's creations and her professional activities as herself in later life. I explained that at its core, my approach was a multi-faceted close analysis of text, audio and audio-visual recordings, often comparing the performances of their creator, Joyce Grenfell, with those of perhaps the most acknowledged exponent of tribute to her, Maureen Lipman. Finally, I presented a small but significant biography of Grenfell and her cohort, in order to give those unfamiliar with her work a broad insight into some of the many other players that populate this study and provide context. I also introduced the concept that the Wave Model neglects the period of fragmented but lively feminist activity occurring throughout the Second World War and Reconstruction Britain and suggested that Grenfell's work provides a resource through which a feminist lens can be applied to the period.

The second chapter was a literature review comprising two parts; the first was an analysis of all the concepts and ideas from which various elements had been taken in order to induct the hybrid methodology. It included a short exploration of the Wave Model of feminism, its shape and challenge, along with Foucault's most discussed contribution to philosophy, the idea that power/knowledge is one concept, so deeply intertwined that the two elements cannot be disentangled. Further, Critical Discourse Analysis in its broadest sense was recognised as the home of this thesis, with influencing factors from Cultural Materialism, New Historicism and, to a lesser extent, Reception Theory.

The third chapter constitutes the second section of the literature review, and gave a broad survey of recent writings on the state of feminism from the late 1920s until the early 1970s, reflecting not only most of Grenfell's adult life, but the changing perceptions of feminism. The vast majority of literature prior to 2010 considers feminism during the period mentioned to be something of a dormant being, with the activities discussed by Martin

Pugh, Christine Stansell and others characterised as the exception to the rule. In this chapter, I demonstrated that since 2010, this view is increasingly being challenged, recognising that history has been made to try and fit the Wave Model, rather than the abandonment or adaptation of the Model to fit the historical evidence. Nicholson's Kaleidoscope analogy resonated strongly with me, and has, throughout the thesis, led to an image I prefer to use, which is that of hand-spun wool, with its different thickness, textures and strands appearing, disappearing, re-appearing and changing its complexion over its skein. Not only is this an image that we can all understand, but it dovetails with the textures and flaws of real people, and therefore helps us to visualise the experiences of lived feminism throughout the period. I also acknowledged and evaluated some of the more recent historical perspectives that give greater credence to the concept of active, if splintered feminist movements, or, at least, women's movements during the Second World War and throughout the reconstruction era.

The fourth chapter began the direct analysis of Grenfell's work. Working in chronological order, I undertook an analysis of texts and performances involving women in paid work, from a co-textual and contextual standpoint. I demonstrated that, while many of these women appeared to be quite strong and independent on the surface, in almost all cases, there was an element of collusion with their oppressors (De Beauvoir, 1997). Alternatively, features of the power/knowledge (Foucault, 1979) concept and skirmish could be found, whereby the women were not in a position to try to 'win', or beat the male characters, rather to ensure that they preserve some level of power in the relationships, often by exercising secret or personalised knowledge.

The fifth chapter examined sketches focusing on women who work in unpaid roles, for the most part in ways that reflect a caring or duty role within the home. Again, these are discussed in chronological order. However, in the case of the Wife of the Oxbridge Vice-Chancellor, it is a University role brought into her family home, representing her husband, his role, and his work, naturalistically and as a matter of course. In comparing this character and set of sketches against the others in this chapter, it is clear that Grenfell is exploring the power/knowledge relationship throughout her work, probably entirely unconsciously. This character, the Mother in 'First Flight' (1969b) , and the white collar worker in 'The Wedding is on Saturday' (1967a) are clearly better educated than many of Grenfell's other characters and, therefore, have more options for gaining, maintaining and bestowing power, and can equally choose whether to actively use this power/knowledge base or not.

The sixth chapter addresses the impact of where we live, and the class in which we are brought up on the feelings of belonging we have, and the roles women play in those environments. This allows an examination of the alliances women form, and the impact when those alliances are broken, based upon the environment and how much agency, or power/knowledge women have over that in environment. In these monologues, we examine when and how the narrators are allowed to speak, and to whom. Thus we can see that the Wife of the Oxbridge Vice-Chancellor, who is constantly representing her husband as a way of earning a vicarious income, feels far more freedom to make her mark than the new resident of the 'high, horrible, beautiful, modern flat' in 'Mulgarth Street' (1973). The flat resident has had no agency in her move and therefore feels little ability to have any say or to engage in her new community. It was demonstrated that these varying levels of power/knowledge and the ability of women to exercise it is replicated throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century.

