Marguerite Yourcenar's *Le Coup de grâce* and Marie Nimier's *La Nouvelle Pornographie*: The Role of the Abject in *Le Discours amoureux*

Joy Rich

Everyone knows that the French are experts on love and that their language is a renowned vehicle for romantic expression. A quick dip into the riches of the internet will confirm this. The entry "Love/French" in a Google Search instantly references ten pages of sites, including everything from "Love in the French theater" to instructions on how to "French kiss" or the history of the traditional wedding cake. Love, in the French tradition, is a formal preoccupation, a product of the court and the *salon*. It functions on the level of *gallanterie* and reveals a fascination with dialogue. To be *amoureux* in French is to be in love with words. The lover's task is to be original and to sound spontaneous while ever aware of the sites of reference, the models and recipes that have preceded him in this language that has specialized in amorous conversation since the Middle Ages. Roland Barthes, in his work *A Lover's Discourse* (*Fragments d'un discours amoureux*), proposes the amorous state not as a psychological one but as structural, a "discursive site" (3). His language seems uncannily prophetic of the workings of the internet, where solitary subjects connect only in an abstract matrix:

> The necessity for this book is to be found in the following consideration: that the lover's discourse is today *of an extreme solitude*. This discourse is spoken, perhaps, by thousands of subjects (who knows?), but warranted by no one; it is completely forsaken by the surrounding languages: ignored, disparaged, or derided by them, severed not only from authority but also from the mechanisms of authority (sciences, techniques, arts). Once a discourse is thus driven by its own momentum into the backwater of the "unreal," exiled from all gregarity, it has no recourse but to become the site, however exiguous, of an *affirmation*. (1)

French, historically, is a language preoccupied with carrying that affirmation.[1]

A look, however, at "le discours amoureux" in the twentieth century French novel demonstrates that the language of love, even for the experts, is often a problematic thing, whether viewed as communication between lovers themselves or as discourse about love, its nature and possibilities, or as discourse about anything at all when produced by, or put into the mouths of, lovers. Such is the case in the two novels discussed in this paper: Marguerite Yourcenar's *Le Coup de grâce* and Marie Nimier's *La Nouvelle Pornographie*. In *Le Coup de grâce*, Yourcenar fleshes out a second-hand "real life" account into the confession of a young man whose relationship ends with the execution, by his own hand, of the woman who loved him. Nimier's *La Nouvelle Pornographie* concludes with the narrator's disappointment, disillusionment and rejection. Based on these novels, one could make the case that love is a doomed proposition and that language is a hopelessly inadequate medium for its expression or discussion. This conclusion is disconcerting to an American idealist who would echo the sentiments of the country song: "If love never lasts forever, tell me, what's forever for?"[2] In spite of the faulty or carefully circumscribed rapport between lovers or potential lovers in these novels, however, the resulting effect—even amid conditions of *échec,* the elusiveness of fusional relationships, and the pervasive incomprehension between speaking subjects—is a surprising affirmation of the power of language and of writing to create a space where singular individuals can meet authentically, a discursive site where a fragile tenderness is possible. I propose that an element of this precarious space is the condition of abjection as described by Julia Kristeva. In this paper, I will examine the notion of abjection as it relates to *Le Coup de grâce* and *La Nouvelle Pornographie*.

Le Petit Robert defines "abject" as follows: "Digne du plus grand mépris, qui inspire une violente répulsion [. . .]. Abominable, dégoutant, ignoble, infâme, infect, méprisable, repugnant, vil" (4). The narrator, also called Marie Nimier, in Nimier's *La Nouvelle Pornographie*, uses this term specifically. Overhearing two young girls castigating the

boyfriend of one of them for having spoken to her, while making love, as if she were a "salope," Marie longs to say:

> [Q]ue dit ce garcon qui visiblement est amoureux de vous? Dit-il: je te méprise? Ne dit-il pas plutôt: j'ai confiance en toi? J'ai confiance au point de prononcer ces mots-là dans tes bras, j'ai confiance au point de me montrer dans ce que j'ai de plus abject, cette volonté de te réduire à l'état de marchandise, de moins que rien? (166)

Nimier pursues throughout the novel this definition of the truly obscene—the reduction of noble themes, causes, and words to the banal and materialistic level of merchandise and marketing. The abject reality implied by the passage above is that the nature of desire itself may make of the desired one a thing to be obtained through trade, through the domination sought in any commercial transaction where success is measured by profit gained or denied and where the participants are, therefore, necessarily adversarial.

