THE QUEST FOR LOVE AND HAPPINESS
IN SELECTED NOVELS OF
FRANCOISE SAGAN

THESIS

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The primary purpose of this study is to demonstrate that the most consistent themes in the selected novels are love and happiness. The novels are: Bonjour tristesse, 1954; Un certain sourire, 1956; La chamade, 1965; Les merveilleux nuages, 1961; Un profil perdu, 1974; Aimez-vous Brahms, 1959; Le garde du coeur, 1968; and De guerre lasse, 1985.

Sagan challenges her heroines, and her readers, to find happiness. Each of the heroines handles the individual search for love and happiness in her own specific way. Throughout the novels, love represents pain and suffering as Sagan describes the emptiness of life in modern society. Her works show the futility of love in a world preoccupied by superficial things.
The Quest for Love and Happiness in Selected Novels of Françoise Sagan is a study of the role that these two themes play in the following eight novels: *Bonjour tristesse*, *Un certain sourire*, *La chamade*, *Les merveilleux nuages*, *Un profil perdu*, *Aimez-vous Brahms*, *Le garde du coeur*, and *De guerre lasse*. All were published between 1954 and 1985.

The selection of these specific novels was based on the belief that they best describe Sagan's view of society, and of relationships between men and women concerning the themes being evaluated. Sagan presents each of the heroines in these novels the challenge of finding happiness, each in her own way.

This thesis is divided into 10 chapters. The introduction explains Sagan's purpose as a writer, gives three important aspects of her own life which appear in her novels, and clarifies her place in the literature of the twentieth century. Each of the novels is given one chapter. For convenience, the heroines are categorized as adolescent, young, and divorced. The conclusion contains a summary, and indicates what Sagan is saying in the works studied about love and happiness in modern society.

It is significant to point out the importance of the following three autobiographical works, since they provide a
valuable insight into Françoise Sagan both as a woman, and
as an author.

The first is *Des bleus à l'âme*, published in 1972, a
skillful blending of a novel and a journal. In it, Sagan
combines episodes in the lives of two protagonists with the
author's personal reflections on the life of a writer. The
second is *Réponses: 1954-1974*, called an autobiography,
when in fact it is a collection of interviews given by
Françoise Sagan during these years. In it, she expresses
her views on such subjects as love, happiness, death, God,
and politics. These interviews were translated into English
by David Macey, and republished as *Nightbird: Conversations
with Françoise Sagan*, in 1980. The third work is *Avec mon
meilleur souvenir*, published in 1984, which received the
*Lire* prize for being one of the 20 best works for that
year. In it are several essays, some related to people she
knew, like Jean-Paul Sartre, Orson Welles, and Tennessee
Williams. One particular essay defines Sagan's ideas on
being a writer.

Two biographies of Sagan have been published. The
first is *Bonjour Françoise!* by Gérard Gohier and Jean
Marvier, in 1957. The second and most current is *Sagan* by
studies in French have been published concerning Sagan's
novels. One, *Le cas Françoise Sagan*, is by Georges Hourdin;
another is entitled *Françoise Sagan*, by Gérard Mourgue.
Both were published in 1958. One other study, *Françoise Sagan et le succès*, by Jean Lignière, was published in 1957. All three are considered the standard and most comprehensive studies which deal exclusively with her first three novels: *Bonjour tristesse*, *Un certain sourire*, and *Dans un mois, dans un an*.

Many scholars have written articles on Sagan in languages other than French; among them English, German, Dutch, and Spanish. Two of the most important in English used in this study are: "Françoise Sagan and the Art of the Beau Geste" by Brigid Brophy, and "Françoise Sagan's Theory of Complicity" by Alfred Cismaru. Other related literature shows that one dissertation has been published, in 1984, by Marian Brown St. Onge, entitled *Narrative Strategies and the Quest for Identity in the French Female Novel of Adolescence: Studies in Duras, Mallet-Joris, Sagan, and Rochefort*. The dissertation is limited to *Bonjour tristesse*, Sagan's first and most important novel.

None of the above studies focuses on the themes of love and happiness. However, two more important later studies include two extensive works on the theme of happiness. One is "Het Geluk of de romans de Françoise Sagan" by Frans Montens and Gabriel Hormaechea, published in 1974. This article is the result of a study done by two students at the University of Bordeaux III. It is different from this study in that not all of the same novels are being studied.
Moreover, the Montens and Hormaechea work stresses the sociological aspects of Sagan's works, such as the sale of her novels. It also tabulates the number of times certain nouns, verbs, and other key words are used in specific works chosen. As opposed to the work by Montens and Hormaechea, this study emphasizes character analysis, plot structures, and Sagan's narrative strategies in the novels listed. One other study, by Henry Zalamsky, entitled "Para una sociología del best-seller: Françoise Sagan," in 1976, concentrates mostly on Bonjour tristesse, and analyzes the sociological success of the novel.

It is hoped that this study will provide insight into Sagan's works concerning the themes of love and happiness. One hopes, also, that it will contribute to understanding Françoise Sagan, the woman, and the writer.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Françoise Sagan is one of the most important women novelists in French literature since the Second World War. She is best known for her first novel, Bonjour tristesse, published in 1954, a best seller not only in France and America, but worldwide. Sagan is listed among the top women writers with an extensive writing career. Since 1954, she has published 14 additional novels, written seven plays, two collections of short stories, four autobiographical works, and one biography. In addition, she has done film reviews, short texts, and a variety of articles on subjects ranging from fashion to travel. None of these works has achieved the immense popularity nor won for her the fame that she attained with Bonjour tristesse.

In 1985, Sagan was awarded the Grand Prix Littéraire de Monaco for the entirety of her works. Besides Bonjour tristesse, many of her other novels have been best sellers as well. Sagan's novels appeal to an enormous number of readers because the psychological relationships she describes are universal. The characters she depicts, the social situations she portrays, and the basic conflicts her protagonists face represent daily problems, common to all
types of readers. For these reasons, her works are worthy as objects of study.

Sagan's purpose as a writer is to describe real life, and to depict experiences and emotions that everyone shares. She believes that "la peur, l'exaspération, l'angoisse, l'ennui, tout cela se retrouve tous les jours dans la vie de n'importe qui s'il est un peu sensible" (Réponses: 1954-1974 82-83). Almost all of her novels are based in a contemporary setting, and deal with the frustrations and conflicts of the modern world. The universality of Saganian heroines, in particular, and the challenges they face have greatly contributed to the success of her works, and to Sagan's fame as a novelist.

At the core of Sagan's novels are her heroines, who seem to be reflections of her own life and character in many ways. Their romantic adventures seem to parallel Sagan's life. In many instances, they are often her own age. Sagan creates heroines who resemble her. They have been selected for study in order to examine the themes of love and happiness. Eight novels and seven heroines have been chosen. Each of the novels describes a specific dilemma that the heroine must face and resolve.

The heroines to be considered come from the following works, and will be studied in this order: Bonjour tristesse, 1954; Un certain sourire, 1956; La chamade, 1965; Les merveilleux nuages, 1961; Un profil perdu, 1974; Aimez-
vous Brahms, 1959; Le garde du coeur, 1968; and De guerre lasse, 1985. The first two include adolescent girls dealing with their first lovers. The next three involve two young women, either married or kept by men. The last three represent divorced women. One of the heroines, Josée, appears in two works: Les merveilleux nuages, and Un profil perdu. Out of a total of 15 novels, some have been excluded because they have male protagonists. Others have several characters involved in a variety of types of relationships with each other. One work, Un orage immobile, concerns the first half of the nineteenth century, and therefore has been excluded. The specific novels chosen show Sagan's ideas concerning love and happiness, and her views about women and society in the mid-twentieth century.

One of the principal themes of the selected novels is love. In Sagan's fictional universe, love represents sadness, pain, and disappointment. Each of the Saganian heroines in this study becomes involved in a triangular relationship with two men. It is this particular aspect that links them together. Sagan believes that the characters in her novels are no different from most people who suffer from loneliness. She maintains that people are basically lonely, and that they try to escape this loneliness through love (Réponses 79). All of her novels,
therefore, focus on variations of the dominant theme of love.

A second principal theme in this study is happiness. The quest for it becomes the primary goal of Saganian heroines. It is that which they struggle to find, and the main reason for their existence. In order to give her heroines a challenge, Sagan gives no precise definition of happiness in the absolute (Meriel "Le phénomène Sagan" Tendances 239). She allows each heroine in this study the individual challenge of dealing with happiness, each in her own way.

Since literature can be seen as a reflection of society, these novels are important for study not only for the themes of love and happiness, but because they deal with women's experiences, and their place in society. Since Sagan began writing in 1954, to the present time, our society has seen the collapse of moral codes, the cult of sexual pleasure, and the liberation of women. All of these factors are important in describing Sagan's views of society.

Before discussing the novels themselves, it is important to acknowledge that in these works, Saganian heroines are unique in that they appear rather bizarre. Critics have always associated Sagan with her heroines, in one way or another, throughout her career. Out of her own creative imagination, Françoise Sagan has transposed in her
works multiple aspects of experiences in her own life. Three specific aspects in particular, solitude, boredom, and freedom, are so strongly linked to both her novels, and her heroines, that they cannot be ignored. Since she became famous at age 18, with her first novel, a brief look into Sagan's past perhaps will help to give meaning to these three aspects, and how strongly they influence the selected novels.

Sagan's Place in Twentieth-Century Literature

Françoise Quoirez, who eventually became known as Françoise Sagan, was born on June 21, 1935, in Cajarc, in the southwestern part of France known as the Lot. She comes from a traditional, bourgeois, Catholic family. The Quoirez family consisted of an industrialist father, and a mother who was a housemaker. The youngest of three children, Sagan's brother and sister are several years older than she, so that she grew up feeling as if she were an only child. Her youth was spent mostly in the company of adults. This family situation caused her to develop a certain shyness in childhood which took years for her to overcome. Curtis Cate believes that her special love for sports cars as a young adult may have been the way she chose to overcome her shyness (Atlantic Monthly 87). Since then, Sagan has always felt a sense of aloneness, or solitude, and it is this same feeling that she recreates within her heroines.
In a recent comprehensive study entitled Françoise Sagan, Judith Graves Miller notes (30) that one of the constant literary projections of élan vital in Sagan's novels is her emphasis on driving fast cars. Since her youth, one of Sagan's great passions has been driving sports cars. In one of her essays in Avec mon meilleur souvenir entitled "La vitesse," Miller also notes, Sagan equates speeding in a shiny sports car with life itself (1). Sagan's emphasis on driving fast, and the thrill it evokes, appears many times in her novels. Curiously enough, Françoise Sagan was almost killed in a car accident while speeding in her Aston-Martin in 1957. She associates speed with the joy of living and happiness, as she shows in this passage:

De même qu'elle rejoint le jeu, le hasard, la vitesse rejoint le bonheur de vivre et, par conséquent, le confus espoir de mourir qui traîne toujours dans ledit bonheur de vivre. C'est là tout ce que je crois vrai, finalement: la vitesse n'est ni un signe, ni une preuve, ni une provocation, ni un défé, mais un élan de bonheur ("La vitesse" 95).

Boredom seems to be as much of a problem for Sagan, even in her childhood, as it is for her heroines. In her youth, Sagan refused to go to any classes that bored her (Crosland Women of Iron and Velvet 193). Another of Sagan's great passions since adolescence has been reading literature. She would read on busses, on the quais, or anywhere else, instead of going to school and being bored.
As a result of this unorthodox and rebellious behavior, she was expelled from both private and religious schools. As a teenager, Sagan had trouble staying in school. As Jan St. Martin points out, "It is said that Françoise regularly failed her examinations in July and then made them up to be readmitted in October" (Critical Survey of Long Fiction 1471). As an adult, Sagan relates in Réponses: 1954-1974 that "La vie matérielle m'ennuie à un point qui frise la maniaquerie. Lorsqu'on me demande ce qu'il faut faire pour le dîner, cela me plonge dans des abîmes de perplexité, d'ennui, d'angoisse" (62). It is this same strong sense of boredom that she recreates within her heroines.

Sagan's intense need for freedom is also evident in her own life, as it is in her heroines. Since 1954, she has been known as a writer who lives life in the fast lane, one who enjoys being totally carefree, impulsive, and irresponsible. While she has earned tremendous amounts of money from the totality of her works over the years, she has lost much of it almost as quickly through compulsive gambling, drinking, fast cars, and simply giving it away to friends. From childhood she has always felt the strong need of being free, and it is this same need, almost a sense of revolt, that she recreates in her heroines. Sagan states, "I always think about the time when I was 10 or 12, living with my parents, and I could be completely irresponsible"
As far as defining Sagan's place in twentieth-century literature, many critics have been puzzled in trying to classify her works. Based on her dominant themes, which revolve around love and happiness, much confusion has resulted as to what label, if any, to place on her novels. As a result, many critics have simply dismissed her as a romantic, for lack of any other definitive category.

One of the problems with classifying Sagan's novels is that she belongs to no contemporary school or movement (Miller 123). She seems to be an independent writer. She is neither a reformist nor, like Christiane Rochefort, a feminist (Miller preface). Alfred Cismaru believes that "Sagan's work does not reveal any major aesthetic, philosophic, or even psychologic truths" ("Françoise Sagan's Theory of Complicity" Dalhousie Review 468-69). He places her novels somewhere between literature and myth, and believes that her intent is to only describe what she sees in the world.

The period after World War II, from 1945 to 1955, was dominated literarily by existentialism under the influence of Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus. After the war, a sense of uncertainty and the idea of absurdity began to take the place of traditional values. The success of existentialism and Sartre seemed to express the anguish of
modern times. The generation of this period began to place an emphasis on man instead of believing in the existence of God. Miller points out that Sagan's novels were believed to be, like many others during this time, the logical development of existentialism (6-7). They seemed to express the emptiness of life for a whole generation.

In *Avec mon meilleur souvenir*, in an essay entitled, "Lettre d'amour à Jean-Paul Sartre,* Sagan discusses her relationship with him, whom she came to know well over a one-year period before his death. The letter appeared in *L'Egoïste* in 1980, and expresses her deep respect for Sartre. In it, she tells how much she has admired him since her adolescence, and relates how they both share the same birthday, as well as the same intense passion for writing.

While Sagan's novels seemed to express the existential anxiety of the time, Margaret Crosland points out that young writers, like her, rejected existentialism and the new novel because they were too abstract (195). These young writers were more interested in enjoying themselves. Sagan states that "She had always been fascinated by the possibility of living fast and hard, drinking, and feeling dazed" (Crosland 196). In living this kind of carefree existence, she believed that she could escape what she describes as the cruelty of her own time.
Kenneth I. Perry describes Sagan's novels as typical of the generation from 1950 to 1960, a generation that possessed everything. Life consisted of "voitures de sport, whisky, vacances à la mer, petits flirts distrayants" ("Une moralité: Deux pièces de Françoise Sagan" Kentucky Romance Quarterly 336). Perry believes that this generation had no need to worry about money, because they had enough, but it seems to be a generation without parents. Since parents were so concerned with material things, youth could only experience boredom and the idea that life has no meaning, an idea similar to the "mal du siècle." As a result, youth only can ease their boredom by searching for love.

As far as Sagan's concept of love and happiness, as it applies to her novels, she can be linked most closely to Marcel Proust. In "Lectures," another essay in Avec mon meilleur souvenir, Sagan discusses her overwhelming passion for writing, and cites four major authors and their works which influenced her in becoming a writer. She relates that as an adolescent, she read Gide's Les nourritures terrestres, Camus's L'homme révolté, and Rimbaud's the Illuminations. The one writer, however, who influenced her most, and whom she considers her master, is Proust (Bourin "Françoise Sagan" Nouvelles littéraires Oct. 17, 1957 7). It is from him that she chose her pseudonym. In A la recherche du temps perdu, she chose the Sagan family name, which appears in many parts of the novel, and represents the
aristocracy. God is absent in the Proustian universe, as well as in the Saganian fictional universe. She states, "la seule idole, le seul Dieu que je respecte étant le temps, il est bien évident que je ne peux me faire plaisir ou mal profondément que par rapport à lui" (Des bleus à l'âme 42). Like Proust, literature is as much a part of her life as it was for him. Furthermore, Sagan emphasizes that in Proust, and in particular, in Albertine disparue, "je découvris qu'il n'y avait pas de limite, pas de fond, que la vérité était partout, la vérité humaine s'entend, partout offerte, et qu'elle était à la fois la seule inaccessible et la seule désirable" (Avec mon meilleur souvenir 212). Through the influence of these four authors, and especially Proust, Sagan discovered a passion for writing which consumed her from adolescence. She also discovered that life itself presents an endless opportunity for writing, since it concerns all mankind, and it is the basic foundation for such themes as love and happiness. Sagan also follows Proust in that she equates love and suffering. Her great passion for writing can be summed up in her definition of literature. She states that literature is "la seule valeur morale que je reconnaisse" (Bourin 7).

Miller recently classified Sagan as a "popular writer" whose novels can be labeled "popular literature" (preface). She believes that Sagan's novels fall into the category of
romances because they are easy to read, and contain certain elements of fantasy and myth. Along with other popular French women writers such as Françoise Mallet-Joris, Geneviève Dormann, and Régine Deforges, Sagan's novels share one particular aspect of their fiction. It is that their heroines are all involved in plots centered around love (Miller 123). In addition to love, Sagan's first two novels explore the "family romance," the most basic type of romance (Miller 18). Based on Freud's psychoanalytic approach, the family romance centers on the traditional family, and a male-dominated society.

In summing up Sagan's place in twentieth-century French literature, one may conclude that rather than being an existentialist, Sagan is simply an independent writer. Although many critics consider some elements of her fiction to be existentialist, such as the emptiness of life and the absence of God, the emphasis of her novels is more on love and happiness. While she is a great admirer of Sartre, she is equally a great follower of Proust, on whom she bases some of her love themes. Whether a reader may consider Sagan an existentialist, a romantic, or a popular writer, what is important is her popularity, the many best sellers that she has created, and her importance as one of the outstanding writers since World War II.
Bonjour tristesse is an extraordinary novel which made Françoise Sagan famous before she was 20. The novel was considered mildly shocking when it was published, in 1954, but in France it won the Prix des Critiques, an award similar to the Pulitzer Prize in America. It made her an international celebrity, and established her reputation as a young novelist. The novel sold one million copies in France in its first year alone (Réponses 11). As of the sixties, it had been translated into 23 languages, and sales increased to four million copies (Miller 5). It was also cited as being one of the three best-selling novels of 1955 (Prescott New York Times Book Review June 5, 1955).

Miller believes that Bonjour tristesse is "France's greatest postwar literary sensation" (4). One of the features which makes the novel so unique is the youth of the author and of the heroine. They are almost the same age. In 1953, Sagan was a student at the Sorbonne. She had passed her baccalaureat, but had failed her first-year examinations. By failing, she was unable to continue her education. It was during that summer when she wrote Bonjour tristesse in several weeks, at age 18. Both Cécile and
Dominique, Sagan's first two heroines, are also students. Success came quickly for her, perhaps more so than even she had imagined. The novel was published in March, 1954; it became an immediate best seller, and by June 21, her 19th birthday, she had won the Prix des Critiques.

In a 1984 dissertation on *Bonjour tristesse* and three other French novels, Marion Brown St. Onge reveals that Sagan has been compared most often to Françoise Mallet-Joris, who published *Le rempart des bêguines* in 1951 (Narrative Strategies 96). The novels are remarkably similar, and both have adolescent heroines who live with their fathers. What is significant about them, St. Onge emphasizes, is that they "are the first French novels of adolescence written by adolescent women" (65).

Another feature which makes the novel so significant is that in looking back through French literature, except for Rimbaud, one cannot find many young writers, especially young women writers (Crosland 198). This is especially true before the Second World War. Sagan follows in the steps of Raymond Radiguet, who published *Le diable au corps* in 1923, at the age of 20. Sagan's heroine, Cécile, as Pierre de Boisdeffre notes, "est la soeur cadette du héro de Radiguet" (Histoire de la littérature de langue française 202). Radiguet's novel concerning the immoral behavior of Raymond, his hero, and the "imagined happiness of the adult" was part of the general uneasiness among adolescents at the
time it was written (Hatzfeld Trends and Styles in Twentieth-Century French Literature 129). Cécile recalls a similar immature perversity in Bonjour tristesse (Hatzfeld 129). Bonjour tristesse drew as much attention through publicity in the fifties as Le diable au corps did in the twenties.

For the convenience of the reader who may not be familiar with Sagan's novels, a brief summary of the plot of each novel is included, beginning with Bonjour tristesse:

Part I concerns Cécile, the 17-year-old heroine, and her widowed father, Raymond. They have left Paris for a carefree vacation in a secluded villa on the Côte d'Azur. As a playboy, Raymond has had a succession of mistresses over the years since his wife's death 15 years earlier. His current mistress is Elsa Mackenbourg, age 29, who has joined them for their summer vacation. Cécile is on the verge of taking her first lover, Cyril, a young law student. He and his mother have a nearby villa. Cécile is also a student, but she has failed her high school examinations at the beginning of the novel. Curiously, in Part I, chapter 3, Cyril is age 25, but in Part II, chapter 3, he is age 26.

Cécile hopes to spend the summer enjoying a carefree existence, with the pleasures of the sun, of the beach, and most of all, of being with Cyril. Elsa poses no threat to the strong bond she and her father share. Just as life seems
ideal, Cécile's vacation is interrupted by the arrival of Anne Larsen, age 42, an old friend of her deceased mother. Eventually, Anne and Raymond fall in love and make plans to marry. Cécile, however, only sees Anne as a threat to her freedom and life of pleasure. Would a stepmother try to mold her life, restrict her freedom, and make her stop seeing Cyril? This is the dilemma which poses the main crisis in the novel.

Part II deals with how Cécile resolves this crisis. Thinking as an adolescent, she decides that Anne must be eliminated. She devises a plot whereby Cyril and Elsa pretend to be lovers only to trick her father, through jealousy, into thinking that they are having an affair. The plot is successful, but as Anne tries to leave Cécile and her father in disgust, she is killed in a car accident, an apparent suicide.

Cécile's preoccupation with being happy begins on the first page as she relates her story, in the first person, recalling a time in her past when she was "parfaitement heureuse" (Bonjour tristesse 13; hereafter BT). That period was last summer while on vacation with her father, Raymond. The opening pages portray the carefree adolescent freedom that Cécile enjoys living with her father and Elsa, whom she describes as "une grande fille rousse, mi-crate, mi-mondaine, . . . assez simple et sans pretentions serieuses" (14).
The intense interaction of each of the characters in *Bonjour tristesse* becomes the driving force for Cécile in her pursuit of happiness. Being happy is her primary reason for living, and it is her ultimate goal throughout the novel. As the title suggests, the story begins with a lyrical note of present sadness, and then continues on to relate what events have led to the present time. Sagan enables the reader to focus all the attention on Cécile and her quest for happiness by the simplicity of the plot. The lucidity of the storyteller, Cécile, as she relates her experience, is what makes the novel so extraordinary.