The seventh chapter concentrates on Grenfell's work during the Second World War and the sketches that came out of those experiences. As well as being a valuable theme for the analysis of the monologues, it provides plenty of context for that work, and serves as a bridge, as it begins to explore Grenfell 'as herself', in her relationships with her fans and their families, and also with her colleague, Viola Tunnard, and her drivers, particularly Ghulam Mohd. Despite the management of Grenfell's letters in their published form , when the unedited versions of these letters from fans were examined, the suspicion arises that Grenfell 'as herself' was, to an extent, as carefully managed as her stage persona. This is not to say that Grenfell provides any falsity in a deliberate fashion, simply that she was naturally a careful, caring person who made sure that the public only saw the most supportive, encouraging, best version of herself. While Grenfell would not have identified herself as a feminist, her bravery and pragmatism in going on tours to entertain the troops of PAIForce is something that some significant male entertainers shied away from and (Grenfell, 1989), perhaps, the only comparable star name, in terms of being willing to enter such dangerous territories, was Vera Lynn. Grenfell said in her wartime journal, It is, at least, partially due to the genuine affection gained from the British public over this period, that Grenfell was able to become so financially successful, and it is clear that, although she minimised this aspect, claiming it was the work of her husband, this is probably where she gained many of her business negotiation and logistics skills which made her such a force to be reckoned with in an otherwise male dominated field.

Thus, chapters three to seven provide the evidence for the answer to the first research question; it can be clearly stated that, having examined this broad selection of sketches, Grenfell's creations provide a clear-eyed socio-political commentary on the position of women from a variety of social and economic backgrounds throughout the period. From

these sketches, we can draw together information about social, political and economic challenges to women's independence and aspirations. We can see that for women in a democratic capitalist society of the period, opportunities for a De Beauvoirian sorority were hard to find and often missed, at least in a comedic setting. Further we see that power/knowledge is not a static entity, but a constantly moving tussle between the sexes, where a female victory in the battle of the sexes is often temporary and with a cost. All these elements feed in to giving Grenfell's sketches significant value as a socio-political resource for historians, students of entertainment, and feminists alike.

The eighth chapter takes the reader further into the world of 'Grenfell as herself', focussing on her work with the Pilkington Committee and her conversations at St Mary-le Bow. This chapter provides the basis for a direct comparison between the views espoused by Grenfell's characters and Grenfell herself. While Grenfell's characters can be read as having a feminist focus with a wider socio-political context Grenfell herself, it is clear from the Pilikington Commission and Bow Dialogues evidence, was more generally focussed on a high ethical and moral stance rooted in her Christian Science faith and fascination with the wellbeing of people in general. The worth of the creations as socio-political commentary can be compared against Grenfell's stated concerns and ethics of faith, love, morals, and concern for welfare across all the people she encountered.

There is no doubt that, as an individual, Grenfell was loved and respected by the public and her circle alike, she had an influence on both politicians and the church at some levels, despite her minority role as a Christian Scientist. It becomes clear that Grenfell's characters and Grenfell the woman are not the same at all. They have many overlapping, but not identical agendas, and while many of Grenfell's behaviours can be construed as feminist

acts, Grenfell was more strongly guided by her faith and her desire to find the good in everyone, regardless of their gender or status. The destruction of the correspondence between Grenfell and her husband upon her instruction is a sad loss to the research, and a further sign of Grenfell's management of her persona, even beyond death.

Analysis and findings have been discussed across all the chapters. It can be said then, in terms of the research questions, that Grenfell's published works can be considered a useful resource in a contextual approach to feminist history of the time and as socio-political commentary. They examine issues that directly and realistically affected women, including work, expectations upon getting married, child and elder care, and shone a light on many of the hypocrisies and challenges women faced in everyday life. In terms of De Beauvoir's concerns for solidarity in, and as, the way forward, Grenfell's characters often fall short; they highlight the need, but fail to deliver. They are not always generous and supportive of their sisters in the struggle, but perhaps this reflects lived feminism. When one proclaims oneself a feminist, one, at least tacitly, signs oneself up to certain behaviours and attitudes, which neither Grenfell nor her characters ever did. However, in shining a light on these situations and challenges, Grenfell offers a hand of solidarity to her audience, male and female, as she allows them to think about the truths among the laughter that, as a trail blazer in her field, it is clear other women were yet to offer.