Julia Kristeva defines the abject in similar terms in her essay les *Pouvoirs de l'horreur*:

> Celui qui refuse la morale n'est pas abject—il peut y avoir de la grandeur dans l'amorale et même dans un crime qui affiche son irrespect de la loi, révolté, libérateur et suicidaire, L'abjection, elle, est immorale, ténébreuse, louvoyante et louche: une terreur qui se dissimule, une haine qui sourit, une passion pour un corps lorsqu'elle le troque au lieu de l'embraser, un endetté qui vous vend, un ami qui vous poignarde... (12)

The repugnant truth, Nimier suggests, is that in speaking to his lover as if she were a prostitute, abasing both himself and her in the process, the boy reveals an aspect of love and desire that may be inherent to those emotions and precedent to a rational, verbal expression of them. Kristeva states,

> Rien de tel que l'abjection de soi pour démontrer que toute abjection est en fait reconnaissance du *manqué* fondateur de tout être, sens, langage, désir. On glisse toujours trop vite sur

> ce mot de manqué, et la psychanalyse aujourd'hui n'en retient en somme que le produit plus ou moins fétiche, l' "objet du manque." Mais si l'on imagine (et il s'agit bien d'imaginer, car c'est le travail de l'imagination qui est ici fondé) l'experience du *manque* lui-même comme logiquement prélable à l'être et à l'objet—à l'être de l'objet—, alors on comprend que son seul signifié est l'abjection, et à plus forte raison l'abjection de soi. (12-13)

Kristeva develops the concept of the abject as an area where words signify more than they symbolize. The abject is not just a transcendence of symbolic representation, but a condition where symbols breaks down: "l'*abject*, objet chu, est radicalement un exclu et me tire vers là ou le sens s'effondre. Un certain 'moi' qui s'est fondu avec son maître, un sur-moi l'a carrément chassé. Il est dehors, hors de l'ensemble dont il semble ne pas reconnaître les règles du jeu" (9). In contrast to an object which, in opposing the subject provides a sort of frame or prop that offers the subject some support, the abject, says Kristeva, though sharing the quality, "celle de s'opposer à *je*" (9), is that which makes one say:

> Pas moi. Pas ça. Mais pas rien non plus. Un "quelquechose" que je ne reconnais pas comme chose. Un poids de non-sens qui n'a rien d'insignifiant et qui m'écrase. À la lisière de l'inexistence et de l'hallucination, d'une réalité qui, si je la reconnais, m'annihile. L'abject et l'abjection sont là mes garde-fous. Amorces de ma culture. (10)

The boy with whom Marie sympathizes labors under this "poids de non-sens." He does not *rationally* consider his lover a prostitute; in complete control of himself, he would not choose that representation of her, but his language treats her as such almost poetically as it attempts to express a reality underlying his words. His language here is more semiotic than symbolic. Anne-Marie Smith, in her book, *Julia Kristeva: Speaking the Unspeakable*, explains this distinction:

> Attention to semiotic modalities focuses reading upon *signi-*

> *fiance*, representation, or the signs of meaning—on the play of signifiers in a text which move through and beyond *signification*—literal meaning, or the relationship between the word and the thing. The semiotic, insists Kristeva, is not an extension of the language system but transversal to and coextensive with it. It is through the semiotic that we can connect language as a formal system to something outside this, in the realm of the psycho-somatic, to a body and a bodily subject structuring and de-structuring identity. (20)

Only the boy's abject self can attempt the expression of this *signifiance*, and only in a situation of the greatest intimacy and confidence. His words, uttered during a sexual encounter, are a most direct example of the semiotic connecting of language to a body and to a bodily subject. The fact that his language was offensive illustrates the inescapable tension that lies between the signified and the signifier. The vile words, flung out involuntarily, one imagines, as symbols he himself would consciously reject, are mirrored in the violent repulsion they invoke in the young girl and by her subsequent rejection of him.