One of the major narrative strategies in Sagan's novels is the use of a melancholy tone, which is achieved through the emotional state of the heroine (Miller 17). The poem by Paul Eluard which precedes the novel, and especially the title, foretells of the underlying sadness throughout the novel, and its tragic ending. Such key words as "ennui," and "insouciance" help to maintain this tone in all of the novels studied (Miller 17).

The role of the father is of primary importance in Cécile's search for happiness. A strong complicity, or bond, is established between them (Mourgue Françoise Sagan 35). Cécile is happy as long as she alone can share her father's love. Since her graduation from convent school two years earlier, they have had a close relationship, evident as Raymond states, "Mon vieux complice, . . . Que ferais-je
sans toi?" (BT 21). Throughout the novel, she is as much concerned with his happiness as she is her own. It is important to note, as Claude Meriel points out, that Bonjour tristesse "est pratiquement le seul roman où F. Sagan s'intéresse aux parents, peut-être parce que la génération d'après-guerre est une génération sans parents" (236).

In spite of their complicity, Cécile and her father seem to have a strange relationship, a fact which is evident, first, in their lifestyle, and second, in their views concerning love (Zalamansky Teoria de la novela 499). As for their lifestyle, since Cécile has lived with Raymond, he has had a series of mistresses. But what is unusual is that she is quite aware of it, and that she is pleased with his behavior. Raymond leads a completely amoral and hedonistic lifestyle, and Cécile's happiness comes from sharing his Bohemian existence. As far as love is concerned, Cécile's search for it plays an important role in her pursuit of happiness. She knows little of love as an adolescent, but she is eager to learn. What she learns about it comes directly from her father. She states, "Il refusait systématiquement les notions de fidélité, de gravité, d'engagement. Il m'expliquait qu'elles étaient arbitraires, stériles" (BT 21).

At this point, Sagan demonstrates a second important narrative strategy, a complex voicing technique which she never quite equals in any of her other novels (Miller 26).
The narrator, Cécile, as Miller stresses, is divided into two "I's," in which "Both I's possess the powers of introspection, thus the Experienced I can reflect upon herself at the moment of telling the story just as the Acting I reflects upon herself as she acts" (26). As Cécile and her father speak about love, the "Acting I" is saying, "Cette conception me séduisait: des amours rapides, violentes et passagères" (BT 21). The "Experienced I" is saying. "Je n'étais pas à l'âge où la fidélité séduit" (BT 21). Miller believes that this technique confuses the reader's rapport with the heroine (24).

Cécile's adolescent dream of happiness is to enjoy a life of pleasure, like her father. Montens and Hormaechea observe that at the beginning of the novel, she leads the easy life of a spoiled child ("Het Geluk of de romans van Françoise Sagan" Forum der Letteren 120-21). She states right from the beginning that "Le goût du plaisir, du bonheur représente le seul côté cohérent de mon caractère" (BT 32). Gérard Mourgue explains, however, that part of the mythology of Bonjour tristesse is that "la paresse règne en maîtresse" (59-60). He believes that idleness is as much physical as it is moral for both Cécile and Raymond, and that whiskey also plays a large role in their artificial paradise.
It is important to recognize that Sagan's novels describe only upper-class society so that money is never a problem for her heroines. As Henry Zalamansky points out, she chooses professional occupations for her characters in order to enable them to live an idle lifestyle (506). Raymond and Anne are both in the advertising and fashion fields. He is a publicist, and she is a fashion designer. Elsa works as an extra in the movies and theater. Even though Cécile is only a student, she is able to live a luxurious lifestyle provided by her father, who can fulfill all her needs. According to Mourgue, she is able to enjoy "plaisirs faciles," or such luxuries as fast cars and new clothes (34). These pleasures, especially of driving fast, indicate the vital energy that Sagan depicts in her adolescent heroine, thus adding joy and happiness to her life.

Throughout Bonjour tristesse, the only real action Sagan depicts is the major confrontation between young and old. It is portrayed in the struggle between the adolescent heroine, Cécile, and the older woman, Anne. The conflict begins when Cécile learns that Anne is coming to visit, then it gets progressively worse as the novel continues. Anne becomes the force which threatens Cécile's happiness. Cécile prefers the company of Elsa, as opposed to Anne, who is much too distinguished and refined for Cécile and her father.
One of the outstanding features of Sagan's style is how she portrays Cécile's confused adolescent feelings of love. She meets Cyril on the beach, and he later becomes her first lover. As Mourgue relates, "La beauté de Cyril est son atout principal" (31). Cécile prefers men her father's age, but she is deeply attracted to the younger Cyril, who is good-looking, sincere, and remains deeply interested in her throughout the novel. As their relationship begins to develop, her adolescent idea of love is clearly evident as she states: "Nous sortions ensemble souvent le soir dans les boîtes de Saint-Tropez, nous dansions sur les défaillances d'une clarinette en nous disant des mots d'amour que j'avais oubliés le lendemain, mais si doux le soir même" (BT 48).

The turning point comes in chapter six when Raymond drops Elsa, falls in love with Anne, and decides to marry her. Raymond, amazed to find that he loves Anne instead of Elsa, decides to settle down to a conventional lifestyle. But his decision only poses a threat to Cécile's happiness. She knows that he has been happy many times before with other women, but fails to understand how this time he could have fallen in love so quickly. While she is concerned about his happiness, she is much more concerned about her own.

Anne threatens Cécile's happiness, the life of pleasure she shares with her father, in three principal ways. The
first way is through love. In the beginning, Anne just wants to teach her "une leçon d'amour" (Mourgue 38). She tries to explain that "Vous vous faites de l'amour une idée un peu simpliste. Ce n'est pas une suite de sensations indépendantes les unes des autres ..." (BT 46). As an adolescent, Cécile cannot understand this concept of love. As she catches Cécile and Cyril kissing one evening, Anne forbids her to see him again, but the incident only sets off a revolt in her against Anne. The controversy is deepened between the adolescent heroine and the older woman as Cécile decides to eliminate Anne from their lives.

A second way that Anne threatens Cécile's happiness is by blocking her strong urge for freedom. The precise statement that Sagan makes about being free is evident in her heroine, as Cécile asserts her need for freedom:

Il fallait absolument se secouer, retrouver mon père et notre vie d'antan. De quels charmes ne se paraient pas pour moi subitement les deux années joyeuses et incohérentes que je venais d'achever, ces deux années que j'avais si vite reniées l'autre jour ... La liberté de penser, et de mal penser et de penser peu, la liberté de choisir moi-même ma vie, de me choisir moi-même. Je ne peux dire 'd'être moi-même' puisque je n'étais rien qu'une pâte modelable, mais celle de refuser les moules (BT 78).

Anne is a threat to Cécile's happiness, and her freedom, because she represents order and discipline. In order to escape being changed into orderly beings by Anne, Cécile defends the complicity between herself and her father, a complicity based only on freedom, and
irresponsibility (Miller 23). She now feels betrayed by her father, and makes the final decision that Anne must be eliminated.

The third and perhaps the most important way Anne threatens Cécile's happiness is through the conflict concerning intelligence. Cécile's obsession with proving her intelligence is evident throughout the novel (St. Onge 105). She states at the beginning that "Mais Anne ne me considérerait pas comme un être pensant. Il me semblait urgent, primordial soudain de la dé tromper" (BT 51). From this point on, Anne continuously plagues Cécile to study for her examination, which she has already failed, to try to pass it in October. Throughout Bonjour tristesse, the question over intelligence arises at various intervals. As St. Onge points out, "The bovine Elsa is stupid, Cécile's father and Cyril are naive, unimaginative and easily manipulable" (105). Cécile, Raymond, Cyril, and Elsa are all in opposition to Anne, who is intelligent. In Cécile's strong urge to retain the happiness she once knew with her father, St. Onge believes that Cécile's obsession with proving her intelligence is at the base of her entire story (105). But the failed examination and Cécile's intelligence have more importance than it would seem. Deeply embedded in the novel are events linked to related experiences of the author's adolescence (St. Onge 65). Sagan's failure of her
own examination at the Sorbonne was an embarrassing family situation, as was her history of failing tests in July, and making them up by October. St. Onge also believes that Cécile's determination to prove her intelligence is as deeply rooted in the novel as it is in the life of the author herself (105).

Anne presents for Cécile a real challenge. What makes the novel so unique is how Sagan portrays her ambivalent feelings for Anne, whom she basically respects. As an adolescent, she wants on the one hand to be like Anne, who is intelligent, beautiful, and refined. Cécile considers her the "idealized representation of mature, independent femininity" (St. Onge 105). She even hopes to be like her one day. But on the other hand, she sees Anne as a judge, an older woman who wants to control her life. In this respect, instead of identifying with her, she wants to eliminate Anne altogether from her life.

Cécile's true rebellion, St. Onge further believes, is that "Anne is the force which is not only repressing her natural desire for freedom but, through judging her irresponsible attitude toward life, is preventing Cécile from liking herself" (109). She admits that "Moi, si naturellement faite pour le bonheur, l'amabilité, l'insouciance, j'entrais par elle dans un monde de reproches, de mauvaise conscience où, trop inexperte à l'introspection, je me perdais moi-même" (BT 77).
From this point on, Cécile manipulates Elsa, Raymond, and Cyril in a plot she devises in order to eliminate Anne from their lives. First, she induces Elsa to pretend that she and Cyril are lovers. She knows that Elsa is close to Cyril's age, and that it would be believable. She also convinces her that Raymond really loves her, instead of Anne, thereby provoking revenge in Elsa. The following passage illustrates Cécile's skills as a manipulator:

Je l'avais prise par la vanité, le sentiment, je l'avais décidée en quelques instants, elle qui venait juste pour prendre sa valise. C'était drôle, d'ailleurs: j'avais visé Elsa, j'avais aperçu la faille, ajusté mes coups avant de parler. Pour la première fois, j'avais connu ce plaisir extraordinaire: percer un être, le découvrir, l'amener au jour et, là, le toucher (BT 101).

Second, Cécile manipulates her father by getting him to walk with her in the pine woods one morning, observing Cyril and Elsa together. Raymond is angered at seeing his past girlfriend, Elsa, with Cyril, and he becomes jealous. Cécile cleverly knows that her father is so vain that "il n'a jamais admis qu'une femme belle qui lui a appartenu se console si vite et, en quelque sorte, sous ses yeux. Surtout avec un homme plus jeune que lui" (BT 99). She makes him feel like reconquering Elsa. Miller points out that the pine woods is a leitmotif which adds to the "fablelike quality" of the novel (23).

Finally, Cécile persuades Cyril to go along with her plot. By now he has asked her to marry him but she refuses,
stating, "Je ne voulais pas l'épouser. Je l'aimais mais je ne voulais pas l'épouser. Je ne voulais épouser personne" (BT 106). Cécile believes that Anne would never approve of her getting married. Cyril, as naive as he is, is happy simply knowing that Cécile will finally have parents, and falsely believes that she will eventually marry him, once Anne is out of Cécile's life.

Sagan seems to establish in her first, young heroine a dual personality which makes Cécile appear rather bizarre. The ability of Sagan to create such a heroine is one of the reasons why the novel is shocking. On one hand, Cécile appears to be an innocent, young adolescent searching for happiness through pleasure, and trying to find love. But on the other hand, in her revenge and plot against Anne, she resembles a monster (Miller 26). It is this skillful characterization on Sagan's part of her heroine which intrigues the reader. One is torn between feeling sorry for Cécile and condemning her.

One of the crucial scenes is the one in which Cécile and Cyril finally become lovers, even though she refuses to marry him. Georges Hourdin notes that she very simply relates "le récit de son initiation sexuelle" (Le cas Françoise Sagan 77). What is important is how Cécile reacts to it. After they make love, Cécile states, "Je ne sais pas si c'était de l'amour que j'avais pour lui en ce moment -
j'ai toujours été inconstante et je ne tiens pas à me croire autre que je ne suis - mais en ce moment je l'aimais plus que moi-même" (BT 122).

Zalamansky believes that the main problem in *Bonjour tristesse* is the problem of youth, which is at the center of the novel (497). He notes that throughout the work, Cécile resembles the adults by what she does. In her pursuit of pleasure, she does the same things that they do. Like her father, she smokes and drinks whiskey, sometimes too much. She loves fast cars, and thinks nothing of going to bars, casinos, or parties with him. The adult role she is playing is now complete, since she has acquired a lover.

Sagan once stated, "Je m'intéresse à la solitude, ... comme à une des choses directement liée à l'amour" (Meriel 241). It is significant to note how throughout *Bonjour tristesse*, Cécile remains basically alone in love. As Meriel points out, "La solitude apporte avec elle l'ennui" (241). The one thing that Cécile fears is the boredom of everyday life. She confesses that "Mais je craignais l'ennui, la tranquillité plus que tout. Pour être intérieurement tranquilles, il nous fallait à mon père et à moi l'agitation extérieure" (BT 159).

The conclusion of *Bonjour tristesse*, chapters nine through 12, describes the denouement of the plot. Throughout the novel, Raymond, Cécile, and Elsa have enjoyed the greatest freedom, a perfect amorality, and a carefree
existence. In one last scene, they succeed in their plan to eliminate Anne from their lives. As Raymond is lured by Elsa on the beach, Anne accidently observes the two of them together. The reader last sees Anne angrily driving away. Shortly after, Cécile and Raymond learn that Anne's car has plunged off a cliff. Although her death seems to be an accident, Cécile considers it a suicide. Her death ends their summer vacation, and at the same time ends Cécile's love affair with Cyril.

As Marjorie Perloff points out, the vague feeling of sadness Cécile and Raymond feel after Anne's death reflects Sagan's "own response to human suffering" ("The Joy of Jong" Washington Post Book World). After her funeral, neither father nor daughter grieve for long over her death. After one month, Raymond finds a new mistress and Cécile acquires a new lover, Philippe, a cousin of Anne's. They talk of plans for their next vacation, the villa they will rent in Juan-les-Pins.

As far as love is concerned, what Cécile thinks is love has only been a disappointment. She thinks she is in love with Cyril, he becomes her first lover, and she loses her virginity. Now she realizes that "je ne l'avais jamais aimé. Je l'avais trouvé bon et attirant; j'avais aimé le plaisir qu'il me donnait; mais je n'avais pas besoin de lui" (BT 182-83). Cyril only became an object of pleasure for her, someone who would help her eliminate her future
stepmother. Instead of finding love, she has found only the transitory nature of it.

As far as Cécile's quest for happiness, a life of pleasure, what she thought would result in happiness has turned out exactly the opposite, and resulted in the death of Anne. She and her father are alone again at the end of the novel, as they were at the beginning. In one last important scene concerning Anne's death, Cécile states, "J'écris Dieu au lieu de hasard; mais nous ne croyions pas en Dieu. Déjà bienheureux en cette circonstance de croire au hasard" (BT 187). Cécile is happy simply believing in fate, despite a recurrent remorse which she has every morning. Since she and her father do not believe in God, Sagan releases them from any moral responsibility for what has happened (Hatzfeld 130).

Boisdeffre maintains that "La tristesse reste le maître mot de l'oeuvre" (203). The novel begins with a note of sadness, and it ends on the same note, as Cécile feels troubled by Anne's memory, at dawn, when she is in bed. She is unable to escape the feeling of sadness underlying the carefree existence that she has known throughout the novel.

Although Bonjour tristesse has been an extremely successful novel, critics have judged Sagan rather harshly. Throughout the years, many of her novels have been on the best seller lists regularly, both in France, and in America. All of her novels have been translated into English, and
other foreign languages. The French and foreign public buys them, yet even in the eighties, Sagan is famous, but she is not well-known (Réponses 11). Many critics believe her success is undeserved, and refuse to take her novels seriously. She has always been associated with controversy, either in her own life, or in the types of heroines she creates.

In spite of the success of Bonjour tristesse, the novel was considered rather shocking in 1954 because of the strong love theme, and the peculiar relationship of Cécile and her father. It was believed that Sagan broke the code of moral conduct through her heroine. During the fifties, as opposed to standards of the eighties, for Cécile to take her first lover, lose her virginity, and then tell about it was a major breakthrough in traditional beliefs. As Miller points out, Sagan herself has said that the idea that Cécile "could make love, enjoy it, and not have to pay at the end of the novel by a clandestine abortion or a hasty marriage... spoke to the overwhelming need of young people to throw off the shackles of sexual oppression" (5).

The novel also offended some Catholics. Since Sagan had a Catholic background, not only critics, but mothers criticized her for writing a novel in which a young woman takes her first lover, and tries to get rid of her potential stepmother. Sagan's cool, detached response only offended
them even more. She states, "Many of the daughters of those women have had children out of wedlock . . . but I'm not sure if it was before or after they read my book" (Christian "Françoise Sagan—Literary Imp" Cosmopolitan 37).

Sagan states that the Prix des Critiques was the principal reason for her tremendous success (Réponses 46). Among those who were outraged by the award being given to her was François Mauriac, who wrote an article in Le Figaro soon after she had won, describing Sagan as "un charmant monstre de dix-huit ans" (Poiret-Delpech Bonjour Sagan 44). Mauriac reproached the critics who awarded her the prize because he believed that only the literary aspects of Bonjour tristesse were taken into consideration, whereas the moral aspects of the novel should have been considered (Guggenheim "Françoise Sagan devant la critique" French Review 9). Many of the young novelists concerned with the spiritual life of France, Mauriac believed, would have been better choices for the prize. In spite of his objections, as Madeleine Chapsal cites, criticism of the novel only helped to increase sales, encourage bids for film rights, and promote other publishers in several countries to translate it ("Paris Report on a Charming Monster" Reporter 46).

Other factors provoked more controversy for Sagan. Many critics believe her success is more sociological than literary. One critic, Boisdeffre, equates Sagan's success
to that of "une vedette" (201). She became known as a literary starlet, famous in a sociological sense rather than in a literary one. She also became a legend, "l'écrivain le plus célèbre de France-le seul dont la légende, comme celle de Sartre, ait joui d'une notoriété internationale" (Boisdeffre 201). Her instant fame developed into the same type of worship as that for James Dean in America, due to her adolescence. But Sagan became so caught up in the legend, both in her own life and with her image, that the public eventually associated her with money, whiskey, and fast cars (Réponses 11-12). Some people associated Sagan with her heroine, Cécile, and assumed that she only lived a life of pleasure. From the publicity, and the legend that had been built up, Sagan soon became known as a spokesperson for a whole generation of young, aimless adults. As Boisdeffre notes, the modern world offered neither faith nor happiness in the fifties, so Bonjour tristesse, through the adolescent Cécile, came to represent youth (202). Because of all these factors, an international scandal developed over Bonjour tristesse. Spain banned the novel on the grounds that it was immoral (Garis 66). People claimed that Sagan's father had written the novel instead of her (Josselin "Les années Sagan" Nouvel observateur 16). Still others thought it a hoax that the novel was actually written by a young woman of school age (Christian 37).
Based on the success of *Bonjour tristesse*, critics were completely puzzled as to how such a short novel, written by a teenager, could be so successful. For several years after its publication, the major question which concerned everyone was whether or not *Bonjour tristesse* is just a simple story of love, or if it has any moral meaning. As far as Cécile's amorality, as Michel Guggenheim confirms, if there is one certainty about the novel, it is that Cécile's character is "parfaitement amoral" (*Françoise Sagan* 8). Hourdin maintains that "Cécile n'est pas une vraie cynique" (103). At the end of the novel, she feels remorse for the evil deed she has committed in devising a plot to eliminate Anne. She experiences "la conscience du bien et du mal" (Hourdin 34). But good and evil are two absolute terms. When Cécile is faced with the choice between them, she chooses the latter, not realizing that her choice is going to be irrevocable, and that it will end in tragedy. As an adolescent, Cécile is too young to imagine the consequences of her choice, but does it offer her an escape from the moral responsibility of what happens?

Sagan writes of *Bonjour tristesse* that "C'était l'histoire toute simple d'une fille qui faisait l'amour avec un garçon, au milieu de quelques complications passionnelles. Il n'y avait pas de conséquences morales pour elle" (*Réponses* 48). This statement is perhaps the key to the meaning of the novel. Since Sagan's only moral value
is literature, she is indifferent to the concepts of good and evil. Based on Sagan's concept of morality, it is clear that she has intended no moral implications in *Bonjour tristesse*. As an atheist, Sagan relates that:

> I never make moral judgments. Making judgments for or against my characters bores me enormously, it doesn't interest me at all. The only morality for a novelist is the morality of his esthétique. I write the books, they come to an end, and that's all that concerns me (Fuller and Silvers "The Art of Fiction" *Paris Review Interviews* XV 87).

Throughout the novel, Cécile's main goal is the pursuit of love and happiness. Her adolescent dream of happiness is to enjoy a life of pleasure, like her father. She tries to manipulate the other characters in order to eliminate Anne, the one person who opposes her happiness. If there is a message in *Bonjour tristesse*, it concerns what Sagan says about existence. Zalamansky relates that the revelation of the consumer society is in fact one of the reasons for the astounding success of the novel (501). He believes that the type of world Sagan presents is one that has no need of moral constraint, since the key word in the Saganian universe is happiness (501). The novel appeals to a consumer society, which is evident in the pleasures that contribute to Cécile's happiness, such as the sun, fast cars, sailing, smoking, drinking whiskey, and making love. These are the dimensions of the world "to be consumed."

Sagan's message, Zalamansky concludes, is that if one is
going to consume, then such an existence is insignificant (501).

Bonjour tristesse portrays an adolescent who relates her story simply and lucidly. In creating a heroine like Cécile, both innocent and perverse, Françoise Sagan shows her outstanding ability as a precocious adolescent author.
Un certain sourire is another outstanding novel, published in 1956, just two years after Bonjour tristesse. The simplicity of the plot is equal to the one of Sagan's first novel, and the heroine, Dominique, is again the center of attention throughout the novel. At the same time Un certain sourire appeared, Sagan herself was about to marry her first husband, Guy Schoeller, a publisher, who was more than 20 years older than she. The plot of her novel is closer to reality as Sagan describes a young woman who falls in love with an older man, and it seems to describe Sagan, also a young woman falling in love with someone older. Although she married Guy Schoeller in 1958, the marriage only lasted two years.

Like Cyril, Dominique, and her first lover, Bertrand, are law students. While Cécile is concerned with proving her intelligence, Dominique has little interest in school. Parents play almost no role in this novel, but remain distant, uninvolved figures, still mourning for a son who died years ago. The popularity of Un certain sourire is evident in the 850,000 copies sold within the first three months of its publication, and like Bonjour tristesse, it
has been translated into 23 languages (Cismaru 460). The universality of the heroine, her problem, and how Sagan describes the emotional development of Dominique is what makes the novel so appealing. Because of the popularity of Sagan's first two novels, both were made into movies in 1958.