In considering a summary of the answer to the second research question, we can say that Grenfell's life provides much material which we can use to apply a feminist lens to the period; her commercial and artistic success was something that no female monologist had achieved on this scale before, and inspired many younger entertainers and comedians who, definitely, are both practical and more overtly feminist, including Victoria Wood,

Dawn French and, into the twenty-first century, Sarah Millican and Susan Calman, who have both publicly declared the influence Grenfell had on their early formations of their understandings, of comedy, and that a woman could succeed in this field. If we concentrate on the lived elements of day to day feminism, Grenfell, in her attitude, adventures and supportive nature, particularly in regard to Viola Tunnard and the family of Janie Hampton, who has gone on to have a very successful career as a journalist and fund raiser, often demonstrated the solidarity De Beauvoir craves, but she offered this solidarity to vulnerable men too. So perhaps, if we return to the earliest conversation with Janie Hampton undertaken regarding this study, while I concur that Grenfell espoused the concept of egalitarianism, she lived her life with elements of embodied feminism too.

It was posited throughout the introduction and much of the literature review that there has been acceptance that feminism was dormant in much of the period covered by this thesis. It can safely be asserted that, along with other more recent scholars, I do not accept this supposition. The characters Grenfell has presented to us, along with the work of many other of her contemporaries, show multiple active feminisms, rather than a feminism united by a single cause, as in the early suffrage movement. The texts and examples provided here show many of the concerns and causes of a fragmented women's movement and, while there have been rises and falls in levels of activity and changes of priority, this fragmentation and undermining remains the only uniting characteristic in feminism today. This also is reflected in my preferred images of the kaleidoscope (Nicholson, 2010) and the many-textured wool skein. As Grenfell's characters demonstrate, while De Beauvoir's solution of sisterhood is wonderful, it is difficult to achieve in reality; human nature is flawed, and we all fall short of the ideal. Here then, is more evidence for lived feminism as a reflection and summary of real-life experiences of feminism. I believe Grenfell would

recognise the experiences of the most recent wave of feminists in the United Kingdom, summed up thus: 'My goals were noble but my concerns were trivial' (Frances-White, 2018, p. ix) as many women have 'drifted into feminism' (Frances-White, 2018, p. x). This lived and drifting feminism not only reflects modern feminism and Grenfell's lived experience, but that of the first wave of feminists, who, as Hewitt (2012) argues, were the only generation of feminists not to name themselves.

There are so many areas of further research that could be undertaken here that it is difficult to narrow it down to a few themes. Constant internet searches suggest I am the only researcher in the world currently examining the role of Grenfell in society, and this could be taken forward in several other areas. Her relationship with Christian Science is one that has been mentioned in passing in Gartrell-Mills' 1992 thesis, but has not been explored in any great depth. There are issues and challenges here. The Mother Church has a reputation amongst journalistic and academic researchers alike as being somewhat uncooperative, and Hampton, in her private email conversations with me, advised that once finally granted access, there had been little to discover in direct relation to Grenfell. However, Grenfell probably spends as much, if not more, time in her letters to Graham discussing Christian Science as she does on her work and daily activities, so this is a rich resource. In a world where religion appears to be the cause and subject of more discrimination than ever (Fox, 2014), mainly based on misunderstandings (Phillips, 2006), this is valuable research. Further, Lipman could again be used as a comparative study, as there are parallels between the way Judaism and Christian Science are misunderstood, and the way their adherents have been viewed with suspicion in the UK over the years, to the point that Lipman has publicly considered emigration (Wyatt, 2015). Any research which can be disseminated across academia and into the broader public that helps minimise these divisions, or explain

how they arose in the first place, is important in supporting a kinder, more equitable community.