Marie's own youthful experience, similar to the young couple's, reinforces the notion of the abject as that which is violently jettisoned or ejected. She herself insults a lover, and the word surges forth "très fort, comme un pet" (166). She asks herself, "De quel réservoir intime a surgi ce mot? De quelle partie de moi-même?" (166). If the abject is that which the *I* ejects but which is not "other" from the *I* (Kristeva 9), then the acceptance of that abjection by another is the ultimate intimacy. It is that idea which Marie wishes to share with the girl. When Marie's lover, after an instant of doubt upon hearing the insult, has an orgasm, Marie says, "Je n'ai pas [. . .] pu le remercier de ce qu'il m'avait donné" (166-67). The young man's physical response is analogous to that response which abjection demands from the person experiencing it, according to Kristeva: "And yet, from its place of banishment, the abject does not cease challenging its master. Without a sign (for him), it beseeches a discharge, a convulsion, a crying out" (2). To respond to that beseeching from another's abjection may be as close as human

beings come to surmounting the gulf that separates each individual. If abjection does not have a sign for its own master, then verbal signs are perhaps inadequate or inappropriate for the acceptance of another's abjection. It is significant that the young Marie was not able to talk to her lover about the experience and that his act of acceptance was wordless, "[. . .] une vague immense qui a tout balayé, ma honte et son étonnement" (166).

In Yourcenar's *Le Coup de grâce*, the concept of abjection, as articulated by Kristeva, runs like a common thread. If abjection is more fundamental than shame, the character who perhaps best embodies its primal, sensory aspect is Eric. Eric recounts, from a distance of 15 years, events of 1919-1920, as the first World War came to a close and the Bolshvic Revolution began. His narrative relates how, as a young German officer operating from the Baltic castle where he passed his youth, he encounters again his friend Conrad, whose family home the castle is, and Conrad's sister Sophie. His ambiguous emotional and sexual attachment to both siblings ends disastrously. There is an interesting parallel between what Kristeva has to say about loathing of taste or texture, "la forme la plus élémentaire et la plus archaïque de l'abjection" (10) and Eric's response to Sophie's kiss. Kristeva speaks of that « dégoût d'une nourriture, d'une saleté, d'un déchet, d'une ordure. Spasmes et vomissements qui me protègent. Répulsion, haut-le-cœur qui m'écarte et me détourne de la souillure, du cloaque, de l'immonde. Ignominie de la compromission, de l'entre-deux, de la traîtrise. Sursaut fasciné qui m'y conduit et m'en sépare" (10).

Kristeva acknowledges the essential harmlessness of one source of her revulsion, the skin on milk, but describes nevertheless a violent reaction to its contact: "un spasme de la glotte et plus bas encore, de l'estomace, du ventre, de tous les viscères, crispe le corps, presse les larmes et la bile, fait batter le cœur, perler le front et les mains" (10). Eric, moved at first by the sensation of Sophie in his arms, suddenly experiences a loathing similar to Kristeva's:

> Je ne sais à quel moment le délice tourna à l'horreur, déclenchant en moi le souvenir de cette étoile de mer que maman,

> jadis, avait mis de force dans ma main, sur la plage de Scheveningue, provoquant ainsi chez moi une crise de convulsions pour le plus grand affolement des baigneurs. Je m'arrachai à Sophie avec une sauvagerie qui dut paraître cruelle à ce corps que le bonheur rendait sans défense. (*Le Coup de grâce* 193)

Kristeva attributes this loathing, this most elementary abjection, to rejection of the way disgusting substances "*show*" her death; they are what she must "permanently thrust aside in order to live" (3). Eric too must thrust Sophie aside to live as his true self. He is tempted by the idea of the productive security of a life with Sophie: "A une époque où tout fout le camp, je me disais que cette femme au moins serait solide comme la terre, sur laquelle on peut bâtir ou se coucher. Il eût été beau de recommencer le monde avec elle dans une solitude de naufragés" (201). He knows, however, that such a life would be beyond his capacity to maintain; he just *does not have it in him.* It is what he must reject, eject, abject: "L'être qui tout de même me constitue dans ce que j'ai de plus inexorablement personnel aurait repris le dessus, et j'aurais bon gré mal gré abandonné Sophie, comme un chef d'État abandonne une province trop éloignée de la métropole" (204). That Eric accomplishes his rejection with cold-blooded clear-sightedness and a cruelty that seems gratuitous is abjection in its purest form. A reader's revulsion at his treatment of Sophie might rival Kristeva's reaction to milk scum, yet Eric's convulsive recoil from Sophie's kiss is precisely analogous to Kristeva's self-protective "spasmes et vomissements." Sophie represents not only the threatened compromise of Eric's own ambiguous sexual nature but also the "entre-deux"—virile masculine courage in a woman's body that yet resembles and evokes the masculine body of Conrad, her brother, the being most precious to Eric (Lydon 36).