A brief summary of the plot is as follows:

Part I concerns Dominique, another adolescent heroine, and her relationship with Bertrand. Both are students at the Sorbonne. In love with each other, their uneventful love affair consists of café discussions, lovemaking, and relating to each other in their boring lifestyles. Then Dominique meets Bertrand's 40-year-old uncle, Luc, who is a businessman. He has been married for 10 years to Françoise. As soon as his wife leaves to visit friends, Luc immediately pursues Dominique. She is intrigued by his interest in her, and finds him appealing. By the end of Part I, Dominique no longer loves Bertrand.

Part II establishes Dominique's love affair with Luc. Françoise leaves for her mother's for two weeks, thereby leaving Luc free. He sends a letter to Dominique, asking her to meet him in Avignon on September 22. Curiously, on September 1, she sets out directly for Avignon in order to meet him there, but it is three weeks until the time that he is supposed to be there. The next scene finds them together
in Avignon, then Cannes. Can Dominique find meaning for her life with Luc? Does she love him any more than she loves Bertrand? Does she realize that their affair is only temporary? This is Dominique's dilemma, one which she must resolve on her own.

Part III deals with what Dominique has learned from her experience of love. As soon as they return to Paris, Françoise finds out about the affair, and Luc breaks off Dominique's friendship. Dominique now discovers that she really loves Luc. But after going to America, he forgets about her. When he returns, he decides to stay with his wife, whom he loves, and Dominique is left alone. From her affair, she learned how to experience emotions. In her case, it has meant pain and suffering.

Out of all of Sagan's novels, Un certain sourire probably best describes modern boredom, an idea which resembles the "mal du siècle." The novel opens with a phrase by Roger Vailland, "L'amour c'est ce qui se passe entre deux personnes qui s'aiment." The melancholic tone of the phrase forewarns of the escape from the solitude of daily life, evident throughout Un certain sourire (Lamy Sagan 109). In Bonjour tristesse, Cécile begins her story by relating how happy she is to spend time with her father. In this novel, Dominique begins by telling of her experience, also in the first person, and what keeps her
from being happy. Like Cécile, Dominique's ultimate goal throughout the work is to find happiness, but the only way for her to attain it comes through the absence of boredom. The boredom of everyday life is the major problem that hinders Dominique's life, that which keeps her from finding happiness. Cismaru defines boredom, in Sagan terms, as the result of the weariness of earthly existence, "the logical consequence of a Godless universe, of the solitude of man who has no hell to fear, no Paradise to hope for" (460). As a lucid heroine, Dominique is quite aware of this consequence. She realizes that she lives in a world without reason, a world where chance reigns, and that her universe consists only of temporality. On the first page, one learns that boredom is a problem for Dominique. She states, "Je m'ennuyais un peu, modestement;" (Un certain sourire 13; hereafter, UCS). By the end of the first chapter, one also learns that literary talk bores Dominique, and so does Bertrand. She admits that "Il ne m'est rien, ... il m'ennuie, je suis indifférente à tout, je ne suis rien, rien, parfaitement rien" (16).

Throughout Un certain sourire, the only real action Sagan depicts is the confrontation between young and old, as in Bonjour tristesse. It is portrayed by the adolescent heroine, Dominique, and the older man, Luc, as well as the older woman, his wife, Françoise. The major struggle Sagan shows is within Dominique herself to overcome boredom, and
to find meaning for her life. As Miller points out, her dilemma is a specific one common to women. Dominique is searching for her own identity, and for the meaning of her existence (31). Bernard de Fallois observes that in the following specific passage, describing the emptiness surrounding Dominique's life, Sagan uses one of her most common literary tricks called "la chute antithétique" ("Un ouvrage fort bien fait" La novelle revue française 896). He specifically points out how the entire paragraph below is serious, but the last sentence suddenly ends with an odd thought, "j'étais probablement hégatique," completely the opposite in spirit to what has just been stated:

Je me levais, j'allais au cours, je retrouvais Bertrand, nous déjeunions. Il y avait la bibliothèque de la Sorbonne, les cinémas, le travail, les terrasses des cafés, les amis. Le soir nous allions danser, ou bien nous rentrions chez Bertrand, nous nous allongions sur son lit, nous nous aimions et après nous parlions longtemps dans le noir. J'étais bien, et il y avait toujours en moi, comme une bête chaude et vivante, ce goût d'ennui, de solitude et parfois d'exaltation. Je me disais que j'étais probablement hégatique (UCS 22-23).

Compared to Cécile, Dominique is a passive heroine. While Cécile takes charge and manipulates people, Dominique prefers to be led. Her own sense of identity is dependent, at first upon Bertrand, and later upon Luc. She states about Bertrand that "Il n'admettait pas que je fusse heureuse sans lui. Mes bonheurs ne devaient être que des moments essentiels de notre vie commune" (UCS 14). It is
important to recognize that Sagan's intent is directed as a specific problem to women, rather than as a philosophical question of why man exists, in that Dominique seeks to find a "separate existence" from men (Miller 31).

Neither Bertrand nor school are able to fulfill the emptiness Dominique feels. The following passage indicates that she believes this absence of emotions is normal (Mourgue 75). She relates that:

Au fond, qu'avais-je à faire? Travailler un peu un examen qui ne me mènerait pas à grand-chose, traîner au soleil, être aimée, sans grande réciprocité de ma part, par Bertrand. Je l'aimais bien, d'ailleurs. La confiance, la tendresse, l'estime ne me paraissaient pas dédaignables et je pensais peu à la passion. Cette absence d'émotions véritables me semblait être la manière la plus normale de vivre. Vivre, au fond, c'était s'arranger pour être le plus content possible. Et ce n'était déjà pas si facile (UCS 21).

Dominique's love for Bertrand adds nothing meaningful to her life. His life is as empty and meaningless as hers. They have a basically boring romance, which consists of meeting at cafés, smoking, drinking whiskey, and making love. Cismaru explains that the problem with their relationship is that Bertrand is far from the image of Dominique's ideal man (458). He describes Bertrand as "a boy who lacks the imagination and the savoir-faire she dreams of in an ideal man" (458). When she meets his uncle, Luc, she is immediately impressed, as he is a world traveler, refined, and knows how to treat her like a real lady. He is polite, generous, and considerate of her. Luc
takes her elbow as they cross streets. He and Françoise buy her a new coat. Luc is in keeping with the type of society that Sagan depicts in Bonjour tristesse. Like Raymond, he works in the professional world as an international businessman, and therefore, is also able to enjoy a luxurious lifestyle (Miller 27). His wife has no particular occupation. Dominique is only a student, but her needs are taken care of throughout the rest of the novel by Françoise and Luc.

As both Montens and Hormaechea reveal in their study, the stereotype of happiness in Sagan's novels can be described as a flight into hedonistic emptiness (100). Dominique tries to escape the emptiness of life, and her life of boredom by being led into an affair with Luc. She hopes to find happiness and meaning for her life, that which she is unable to find at the beginning of the novel.

One of the interesting features of Sagan's novels is that throughout them, one soon becomes aware of the author's presence, and at points, it seems as if it is Sagan herself speaking. For example, when Dominique tells what she finds so appealing about Luc, it is almost as if Sagan herself is telling us about how much she loves cars, which has been stated as one of her great passions. Dominique states about Luc that "Il avait une voiture découverte, rapide, qu'il conduisait bien" (UCS 33).
As Françoise leaves to spend time with friends, Luc begins to pursue Dominique. First, he invites her to dinner, where they have the chance to be alone, and explains his feelings about love. He states that "c'était une bonne chose, moins importante qu'on ne le prétendait, mais qu'il fallait être aimé et aimer soi-même assez chaudement pour être heureux... Il me dit qu'il était très heureux parce qu'il aimait beaucoup Françoise qui l'aimait beaucoup lui-même" (UCS 37). Next, he proposes an affair with Dominique by leading her to believe that they are the same type. In trying to convince her, he states, "Vous êtes bien à plaire. Si encore vous aviez quelques notions de morale élémentaire. Mais vous n'en avez pas plus que moi. Et vous êtes gentille. Et vous aimez bien Françoise. Et vous vous ennuyez moins avec moi qu'avec Bertrand" (UCS 38). As Thomas Molnar explains, the proposal that Luc offers only means that love is going to be "less boring" for Dominique with one man than with another ("Françoise Sagan and the Youth of France" Catholic World 263). She will be less bored with Luc than with Bertrand. The reader may recall that Dominique can only find happiness through the absence of boredom, or everyday life. Finding no meaning for her life through Bertrand, or school, Luc's offer, as strange as it may seem, appeals to her because it offers her a chance at finding happiness. Luc's final words are too enticing for Dominique, and the thrill of an affair excites her. He
admits that "Je vous aime bien, je t'aime bien. Nous serons très gais ensemble. Seulement gais" (UCS 38-39).

As Dominique deliberates on Luc's proposal, which she considers to be like a game, Sagan again portrays her to be a passive heroine. She still struggles to find her own identity, and the happiness which she seeks. She states that "Je n'avais, au reste, jamais rien décidé. J'avais toujours été choisie. Pourquoi, une fois de plus, ne pas me laisser faire? Il y aurait le charme de Luc, l'ennui quotidien, les soirs" (UCS 42). Luc's appeal is strong because she realizes that Bertrand falls short of her ideal man. The possibility of finding happiness with Luc overwhelms her, and makes Bertrand seem even more boring than he actually is. At this point, Dominique sincerely believes that "si je m'ennuyais, du moins m'ennuyais-je passionnément" (UCS 45).

In one particular scene, Dominique feels certain that she and Luc are linked to each other through boredom. As she and Bertrand, along with Luc and Françoise spend the weekend at Bertrand's mother's house, Dominique notices that "Luc était le seul qui s'ennuyât aussi violemment que moi, et je me demandais si ce n'était pas là notre première complicité: cette espèce d'inaptitude à l'ennui" (UCS 61). After Luc kisses her in a garden, her feelings for him become even stronger. She admits that "En fait je ne
Dominique's sense of identity is now dependent on Luc. What is important is that Dominique can only see herself positively when she is with him (Miller 30).

One of the crucial scenes in *Un certain sourire* is the one in which Luc makes his most enticing appeal to Dominique to have an affair:

*Je ne pensais pas que je pouvais t'estimer. Je t'estime beaucoup, Dominique, je t'aime beaucoup. Je ne t'aimerai jamais 'pour de vrai', comme disent les enfants, mais nous sommes pareils, toi et moi. Je n'ai plus seulement envie de coucher avec toi, j'ai envie de vivre avec toi, de partir avec toi en vacances. Nous serions très contents, très tendres, je t'apprendrais la mer, et l'argent, et une certaine forme de liberté. Nous nous ennuirions moins* (UCS 80-81).

Miller notes that the sea is a metaphorical symbol for passion, and money is symbolically related to power (30). Luc tries to convince Dominique that suffering and pain are much better than boredom. His most tempting offer urges her to take a chance, as he states, "Après je reviendrais à Françoise. Qu'est-ce que tu risques? De t'attacher à moi, de souffrir, après? Mais quoi? Ça vaut mieux que de t'ennuyer. Tu aimes mieux être heureuse et malheureuse que rien, non?" (UCS 81).

Dominique is now convinced that she has found her ideal man in Luc, and that she no longer loves Bertrand. It is interesting to note how Sagan allows Dominique the thrill of driving a car in one short scene, as Luc teaches her about
driving. As she drives along, she imagines that she and Luc are driving off together on a long trip, and that they will soon enjoy the sun and the sea, the same images that Cécile enjoyed (UCS 71).

Dominique now tries to escape into an imaginary dream of happiness through love with Luc. They meet in Avignon, then drive to the sea, just as Dominique had previously imagined. As Cismaru comments, Dominique has now entered into a complicity with Luc (459). He states that in Sagan terms, a complicity between lovers indicates a "deliberate arrangement," where both have carefully made plans to be together (459). They both know the arrangement is going to be temporary so there is no need to dwell on love because they are only going to be together as long as neither bores the other. Dominique views the arrangement as an exciting game, one which fascinates and intrigues her.

Mourgue relates that "L'amour de Dominique pour Luc est fondé sur l'illusion que cet homme appartient à la même race qu'elle. Elle lui prête une vie intérieure semblable à la sienne" (95). She relates "Nous avions le même pas, les mêmes habitudes, le même rythme de vie. Nous nous plaisions, tout allait bien ... Nous étions amis, amants" (UCS 108). Dominique wants Luc to love her, as she considers them "alliés et complices," two of the same kind (UCS 112).
The lovers vacation together for two joyous weeks, enjoying the sun and the sea, dining and dancing, whiskey and moonlight. For Dominique, it is two weeks of happiness. Mourgue also points out the importance of music in *Un certain sourire*, in that it plays an important part in the mythology of the novel (93). As Dominique is experiencing happiness, while being with Luc, one specific song, "Lone and Sweet," forewarns of the inevitable breakup that she will eventually face (Miller 30). The lovers hear the song from an orchestra as they dance. Dominique also hears the song in the opening pages as it is played on the jukebox, when she is with Bertrand. It is interesting to note how Sagan applies this musical analogy to her writing. She states that "For me writing is a question of finding a certain rhythm. I compare it to the rhythms of jazz. Much of the time life is a sort of rhythmic progression of three characters" (Fuller and Silvers 86). It is this analogy, the love triangle, which is at the base of her novels.

Music also plays a great role throughout the novel as it evokes specific feelings for Dominique. At one point, she runs into Bertrand by accident, and they go to a club where they drink whiskey and dance to orchestra music. The music itself gives Dominique such an extreme sense of pleasure that she exclaims, "la musique de jazz, c'est une insouciance accélérée" (UCS 84). According to Peter Quennell, the combination of the whiskey and the music
produce a mild euphoria which "represents a condition of human happiness" ("A Certain Smile" Spectator 237).

As the lovers continue their rendezvous, they also speak of Bertrand and Françoise, and hope that neither finds out about their affair. At one point, Dominique almost believes that Luc actually loves her. So intense are her efforts to overcome boredom that she dwells on the despair she will soon feel once this game ends. She states, "Le quitter, le quitter... pourquoi, pour qui, pour faire quoi? Pour retrouver cet ennui instable, cette solitude dispersée? (UCS 114). Dominique's happiness increases as she becomes more infatuated with Luc. She questions the meaning of her own life, and again, only sees herself in a positive way when she is with him. She states, "Je me sens absolument responsable. Mais de quoi? De ma vie? Elle est bien souple, bien molle. Je ne suis pas malheureuse. Je suis contente. Je ne suis même pas heureuse. Je ne suis rien; sauf bien avec toi" (UCS 114-15).

In one scene, Dominique sums up the meaning of happiness. She defines it only as a negative:

Le bonheur est une chose plane, sans repères. Aussi de cette période à Cannes ne me reste-t-il aucun souvenir précis, sauf ces quelques instants malheureux, les rires de Luc et, dans la chambre, la nuit, l'odeur suppliante et fade du mimosa d'été. Peut-être le bonheur, chez les gens comme moi, n'est-il qu'une espèce d'absence, absence d'ennuis, absence confiante (UCS 121).
As Miller cites, "Whereas Raymond and Cécile share an addiction to irresponsibility and frivolousness, Luc and Dominique share an inability to be happy, to find a niche in which to ignore the anguish of their aloneness" (30). Just as the father and daughter resemble each other, the same can be said for Dominique and Luc. Molnar believes that the cynicism that one finds in Bonjour tristesse and Un certain sourire is based on the idea that these two novels cannot define happiness (263). The last scene of their rendezvous finds the lovers departing, each as bored as the other.

As Dominique returns to Paris, she realizes that she now has to deal with her feelings of betrayal to Françoise. Dominique believes that her affair with Luc will have no serious consequences, just as the adolescent Cécile believed that her plot would harm no one.

However, Françoise has decided that she wants to treat Dominique as if she were her daughter by helping her dress properly, and taking more interest in her. Guggenheim points out that in these first two novels, the older women seem to fascinate Cécile and Dominique ("Aimez-vous Brahms" Yale French Studies 94). While Anne is seen as an enemy, the more passive Françoise is seen as a figure of remorse, someone who makes Dominique feel guilty. Yet in both novels, the opposition between the young girls and the older women is evident. The wisdom and maturity that the older women possess are what the adolescents can only hope for.
Dominique and Françoise have been friends throughout the novel, but now Dominique has betrayed that friendship. Cismaru emphasizes that Dominique cannot be considered an evil heroine (460). It was never her intention to cause Françoise pain. Like Anne, who is a threat to Cécile's happiness, Françoise also constricts Dominique's happiness by being married to Luc.

The turning point comes when Dominique realizes that she is in love with Luc. But as Meriel comments "La quête de l'amour se fait d'abord par la souffrance" (242). First, Dominique suffers through Bertrand, who finds out about the affair and requires that she make a choice between him or Luc. Like Cyril, who meant nothing to Cécile, Dominique confesses her true feelings about Bertrand. She admits "Mais il ne m'était plus rien, absolument plus rien" (UCS 145). He drops out of Dominique's life. Next, she suffers when her friends Catherine and Alain try to cheer her up and give her advice regarding her romance, but they cannot relieve her misery. Finally, Dominique experiences the worst suffering when Françoise discovers the truth, Luc breaks off their relationship, and then informs her that he must go to America on business for one month. Dominique has tried from the beginning of their affair to overlook the transitory nature of their love in order to avoid despair (Guggenheim "Aimez-vous" 94). But now as she repeats "Luc
ne m'aime pas," she reaches the bottom of despair (UCS 169). In one final visit with him, she admits to him that she loves him, and confesses her misery and pain. She exclaims, "Luc, ce n'est plus possible. Il ne faut pas que vous me laissez. Je ne peux pas vivre sans toi. Il faut que vous restiez là. Je suis seule, je suis si seule. C'est insupportable" (UCS 171). But Luc avoids any further commitment with her. At this point, Dominique experiences the worst possible unhappiness. She sinks deeper into despair, becoming obsessed with Luc while he is in America. She sees an image of his face in Cannes and recalls the vivid memory of their affair. She memorizes a note that he sends from America. She even plays the same tune on the jukebox over and over again just to recall his memory. Dominique now realizes that "J'avais été bien étonnée, bien admirative de mon amour. J'avais oublié qu'il ne représentait rien, sinon pour moi l'occasion de souffrir" (UCS 182). In one last desperate attempt to overcome her unhappiness, she visits Françoise, speaks with her about her misery, and apologizes.

The conclusion of Un certain sourire, which makes the title meaningful, occurs suddenly and vaguely in two quick scenes. In the first short one, music again plays a role. As Luc returns from America, he fails to call Dominique for 15 days. She recalls "Le quinzième jour je me réveillai en entendant une musique dans la cour, diffusée par la radio
généreuse d’un voisin. C’était un bel andante de Mozart, évoquant comme toujours l’aube, la mort, un certain sourire” (UCS 188). According to Miller, the smile now indicates Dominique's liberation (32). At the beginning of the novel, she experiences only the absence of emotions. Her affair with Bertrand was only physical. He meant nothing to her emotionally, even though she was dependent upon him for her own self identity. In order to experience feeling and passion, Dominique needed someone like Luc, a father figure whom she felt was her ideal. She has now liberated herself from both Bertrand and Luc, as far as her dependency needs.

Cismaru believes that the smile that forms on her lips is a smile of indifference (459). Since love has ceased being an efficient method for eliminating boredom, Cismaru relates, it has become pure pain. In the future, Dominique's emotional involvement will be more detached and distant, so that when she hears the most beautiful of music, that of Mozart, it will evoke in her "a certain smile," but one that is uninvolved.

In the second short scene, the last paragraph, Dominique's final words are:

La musique était finie et je regrettais d’avoir manqué la fin. Je me surpris dans la glace et je me vis sourire. Je me m’empêchais pas de sourire, je ne pouvais pas. A nouveau, je le savais, j’étais seule. J’eus envie de me dire ce mot à moi-même. Seule. Seule. Mais enfin, quoi? J’étais une femme qui avait aimé un homme. C’était une histoire simple; il n’y avait pas de quoi faire des grimaces (UCS 188-89).
André Rousseaux believes that Dominique has exposed herself to suffering, and now has discovered pain ("L'Ennui de Françoise Sagan" Littérature du vingtième siècle 275). "Pas plus que la foi en l'amour," Rousseaux comments, "l'ennui de Françoise Sagan ne laisse subsister l'illusion du bonheur" (279). Dominique has learned an important lesson in trying to find happiness. From now on, as St. Martin concludes, Dominique "will accept the pleasures of the sun, sports cars, and sex as they are offered, with no illusions that they will last beyond the present moment" (1474).

Bonjour tristesse and Un certain sourire conclude the first part of this study. In these two novels, Sagan has portrayed two adolescent heroines in pursuit of happiness. They both escape into an imagined dream of happiness through love, only to experience pain and suffering. Both heroines also experience only the transitory nature of love and happiness. Each novel represents an imaginary experience especially unique to the author herself. With the publication of Sagan's second novel, it is significant to note that she stopped being a literary starlet, and finally became recognized as a writer (Réponses 54).

Both Bonjour tristesse and Un certain sourire, according to Miller, can be classified as perversions of the family romance (18). Normally, relationships in the basic
family unit of this particular genre end up in marriage, or at least have happy endings. Sagan's romances end up just the opposite. She avoids the traditional family structure, the oedipal drama, and the structure of the family is totally amoral.

In Bonjour tristesse, for example, the family structure portrayed is far from a conventional fictional model. Instead of stable family members who live with traditional family values, Sagan depicts an irresponsible playboy father, and an adolescent daughter who follows his lifestyle. Both lead an aimless existence, and pleasure fills their needs.

In Un certain sourire, while the family is at the center of the novel, Dominique's parents have retreated from her life. She is left alone in Paris where she can play the role of the child again, and becomes more susceptible to Luc's advances (Miller 22). He is the only real father figure that she can relate to. She also leads the same aimless existence as Cécile, by drinking whiskey, smoking, and engaging in lovemaking. In each novel, the heroine's evolution from a sexual experience leads to a different kind of self-awareness (Miller 19).

From these first two novels, Miller concludes that "Sagan chooses to establish androgynous adolescent heroines" (33). Although the two young girls are attracted to men, they are to a certain extent boyish in the sense that they
like to drink, and love fast cars. Cécile and Dominique, even as adolescents, refuse to be victims. They are the ones to establish the rules, very well aware of social role playing. Both heroines, Miller believes, "tend to see men as objects of consumption, therefore adopting a prevalent male attitude toward the opposite sex" (34).