When examining Grenfell's written work, there are a number of themes other than feminism that could be investigated further, some of which intersect with feminism and could be used to extend this research and others which stand alone. Grenfell's sketch 'Nicodemus' Song' (1967) is the only one where she wrote the narrator as male; he is a black South African, and an initial analysis indicates that this piece is supportive of black South Africans, and anti-apartheid. If other instances can be found of contemporaneous entertainers crossing gender and race boundaries to show support and explore their ethical positioning, there are conclusions to be reached here; equally, if Grenfell is the only artist doing this, that makes a statement on its own.

One area that caused much interest to me, but did not fit with the overall thrust of the study, was that of audience reaction and reception theory. A piece of work was scoped out to test the theory that 'expert audiences' have a deeper emotional reaction to a sketch or character than non-expert audiences. Practical research could easily, quickly and relatively cost-effectively be undertaken to examine the reaction of general audiences and expert audiences to specific performances. Two Grenfell creations spring to mind: 'The Nursery School Teacher', for whom at least three sketches were written, was one of Grenfell's most popular characters, and, it is rumoured, until the 1970s, was used in teacher training colleges to demonstrate how not to deal with what is now called Year R. These sketches could be shown to audiences of lower primary teachers, wider teaching professionals, and a general audience, and their reactions recorded, compared and analysed, supported either by group interviews or questionnaires. Similarly, 'Three Lady Choristers' could be

shown to a general audience, a non-auditioned choir, and an auditioned choir with a similar analytical approach. This would give clues as to relationships and resonances the audience has with each other and the performance, based on depth of shared experience.

From the point of view of biographical research, every person mentioned among Grenfell's cohort throughout this thesis is worthy of further work. While there are some, like Noël Coward and Benjamin Britten, who have significant wordage devoted to them already, little of academic rigour exists on Virginia Graham and Viola Tunnard, and only a little more on Clemence Dane. All these women have made important contributions to the fields of journalism and/or the arts and, as contemporaries of Grenfell, the former two can be examined to further explore and test the embodied experience of feminisms throughout this period, thus allowing it to become more widely known and embedded as one of a growing number of alternative and supplementary views to the Wave Model.

This is not to say that the men in Grenfell's life are not deserving of further research. For a musicologist or music historian, the work of Richard Addinsell and Bill Blezard hold potential in terms of their refusal to be categorised by genre or roles. Perhaps, just as feminism does not fit the model theorists have created for it, real musicians do not fit the categories we try to place them in, and stronger, living and flexible definitions of the significance of these artists (along with Tunnard) can be found.

This thesis has explored the relationship between Grenfell, her characters and feminism. It has established that much of Grenfell's material can be used as a feminist resource, and all of it can be used as a broad yet focussed socio-political commentary in a way few female entertainers had achieved before her. We have established Grenfell as a role model and icon for many female comedians and entertainers who came after her. To this point,

Grenfell then, is an embodied feminist, forging a path into a previously male dominated world, becoming highly successful and creating aspirations for many women to this day. Grenfell is therefore a case study, because she lived a flawed feminist life that many of us recognise. Much of her work plays with and explores the power/knowledge concept as encapsulated by Foucault, and this provides a powerful socio-political commentary at a micro-level of many macro issues that were powerful players in women's lives throughout this period.

We can argue, therefore, that Grenfell's work is both a feminist resource and a socio-political asset. Grenfell espoused equality and made many feminist acts in doing so, which directly benefitted the women around her and has gone on to inspire both men and women to small actions of solidarity, whether that has been in donating the charities she supported and promoted in her later broadcasts as herself or in more direct ways. Grenfell's characterisation inspires affection and hope; from beginning to end of this research, I have met people, mainly women, who remember seeing Grenfell perform when they were young, and not only remember the performance, but can call to mind characters that inspired them, including a retired teacher who clearly remembers seeing the 'Nursery School Teacher' sketches, validating Stephen Potter and Grenfell's theory that perhaps showing how not to do something is perhaps the most effective way of teaching, as well as the funniest. Grenfell would not have identified herself as a feminist, of that I am sure, and am in agreement with Janie Hampton on that point. However, through both her life and work, she has created a legacy of accidental feminism, deliberate 'brotherhood' (De Beauvoir, 1997, p. 741) and a socio-political commentary resource which displays deep insight into many women's positions in the power/knowledge tussle which pervade our human interactions and relationships.

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