Eric's memoir, supposedly recounted to strangers in a train station, is characterized by relentless self-awareness and not a hint of self-justification. His abjection lies, not in any sort of shamed groveling but in the unflinching revelation of unsavory facts about himself. Eric illustrates the double nature of the abjection that Kristeva talks about. There is the state of abjection that consists of being repulsed by some-

thing repugnant; there is also the abjection inherent to those aspects of the self that are repugnant to oneself and to others. The physical repugnance that sweeps over Eric as he embraces Sophie, likened to that triggered by the touch of a sea creature—something living and yet totally alien—places Eric in a state of abjection and is symptomatic of his fundamental nature and what it must reject to survive. He does not apologize for it, but it is clear that the sensation is unpleasant to him.

The abjection demonstrated by Eric is not that of self-abasement—he is too fastidious for that—but is rather that of the hapless young boy of Nimier's account: both reveal the most abject part of themselves, the need to treat another as merchandise. The rich and beautiful language of Eric's confession seems a far cry from the involuntary vulgarities of Nimier's boy and narrator, which come forth with the unplanned explosion of a "pet"; yet Eric abjectly markets his magnetism, using another human being for personal gratification with little intention that the gratification be mutual. He initially uses Sophie as a sort of camouflage and later, in spite of a genuine appreciation and even awe in the face of her fearless generosity, indulges his pride in a cat-and-mouse manipulation, an almost experimental approach to see the reaction his indifference can provoke. Although primarily amoral by nature, Eric becomes immorally abject, as Kristeva describes it. His pride and perhaps his fear spur him to "play mind games" with Sophie as she comes to him night after night only to be engaged in hours of conversation but rejected sexually. When Sophie—furious not so much that that he is incapable of loving her but that he has let her suffer so long from incomprehension—confronts him about his proclivities, he insults her. When she leaves, distraught, alone and on foot, he admits to a cold curiosity as to the consequences. One is reminded of a loathsome child who plucks the wings from flies. He has stated earlier that his austerity makes of him a killer who has no need to prolong the agony of his victims (140-41). The fact that he psychologically tortures Sophie is a tribute to the extent to which she troubles him. For Sophie, he is, as Kristeva says, the friend who stabs, the debtor who sells her up.

This particular image of abjection, the trusted friend who kills, is

especially applicable to the conclusion of *Le Coup de grâce*. Sophie demands that Eric be her executioner. She *falls* at his hands. By this act Eric reduces Sophie to that most abject of objects, the dead body. The cadaver, says Kristeva, repulses because it defies the boundaries beyond which we push those things that we must exclude in order to maintain life. When a being becomes a cadaver, every one of those protective limits has been breached:

> Ces humeurs, cette souillure, cette merde sont ce que la vie supporte à peine et avec peine de la mort. J'y suis aux limites de ma condition de vivant. De ces limites se dégage mon corps comme vivant. Ces déchets chutent pour que je vive, jusqu'à ce que, de perte en perte, il ne m'en reste rien, et que mon corps tombe tout entier au-delà de la limite, *cadere*, cadavre. Si l'ordure signifie l'autre côté de la limite, où je ne suis pas et qui me permet d'être, le cadavre, le plus écœurant des déchets, est une limite qui a tout envahi. Ce n'est plus moi qui expulse, "je" est expulsé. (11)

By compelling Eric to kill her, Sophie causes him to do in a concrete way what he has done to her psychologically: The most abject part of himself, according to Nimier's definition of abjection, the reducing of a human being to an object of manipulation, has led through chains of consequences to this moment when he makes of Sophie the ultimate instance of abjection, that *thing*, the dead body. Eric speculates on Sophie's reason for making the request. Is it for revenge, he wonders, so that he will never lose the catastrophic image of the killing shot? Eric's unflinching self-awareness would cause one to doubt that he pulls the trigger without having foreseen just that result. Does his act acknowledge and take responsibility for the damage he has caused? Does he rise to the dare to match his courage to hers? Or is this simply one more example of his curiosity to see circumstances play themselves out? Whatever the case, this climactic event is an extreme example of violent ejection of that which one must push beyond the limits of the self in order to survive. The power of the scene derives from the fact that

this radical expulsion of the bullet, and the simultaneous explosive emptying of Sophie's life force, is a vivid and tangible conclusion to their ongoing struggle—their mutual rejection of the abjectly unacceptable other and, paradoxically, the supreme acceptance of the other's abject self. One senses that, throughout their troubled and unconsummated relationship, Eric and Sophie cross swords as equals—that though Sophie is seemingly the injured and innocent party, she has never been a defenseless one, and that their hold on each other has always been a test of strength between titans. Until her flight, Sophie chooses despair rather than give up on loving Eric. She flaunts that despair self-destructively. It is her weapon. To that extent, were he to capitulate, Eric would be her trophy. Sophie, too, manifests that abject aspect of desire, to possess, to manipulate an object.