As far as the theme of happiness in both novels is concerned, Mourgue explains that in the Saganian universe, everything, including mankind, is reduced to nothing (6). Her characters reduce themselves to nothingness, because nothing has importance in a world consumed by boredom, whether it be love, or happiness. One notes, for example, that Sagan's characters have no definite characteristics, and some have no last names, or ages. So far, such characters are Cécile, Raymond, Cyril, Dominique, Bertrand, Luc, and Françoise.

Mourgue writes of Sagan that "Elle a donné à l'ennui les traits d'une passion" (26). Fallois agrees, but adds that the theme of boredom is one of the main criticisms against Sagan. Fallois takes note of the number of references to boredom in Un certain sourire, and observes that these references occur approximately every five pages throughout the novel (895). He reproaches Sagan for the number of ways that one can be bored. He notes, for example, that the heroine is "modestly" bored,
"passionately" bored, or "violently" bored. How many more ways can one be bored? Fallois believes that boredom is Sagan's favorite word, and that her favorite adverb must be "vaguely." He also observes that in order to combat boredom, her characters drink whiskey "methodically" on several pages of the novel. Bertrand, in fact, admits that Dominique has the reputation of being a hard drinker (UCS 17).

Hourdin classifies Sagan's characters as belonging to contemporary mythology because he believes that they are unreal (85). Assuming a primarily Catholic viewpoint, Hourdin believes that Sagan's heroines encounter much spiritual distress, but that the author gives no response to their anguish. They are unable to react spiritually, and therefore, can only experience "the infinite distress of man without God" (103). As a result, Hourdin believes that Sagan's novels are a negation of moral values (7).

Mourgue concludes that the message around which both of Sagan's first two novels revolve is the one of solitude (118). He relates that one accuses Sagan of amorality, but she is in fact only describing what she observes in reality, which is the banality of life, and the transitory nature of all human relationships.

Un certain sourire portrays another adolescent heroine who, in search of happiness, only finds disappointment. Françoise Sagan succeeds in these first two novels in
showing her own youthful simplicity by creating teenage girls who search for love and happiness.
CHAPTER IV

LUCILE IN LA CHAMADE

La chamade, published in 1965, is the first of three novels in the second part of this study. Sagan's first two novels dealt with adolescents concerned with their first lovers. In the next three novels, the two heroines, Lucile and Josée, find their search for happiness plagued with more serious problems. One notes that Sagan is now age 30, and that the older she gets, the older her heroines become.

This particular novel is one which follows the seasons. The story begins in the spring, and ends in the fall. Unlike the first two, it is told in the third person.

A brief summary of the plot is as follows:

Part I concerns Lucile Saint-Léger, age 30. She is the mistress of an older man, Charles Blassans-Lignières, age 50, and has lived with him for two years. Charles is in love with Lucile, and because he is rich, he is able to offer her a great deal of security. At a dinner given by Claire Santré, a wealthy friend of Charles, Lucile first meets Antoine, also 30, who is the young lover of a famous socialite, Diane Merbel. Curiously, on page 29, Diane is age 40, but at the same dinner party, on page 33, she is age 45. Eventually, the attraction becomes so strong between
Lucile and Antoine that they become lovers. By the end of Part I, Lucile decides to move in with him.

Part II, one short chapter, develops their relationship during the summer. Lucile now faces a simple life, far from the lifestyle she once knew with Charles. Her dilemma becomes one where she will eventually have to choose whether or not she can retain her happiness and freedom with Antoine's poor lifestyle.

Part III concludes in the fall, as the lovers experience difficulties in staying together. Antoine gets Lucile a job in order to increase their income, but she is bored with it, and quits in just two weeks. Lucile discovers that she is pregnant, but realizes that a baby would disrupt her freedom and happiness, and so she has an abortion. For economic reasons, she returns to Charles and the luxurious lifestyle to which she is accustomed. Eventually, she marries him.

According to Miller, the bed is one of the few consistent props found in Sagan's novels (41). In the first chapter of La chamade, Lucile is in bed, as is Charles, asleep, in another room. In this first scene, Lucile imagines that "Le lit semblait une île, entourée de deux uniques récifs: la table de nuit et une table basse entre les deux fenêtres" (La chamade 15; hereafter LC). Later, it takes on other forms.
The spring wind, particularly important in this novel, represents one of the seasons. All four seasons play a dominant role in La chamade. Sagan's characters fluctuate with the seasons, which is one of the ways she shows the emotional intensity of her characters (Miller 41). In this particular novel, the elements of sunlight and wind help to create an image of fantasy and myth.

Another way that Sagan portrays the emotions of her characters is through the use of adverbs and adjectives, particularly as she contrasts them in order to evoke a sense of the emptiness of life (Miller 44). She uses such words as "parfaitement," "tranquillement," or "vide" most often. In the opening pages, for example, Lucile states that "Elle se sentait parfaitement irresponsable" (LC 14). As she is called by the spring wind, Sagan evokes the same feeling of being free in Lucile as she herself enjoys. As she drives along, the radio is playing "un concerto" (17). Lucile asks "Etait-ce de: Grieg, Schumann, Rachmaninov? En tout cas un romantique, mais lequel? Cela l'agaçait et lui plaisait à la fois" (LC 17). The vagueness of a concerto in this novel is equal to the same vague description of "un bel andante de Mozart" in Un certain sourire (188). Both favor the particular feelings it evokes for the heroine. For Lucile, it recalls memories of a time in her past when she suffered.

In La chamade, Sagan relies heavily on the city of Paris, and the theater for background. Also exerting a
strong influence on the characters are two quotations from Arthur Rimbaud, especially "Je vis que tous les êtres ont une fatalité de bonheur" (LC 187). Lucile's preoccupation with being free is equally as important to her as being happy. Meriel defines what freedom means in Sagan terms. He reveals that "Etre libre, pour F. Sagan, c'est sans doute, pouvoir, sans contraintes d'argent ni de morale, répondre à tous ses désirs, ses folies, ses caprices même" (242). It is this type of lifestyle that she endows on Lucile. As the novel begins, Lucile leads the luxurious lifestyle of a kept woman. For her, this includes dinner parties, social events, and opening nights at the theater. It means eating at the finest restaurants, and having a maid, Pauline, to wait on her. Charles buys her expensive gifts, including a new convertible. Throughout the novel, Lucile's principal aim is to be happy, like Sagan's adolescent heroines, but in spite of this luxury, she lives in a universe of nothingness. The one thing which she cannot find is happiness.

Dorrie Pagones comments that one of the features so beautifully portrayed in La chamade is "society types" ("Bonsoir tristesse" Saturday Review). Sagan depicts three characters who represent high society. The first is Claire, a woman who "faisait partie de cette vaillante petite cohorte de femmes quinquagénaires qui, à Paris, se
débrouillent, et pour vivre et pour rester à la mode — parfois même pour la faire" (LC 25-26). Next is Johnny, Claire's escort, who accompanies her everywhere. The last society type is Diane, who has millions in comparison to her lover Antoine's "deux cent mille francs par mois" (LC 29).

Happiness for Lucile means being free. She enjoys having no sense of responsibility, no worries about money, and living a totally carefree existence. She loves no one and has no specific goals in life. Since there is no need for her to work, she has no ambitions, although she once worked for a small newspaper. As students, Cécile and Dominique were cared for by someone else. Lucile is being taken care of financially by Charles, who is able to do so because he is a distinguished businessman involved in real estate. He is wealthy, which is in keeping with Sagan's affluent society.

Freedom means having the right to make your own choices, but it also means having responsibility. In La chamade, Sagan shows her heroine to be as irresponsible as the adolescents of her earlier novels, even though she is 30. As Meriel points out, while Sagan's heroines love luxury, they are so afraid of losing their freedom that they react the way children do, "dans le refus de prendre des responsabilités" (243). Miller adds that Sagan depicts Lucile as an "eternal adolescent," which contributes to the fantasy of the novel (42). This type of lover in Sagan's
fictional universe, Miller also adds, is the character "who rejects responsibility, lives only in the present, expects and needs no emotional commitment to enjoy sexual relations, and characterizes himself or herself by a narcissistic insouciance" (42). Much like the younger heroines, Lucile expresses the same moods of indifference, and craves the same excitement. Not only does she act in a childlike manner, but she is treated as such by the other characters. Charles accepts her irresponsible behavior, and loves her just the same. His maid, Pauline, also accepts her childishness. She tells Charles, "Lucile avait dix ans d'âge mental et Monsieur, qui n'en avait pas plus, n'était pas en mesure de la protéger efficacement contre les choses de la vie" (LC 22). Pauline accepts this task as her duty, and she then proceeds to order Lucile "de se reposer, de manger, de ne pas boire et Lucile, apparemment enchantée, lui obéissait" (LC 23).

Throughout La chamade, Sagan portrays the opposition between young and old, as she has in her first two novels. The love affair between the older man, Charles, and the younger woman, Lucile, breaks off later, but it never really ends. Also similar to the first two novels, Sagan presents no real action in La chamade, except the heroine's own struggle to retain her freedom, and find happiness.
In opposition to the older man, Charles, is the younger man, Antoine, who later becomes Lucile's lover. She first meets Antoine at a dinner one evening. His lifestyle resembles hers in that he is also a kept man, but has no love for his protector, Diane. Their relationship is similar to that of Charles and Lucile, and their initial attraction begins that evening. As the four of them sit down to dinner, Charles and Diane, the older protectors, are seated together, as are Lucile and Antoine. The following passage depicts Sagan's treatment of the strong adolescent theme:

On les avait placés côte à côte, à l'autre bout de la table, en face de leurs 'protégés.' Les parents d'un côté, les enfants de l'autre. De vieux enfants de trente ans qui refusaient de faire les grandes personnes. Lucile s'arrêta de rire: elle ne faisait rien de sa vie, elle n'aimait personne. Quelle dérision. Si elle n'avait pas été si heureuse d'exister, elle se serait tuée (LC 36).

Both Lucile and Antoine accept playing the role of adolescents, as opposed to their older lovers. As the evening ends, the younger couple discovers their common bond. What they share is "le fou rire," like two 30-year-old adolescents (LC 38). At a later theater event they both find themselves so attracted that they realize they must see each other again soon.

In order to escape the emptiness she feels, Lucile desperately tries to seek the unknown happiness missing from her life through an affair with Antoine. One of the crucial
scenes is chapter seven, which is only four paragraphs. This short chapter establishes Lucile and Antoine's love affair, and describes their first sexual encounter. Miller points out that, in this particular novel, Sagan gives it an even more fairytale-like quality since their affair begins in the spring, "the archetypal moment of love's awakening" (40). She also points out that the basic structure of love in Sagan's third-person novels is that the lovers "willingly bond in such a way that they are no longer distinguishable one from the other" (39). Love becomes a sort of addiction where "the other is necessary to prove one's own existence" (39). Lucile and Antoine meet at 4:00 in the afternoon in his small apartment. As they make love, they disappear as individuals and become one:

Il leur arriva ce qui arrive à un homme et une femme entre qui s'installe le feu. Très vite, ils ne rappelèrent plus avoir connu autrefois le plaisir, ils oublièrent les limites de leur propre corps et les termes de pudor o d'audace devinrent aussi abstraits l'un que l'autre. L'idée qu'ils devraient se quitter, dans une heure ou deux, leur semblait d'une immoralité révoltante (LC 67).

Sagan maintains that "l'amour, c'est la guerre. Un combat où chacun cherche à s'emparer de l'autre. Il est fait de jalousie, de possession, d'appartenance, même dans les attitudes en apparence les plus généreuses" (Réponses 150). It is interesting to note the way Sagan compares love to war, and treats her characters as if they were warriors, as is evident in the following passage:
Le ciel s'assombrissait et ils refusaient l'un et l'autre de regarder l'heure. Ils fumaient, la tête renversée, ils gardaient sur eux une odeur d'amour, de mêlée, de transpiration qu'ils respiraient ensemble comme deux combattants épuisés et comme deux vainqueurs (LC 68).

After their affair, Lucile and Antoine again meet at a party a short time later. Even though she is with Charles, she now becomes obsessed with Antoine. In one scene, she wishes she could share with Charles the happiness she feels after her rendezvous with Antoine. In her imagination, "Elle eût voulu partager avec lui ce bonheur violent qu'elle éprouvait à présent à penser au lendemain. 'Il est dix heures du soir, dans dix-sept heures, je serai dans les bras d'Antoine. Pourvu que je dorme tard demain, que je ne sente pas le temps passer!'" (LC 86). In another scene, when Charles requests that she go to New York with him for 10 days, Lucile can only relate the city to Antoine. She fantasizes, "Que faire sans Antoine dix jours? ... Je donnerais toutes les villes du monde pour la chambre d'Antoine. Je n'ai pas d'autres voyages, d'autres découvertes à faire que celles que nous ferons ensemble dans le noir" (LC 89). In a third important scene, Lucile dreams again about how strong her love for Antoine now has become:

Brusquement, elle découvrait l'amour dans sa force—l'amour heureux—et il lui semblait que son existence au lieu de se cantonner à un seul être devenait immense, impossible à remplir, triomphale ... elle n'aurait jamais assez de temps pour aimer Antoine (LC 88-89).
At this point, the lovers begin meeting two or three times a week. At another rendezvous, it is interesting to note that while the lovers are in bed, it now appears as "un miraculeux radeau sur lequel ils s'étaient hissés, étendus, avant de s'évanouir, se tenant légèrement par la main, quand même, en dernière complicité" (LC 124).

Lucile affirms that "Le bonheur était sa seule morale et le malheur, s'il vous était infligé par vous-même, lui semblait inexcusable" (LC 147-48). As she continues her affair with Antoine, Sagan eventually forces her to make a choice between him and Charles. That choice is difficult because Lucile is a kept woman, and is used to a luxurious lifestyle. The following passage portrays the difficulty Lucile already has in making this decision:

Car sa seule morale étant de ne pas se mentir, elle se trouvait forcément entraînée à un cynisme involontaire mais profond ... Elle aimait Antoine mais elle tenait à Charles, Antoine faisait son bonheur et elle ne faisait pas le malheur de Charles. Estimant les deux, elle ne s'intéressait pas suffisamment à elle-même pour se mépriser de se partager (LC 94).

One of the key scenes is the one which gives meaning to the title. As they lie in bed during another rendezvous, Lucile listens to Antoine's heart beating wildly as her cheek touches his chest. The lovers relate:

-Ton coeur bat très fort, dit-elle. C'est la fatigue?
-Non, dit Antoine, c'est la chamade.
-Qu'est-ce que c'est exactement que la chamade?
-Tu regarderas dans le dictionnaire. Je n'ai pas le temps de t'expliquer maintenant (LC 125).
The title means, as Stanley Kauffmann explains, "a roll of drums by which the inhabitants of a besieged city acknowledged defeat. Sometimes used to signify the wild beating of the human heart" ("Toujours tristesse" New Republic 21). While Lucile may be confused by the meaning of the word, Antoine's only intention is that she admit defeat, and choose him over Charles. He gives her an ultimatum that she must choose between the two men by the following evening.

Lucile, however, cannot make that decision. She states about Charles, "Il l'aimait pour ce qu'elle était, il ne lui demandait aucun compte, il n'exigeait rien d'elle et elle se sentit une bouffée de rancune contre Antoine" (LC 130). As he returns from a recent trip, Charles brings her a mink coat. Like Dominique, Lucile enjoys the pleasures of the sun and the sea as they go to the Côte d'Azur. She still, however, cannot find happiness with Charles. Instead, she turns to whiskey, and drinks to forget Antoine. She admits that "Que lui importaient ce soleil, cette mer, et même le bien-être purement physique de son corps, que lui importait ce qui, autrefois, suffisait si bien à son bonheur puisqu'Antoine n'était pas là pour le partager avec elle" (LC 146). Eventually, Lucille makes the final decision to live with Antoine, telling Charles that she must leave him. Charles, however, is determined that Lucile will return to him and will wait for her.
Lucile's imagined dream of happiness with Antoine follows the seasons. Their ideal love affair takes place during the summer, when she moves in with him. Compared to the two-week period of happiness that Dominique enjoyed with Luc in Cannes, Lucile's lifestyle has now been reduced to simplicity compared to the luxury she once knew with Charles. After Antoine leaves for work, Lucile reads books until lunch, when they meet for a sandwich. After he goes back to work, “Lucile commençait alors sa longue promenade oisive dans Paris, à pied, elle rencontrait des amis, des vagues connaissances, prenait des jus de tomate aux terrasses des cafés. Et comme elle avait l'air heureux, tout le monde lui parlait” (LC 182).

Antoine, as a publisher's reader, makes little money. When he has a holiday in August, neither he nor Lucile have any money, so they are forced to remain in his cramped apartment. Lucile, therefore, spends the time on her bed, where "Elle lisait énormément, fumait, descendait acheter des tomates pour le déjeuner, faisait l'amour avec Antoine, parlait littérature avec lui, s'endormait" (LC 184).

Boredom also plagues Lucile, as it did Cécile and Dominique. Antoine states that "La paresse de Lucile, sa capacité énorme à ne rien faire, ne rien prévoir, sa faculté de bonheur--à vivre des jours aussi vides, aussi inactifs, aussi semblables--lui semblait par moments extravagant,
presque monstrueuse" (LC 184). In much the same way that Dominique is less bored with Luc than with Bertrand, a similar situation is true in *La chamade*. Although Antoine is certain that Lucile loves him:

\[
\text{elle ne pouvait pas plus s'ennuyer avec lui que lui avec elle mais il sentait que cette façon de vivre était celle qui se rapprochait le plus de sa profonde nature, à elle, tandis que lui savait que c'était à la passion qu'il devait de supporter cette vacuité perpétuelle (LC 184-85).}
\]

As the summer ends, Antoine believes that "ça avait été le plus bel été de leur vie" (LC 186). Miller, however, points out that, like the seasons, a change begins to take place and "love, like the leaves, begins to fade in the fall" (41).

As fall begins, Lucile's dream of happiness slowly fades as she encounters several distasteful events. In the opening pages of chapter 18, Sagan's idea that one needs money in order to be free is clearly shown. She asserts that "Dans la société actuelle, il représente un moyen de défense et un moyen de liberté. Il donne la possibilité de ne pas faire la queue sous la pluie pour attendre l'autobus" (Réponses 60). The following passage portrays her heroine, now without money, standing in the rain waiting for the bus:

Lucile attendait l'autobus place de l'Alma et s'énervait. Le mois de novembre était spécialement froid, spécialement pluvieux et la petite guérite devant la station était bondée de gens frileux, maussades, presque agressifs. Aussi avait-elle préféré rester dehors et ses cheveux mouillés lui collaient au visage. De plus, elle avait oublié de prendre un ticket en arrivant . . . Le seul charme
réel de l'argent, pensait-elle, c'était qu'il vous permettait d'éviter cela: l'attente, l'énerverement, les autres (LC 189).

In desperation, Lucile gives up on the bus, and decides to walk home. At this point, she realizes just how much she misses her convertible, and the luxury she once knew.

In another scene, Antoine urges Lucile to work at Le Réveil, a newspaper, since they could use the extra income. He believes that otherwise she will soon become bored with him, and so he arranges a job for her at 100,000 francs a month. He even works out a budget for her, based on their expenses. Sagan states, "Autant je trouve l'usage de l'argent agréable, autant les problèmes de comptabilité me paraissent froidement ennuyeux—comme tous les problèmes matériels" (Réponses 62-63). Like the author, Lucile cannot comprehend life without money, nor is she interested in keeping track of it. Lucile knows that a mere 100,000 francs can never be enough for her. She wants to tell Antoine that "des tickets d'autobus et deux cents francs en poche" is hardly enough for living in Paris (LC 190). She wants to explain to him "qu'une robe chez Dior coûtait trois cent mille francs, qu'elle haïssait le métro—fût-il direct—et que le simple mot de cantine lui donnait envie de fuir" (LC 200). The words "le métro" are mistakenly used instead of "l'autobus," throughout the rest of the novel.

The turning point comes as Lucile begins work at the newspaper on December 1. Within 15 days, boredom overcomes
her so strongly that she cannot tolerate her job. She sadly states, "Elle s'ennuyait tellement qu'elle était même incapable de finir le sandwich qu'à midi--fuyant la cantine, une première et dernière fois tentée--elle allait prendre dans une brasserie proche, en lisant un roman" (LC 202-03). Reading a passage from the book, *les Palmiers sauvages*, by Faulkner, sets off in her a rebellion, and so she goes directly to the newspaper and quits her job. She orders her employer to avoid telling Antoine, then proceeds to sell an expensive string of pearls that Charles had given her for Christmas in order to live off the money. She orders some imitation pearls, and lies to Antoine about liking her job instead of telling him she quit. What is significant to recognize is that Lucile's true purpose in all this deception is simply to be happy, for being happy is her one and only goal. She admits that "elle lui mentait d'autant plus qu'elle l'aimait, d'autant plus qu'elle était heureuse et qu'elle avait envie de lui faire partager ce bonheur" (LC 207). In this last attempt to find happiness, the sale of the necklace enables her to buy expensive gifts for Antoine, and she hopes that "elle avait deux mois d'assurés, deux mois de fainéantise, de luxe et de mensonges, deux mois de bonheur" (LC 208).

Lucile makes one last attempt to deceive Antoine. She now compares what she once had with Charles to what she now
has with Antoine. She thinks of "le temps libre que lui laissait Charles et le temps libre qu'elle volait à Antoine" (LC 208). The following passage indicates how far Lucile goes to deceive Antoine, in her desperate search for happiness:

Elle se levait en même temps qu'Antoine, descendait prendre un café avec lui, l'accompagnait parfois jusqu'à la maison d'édition puis elle repartait officiellement pour son rude labeur, en fait vers leur chambre. Elle se déshabillait, se recouchait et dormait jusqu'à midi. L'après-midi, elle lisait, écoutait des disques, fumait beaucoup, puis à six heures, elle refaisait le lit, enlevait les traces de son passage et partait au petit bar de la rue de Lille chercher Antoine (LC 209).

One of the crucial scenes is the one where Antoine discovers what she has done. He becomes angry, accuses her of being with Charles, and slaps her. But Lucile only asserts that "J'étais malheureuse, Antoine. C'est tout ce que tu as à me reprocher" (LC 213). Again, her only intent is to be happy.

Lucile gets pregnant one month later. One notes that at this point the bed now takes on another form, "Et ce lit qui avait été le plus beau bateau de Paris devenait un radeau à la dérive, et cette chambre si familière un décor abstrait" (LC 216). Lucile wanted Antoine, but has no need of a baby "Parce que cet enfant aliénerait définitivement sa liberté et, de ce fait, ne la rendrait pas heureuse" (LC 217). Antoine's suggestion that they get married, like other people in love, is quickly rejected by Lucile.
Because Antoine can only afford a cheap abortion, Lucile turns to Charles in desperation, hoping that he will pay for a more expensive one in Switzerland. Charles is only too happy to comply, since he has been waiting for her return. What Saganian heroines look for, Meriel emphasizes, is the luxury that a man provides, but they cannot stand possession (242). In one final statement, Lucile admits to Charles, as she takes the check for her abortion, that "Je ne veux rien posséder, dit-elle, vous le savez. J'ai horreur de la possession" (LC 225). Antoine, however, is as irresponsible as Lucile, since he is no more interested in a child than she. He, too, admits that "il n'avait pas si envie de cet enfant, il n'avait envie que d'elle, seule et insaisissable et libre. Leur amour avait toujours été posé sur l'inquiétude, l'insouciance, la sensualité" (LC 231).

The conclusion of *La chamade* occurs quickly, but vaguely, as in *Un certain sourire*. Kauffmann notes that in contemporary living, one of the ways of showing modern consciousness is by a character acting out a role, as if in a play (21). Earlier in the novel, Lucile, when confronted with boredom from her job, thinks, "C'étaient de mauvais rôles, tout au moins une mauvaise pièce ... si cette pièce qu'elle était en train de jouer était une pièce convenable, utile, eh bien, c'était que son rôle à elle était mauvais ou qu'il était, en tout cas, écrit pour quelqu'un d'autre" (LC 204). This passage shows Sagan's style to be one where she
assumes a more dramatic approach to life. Miller also agrees, and adds that Sagan tends to dramatize life so that it is less burdensome, and therefore protects one against the "awful cruelty of the contemporary world" (14).

Five weeks after her successful abortion, Lucile again meets Charles, who invites her to a concerto at the house of La Molls. Similar to Un certain sourire, La chamade ends with a Mozart concerto, but this time it is one for flute and harp. The following passage indicates the emptiness of Lucile's life, similar to the previous heroines:

C'était décidément une soirée à la Proust: on était chez les Verdurin, le jeune Morel faisait ses débuts et Charles était le nostalgique Swann. Mais il n'y avait pas de rôle pour elle dans cette superbe comédie, pas plus qu'il n'y en avait eu à Réveil dans ce bureau glacé trois mois avant, pas plus qu'elle n'en trouverait sa vie durant. Elle n'était ni une courtisane, ni une intellectuelle, ni une mère de famille, elle n'était rien (LC 242).

Throughout the novel, Lucile's innocent pursuit of happiness results in making two men suffer. She realizes that her life is as empty now as it was earlier. As Lucile listens to Mozart's music, it evokes special feelings in her, as it did for Dominique. She now discovers that she feels a love for Charles that she never knew existed. The last scene sees her going toward Charles, "vers la solitude," a result of her lost search for happiness and love (UCS 247). With winter, Antoine and Lucile's affair has died. Eventually, Lucile marries Charles, but two years
later, while they are at a party, an erudite guest provides the answer to the question Lucile had asked Antoine that night in bed about the meaning of "la chamade." The guest replies, "D'après le Littré, c'était un roulement joué par les tambours pour annoncer la défaite" (LC 249). This time, the retreat has meant for Lucile a return to Charles.

In *La chamade*, as in the first two novels, love and happiness are the dominant themes, linked to Lucile's overwhelming need for freedom. The heroine's intense search for happiness is the underlying factor behind her sense of revolt, and in deceiving Antoine. Lucile experiences only disappointment in her affair with Antoine, and resorts to a life of solitude with Charles. The emptiness shown in this novel is equal to the first two, and is evident by characters who have no last names, such as Antoine and Johnny. It is also shown in the way the characters' feelings change with the seasons, and the absence of material things except for cars and beds.

This particular novel, Miller emphasizes, may be seen as a fantasy which is typically ideal to women (55). But there are two important things to note about *La chamade*. The first is that Lucile chooses luxury and freedom when she returns to Charles, but also a life of solitude. What is so significant is that she has given up "passion, the ultimate pleasure" (55). Just like Dominique, who needed Luc for her own self identity, Lucile, likewise, defines herself through
Charles. The second most important point, Miller states, is that Lucile rejects almost all feminine values, such as "nurturance, motherhood, and companionship," only to find herself lost, and her life without definition at the end of the novel (53).

*La chamade* describes an older Saganian heroine who searches for happiness through love. Françoise Sagan again successfully portrays the emptiness of a life consumed by luxury, wealth, and superficial things, none of which bring happiness.
Les merveilleux nuages, published in 1961, is the second novel of three in the second part of this study. Events from Sagan's own life are reflected in this novel in two ways. The first is in love. In January, 1962, she married her second husband, Robert Westhoff, an American painter. Her only child, Denis, was born that year also. The following year she was again divorced. Sagan, now age 27, is Josée, a heroine the same age married to an American who becomes a painter. Like the previous heroine, Lucile, Josée's struggle for happiness is also plagued with difficulties, but they are in relation to her marriage. The second way the novel concerns Sagan's life is the setting. It is Sagan's first work to present an American setting. She seems to have chosen Key Largo, Florida, because it is where she once met the playwright Tennessee Williams on her first visit to America ("Tennessee Williams" Avec mon meilleur souvenir 61-62).

A brief plot summary is as follows:

Part I begins in Key Largo, and concerns 27-year-old Josée. She is married to Alan Ash, a wealthy 30-year-old American. Alan loves her, but he is neurotic, jealous, and
overly possessive. Josée's main dilemma throughout the entire novel is whether or not to stay with him, even though she is certain that she no longer loves him. As they vacation on the beach with friends, Brandon and Eve Kinnel, Josée is unfaithful only once, with a shark fisherman called Ricardo.

Part II continues in New York where Josée meets a friend and former lover, Bernard Palig, who is married to Nicole. He has now become a successful writer. Josée mistakenly believes that he will help her resolve her marriage problems, but he refuses. She tries to escape by going to Paris, hoping to find solitude and former friends to help her.

Part III ends in Paris where Josée meets Séverin, age 50, and Laura Dort, also around 50, both society types who throw lavish parties for the rich and famous. Josée is age 27, as was stated above. Curiously, she elsewhere states that five years earlier, when she was 20, Laura caught her making love to Marc, a former lover, in an attic. She would have been age 22, not 20. Yet on page 180, she relates that she is 22 whe she first meets Marc.

Both Bernard and Alan find Josée in Paris. She continues to live in misery with Alan, and later, begins an affair with Marc. When Alan finds out, they supposedly break off their perverse game of love.
Of all Sagan's novels, Les merveilleux nuages, and Un profil perdu probably best describe Sagan's pessimistic view of love and happiness. They more than any other novels represent how closely Sagan follows Proust's definition of these themes. Proust equates love and suffering throughout A la recherche du temps perdu in the major love affairs of Swann and Odette, Charles and Morel, Saint-Loup and Rachel, and the narrator and Albertine. As J. E. Rivers notes, "Though Proust's love affairs sometimes have charming moments of happiness and tenderness, they all turn out badly" ("Proust and the Aesthetic of Suffering" Critical Essays on Marcel Proust 119). It is this idea of love that Sagan follows in Les merveilleux nuages. The opening pages portray a young heroine trapped in a destructive love relationship, one that is based on pathological jealousy and possession on the part of Alan, Josée's rich but neurotic husband. His only role becomes the one of "persécuteur" as he makes Josée's life miserable (Les merveilleux nuages 24; hereafter LMN). Like Bertrand, in Un certain sourire, who adds nothing meaningful to Dominique's life, Alan contributes nothing positive. As in La chamade, Sagan relates their perverse relationship to a role in a play. She believes that "il poussait si loin la stylisation de leurs relations et si loin la désaffection de lui-même que le vertige la prenait parfois comme devant certaines
mauvaises pièces de théâtre . . . dont l'auteur ambitieux était son mari" (LMN 24).

Happiness, as in Baudelaire's "les nuages qui passent" in the epigraph, seems to be an illusion in Les merveilleux nuages. No real action takes place, as in the previous novels, except for the constant disputes between Josée and Alan, who cannot seem to live happily either with or without each other. Each provokes the other so much that divorce seems to be inevitable. As in Un certain sourire, happiness is defined only as a negative.

Alan's perverse character is shown in basically three ways. First, he incessantly asks the same three questions concerning her past love life. Josée constantly hears:

-Pourquoi m'as-tu épousé? demanda-t-il.
-Parce que je t'aimais.
-Et maintenant?
-Je t'aime encore.
-Pourquoi? (LMN 15)

Josée's answers are never enough to satisfy him.

Second, Alan enjoys making her feel guilty. He admits that "Il ne visait qu'à développer chez elle un sentiment de culpabilité" (LMN 27). One way he does this is by accusing their friend, Brandon, of being in love with Josée. As Laurent LeSage points out, Alan is "masochistically trying to provoke a situation between Josée and Brandon" ("The Little Joys of a Party Girl" Saturday Review 26). Finally, Alan reveals his neurosis by his talk of suicide and through drinking. Josée knows that he is capable of using any
excuse to kill himself but she admits, "Le premier prétexte sera le bon, je ne veux pas être ce prétexte" (LMN 17).

Josée once loved Alan, but by the end of the first chapter, she realizes that her feelings for him have changed. Even though they are on vacation with friends, Josée and Alan only seem to really agree on one thing. They both think that "le bonheur est sur la plage" (LMN 20).

The only way for Josée to attain happiness is to escape from her bad marriage. In this particular novel, her search for happiness is the consequence of "un certain abandon du malheur" (Meriel 240). As Cismaru notes, Josée is treated as an object by Alan, but his cruelty to her is only matched by her infidelity to him (466). One of the key scenes is the one where Josée retaliates against Alan with a shark fisherman, Ricardo. She ends up alone with him because neither Alan nor their friends care to join her for a short fishing trip. After getting on the boat,

Il la prit par la main. Il y avait deux marches entre le pont et la cabine. Les draps étaient propres et Ricardo très brutal. Après, ils trouvèrent un malheureux poisson accroché à la ligne et Ricardo se mit à rire comme un enfant (LMN 37).

Brigid Brophy emphasizes that every act in Les merveilleux nuages, especially the sexual act, is performed instantly, without thought or feelings for each other ("Françoise Sagan and the Art of the Beau Geste" Texas Quarterly 63). In the above passage, for example, Josée's
seduction is described in one single terse sentence. Josée
goes even farther in her retaliation against Alan.
Disgusted by his jealousy, she gives his imagination
substance in a scene at dinner a short time later. As she,
Alan, and the Kinnels are about to enjoy dessert, Josée
presents Alan with a cake with only one burning candle and
confesses:

- Une bougie, dit Josée. C'est la première fois que je te trompe.
  Ils restaient pétrifiés, regardant tour à tour Josée
  et la bougie, comme pour déchiffrer un rébus.
- Le marin du bateau, dit-elle impatientement, Ricardo. (LMN 41).

After embarrassing her friends and Alan by admitting
her quick affair, Josée is frightened that Alan will try to
kill her. Out of desperation, she wants to escape from this
lifestyle, and from a life with Alan. The following passage
shows Josée to be as adolescent as Cécile, Dominique, or
Lucile, and searching for a means of escape:

Elle avait besoin de sa mère, de sa maison, de sa
ville, de ses amis. Elle avait voulu faire la maligne,
voyager, se marier, s'expatrier, elle avait cru pouvoir
tout recommencer. Et là, dans la nuit chaude de
Floride, appuyée à la porte de cette maison de bambous,
elle avait envie de gémir, d'avoir dix ans, d'appeler à
l'aide (LMN 44).

Music plays a role in this novel, as it did in her
earlier novels. As Alan puts on a record, Josée is overcome
by the sound of it, and tries to recognize the concerto. It
is interesting to note that Josée states the exact same
works, "Grieg, Schumann?" in trying to place the concerto,
as did Lucile in _La chamade_ (LMN 46). In _Les merveilleux nuages_, the music again evokes feelings in both Alan and Josée, as it sets off a discussion on divorce. Sagan shows the absence of feelings within her characters, such as Josée and Alan, in the cold way they define their love for each other. Alan relates to Josée, "J'ai toujours eu des femmes. Jusqu'à toi. Avant toi, je n'aimais rien vraiment. Et tu as été aussi mon premier corps" (LMN 53). Josée responds with the same indifference, "Elle avait aimé d'autres hommes que lui, d'autres corps surtout" (LMN 53). What is significant is the coldness of their statements as they relate to each other as "bodies," instead of persons with feelings.

The dominant trait of Josée's character is her indecision. She admits from chapter one that she no longer loves Alan, and that she must leave him, yet throughout the novel, she cannot rid herself of him. The type of lifestyle Alan and Josée are accustomed to is the same as the affluent society Sagan portrays in _La chamade_. Alan and his mother are wealthy, so he has no need to work. Neither Josée nor Alan has any real purpose in life, nor does either have any occupation. It is another way that Sagan enables them to experience the boredom of life, and the nothingness of existence.

Sagan also varies the theme of love in this novel, as opposed to the others, in her treatment of the heroine's
relationship with other men. As Josée and Alan go to New York to visit his mother, who needs an operation, she runs into Bernard, one of her past lovers, on a New York street. He has just written a novel, which has been extremely successful, and they decide to celebrate by having a drink at a bar. It is interesting to note the lack of feelings in the strange way they greet each other during their first meeting. Bernard states, "Josée . . . Je te croyais morte" (LMN 62). She in turn replies with "Mariée seulement" (LMN 62). Josée poses the problem concerning her miserable marriage to Alan but Bernard only reacts with the same coldness as do the other characters throughout the novel. In desperation, she wants to leave with Bernard soon and urges him to help by telling Alan for her that she wants to leave him. Bernard flatly refuses and responds coldly that, "Tu es toujours aussi folle. C'est à toi de lui parler" (LMN 65). Hoping to leave with Bernard, she invites him to have dinner with both of them soon thereafter. Alcohol plays a part in this novel, as in the others. First, the threesome go to one bar for cocktails and martinis. Later in the evening, they go to another bar for brandy. As Alan and Bernard discuss love, Josée deserts both of them, catches a cab to a hotel, and makes plans to return to Paris on her own. She is so distressed over her marriage that she now sees her life as "une vaste catastrophe" (LMN 78).
Josée tries to overcome her unhappiness in love through solitude, as in the previous novels, only this time the heroine tries to find it in a lonely old house in the country in Normandy. Her state of solitude is short-lived, only one chapter, for Sagan allows her heroine no more happiness there than she had found previously. Josée declares "Elle était libre. Ce n'était pas désagréable, ce n'était pas exaltant" (LMN 81). This particular statement by Josée is one of the best examples in Sagan's novels of the ambiguity of her style. It is one of the things for which she has often been criticized. Sagan's art, Brophy notes, is the art of "so what?" (63). It is as if Sagan is saying, "Why should I?" and "Why shouldn't I?" at the same time. This ambiguity is also true as far as Josée's relationship with Alan. As Brophy points out, Josée can ask, "Why shouldn't I leave Alan?" but she can also ask, "Why should I?" (66). Although she wants to leave him, she seems unable to because she may still love him, or desire him sexually. There would be no reason for her to escape with another lover, who would perhaps have less financial security than Alan. It is this ambiguity and the emptiness of the characters that dominate the entire novel, and therefore keep Josée from finding happiness. She cannot be happy as long as she stays married to Alan.
One of the diversions from Sagan's previous novels is that Bernard, who finds Josée later in the story, never becomes her lover. Instead, he simply offers her sound advice. He tells her, "Si tu veux divorcer, entame la procédure" (LMN 90). Then he encourages her to attend a party being given that evening by his friend, Séverin. While there, Josée discovers that Alan is there, too, and agrees to meet him the following morning to discuss their divorce.

The next day, instead of discussing divorce, the lovers have a reconciliation at the Ritz, where they end up in bed, and Josée agrees to move back in with Alan, under new terms. As Christina Crane notes, "The old duel begins again between these two people, who can't seem to live together and yet cannot leave each other for good" (Books Abroad).

It is at this point that Alan decides to become a painter, and takes lessons in art. Like the three previous heroines, Cécile, Dominique, and Lucile, whose lives were empty and meaningless, the following passage portrays Josée's life as being equally so:

Après le déjeuner, elle partait en voiture, roulait doucement dans les rues et s'arrêtait quand il lui plaisait. Elle avait trouvé un square qui lui convenait particulièrement, ... Elle rêvait, allumait une cigarette, écoutait la radio, parfois, immobile, comme morte à elle-même, envahie d'un plaisir très doux (LMN 121-22).
Sagan once stated, "Le bonheur . . . c'est la mer, le soleil, l'herbe" (Réponses 166). For Josée, happiness is nothing but an illusion, something that she can only imagine. She states, "elle eût aimé passer sa vie sur une plage à regarder la mer, ou dans une maison de campagne à respirer l'herbe, ou au bord de ce square, une vie à rêver, seule, le temps suspendu à sa seule conscience" (LMN 122).

The turning point comes when Laura meets the couple and disrupts their marriage even more. Several years earlier, Laura had caught Josée making love to Marc in an attic, and relates this news to Alan. It only provokes his jealousy that much more. He incessantly questions her about their affair for two months until she finds herself hating him. Ironically, Laura throws a lavish party at her apartment, and Josée unexpectedly runs into her former lover, Marc, again. The party is being given to celebrate Alan's success as a painter. Josée finds herself entering a bathroom where she suddenly runs into him in the doorway. At that instant, they decide to make love. Brophy describes the following scene as an acte gratuit (66):

Il ferma la porte à clef, doucement et la reprit dans ses bras. Ils luttèrent un instant pour se déshabiller l'un l'autre, glissèrent maladroitement par terre . . . il faisait toujours l'amour aussi vite et Josée n'oublia pas un instant le bruit de l'eau dans la cuvette (LMN 170-71).
Following the incident, Josée displays the same attitude of retaliation for Alan as she did after her short-lived affair with Ricardo. She states,

Mais qui pourrait croire que, le jour de l'exposition de son jeune et beau mari, Josée Asp ferait l'amour à moitié habillée dans une salle de bains de cinq mètres carrés avec un vieil ami qu'elle n'aimait pas? Qu'elle n'avait jamais aimé? Même Alan n'y penserait pas (LMN 172).

The conclusion of *Les merveilleux nuages*, contrary to Sagan's previous novels, finds Josée beginning a liaison with Marc. She agrees to meet him in his studio the following afternoon. Their first affair takes place in two terse sentences, and with the same emptiness as the others:

Les choses se passèrent comme la veille quoique plus confortablement, grâce au lit ostensiblement trop grand qui encombrait le studio de Marc. Après il alluma une cigarette, la lui donna et commença son questionnaire (LMN 178).

When Josée returns home, she confesses her affair to Alan, who only stares at her with hatred. The novel ends with ambiguity in Josée's final statement, "le jeu est fini" (LMN 185).

In *Les merveilleux nuages*, love is the dominant theme, linked to unhappiness as a result of a perverse relationship. In this marriage, Crane notes, "Each has brought out the worst in the other . . . They evoke both pity and disgust" (43). In this novel, Sagan turns the search for happiness into a resignation to unhappiness. Love is also as disappointing in this novel as in the
Sagan believes that she is describing the reality of life. She states "Je trouve la vérité et la vie beaucoup plus compliquées, ambiguës et nourrissantes que le moindre fantasme" (Réponses 82). Jealousy, she believes, is universal. She explains that "La jalousie est la même pour un intellectuel parisien ou un cultivateur de la Gironde" (Réponses 83). As Willy de Spens concludes, if there is one thing that the novel portrays, it is that "l'argent ne fait pas le bonheur" ("Françoise Sagan et son public" La Table Ronde 74). Even though Alan and Josée are rich, instead of finding happiness, they find only boredom in life and with each other. As the novel ends, happiness is only a passing illusion for Josée, something entirely out of her reach.
CHAPTER VI

JOSÉE IN UN PROFIL PERDU

Un profil perdu, published in 1974, is the last novel in the second part of this study. At the end of Les merveilleux nuages, Sagan leads the reader to believe that the marriage between Josée and Alan is finally over. But in Un profil perdu, they are together again, three years later. What little action there is continues for another six months in the life of Josée.

A brief summary of the plot is as follows:

The plot continues with Josée, now age 30, and Alan, who by now resorts to bondage in their relationship. Josée has literally become a prisoner in their apartment. At the beginning of the novel, when she meets Julius A. Cram at a party, the attraction is mutual between the two of them. As a millionaire, he helps her to escape from her neurotic husband by getting her a job, and a place to live. As the novel progresses, he begins to manipulate her life. Eventually, Josée makes plans to divorce Alan.

Josée then meets Louis Dalet, a country veterinarian, and they fall in love immediately. The dilemma Josée faces is whether to continue her dependence on Julius or try to make a life for herself. At the end of the novel, she
learns that she has been deceived by Julius, and that all
she has accomplished was arranged by Julius so that she
would feel successful and independent. Julius's scheme has
been to win Josée over for himself, thinking that eventually
she will marry him. She discovers at the end that she is
pregnant with Louis's baby, and chooses him over Julius.
When Julius finds out that she is going to marry Louis, and
that she is pregnant, he dies of a heart attack brought on
by an overdose of drugs.

In Un profil perdu, Sagan continues the story of
Josée's unending attempts to escape from Alan. He has now
become a masochist. Sagan again portrays the opposition
between young and old, or between the older man, Julius, and
the younger woman, Josée. In the opening pages of this
novel, Josée and Alan are at another Parisian party for the
rich and famous. Almost immediately Josée is attracted to
Julius, a wealthy businessman, who invites her to a tearoom
in the near future. Sagan deviates from the previous novels
by keeping the relationship between Julius and Josée
platonic throughout the novel.

Among the rich people at the party is Mme Debout, a
rich widow of about 60, who rules over the fashionable jet
set. She plays no real role in the novel, for it is again
centered around the heroine, and her problems. Julius is
described in the following way:
Julius A. Cram était un homme d'affaires tout-puissant, bénéficiant d'appuis politiques considérables et, sans doute, était-il au courant des comptes suisses des trois quarts des invités. On le disait généreux et très dur, on le craignait et on l'invitait partout (Un profil perdu 14; hereafter UPP).

Josée's life is as empty as those of the previous heroines. As they meet in the tearoom, Julius asks Josée what she does. She spends her days doing little, as the following passage shows, and explains that:

Je regarde passer le temps, défiler les jours, je me mets au soleil, quand il y en a, je ne sais pas ce que je ferai le lendemain. Et s'il me vient une passion, j'ai le temps de m'en occuper (UPP 16).