One might claim that Sophie triumphs over Eric in having him to kill her, that this is the ultimate manipulation ensuring that she dominate his thoughts for the rest of his life. I see her request and his free acceptance of it, however, as a mutual salute, a final laying down of the gauntlet to a beloved enemy. One senses that by this act, through his uncoerced agreement, Eric's life, as much as Sophie's, is *finished*, completed. Both parties witness the "*je* expulsé"; for both, it is a case of *cadere*. We see no victor here, but two *falling* angels plummeting endlessly, locked in a combative embrace. This killing is a worst-case scenario of that intimate confidence Nimier describes, that abjection which allows the other to be at his most unjustifiable.

It is significant that this fatal encounter is a wordless one, as are the other rare occasions when Eric and Sophie come close to achieving a bond based on something other than unrequited desire or egotistic antagonism. The closeness of their kiss, for example, is instantly swept away on the tide of Eric's revulsion before words are exchanged. This kiss is preceded by the couple's most intimate moment, when, with death as the catalyst, the tension between the two provokes a sort of dare that foreshadows the last; they stand locked together on a balcony in range of gunfire. Eric describes the situation later, but at the moment of the incident, though the excitement of the encounter is at

a high pitch, neither party speaks. This muteness is problematic, but not because silence is a source of trouble between this couple. Eric and Sophie talk. Sophie is honest to a fault in announcing her love and transparent in her despair. They spend entire nights in conversation. Although these conversations fail to reveal Eric's nature in a way that Sophie can understand, it is not simply lack of communication that leads to the fatal climax of their story, but rather the fact that the latent hostility produced by the unresolved tension of their relationship has no verbal framework to lend it form. The killing shot, which is their ultimate acknowledgement of the other's mettle and an act of supreme understanding, is poetic, moving and even noble by its very extremity. Extremes, however, are untidy in civilized society. Love, as an emotion lending itself to extremes--abjection being one of them—may require the safeguard of form if its expression is not to take shape as a bullet to the brain.

Philippe Sollers speaks to this idea in his novel, *Portrait du joueur*. The narrator and his lover, another Sophie, have scripted forms for their sexual encounters which include insults and vulgarities. Like Nimier, Sollers views these terms as tools to cut through to a kind of authenticity where hostility and tenderness are not mutually exclusive. Indirectly, he compares these words to scalpels: "Oui, c'est bien elle qui prononce ces phrases, ces ignominies, ces atrocités tranquilles. Comment elle aimerait découper des queues au scalpel, les opérer vraiment sans anesthésie, voir le sang gicler, écouter les vaines supplications et les cris" (159). They are a form of exorcism: "Des mots splendides, éternels, ramenant toujours avec eux, magnétiquement, toute une limaille effervescente d'émotions enfouies, une corolle d'enfance invisible" (159). Sollers does not consider these words as means to connection, but rather as forms by which one individual may accord to another his uniqueness, and by doing so, to find ease one with the other. These words acknowledge "[c]ette volonté d'abîmer, de détruire, toujours dissimulée par force, par rapport de forces, mais qui peut, à certaines conditions—sécurité, clandestinité absolue—, s'avouer dans l'aisance la plus désinvolte..." (159). This ease cannot be attained, however,

without embracing the abjection in all desire, based on the fact that true understanding between lovers can never be attained; one is never relieved of his aloneness by the presence of another; and therefore the union of lovers is inescapably the possession, however fleeting, of an adversarial object. "Le processus prétendument naturel est nié jusqu'au fond," claims Sollers, "mais c'est normal, nous sommes en guerre" (164).