Throughout Un profil perdu, Sagan presents one major struggle for her heroine, and that is the opposition between dependency and freedom. Josée is as unable to find happiness with Alan in this novel as she was in the previous one, yet she continues to depend on him for all her needs. The urge for freedom becomes stronger than before, and eventually Josée makes an effort to break free of her dependency on men. Sagan varies the theme of love by adding the bizarre aspect of bondage. As a result of their ongoing perverse relationship, Josée's resignation to unhappiness continues in the story, as is evident in three specific scenes. In the first one, Alan confines her to their apartment. She states:

J'avais été depuis deux jours fusillée à blanc par tous les mousquets de l'amour, de la jalousie, du désespoir, tous les fusils d'Alan une fois de plus braqués sur moi et tirant à bout portant, puisqu'il ne m'avait pas,
In another scene he interrogates her, like a madman, whenever she tries to sleep, and "pleurait comme un enfant sur la fin de notre amour, gémissant que c'était de sa faute, tantôt me la reprochait amèrement avec une violence toujours grandissante" (UPP 30). In still another scene, Alan cuts her off from the outside world. She relates that "Alan avait cassé la radio, puis la télévision et s'il n'avait pas coupé le fil du téléphone, je pense que c'était pour le seul plaisir de me voir sursauter d'espoir, d'un très vague espoir, quand par hasard il sonnait" (UPP 31). Since she cannot escape Alan, the only other way Josée can avoid the misery and unhappiness of her lifestyle is to take sleeping pills. She reaches the bottom of despair when she admits that "J'attendais qu'Alan s'en aille ou qu'il me tue" (UPP 32).

In *Les merveilleux nuages*, Josée could only retaliate at Alan's cruel behavior by having quick love affairs, but Sagan is a little more compassionate with her heroine in *Un profil perdu*. Josée is rescued by Julius, who comes to their apartment, and boldly faces Alan to tell him that he has come to pick up Josée for tea. In most of the novels, Sagan's love of cars is evidenced by her characters driving a specific kind. In this novel, Josée remarks that Julius's car is "une vieille Daimler, longue et grosse comme un
As she drives along with Julius, she is relieved to experience freedom once again. Julius takes Josée to his lavish home, where he tells her that he felt it was his duty to remove her from Alan. He has gone out of his way to question her friends, her maid, and her concierge about her lifestyle. On the one hand, Josée hates him for intruding into her life, but on the other hand, she is greatly relieved and thankful to be free.

Sagan endows her characters with a certain basic "joie de vivre." The heroines presented in this study all possess a certain naive, childlike innocence. As long as Saganian heroines can experience sensual pleasures, such as the sun, the wind, or the fragrance of spring, for example, each continues to enjoy life. It is this innocent pleasure of life that prevents them from giving up on life altogether (St. Martin 1475).

Julius proceeds to take on the role of protector toward Josée, and she in turn becomes dependent on him. Around women, Julius is shy and insecure, but upon meeting Josée in the tearoom the first time, he feels something special with her. He chooses Josée because she makes him more secure as a man. Alan eventually goes back to America alone to be with his mother, but leaves Josée penniless. She is forced to become independent. She states, "Je voulais trouver un studio et travailler afin de payer mon loyer et ma nourriture" (UPP 59).
Julius's influence helps her indirectly in three important ways. First, he arranges for her to get a job at a publishing house as an art critic at a modest salary, even though she has no skills. Second, he aids in getting her a luxurious apartment in Paris for the lowest rent possible. Finally, he persuades Mme Debout to get a friend, a couturier, to loan Josée clothes free, saying that it is good publicity.

Anatole Broyard states about Julius, "He does all this for her without asking anything for himself, and this smart-set Parisian woman never pauses to wonder about his disinterestedness or the remarkable 'luck' he has brought her" ("Bonjour, Happiness" New York Times). Josée, however, does indeed wonder why all this incredible success is happening so quickly. She states, "Et ce n'était pas le fait d'accompagner Julius A. Cram qui pouvait constituer une explication: aucun journal jamais ne parlait de lui ni de sa fortune" (UPP 70). Although she wonders, she cannot quite make the connection between Julius and her newly found success. At this point, Josée is so eager to experience independence and the chance at finding happiness that she is too overwhelmed with her own achievements to closely question all that has happened to her.

Julius goes even farther to help Josée find freedom and happiness. One way he helps her is by leading her into
Parisian café society. She begins going out in the evenings with Julius and his circle of rich friends. Little by little, she begins to trust him. She believes that "Il était toujours là quand on voulait lui parler, il me sortait partout sans laisser suggérer entre nous la moindre intimité et finalement, à travers mon incompréhension totale de sa nature, je le trouvais très honnête" (UPP 72).

At one point, Josée is concerned whether or not their relationship is creating a scandal. People think that she is a kept woman, and that she is only after Julius's money. Julius, however, only dismisses the idea as foolishness, and states, "Rassurez-vous, ma chère Josée, quand je vous ai rencontrée, j'étais un homme libre" (UPP 92). When Josée asks him "Et où pensez-vous que le temps puisse nous mener?" Julius's only response is "le charme du temps, c'est qu'on ne sait jamais où il vous mène. Jamais, au grand jamais" (UPP 94). She gives up in desperation, realizing that she will receive no suitable answers from him. She therefore concludes that "l'attitude de Julius était au fond celle d'un homme fatigué des femmes ou déçu par elles" (UPP 95).

Another way he comes to aid her is by getting her a flight and allowing her to stay in his suite at the Pierre Hotel when she is called to New York by Alan, who is sick. Josée achieves nothing upon seeing Alan. She is insulted by her mother-in-law, and informs Alan that a Paris lawyer will be contacting him in regard to a divorce. The one person
whom she is truly grateful to is Julius. In the three months that she has known him, she believes that he is truly "un protecteur" (UPP 98).

Julius invites José to go to Nassau for a week to enjoy the sun, and the sea, the two most enticing pleasures to Saganian heroines. Like the previous women, José cannot resist the offer. While there, she discovers his true intentions. He first relates that since he has known her he is no longer lonely, but happy. Then he admits that he cannot bear to lose her. Finally, he asserts, "Je voudrais que vous compreniez que je désire profondément vous épouser" (UPP 130). The shock of Julius's proposal takes her by surprise, and she is unable to respond. José immediately dismisses herself from him only to have a quick affair with someone she meets at a nearby bar:

Une heure plus tard, je me rendis dans le bar désert et avalai deux Planters' Punch. Dix minutes plus tard, le pianiste survint et me demanda la permission de m'en offrir un autre. Une demi-heure plus tard, nous connaissions nos prénoms, une heure plus tard, j'étais nue contre lui dans son bungalow (UPP 131-32).

Upon returning to Paris, José sinks to the bottom of despair over Julius's proposal, and guilt over her affair with the pianist. Like the other Saganian heroines, José states, "J'étais seule, je n'étais rien" (UPP 144).

Sagan, however, rescues her heroine one more time and varies the theme of love once more by introducing a third man, Louis, who eventually becomes her lover. As in La
chamade, where the older protector, Charles, opposes the younger man, Antoine, so it is in Un profil perdu. Now the older protector, Julius, opposes the younger man, Louis. He is a country veterinarian who loves the country, whereas Julius is a rich business tycoon who loves Parisian society. Louis is also closer to Josée's age than Julius, and is equally as kind, sincere, and generous to her. Upon meeting her, Louis brings her a dog, which she loves. In comparison to Julius's Daimler, Louis drives a Peugeot. In spite of her experiences with Alan, and with Julius, Josée is now beginning to experience happiness with Louis. Louis, however, dislikes Julius and his circle of rich friends, and quickly advises her to get out of his life. His opinion of rich society types is that "Ils ne vivent qu'en fonction de leur fortune, de leur personnage et je les crois dangereux" (UPP 154-55).

The turning point comes after Josée spends the night with Louis, and suddenly decides that she is in love with him. She exclaims:

J'avais basculé d'un coup du royaume de la solitude dans celui de l'amour et je trouvais curieux d'avoir le même visage, le même nom, le même âge. Je n'avais jamais très bien su qui j'étais objectivement mais là, je ne le savais plus du tout. Je savais simplement que j'étais éprise de Louis et je m'étonnais que les gens ne sursautent pas en me voyant, ne le devinent pas au premier coup d'œil (UPP 157).

It has already been stated that Sagan's fictional universe contains almost no material objects. So far, cars
and beds are the only objects portrayed. But in *Un profil perdu*, as Josée becomes more obsessed with Louis, objects, such as telephones, suddenly take on importance. Josée states that:

> Il importait aussi qu'il fût beau car ainsi les routes seraient sèches et sa voiture ne risquerait pas de déraper, comme il importait que les circuits entre la Sologne et Paris restent libres, comme il importait qu'il y ait des téléphones partout autour de moi et que sa voix surgisse de chacun, calme, exigeante ou troublée, sa voix heureuse ou nostalgique, sa voix, bref (UPP 158).

Not only does weather now acquire special meaning for Josée, but specific dates do, too. She now notes that "Et les jours, les dates avaient de nouveau un nom, un chiffre, puisqu'il était parti un mardi 19 et qu'il reviendrait le samedi 23" (UPP 158). Josée is as obsessed with Louis as Lucile is with Antoine in *La chamade*. The happiness she feels with Louis becomes the most important thing in her life.

After spending the weekend together, Josée can only relate that "Lorsqu'il me quitta, je vacillai un peu contre lui de fatigue et de bonheur" (UPP 155). About the same time that Josée falls in love with Louis, her editor, Ducreux, gives her a promotion with an increase in salary, which enables her to feel even more independent. She now feels less dependent on Julius. But Josée lives in Paris, and loves the city. She is concerned with her job, and the circle of rich friends that she and Julius share. Louis
lives in the country in Sologne, and likes the simple country life. She spends one weekend at Louis's home in the country, where she sees a calf being born, and experiences country life. They speak of marriage, and compromise by agreeing to live near Paris.

What is different in *Un profil perdu* from all the previous novels is that Josée comes the closest of all Saganian heroines to settling down to a traditional and conventional lifestyle, with Louis. She states.

> Je vivrais dans une maison avec Louis, le chien, l'enfant. Je deviendrai la meilleure critique d'art de Paris. Nous élèverions des pur-sang dans le jardin. Ce serait le happy end d'une vie d'orages, de chasses, de fuites (UPP 201).

As Josée dreams of life with Louis, she is shocked to overhear a telephone conversation between her editor and Julius, which exposes the reasons for her quick success. It has been Julius's influence from the beginning that has been responsible for all that she has achieved since they met. She has been totally deceived by him in his obsession with trying to possess her. Her dilemma is only whether to keep her job, which she has never been qualified for, or to break away from Julius and try to make it on her own. She decides to break off her relationship with Julius, and move in with Louis, when she discovers that she is pregnant. As Rosalind Wade points out, Josée "settles for life in the country with
him, cheerfully abandoning all pretentions to independence" (Contemporary Review).

The conclusion of Un profil perdu, one last confrontation between Julius and Josée, proves disastrous. When she tells him that she is going to marry Louis, and that she is pregnant, he goes berserk and exclaims wildly, "Cet enfant est à moi, ... et vous aussi vous êtes à moi" (UPP 215). Two months later, Julius dies from overindulging in pep pills, and other drugs. Josée sums up their relationship in one last statement. She concludes that "Il n'avait rêvé que de me posséder, et moi que de le fuir, c'était tout, et à y penser, c'était une histoire plutôt misérable" (UPP 216). Josée ends her story in the same way as Dominique in Un certain sourire, with a note of indifference.

La chamade, Les merveilleux nuages, and Un profil perdu conclude the second part of this study. In these three novels, Sagan portrays two young heroines, one a kept woman, the other married. Both Lucile and Josée are dependent on two older, wealthy protectors. Lucile is the mistress of Charles, her protector, and then Antoine. Josée is dependent on Alan for financial independence, on Bernard for help and friendship, then on Julius for help in achieving her independence, and finally on Louis. Both heroines lead an idle existence, like Cécile and Dominique, with no particular goals, and no workable skills.
According to Miller, Sagan's romances "inform us of the constraints of a male-dominated society" (preface). This idea seems to be evident in the heroines' dependency on wealthy men, and in the way Josée is deceived by Julius. Zalamansky notes that Sagan's only concern is with describing the problems that women encounter with men, and the traps that men prepare for them (518). It is Sagan's intent to show the basic ironies and contradictions in relationships between men and women.

As far as love and happiness are concerned, both Lucile and Josée experience disappointment in love, as in the first two novels. Both also become pregnant. In Lucile's case, she faces poverty, as well as overwhelming boredom, and gets an abortion because a baby would disrupt her life of freedom. In Josée's case, she experiences pain, suffering, and misery in her marriage to a neurotic husband. As in Proust, Sagan follows the same perversions of the love theme, as well as portraying relationships that turn out badly and end in suffering. Guilt is another factor which Sagan endows in her heroines. Josée, for example, feels guilty for staying with Alan, whom she no longer loves, but also feels guilty for leaving him. Happiness in love, as Proust describes it, is almost an impossibility. In Sagan's love universe, it is equally impossible, and is hindered by anguish, solitude, and misery.
Sagan has often been criticized for describing only affluent society because all of her heroines are involved in relationships between wealthy men and women, especially in *La chamade*, *Les merveilleux nuages*, and *Un profil perdu*. Some critics believe her novels are trivial because nothing ever happens to her characters, except emotional problems concerning love. Sagan's intent in portraying the rich who lead an idle existence is not directed at making fun of the wealthy. "Les gens riches, en général, m'ennuient," she maintains (*Réponses* 109). Sagan writes of the rich simply because she has never been poor herself, and knows nothing about being poor or creating characters who are. She states, "Autant le travail d'un être humain est fascinant dans l'œuvre de Zola ou de Balzac, par exemple, autant il ne m'intéresse pas dans mes propres livres" (*Réponses* 84). Writing physical descriptions of characters is one of the things in which she simply has no interest (*Réponses* 88). Françoise Sagan has succeeded once more in these three novels in portraying two young heroines of her own age who become involved with love, only to experience disappointment in their search for happiness.
Aimez-vous Brahms, published in 1959, is the first of three novels in the last part of this study. The three heroines in this last section have all been divorced. Two are older, professional women who enjoy a career of their own. All three look back on their past lives and recall events which have evoked for them either misery or happiness. As in La chamade, the emotional intensity of the characters is shown in Aimez-vous Brahms through the seasons, only in reverse order, starting in autumn. Aimez-vous Brahms was produced as a movie, "Goodbye Again" by United Artists in 1961. A brief summary of the plot is as follows:

The plot begins in autumn, and concerns Paule, age 39. She is the mistress of Roger, a middle-aged businessman. Paule has been divorced from her first husband for several years and is a successful interior decorator.

Paule and Roger are in love with each other, but he refuses to make a commitment. Out of boredom and loneliness, Paule is driven to a younger man, Simon Van den Besh, age 25, who is a law clerk, very rich, and known as a playboy. His mother, Mme Van den Besh, is an ex-prostitute,
but plays no active role in the plot. Simon likes Paule and begins to pursue her. He eventually falls in love with her, and they become lovers. Paule's dilemma comes when she must choose between Roger and Simon. Paule never stops loving Roger, even though he has fleeting affairs with other women, one of them, Maisy, who also plays no large role in the novel. Paule eventually chooses to remain faithful to Roger, and the novel ends in melancholy indifference as Paule breaks off her relationship with Simon, in the spring.

In *Aimez-vous Brahms* as in *La chamade*, attention is immediately drawn to two specific things. In the first, it is a bed, and a mirror; in the second, it is a bed and the spring wind. For the past six years, Paule has been Roger's mistress, but now, as she stares intensely at herself in the mirror, she only experiences distress that soon she will be turning 40. She focuses on the meaning of her life, on how time has passed, and on how much she is aging. As she waits for Roger to pick her up, she relates "Elle s'était mise devant ce miroir pour tuer le temps et - cette idée la fit sourire - elle découvrait que c'était lui qui la tuait à petit feu, doucement, s'attaquant à une apparence qu'elle savait avoir été aimée" (*Aimez-vous Brahms* 11-12; hereafter AVB). As she lies on the bed, she recalls a time in her past when she was happy. That period was nearly 15 years earlier, when she was married to her first husband, Marc. Like Dominique and Luc in *Un certain sourire*, Paule's
relationship with Roger adds nothing meaningful to her life. She realizes that she is getting older, and that she is tired of waiting for Roger to make a commitment. Throughout the years, he has insisted on complete sexual freedom and independence for himself at all times. She loves Roger, and he, too, admits that "Il se sentait bien chaque fois qu'il voyait Paule, il n'aimait qu'elle" (AVB 21). Yet he is unfaithful to her with younger women, and Paule knows that the chances of their relationship resulting in marriage are slim.

Paule's career gives her life no meaning, nor does it create a sense of happiness for her. Instead, she can only find her identity through Roger, whom she loves. When he is absent from her life, time means nothing, and all that Paule feels is emptiness. She wants to be happy, as did the previous heroines, but she must first overcome solitude. In the following passage, Paule portrays her anguish over the unwritten rules Roger has established for himself over the years, which add to her loneliness:

Non, elle ne pourrait pas expliquer à Roger qu'elle était lasse, qu'elle n'en pouvait plus de cette liberté installée entre eux comme une loi, cette liberté dont il était le seul à se servir et qui ne représentait pour elle que la solitude; elle ne pourrait pas lui dire qu'elle se sentait parfois comme une de ces femelles âpres [sic] et possessives qu'il haïssait (AVB 13-14).

Music plays a role, as in the previous novels. As Roger takes Paule out for dinner and dancing, the music evokes
feelings of happiness for her, just as it did for Dominique and Luc. Paule describes a perfect evening with Roger:

Dans la boîte de nuit, ils s'assirent à une petite table loin de la piste et regardèrent défiler les visages sans un mot. Elle avait sa main sur la sienne, elle se sentait parfaitement en sécurité, parfaitement habituée à lui. Jamais elle ne pourrait faire l'effort de connaître quelqu'un d'autre et elle puisait en cette certitude un bonheur triste. Ils dansèrent. Il la tenait solidement, traversant la piste d'un bout à l'autre sans aucun rythme, l'air très content de lui-même. Elle était très heureuse (AVB 20)

But by the end of the evening, Roger deserts Paule, and leaves her alone at her apartment instead of coming in and spending the night. Her disappointment is evident as she states, "Seulement, ce soir, en la quittant, il avait senti sa tristesse et il n'avait su que dire" (AVB 21).

Miller points out that Roger, as Paule's lover, is an eternal adolescent, just like Lucile in La chamade (42). In his relationship with Paule, he makes unreasonable demands upon her for his freedom. Paule, and her future lover, Simon, belong to another category of lovers, according to Miller, and that is the "love addict"--the lover who "lives in the past or in fear of the future" (42-43). Paule, as a love addict, cannot define herself without Roger. Later, Simon will be unable to define himself without Paule.

Cismaru adds that Paule and Roger's relationship is based on the same complicity that Dominique and Luc shared in Un certain sourire (462). Paule knows freedom since she has a good career. Roger is also free, in spite of his
other affairs, and can return after each to the security that Paule offers him. As Cismaru points out, what is important is that each is able "to prove the existence of the other" (462).

Guggenheim notes that at age 39, Paule still seeks the same kind of security that the adolescent heroines hoped for ("Aimez-vous" 94). She knows that she can get the security that she needs from Roger because he is near her age, but she is lucid enough to realize that he has no intention of getting married. In order to escape solitude, she eventually is attracted to a younger man, Simon.

Paule first meets Simon while she is redecorating the apartment of his mother, Mme Van den Besh, a rich woman in her sixties. Like all the previous novels, Aimez-vous Brahms has no real action. What Sagan stresses is the relationship of the heroine with two men, and her attempt to overcome solitude and find happiness. When Paule first sees Simon, it is interesting to note that she sees him coming as she looks in a mirror at his mother's apartment. Miller relates that this particular incident is a "doubling technique," since not only does Paule see herself in the mirror, but Simon as well (50). It indicates that his actions resemble hers throughout the novel. By the time Paule leaves the apartment, Simon asks her out to lunch. Believing that he is too young for her, she refuses.
Simon, who lives with his mother, basically leads a meaningless existence. He is rich, but is as insecure and unhappy as Paule. In order to escape the emptiness in his life, he drinks. At one point, after drinking for an entire evening, he acknowledges the sum total of his life. He confesses, "Mais j'ai découvert ce matin que je n'avais jamais rien fait dans la vie. Rien" (AVB 40). He has no girlfriend, he admits to never having been in love, and he works infrequently.

In _Aimez-vous Brahms_, Sagan again portrays the opposition between the older man, Roger, and the younger man, Simon. The competition between them increases as the novel progresses. At one point, Paule and Roger meet Simon at a nightclub by chance. Roger states angrily, "Il m'ennuie, . . . Je vais l'emmener" (AVB 40). But when Paule informs him that Simon is the son of one of her clients, Roger calms down, and they all have drinks together. Simon dislikes Roger almost immediately. He states, "Voilà un homme, . . . Un vrai homme? J'ai horreur de ces types costauds, virils, avec des idées saines" (AVB 41). As the threesome drink together, Simon drinks so much that he has to be driven home by Roger and Paule.

In the earlier novels, Sagan portrays the conflict between the older man, and the younger woman. In this one, she shows the opposite, the confrontation between the older woman, Paule, and the younger man, Simon. He begins to
pursue her. In one scene, they go to a restaurant together. Paule, however, can only think of Roger. She states, "Roger était pris, ... Autrement, je ne serais pas là" (AVB 53).

At this point, Simon accuses Paule of failing to make herself happy, and he condemns her to a life of solitude. He boldly asserts:

> Et vous, je vous accuse de n'avoir pas fait votre devoir d'être humain. Au nom de ce mort, je vous accuse d'avoir laissé passer l'amour, d'avoir négligé le devoir d'être heureuse, d'avoir vécu de faux-fuyants, d'expédients et de résignation. Vous devriez être condamnée à mort, vous serez condamnée à la solitude (AVB 53).

At this point, Roger lies to Paule, telling her that he is going out of town on business, when in fact he is meeting Maisy, a young starlet, at an inn. Out of loneliness, Paule calls upon Mme Van den Besh to work on her apartment while Roger is gone. As soon as she sees Simon, Paule again only thinks of Roger. She states, "À cette heure-ci, elle aurait dû être sur la route avec Roger, ... riant avec lui, ou s'effrayant car il lui prenait des colères aveugles d'automobiliste qui les menaient parfois près de la mort" (AVB 66-67). Simon's attempt to see Paule while she is at his apartment is limited this time to walking her down the stairs.

In another attempt to see Paule, the next day Simon invites her to attend a concert of Brahms' music at the Salle Pleyel. The thought of music evokes strong feelings
in Paule, as it has in the other heroines, and gives meaning to the title. It leads to her own self-awareness:

Et cette petite phrase: 'Aimez-vous Brahms?' lui parut soudain révéler tout un immense oubli: tout ce qu'elle avait oublié, toutes les questions qu'elle avait délibérément évité de se poser. 'Aimez-vous Brahms?' Aimait-elle encore autre chose qu'elle-même et sa propre existence? Bien sûr, elle disait qu'elle aimait Stendhal, elle savait qu'elle l'aimait. C'était là le mot: elle le savait. Peut-être même savait-elle simplement qu'elle aimait Roger (AVB 70-71).

Paule and Simon go to the concert together. Paule, however, can only think of Roger, and she quickly declares after the concert "Ne m'en veuillez pas, Simon, je suis un peu pressée. Roger doit m'attendre" (AVB 77). She hopes that he has returned from his business trip. Simon, however, has seen Roger with another girl at an inn over the previous weekend, but he keeps this information to himself. Knowing how Roger is deceiving Paule, Simon feels confident in informing her of her inability to be happy, and declares his intentions. He rigidly asserts that:

 Vous aimez Roger mais vous êtes seule, ... Vous êtes seule, le dimanche; vous dînez seule et probablement vous ... vous dormez seule souvent. Moi je dormirais contre vous, je vous tiendrais dans mes bras toute la nuit, et je vous embrasserais pendant votre sommeil. Moi, je peux encore aimer. Lui, plus. Vous le savez ... (AVB 79).

Simon believes that he has the right to try to win Paule's love away from Roger, and he is determined to do so. He is now convinced that he must have that love, or he will suffer. Roger, who dislikes Simon, reacts the same way. Upon hearing that Paule went to the concert with Simon, he
imagines her loving and kissing him, and therefore, he suffers in thinking about it.

Sagan continues to build the tension between the two rivals. Chapters eight through 13 represent a thickening of the plot as the two rivals compete to win Paule's love. One of the turning points is when Simon sends Paule a letter of apology, but in it also lets her know that he loves her. In return, out of loneliness, she sends him a letter asking him to return as quickly as possible, and stating that she misses him. Simon mistakenly assumes that she loves him, but Paule is only concerned with overcoming her solitude. He becomes as obsessed with his love for Paule as the previous heroines were for their lovers. But he is appalled when his mother decides to give a dinner, and invites Paule and Roger, her official escort.

Roger quickly accepts the offer of escorting Paule to the dinner since "Il voulait voir de plus près ce petit gandin qui suivait Paule partout et dont elle parlait avec une affection plus rassurante pour lui que n'eût été toute réserve" (AVB 105). At the dinner, however, Roger is quickly bored, drinks too much, and drags Paule away early, only to desert her at her apartment alone again, without speaking a word about their miserable evening, or spending the night. Paule again is left to experience solitude.
As in *La chamade*, the influence of the seasons is noted, this time upon Paule, and her emotional intensity. At this point, it is winter, which contributes even more to her solitude, that "Elle n'en pouvait plus, et la monotonie des jours d'hiver, l'éternel défilé des mêmes rues qui la menaient, solitaire, de son appartement à son travail, ce téléphone si traître . . . enfin la nostalgie d'un long été" (AVB 116). In *Un profil perdu*, the telephone as an object acquires meaning for Josée, since she can hear her lover's voice. In *Aimez-vous Brahms*, the telephone usually means that Paule's lover Roger is calling with another excuse for his absence.

Simon continues his pursuit of Paule, but so far in the story, he is the only character who seems to have found happiness. He exclaims to Paule "Je suis heureux, je vous aime" (AVB 124). In an attempt to make Paule love him too, and be happy, his advice to her is "Ce n'est rien d'aimer, . . . il faut aussi être aimé" (AVB 124). It should be noted that although Paule makes Simon happy, that happiness is never returned. It is one-sided, with Simon doing all the receiving. He wants it to be shared between them, but Paule fails to cooperate.

Convinced that he is happy, and hoping to make Paule as happy as he, Simon becomes even more obsessed with loving Paule. He wants to please her in every possible way, and wants to protect her from any harm. As Cismaru points out,
Paule and Simon's complicity is doomed from the beginning because "Simon's love is not simply that of an adolescent for the savoir-faire and experience of an older woman" (462). Simon's interest in Paule is sincere, Cismaru further points out, and is similar to the same warmth and tenderness Dominique had for Luc. He relates that "Il se sentait plus responsable vis-à-vis de Paule, pourtant de quinze ans son aînée, qu'il ne l'eût été envers une jeune vierge de seize" (AVB 127-28). In another scene, he wants to drive her to work, and pick her up at six. Having Simon there when she gets off work appeals to Paule. She admits that "l'idée qu'il pourrait être devant la porte, impatient, dans sa petite voiture, tous les soirs, lui procurait un réel bonheur .. ." (AVB 130). Still in another scene, Simon is attentive to her needs. For example, "Il était tellement appliqué et content, tellement prêt à s'occuper d'elle, lui ouvrir les portes, allumer ses cigarettes, courir au devant de ses moindres désirs qu'il finissait par y penser avant elle" (AVB 135). As for Roger, after meeting him in a restaurant for lunch, Paule decides that it is best for them to separate.

Another key turning point is when Simon moves in with Paule. It is at this time when he stops working, and starts drinking heavily. Paule believes, however, that Simon is helping her overcome her solitude. She recalls when "Elle
aurait pu rentrer seule dans son appartement, se coucher avec un livre, un peu triste, comme souvent avant lui, mais il était là, il riait, il était heureux" (AVB 161). In spite of the snow from winter, and her solitude, Paule finally admits that "Elle était heureuse. Merveilleusement heureuse" (AVB 162).

The conclusion of Aimez-vous Brahms, the last three chapters, ends in the spring, the opposite of La chamade. It is close to Easter, and Paule now begins to see the absurdity of her situation. She is unable to forget Roger. He, likewise, cannot forget her. Paule knows that "Dans sa vie, il y avait quelqu'un d'inéluctable: Roger " (AVB 170). She reflects on her relationships with both lovers. With Roger, "il était son maître, elle était sa propriété, il était à peine plus âgé qu'elle, tout était conforme à certaines règles morales ou esthétiques qu'elle ne s'était pas jusque-là soupçonnée d'entretenir" (AVB 170). With Simon, she is his master, and he is dependent on her. For Paule, what is normal is to be with Roger, to be alone and unhappy.

In one last important scene, Paule, Simon, and Roger all end up at the same restaurant by chance. Upon seeing Roger, Paule suddenly realizes that "Elle l'aimait, cette évidence l'avait atteinte dès qu'elle l'avait vu dans la porte, avec son air buté: elle l'aimait encore, elle sortait d'un long sommeil inutile" (AVB 182). The next day, Paule
and Roger meet, declare how lonely they are without each other, and decide to be together again. The reader last sees Simon packing, then running down the stairs of their apartment, in tears. The last crucial scene finds Paule alone once more that evening. As she answers the phone, Roger's last statement is "Je m'excuse, ... j'ai un diner d'affaires, je viendrai plus tard, est-ce que ..." (AVB 187). As Guggenheim concludes, with one more call, Roger has another excuse for his absence, and all Paule can wait for, "all that she can hope for, are those stray bits of happiness which she has had in the past and which she once so aptly called 'le bonheur triste'" ("Aimez-vous" 94).

Sagan's third-person romances, like *Aimez-vous Brahms* and *La chamade*, are especially appealing to readers because of the love stories, and the Parisian milieu, with its theaters and nightclubs (Miller 45). But *Aimez-vous Brahms* has a more important message to women, since the novel seems to portray a lucid portrait of what aging means in contemporary society. As Miller emphasizes, Paule is being defined in society "by her looks and by her relationship to a man" (Miller 48). Sagan stresses this idea by the importance Paule places on looking at herself in the mirror. She realizes that she is getting older, and seems even older at the end of the novel than when she looks at herself in the mirror in the opening pages.
Guggenheim believes that Sagan most clearly shows what love represents in *Aimez-vous Brahms*. He states that it is "nothing but a tentative answer to human solitude, an abortive, hopeless attempt that never quite fulfills its promises and that will ultimately bring pain and distress" (*Aimez-vous* 92). Throughout the novel, Paule constantly struggles with trying to escape from her solitude. Although Simon cannot equal the security Roger can give her, what is important is that "she is needed by him" (*Aimez-vous* 93). Through Simon, Paule's life temporarily has meaning, and for a short time, she finds happiness with him. Neither Paule nor Simon can deceive themselves for long, as they both can see the reality of their situation. As Guggenheim points out, "he loves Paule, she is being loved by him" (*Aimez-vous* 93). The most important point of this novel is that Paule never returns Simon's love, and she never tells him that she loves him, in spite of the attempts that he makes to win her over. Responding to Simon's passion is for Paule an "impossible dream," in which she discovers that youth is not for her, and that she must be the older woman that she is (*Aimez-vous* 93). Sagan once stated, "Le drame, c'est la vie quotidienne . . ." (*Réponses* 81). The experiences of Paule represent what Sagan says about life—in that people try to escape their loneliness through love but find that it is only a temporary solution. Guggenheim concludes that Sagan shows in *Aimez-vous Brahms* that those who search for
happiness in the absolute are likely to be disappointed in the futility of all human relationships ("Aimez-vous" 95).

Aimez-vous Brahms concerns another Saganian heroine in search of happiness. She tries to find it through love with a younger man, but the attempt fails, so Paule returns to the life of solitude she had previously known with Roger.
CHAPTER VIII

DOROTHY IN LE GARDE DU COEUR

Le garde du coeur, published in 1968, is the second of three novels in the last part of this study. All of the characters are American, except for Dorothy, who is French. She is one of the most successful heroines in all of Sagan's novels, and certainly in this study. Success in her career has come entirely through her own efforts. Sagan may have chosen an American setting for this novel in order to add an element of mystery to it, both in the treatment of the characters, and in the Hollywood background. "The Heartkeeper" was filmed by Twentieth-Century Fox in 1969.

Following is a short summary of the plot:

The story concerns Dorothy Seymour, age 45, who is a successful scriptwriter at RKB, a film company in Hollywood. Beginning at the age of 25 as an actress, Dorothy is now at the peak of her career. She has a grown daughter, who is happily married and lives in Paris. Three minor characters, her ex-husband, Frank Tyler, Lola Crevette, and Jerry Bolton, appear in the story only long enough to be murdered. Dorothy has been divorced twice. Her current lover is Paul Brett, in his forties, who has an equally good job representing film companies.
One night Lewis Miles, on LSD, enters her life by jumping in front of Paul's car. He is almost killed. Dorothy allows him to stay with her for a few days while recuperating, but he is still there after a few months. Eventually, he falls in love with her, and refuses to leave. He becomes so obsessed with Dorothy that he kills people who try to harm her. Two other minor characters, Rena Cooper, and Bill Macley, are also killed.

Dorothy's dilemma becomes one in which she must decide if she really wants Lewis to leave or not. For some strange reason, she is strongly attracted to this mysterious intruder in her life. She marries Paul, but Lewis now becomes attached to both of them, and refuses to leave. He continues to live with them after they marry, apparently intending to stay forever.

Le garde du coeur presents the oldest Saganian heroine in the study. Dorothy lives comfortably, is independent, and has her own home. In spite of her success and independence, two major problems hinder Dorothy's life and keep her from being happy. One of them is boredom, and the other is the sexual passion of a middle-aged woman.

Boredom comes through her relationship with Paul. He represents for her the mature man who is handsome, attractive, and stable. He also represents security in that he is willing to take care of her and attend to her needs. In the opening pages, it is evident that Dorothy is as bored
with Paul as Dominique is with Bertrand in *Un certain sourire*. While waiting for him to arrive one evening, she states, "En attendant, le souverain de mon coeur, de mon corps tout au moins, devait être Paul Brett, ce soir-là, et j'en bâillais d'avance" (*Le garde du coeur* 13; hereafter LGC). Even though he is her lover, their relationship is so ordinary and undistinguished that it offers Dorothy no challenge or excitement. As a result of this boring relationship, and because of an unknown challenge to find happiness, Dorothy is led into a near-fatal attraction by a bizarre young man.

Sexual passion for Dorothy is represented through her relationship with Lewis. Sagan once more portrays the opposition between young and old, or between the younger man, Lewis, and the older woman, Dorothy. The sexual passion of middle age for youth becomes more prominent as the novel progresses. As Dorothy and Paul are driving home together, in the middle of the night, Lewis jumps in front of Paul's Jaguar and is almost killed when the car hits him. As in the other novels, little action occurs in *Le garde du coeur*, except for the driving accident. Sagan again centers the novel on her heroine, and the strange triangular relationship she develops with Paul and Lewis. As soon as Lewis leaves the hospital, Dorothy, whose
attraction for him is odd in itself, allows him to move in with her for a few days.

Miller believes that this particular novel resembles a detective story by the way Dorothy relates her experience in the first person (103). Mystery is also evoked by her lifestyle, which includes Hollywood people and parties. According to Miller, *Le garde du coeur* can be classified as a "fantasy of revolt," because of the way Sagan emphasizes the "deliberate reversals of what is accepted as real" (104). Sagan's ability to ridicule the reality of what is normal is the outstanding feature of the novel.

One of the ways Sagan shows a reversal of real life is the way Dorothy reacts to Lewis's habit of taking drugs. He is a young man, perhaps 20 or 25, a drifter who takes LSD. The night he jumps in front of Paul's car he has taken some of the drug, but has no memory of what he has done, even though it almost cost his life. But Dorothy excuses him for this behavior. When she invites him into her home, Paul tries to discourage her from doing so, but she ignores him, and shows sympathy for Lewis when she states, "Sous l'influence de ses petites drogues, il ne vous a ni reconnu ni vu comme une voiture. Il a pris les phares pour . . ." (LGC 23).

Another way this reversal is shown is by Dorothy allowing Lewis into her home to care for him. When she discovers that he has no money or family, she becomes even
more sympathetic. When Paul suggests leaving him in the hospital, Dorothy maintains that "Il trouvait cet hôpital lugubre et j'avoue qu'il l'était" (LGC 23). Since his leg is in bandages, she proceeds to wait on him by bringing him food and other necessities. Dorothy notices that Lewis is very quiet, that "Il ne lisait pas, n'écoutait pas la radio, ne parlait pas" (LGC 26). What little she learns about him is that he has done some odd jobs, that he comes from New England, and that he finally ends up in San Francisco where he started using drugs.

It is interesting to note that one of the first few questions that Lewis asks Dorothy is "Vous vous ennuyez beaucoup?" (LGC 29). Like Dominique, in Un certain sourire, Dorothy tries to think of ways that one can be bored. She thinks, "Sait-on jamais si l'on s'ennuie beaucoup ou un peu, ou inconsciemment, dans ce bizarre fatras qu'est l'existence?" (LGC 29). She only responds that she has no time to be bored with her busy career.

At this point, Sagan again portrays the opposition between the older man, and the younger man. As Audrey C. Foote points out, the reader assumes that a "conventional ménage à trois" among Dorothy, Paul, and Lewis will take place, but in this novel, what is conventional is out of place (Washington Post Book World). Dorothy has developed a special fascination for Lewis, and his equal attraction to
Dorothy only angers Paul, and makes him dislike Lewis even more. Dorothy, however, is in love with neither Paul nor Lewis at this point.

Lewis begins to get control of Dorothy's life. As he begins to dominate her life, whiskey plays a role, as it has in the other novels. This time, they drink Scotch together as Dorothy arrives home from work, so that her attraction for him continues to get stronger. Just as Josée is plagued with incessant questions about her past love life in Les merveilleux nuages by Alan, Dorothy now finds the same thing happening with Lewis. She tells him of one of her past husbands, Frank, and how he hurt her by running off with another woman, Lola. How several years ago, he had caused her pain and suffering by leaving her. Dorothy finds it strange that Lewis explains nothing about his past love life, and that he speaks of everyone with the same indifference.

Ironically, Dorothy learns soon thereafter that her ex-husband, Frank, has killed himself at a cheap motel not far from Dorothy's home. She immediately turns to alcohol, or "la bouteille de Chivas" to ease the shock of his death (LGC 45). She is called upon to help with funeral arrangements since Frank has no family, and Lola is out of town. It is Paul who helps her through the ordeal. But when Dorothy tells Lewis about Frank's death, his response
is cold and indifferent. He states, "Il vous a quittée, Il a été puni, . . . C'est la vie" (LGC 50).

Dorothy's fascination for Lewis deepens as she helps him find a job at the studio where she works. She arranges a screen test for him, and strangely enough, it is so successful that he is offered a two-year contract to make films. By now, her attraction for him is so strong that as they discuss his leaving, Dorothy asserts that "Je ne désirais pas qu'il parte. Je l'aimais bien" (LGC 58).

After one month, Lewis is still living with Dorothy, and it is causing a scandal. But she is happy. She exclaims, "Lewis allait faire une carrière superbe, Paul était toujours amoureux de moi, nous allions dîner, nous amuser, faire l'amour peut-être, la vie était une chose charmante" (LGC 68-69). Dorothy is happy being with both Paul and Lewis.

Ironically, two more murders occur within two months. The first is the murder of Jerry Bolton, head of the Screen Actor's Guild. After Dorothy tells Lewis how much she hates Jerry, who tried earlier in her life to bring her to court, the latter suddenly turns up dead. He is murdered by a young man whom no one could recognize. The second murder is of Lola. After visiting Dorothy one afternoon, she, too, dies. On her way to work the next day, like Anne in Bonjour tristesse, her car misses a curve, and she is killed.
In spite of the murders, Dorothy is only concerned with happiness. So far, in spite of the murders of people whom she knew, she has succeeded in creating a strange love triangle. It is similar to the love triangle of Josée in Un profil perdu, where she is kept by Julius A. Cram, but loved by another man, Louis Dalet. In Le garde du coeur, Dorothy has developed a platonic relationship with Lewis, but is loved by Paul, who has asked her to marry him. Lewis is also quickly becoming obsessed with Dorothy. They have already created a scandal by living together. Lewis buys her a 1925 Rolls-Royce with his own money because he knows that it is one of her favorite pleasures. He goes out of his way to please her, especially in cooking. He also tries to kill a man at a bar because the man offends Dorothy. It is interesting to note that music also evokes certain feelings in Dorothy, as it has for the other heroines. At one point, she puts on a record, "La Traviata," for the three of them. Upon hearing the music, it evokes feelings of happiness for her. She relates that "Nous sommes là tous les trois, il fait doux, la terre est ronde, nous sommes en bonne santé, nous sommes heureux . . ." (LGC 101). Dorothy is happy with the strange love triangle she seems to have created. Contrary to the Saganian norm, Dorothy enjoys being with both Paul and Lewis at the same time. In the previous novels, the heroine is with one man or another, and usually drops one.
One of the crucial scenes in Le garde du coeur is when Dorothy discovers that Lewis killed Frank, Jerry, and Lola. He relates with a cold and indifferent tone, "Mais il ne faut pas vous faire de soucis. Il n'y a aucune trace. Ils ne vous embêteront plus" (LGC 115-16). At first, Dorothy is shocked, and asks Lewis why he kills at random. But again, Lewis responds coldly, "Mais, Dorothy, je ne tue que les gens qui vous ont fait ou qui vous font de la peine. Ce n'est pas au hasard" (LGC 117). Dismayed by what she is hearing, Dorothy then asks Lewis if he thinks he is her bodyguard. His only response for the murders is "je vous aime" (LGC 117). Lewis's only reason for the murders is to make Dorothy happy. She now realizes that Lewis is a sociopath, and that he is capable of killing again, especially someone that she dislikes.

As in some of the previous novels, Lewis becomes Dorothy's protector in a ridiculous and antisocial way by killing anyone who insults or hurts her. He proceeds to tell her how he killed the three people. He explains that "Pour Frank, je lui ai donné rendez-vous au motel de votre part, dans une chambre louée par téléphone. J'y suis rentré par la fenêtre" (LGC 120-21). For Jerry's murder, Lewis states that "Il m'a donné rendez-vous aussitôt dans l'hôtel louche" (LGC 121). And for the last one, he explains that
"Pour Louella, j'ai passé la nuit à dévisser les boulons, devant. C'est tout" (LGC 121).

The element of mystery is equal to the love story as Sagan adds to this perplexing situation one important reversal of the norm, and that is how Dorothy responds to the murders. At first, she tries to decide what to do about Lewis. She knows that if he leaves her, he could be dangerous to others. Then she rationalizes that he has a two-year contract to make movies, so how could he leave town? She wants to avoid the police, for fear that they might think she is his accomplice. She finally decides that she is stuck with him, and that there is nothing she can do about it. But the most important scene showing a complete reversal of reality is how Dorothy establishes rules for Lewis's behavior. The first one is that "Il s'engageait formellement à ne tuer strictement personne sans mon autorisation" (LGC 126). The second one is that "Il arrêtait de prendre ses petits sucres au LSD" (LGC 126). The last rule Dorothy advocates is "Il essayait pour de bon de se trouver une maison à lui" (LGC 126). As Marc Slonim points out, "Dorothy, to her own surprise, is not too upset by her terrible discovery and does not denounce the criminal" (NYT Book Review). Instead, the unexpected turn is that she accepts his behavior, then makes up rules for him to follow, as if this were normal.
One notes that Lewis, as maladjusted as he is, seems to be in search of "new parents" ("The Sagan Set" Times Literary Supplement). He treats Dorothy as a mother figure, someone whom he protects by killing anyone who tries to harm her. Seeing himself as an adolescent, Lewis tries to possess Dorothy and Paul, his imaginary parents. At times, he is even treated as if he were an adolescent by both Dorothy and Paul. They fulfill Lewis's imagined role of parents. In one scene, at a Hollywood party given by Gloria Nash, Dorothy asks Paul, "Comment va notre petit garçon?" (LGC 138). In another she checks on Lewis at the party, like a mother. She states, "je partis dans le jardin vérifier si Lewis, entre deux petits fours, n'avait pas trouvé le temps de poignarder quelqu'un qui n'aurait pas aimé ma robe de paillettes" (LGC 136).

After two more murders, the drowning of Rena Cooper, a columnist at the party, and the shooting of Bill Macley, a director, Dorothy feels as if she is now an accomplice to murder. She imagines going to the state prison, or even to the gas chamber. She begins to think about suicide, but before she can do anything, she finds herself trapped alone in the house with Lewis because of a severe storm. It is at this point that Sagan allows her heroine to reach the peak of her happiness with Lewis. As he plays his guitar for her, the music again evokes strong feelings of pleasure and happiness within her, in a peculiar way. She exclaims,
La tempête soufflait dehors, je buvais mon café bien chaud en compagnie de mon assassin favori, je ronronnais. C'est terrible, finalement, d'avoir le bonheur facile. C'est très astreignant, le bonheur, on ne peut pas plus s'y dérober qu'à la neurasthénie. On nage au milieu des pires ennuis, on se débat, on se défend, on est obsédé par une pensée et subitement le bonheur vous frappe au front comme un caillou ou un éclair de soleil et on se laisse aller en arrière, toute au plaisir d'exister (LGC 170).