If sincerity is not the goal in *le Discours amoureux*; if it is impossible, then what is to be sought? According to Sollers, a form is needed, a gratuitous form, which will give birth to that confidence of which Nimier speaks; which will trigger, if not fusion, *jouissance*: "Il faut un code, une grille, un chiffre, des messages vraiment addressés" (Sollers 164). This is what Yourcenar's Eric and Sophie lack: "des messages vraiment addressés." Raw emotion and self-serving reticence, in the absence of such a code or *chiffre*, emit messages that go badly astray until the end. Ultimately, Eric and Sophie are compelled to act out literally what Sollers calls the transaction "[a]u comble de la communication incommunicable, divisée, divergente, contradictoire" (165). In place of "la 'phrase sans aucun rapport'" (165), "le message féminin qui doit déclencher l'éjaculation" (164), they have Sophie's request for execution at Eric's hand... truly a "message féminin" that turns the tables to be sure, but which triggers a lethal ejaculation of lead. Sollers's description of the desired and cathartic result of his "phrase sans aucun rapport" is eerily similar to Sophie and Eric's final tragic encounter:

> Tel est le principe de la transaction, image de toutes les transactions possibles... L'élément verbal est prédominant. Le dispositif est celui d'une sorte de roulette puisque le *moment* où la phrase sera prononeée est du seul ressort de l'élément féminin. On dirait la mise en place d'un attentat. Et en effet, on tient là le moteur, la matrice abstraite, de tout terrorisme, une mort soudaine, à l'envers, qui réclame, de la part de l'élément masculin, une maîtrise nerveuse complète. (Sollers 165)

This gratuitous form, sadly missing for Eric and Sophie and for

Marie as characters (Marie, indeed, creates form for her experiences in a manuscript, but, in the time frame of the novel, the manuscript is not read), is provided by the physical object which is, after all, where we find these *personnages*—the novel in the reader's hands. That "élément verbal," the "phrase prononcée," the "matriee abstraite" is the literary work itself. The presence of the abject in the situations and psyches represented in the events and characters of these novels is doubled by the abject element that is characteristic of a work of literature by its very nature. Literature is life at a remove from the mechanical function of the animal body. It is *other*. One could consider it as thrust away from and by the writing hand, not spasmodically but with a "maîtrise nerveuse complète." It may be, at times, what the body thrusts away from itself in order to live mindlessly. It is significant that near the end of *La Nouvelle Pornographie*, when Marie cannot relinquish the pages of her manuscript that she has set on fire, cannot, in fact, thrust them away, she "burns herself." Conversely but simultaneously, in the literary work, the ejected, emitted, *written* life finds space to exist. In spite of her wound, Marie specifies her anguish, her eternally absent father, in terms which suggest a remove to that discursive space: "Oui, c'est cela, mon père. J'attends mon père. On dirait le titre d'un roman [. . .]" (Nimier 181).

We think of the abject as ugly, repellent, repulsive; yet any definition or description of such qualities is necessarily subjective and abstract, a "phrase sans aucun rapport." If the abject is fundamentally that which must be distanced from the self through form, every extreme qualifies, even, or perhaps especially, beauty. The abject beauty of amorous discourse is its incorporation in form. The activity of the physical organism—the brain's prompting, the lips and tongue's movement, the breath of the lungs—is transmuted into speech. Speech rendered material is the written word—that ultimate removal from the mortality of the body, the beautiful and eternal space where love, that ultimate extreme, may dwell.

University of Cincinnati

NOTES

[1] Informal interview with Sanford Ames at the University of Ciucinnati, January 2006.

[2] Vanhoy, Rafe. *What's Forever For*. Tree Publishing Co. Inc., c1978.

WORKS CITED

"Abject." Le Petit Robert: Dictionnaire de la langue française. 2nd ed. 1977.

Barthes, Roland. *A Lover's Discourse*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1978.

Kristeva, Julia. *Pouvoirs de l'horreur; Essai sur l'abjection*. Paris: Éd. du Seuil, 1980.

Lydon, Mary. "Calling yourself a Woman: Marguerite Yourcenar and Colette." *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 3.3 (1991): 26-44.

Nimier, Marie. *La Nouvelle Pornographie*. Paris: Gallimard, 2000.

Smith, Anne-Marie. *Julia Kristeva: Speaking the Unspeakable*. London: Sterling, VA: Pluto Press, 1998.

Sollers, Philipe. *Portrait du joueur*. Paris: Gallimard, 1984.

Vanhoy, Rafe. *What's Forever For*. Tree Publishing Co. Inc., c1978.

Yourcenar, Marguerite. *Le Coup de grâce*. Paris: Gallimard, 1971.