Another crucial scene occurs when Dorothy discovers that Lewis is impotent, as they end up together in bed during the storm. He suddenly becomes outraged, and tries to choke her to death. What is important is what Dorothy says to save her life. She shouts, "Qu'allez-vous faire sans moi, Lewis, vous allez vous ennuyer vous savez ... Lewis, mon chéri, soyez aimable, lâchez-moi" (LGC 177). When Lewis is faced with boredom, that which opposes happiness, he can only choose the happiness of being with Dorothy. He immediately releases her.

The conclusion of *Le garde du coeur* finds Dorothy marrying Paul, but also being forced into an unconventional ménage-à-trois. She allows Lewis to stay in her house while they are on their honeymoon. The newlyweds, returning after six months, find Lewis waiting for them at the airport when they return. Lewis is still determined to be happy with Dorothy. As the three of them arrive at her house, Dorothy and Paul must face the reality of their situation. They realize that Lewis is going to be with them "pour la vie" (LGC 186). When Paul asks Dorothy if she is not happy with
the current living arrangements, she responds, "Si, ... très ... Evidemment j'aurais sûrement du mal à empêcher Lewis de tuer des gens de temps en temps, mais avec un peu de surveillance et de chance ... ." (LGC 186-87).

*Le garde du cœur* is a novel that has baffled critics mainly because it is difficult to understand exactly what Sagan portrays. One critic, Norma Rosen, believes that Sagan may be spoofing her characters, the plot, or even herself. Rosen states that the novel is a puzzle, "a book that does not work, that baffles us with its self-contradictions, that resembles the author's best work to the point of parody" (NYT Book Review).

Leslie Garis points out that this novel was written in only two weeks, at the request of Sagan's publisher (88). Sagan had provoked controversy for herself upon leaving her publisher, Flammarion, after 13 years, claiming that they owed her two million dollars. As Garis reveals, "Suddenly out of money with no warning, she has dashed off novels in order to raise cash" (Sagan 88). *Le garde du cœur* is one of those novels.

Lothar Kahn believes that Sagan's heroines are equal to the "New Wave hero" in films, a hero in revolt against conventional morality ("Of New Waves and Saganism" Audience Press 83). In *Le garde du cœur*, for Dorothy, Paul represents conventional morality, but she is bored with him.
As Kahn explains, even if a Saganian heroine finds temporary happiness, "continued bliss would be boring and boredom—not adultery or even murder—is the supreme sin in this most fascinating of nihilistic worlds" (85-86). As a heroine in revolt, Dorothy eventually accepts the idea that Lewis murders.

In spite of the criticism against the novel, and of the controversy concerning Sagan, the meaning of *Le garde du coeur* can perhaps best be explained by Sagan's idea of happiness. She states that "la quête du bonheur, c'est peut-être de vivre avec, toujours présente, l'idée de la mort. C'est une idée qui d'ailleurs ne me déplaît pas, un excellent dénominateur pour toutes les actions humaines" (Réponses 172-73). Sagan believes that everyone has the basic fears of living and dying, and therefore her characters always live in the present in order to escape the anguish and boredom of everyday life. It is perhaps why Dorothy is able to excuse Lewis for the murders, and why she makes up rules for him to follow. Both Lewis and Dorothy are seeking happiness from each other in a bizarre way. He becomes the heartkeeper by protecting her as a mother figure when he kills. Lewis makes Dorothy happy, and he admits, too, that the reason he murders is because he loves her and wants her to be happy.

The quest for happiness takes on an even more unusual twist in *Le garde du coeur*. Another Saganian heroine
searches for happiness, but ends up in a strange love triangle.
De guerre lasse, published in 1985, is the last novel in this study. The time frame, World War II, adds to the love story in that it holds an added element of the historical adventure. Sagan was born in a time period when Europe was unsettled. From 1935 on, until about 1945, Sagan's family lived in a country house near Lyon in an effort to miss the hardships of the Occupation. But Lyon became the center of the Résistance. Sagan recalls that she still has frightening memories of the war, and that they are reflected in De guerre lasse (*Réponses* 24). In 1987, the novel was made into a movie.

A brief summary of this final novel is as follows: The plot concerns Alice Fayatt, age 30, and her current lover, Jérôme, who are members of the Résistance. They have been traveling together for the past year. They have come to the Vichy area in order to see Jérôme's childhood friend, Charles Sambrat, an apolitical industrialist. Jérôme's personal involvement in the war is to try to convince his best friend, Charles, to use his shoe factory as a way station for Jews who are being smuggled out of France. Alice's involvement in the war relates to her first husband,
Gerhardt Fayatt, a Jewish Austrian surgeon, from whom she is now divorced. Jérôme and Charles hold different views concerning the war, and both compete for Alice's love. Jérôme is a humanist whose purpose is to save Jews. Charles is a libertine who is uninterested in the war. If Jérôme is unable to persuade Charles to use his factory as a hideout, then Alice will seduce him, if necessary, to obtain his cooperation and fulfill their purpose.

After being sent on a mission in Paris with Charles, Alice's dilemma is to choose between Jérôme and Charles, since she has fallen in love with Charles, but wants to fulfill her duties concerning the war.

In the fall, all three are separated by events relating to the war. Charles is the reluctant hero since throughout the novel, he has chosen not to participate in it, but he finally joins the Résistance.

In *De guerre lasse*, Sagan involves her heroine not only in a love triangle, but in the war as well. Sagan has developed into a more serious writer, one who poses more profound problems for her heroines, such as the war, and the humanitarian involvement in helping Jews. These pursuits are far different from the simple pleasures of adolescence that Cécile and Dominique had to deal with. As in all the previous novels, little action takes place in *De guerre lasse*, in spite of the war background. What is absent from this novel, as opposed to the others, is the confrontation
between young and old. Both Alice and Charles are age 30, and Jérôme, about the same.

Sagan again presents a heroine who has known misery, but this time far greater despair than any other previous heroine. None of the others have known this kind of unhappiness. Alice's ex-husband, a Jew, left her in a state of despair. After their divorce, Alice believed that "toute sa vie n'avait été faite que de faux semblants" (De guerre lasse 177; hereafter DGL). She recalls the despair of her past life in the following passage:

C'était par maladresse, ignorance, qu'elle s'était retrouvée enceinte de Gerhardt, et non par goût de la maternité. C'était pour épargner sa famille qu'elle l'avait épousé, et non pour le désir de partager sa vie. C'était par accident qu'elle avait fait une fausse couche, et non par stratagème ni par répulsion... C'était par passion de la vie, passion déçue, qu'elle avait subi cette dépression nerveuse (DGL 177).

Alice is seeking happiness, yet it seems to be something out of her reach. Her past life was filled with misery. After having suffered through a divorce, a miscarriage, and a suicide attempt, as well as loneliness, she has joined Jérôme and his efforts in the Résistance. For Alice, overcoming loneliness is what keeps her from being happy. Miller states that this particular novel proposes "a thrilling escape from the banality of the quotidian" (70). Boredom and solitude are what plague Alice's life and keep her from finding happiness. But she has a purpose, a goal, which she states as: "elle n'était là
Alice's relationship with Jérôme is one of closeness, companionship, and love. It is Jérôme who helped her through a past suicide attempt, and who stayed with her for two years until she recovered. Their relationship is currently that "Ils étaient amants depuis six mois mais avaient vécu dix-huit mois ensemble sans l'être" (DGL 43). For the last two years, Jérôme has been like both a father and a brother to her. The extent of their love is characterized in the following passage:

Jérôme la trouvait belle; mais Jérôme l'aimait; et d'un amour si éperdu, si longtemps par elle maintenu platonique, qu'elle n'arrivait pas, malgré la passion de son amant, à voir dans ses étreintes autre chose que la concrétisation de son sentiment - de leur sentiment plutôt; car enfin elle n'aimait personne au monde sinon Jérôme, il n'y avait que lui qui la rassurât, il n'y avait que lui dont l'absence l'attristât (DGL 80).

Other Saganian heroines only think about suicide, but in this particular novel, Alice actually tries it. As for Jérôme, his own youth was plagued with despair and loneliness and it is this bond, a sharing of unhappiness and misery, that closely links them.

Ellen Pall believes that the principal conflict in De guerre lasse is the struggle between "personal desire and moral responsibility" (NYT Book Review). As opposed to the other heroines in this study, who had no real purpose to
fulfill, Alice's role in the war is to help Jérôme work out a plan which will enable Jews to escape from Paris. The conflict of personal desire means that eventually Alice will have to choose between two men, Jérôme, or Charles. The struggle with moral responsibility concerns whether or not Alice will help Jérôme in his goals concerning the war.

One of the major conflicts in the novel is the confrontation between Jérôme and Charles, two childhood friends, as they compete for Alice's attention and love. The rivalry between the two is set up immediately, as soon as Jérôme and Alice visit Charles unexpectedly at his leather factory. Charles is immediately impressed with Alice, and is attracted to her romantically. When Jérôme asks Charles what he thinks of her, Charles wants to say that "Alice est pour moi, à moi, il me la faut, je la veux et je l'aime. J'ai envie de la séduire et, pire, j'ai envie de la garder. Tu as été fou de l'amener ici. Même si je n'ai qu'une chance sur cent, je la tenterai" (DGL 20).

The competition between Jérôme and Charles is based on their completely different characters. Jérôme represents the serious, intellectual type who is taking an active part in the Résistance. Charles describes him as an idealist, and as someone who is always involved. As Pall points out, Jérôme "is dedicated to saving Jews." As soon as he arrives at Charles's country house, he begins to inform him of the
seriousness of the war. He tells Charles that the Gestapo are arresting Jews and sending everyone, even women and children, off to camps. It is Jérôme's purpose to use his best friend's leather factory as a hideout for Jews in their escape. In order to try to convince him, Jérôme believes that it is his duty to inform Charles that "Il va falloir qu'il admette que son usine peut être brûlée, ses ouvriers fusillés, lui-même torturé, sa maison réduite en cendres" (DGL 47).

On the other hand, Charles represents the frivolous, pleasure-seeking type who has no interest in war. His purpose in life is more suited to women. He has the reputation of being "un séducteur" (DGL 111). Charles's wife, Hélène, has recently left him when Jérôme and Alice first arrive, and therefore he becomes even more interested in Alice. As Pall states, Charles "is dedicated to pleasure." As Charles himself admits, "Et Charles Sambrat en était venu à se considérer comme peu intelligent ou tout au moins à considérer cette faculté mineure chez lui" (DGL 21). In addition to his wife, and Alice, whom he finds irresistible, Charles "a deux femmes, deux maîtresses au village, à cinq kilomètres; il en a trois à Valence; il en a deux à Grenoble; il doit en avoir une douzaine à Lyon!" (DGL 44).

Charles is interested in neither the war nor the Jews. He tells Jérôme, "Tu sais très bien que pour moi les juifs
ça n'existe pas, ça n'a jamais existé, ... quelle différence il y a. Tu me dirais que tu es juif, que je suis juif, ça me serait complètement égal, ça ne ferait aucune différence" (DGL 28-29).

It is significant to note that Alice is at first attracted to Charles because of that which she cannot find, happiness. Charles appeals to her because he is so different from Jérôme. He loves pleasure, freedom, and most importantly, he is happy. One of the crucial scenes is the one where Alice describes Charles:

Il était beau d'ailleurs, avec la chemise ouverte sur sa peau hâlée, la masse de ses cheveux noirs luisant dans le soleil, ses yeux marron et liquides, ses dents blanches. Il ressemblait à un très bel animal très sain, à un bel homme heureux en somme - et peut-être n'était-il en fait que ça: un homme heureux. Peut-être était-il même spécialement doué pour ça, pour le bonheur, et Alice avait toujours eu une confuse admiration pour ces privilèges rarissimes (DGL 35). If Jérôme's plan fails to convince Charles, then Alice plans to seduce him, if necessary, to get his help. While Jérôme is more concerned with keeping Charles as a friend, supporter, and now accomplice, Charles is much more concerned with having Alice for himself. He says, "c'était l'espoir, l'espoir fou, le désir mortel de pouvoir un jour rejoindre lui-même Alice, dans ce lit sous la couverture de crochet" (DGL 24).

Miller states that within the scope of Sagan's novels, Saganian heroines "strive to break free of sexual and social
conditioning" (123). This idea is especially true in *De guerre lasse*, more so than any other novel in this study. In one particular scene, Jérôme tells Alice about men like Charles. He states, "Les hommes comme Charles peuvent tout faire pour les femmes qui leur résistent. Ça décuple leur désir. En revanche, si elles leur cèdent ..." (DGL 48). Alice quickly responds that "Céder, céder, quel vilain mot, ... c'est un terme de défaite" (DGL 48). In another important scene, Charles explains that he must run the family's leather business because it is something that women find tiring. Alice quickly responds that "Parce que les femmes ne sont pas faites pour les affaires, elles sont faites pour parler de leurs bébés et rester à la maison, n'est-ce pas?" (DGL 38). Charles immediately defends himself by stating:

Ah ça, non! ... Les femmes sont faites pour sortir au contraire, pour sortir dans les rues, pour plaire aux hommes, pour les rendre fous d'amour, pour les rendre fous de malheur. Elles sont faites pour prendre des bateaux, pour prendre des trains, pour aller partout faire rêver les hommes. Ah, non, elles ne sont pas faites pour rester à la maison ... Ça, je n'ai jamais dit ça!' (DGL 39).

One of the turning points is when Jérôme comes up with a plan whereby Alice and Charles must go to Paris alone together. Jérôme is unable to go because he would be recognized by the police and the Gestapo. But if she were to pose as a mistress to a manufacturer in the leather business, it would serve as an ideal cover. Charles is
nothing but pleased with the arrangement because he plans to spend time alone with Alice, in which "il emmènerait Alice découvrir son Paris à lui, ce soir il essayerait de l'écouter, de lui parler, de l'amuser, de la 'distraire' de tout: de la guerre, des juifs, des nazis, de Jérôme, de son passé et même de lui-même" (DGL 113-14).

In Paris, Alice carries out three missions, following Jérôme's instructions and meeting her contacts, as he had planned. Finally, she meets Monsieur Migond, who is in charge of the Jews who are to escape. She passes herself off as Jérôme's wife, instead of his mistress, believing that it would be more reassuring to the people. Looking at those whom she had come to save, she exclaims, "Ils étaient huit, non ils étaient dix, non ils étaient douze: elle n'arrivait plus à les compter et son regard vacillait d'un groupe à l'autre" (DGL 126). While she explains her purpose for being there, and how she has come to look after them, Charles makes plans to take Alice out. One must remember that she considers him as possessing something that she still is unable to possess, that which is so important, happiness. She can only imagine herself being as happy as Charles at this point. She explains that "Elle ne voulait pas d'un Charles perdant, ni malheureux. Cela lui faisait peur" (DGL 134). Like Dominique, in Un certain sourire, who is intrigued by Luc, Alice is equally fascinated by Charles. She admits that:
Ce petit-bourgeois si avide et si naturel, si désarmant et si ingénus dans son cynisme d'homme adulte, ce petit-bourgeois soucieux de son confort et de ses jeux, ce petit-bourgeois représentait pour elle, sur un terrain très exigu et sur lequel elle n'avait jamais joué jusque-là, celui du plaisir physique, eh oui, ce petit-bourgeois représentait pour elle l'aventure... (DGL 135).

Music also plays a role in *De guerre lasse*, as it has in the other novels. Like Dominique, who danced to orchestra music with Bertrand in *Un certain sourire*, Alice likewise enjoys dancing with Charles to similar music at the club L'Aiglon. In both cases, the music and the alcohol evoke special feelings of pleasure and happiness for the heroines. For Alice, it recalls a time in her past when she was happy with one of her former lovers. What she discovers within herself which is so significant is the possibility that she can enjoy herself. As she and Charles leave the nightclub, Alice "ne se rappelait pas s'être autant amusée, s'être sentie aussi jeune, aussi gaie, depuis des années" (DGL 148).

Another turning point is when Alice and Charles walk back to their hotel from the nightclub. They are captured by Nazi officials, and interrogated for several hours throughout the night. After returning to their hotel, they wake up in bed together the next morning. They have become lovers, only to realize that they must leave to return home the following morning.
Sagan deepens the conflict between Jérôme and Charles at this point. Charles now wonders, "Que devait-il faire, était-ce à lui de parler à Jérôme ou à elle?" (DGL 174). He feels no guilt for stealing his best friend's lover, only a sense of happiness at being with Alice. He states, "Il ne craignait qu'une chose, véritablement, c'était que le remords ne troublât les débuts de leur amour et leur bonheur à peine né de la veille" (DGL 175). He decides that Alice must be the one to tell Jérôme, because "C'était Jérôme qui n'avait jamais pensé qu'à son bien et à qui elle allait faire le plus grand mal qu'on puisse lui faire" (DGL 176).

L. F. Becker points out that the struggle between the two men for Alice becomes unequal. Jérôme "is no match for Charles, who not only satisfies her as no man has ever done, but also makes her laugh" (World Literature Today). In Alice's newfound discovery of happiness, and the enjoyment of life, she explains her reasons for choosing Charles in the following scene:

Et c'était parce qu'il continuait à lui plaire, qu'il la faisait rire et qu'il la mettait en confiance, qu'elle allait rester avec lui. Oui, pour la première fois, c'était parce qu'elle en avait envie qu'elle allait faire quelque chose; c'était pour le plaisir qu'elle aurait à vivre avec Charles, et non par féroce qu'elle allait abandonner Jérôme (DGL 178).

One of the crucial scenes is one where Alice realizes that what she has needed is someone like Charles in her life to re-awaken her vitality and help her discover the happiness within her. In the past, Alice had only known
misery. She did not even realize that it was possible to attain happiness until she met Charles. In the following passage, she explores within herself her new discovery, the one of being happy:

La vie, le bonheur, l'équilibre, avaient-ils des bases aussi simples? L'existence de Dieu, le pourquoi de la vie, tout cela n'était-il vraiment qu'une question de glandes? Elle n'en savait rien mais, après tout, elle s'en moquait du moment que ses glandes et sa métaphysique marchaient. Tout allait bien, le bonheur était à jamais innocent, elle l'avait toujours su; et c'était bien ce qui l'avait si profondément désespérée quand elle l'avait perdu. Il n'y avait que le malheur d'impardonnable sur cette terre (DGL 202-03).

Alice is now able to break free of the bond with Jérôme. They no longer share the bond of misery and unhappiness.

The conclusion of De guerre lasse finds Alice staying with Charles, and Jérôme hastily leaving alone. It had been only one week since Alice and Jérôme had arrived at Charles's house together. Just like Lucile and Antoine in La chamade, whose imagined dream of love and happiness reached its peak in the summer, Alice and Charles also spend an idyllic summer together.

In the fall, Alice receives word that Jérôme has been taken prisoner in Paris, and that he is being tortured. The novel ends ambiguously as Alice goes to his aid, but after two months, in November, Charles has had no word from her. He decides to join the Résistance, and becomes the reluctant hero, having changed his attitude by the end of the story.
Although *De guerre lasse* concerns the war, one of the main criticisms of the novel is a lack of believability due to the dominating love plot. Pall points out, for example, that there are no Jewish characters in *De guerre lasse*. The main purpose of Alice and Jérôme's mission to Paris is to free Jews. But after Alice and Charles reach Paris, Alice is even unsure of how many Jews there are to save. She deliberates between eight, 10, and 12. Then she states that she is unable to keep count. The only one who is actually Jewish is Alice's ex-husband, and he plays no active role in the plot.

Alice's inner search has led to her own self-awareness concerning happiness. She realizes, through Charles, that she can be happy and enjoy life. In spite of her past, which consisted of misery and despair, she learns from him the meaning of happiness. But as in all the previous novels, that happiness is short-lived.

*Aimez-vous Brahms*, *Le garde du coeur*, and *De guerre lasse* conclude the last part of this study. In these three novels, Sagan portrays three divorced heroines. They are all linked together in that they recall either happiness or misery in their past. Paule recalls the happiness of her first marriage to Marc, only to dwell on how old she feels when *Aimez-vous Brahms* begins, 15 years later. Ironically, she meets him again at the end of the novel, and they have a quick affair. Dorothy recalls unhappy memories of being
left by her ex-husband in *Le garde du coeur*, and ironically, he is murdered. Alice also recalls the misery of her unhappy life, a divorce, an abortion, and a suicide attempt, and how she and Jérôme are linked through despair and solitude. Each of these heroines, like the other heroines, becomes involved in a love relationship with two men.
CHAPTER X

CONCLUSION

Françoise Sagan made literary history with her first novel, Bonjour tristesse. Since then, she has continued to express an amoralism and overall weariness with modern society. Her purpose as a writer has been to describe the reality of life, as she sees it, in the mid-twentieth century. Basically, she presents a harsh and uncompromising view of life, evident in the types of heroines she depicts, the type of society she portrays, and the specific problems her heroines face. All of the novels presented in this study deal with the conflicts of the modern world, with the liberation of women, with moral codes, and with sexual pleasures.

In the selected novels, the principal themes studied are love and happiness. Each of the heroines encounters three specific problems linked to these two themes: solitude, boredom, and freedom. Sagan presents these heroines with the challenge of finding happiness, and of dealing with each of these problems.

Sagan first presents two adolescent girls who have acquired their first lovers. Cécile, in Bonjour tristesse, is 17, deals with the love of her father, and of her first
lover. Happiness to her is to enjoy a life of pleasure, and a carefree existence, like her father. Anne becomes the threat which opposes her happiness, and she therefore tries to eliminate her from their lives. Boredom is the one thing that Cécile and her father must avoid in order to be happy. Cécile must also avoid losing her freedom and leisurely lifestyle that she now enjoys. The conclusion shows that after the death of Anne, Cécile and her father return to the same superficial life that they had always known, and to solitude.

Dominique, in _Un certain sourire_, is also an adolescent, and a student, like Cécile. She must overcome boredom before she can find happiness. In her case, boredom is a result of her uneventful affair with her first lover, Bertrand. Dominique believes that she can find happiness with an older man, so she begins an affair with Luc, Bertrand's uncle. He tries to convince her that even pain and suffering are better than boredom. The conclusion shows that when Luc abandons her, she ends up alone, in solitude.

Sagan next presents two young heroines, one a kept woman, and one married. Lucile, in _La chamade_, is 30, a woman living with an older man. She enjoys a luxurious life, a life of complete freedom, and a carefree existence. The only thing that she cannot find is happiness. In order to try to find it, she becomes involved in a love affair with Antoine. But she cannot handle the boredom of a job,
or the loss of her freedom when she gets pregnant. The conclusion shows that, after a hasty abortion, Lucile returns to Charles for economic reasons, and to a life of solitude.

Josée, in *Les merveilleux nuages*, is 27, and is married to Alan, her neurotic but wealthy young husband. The only way for her to attain happiness is to escape from her bad marriage. She tries to find freedom by going to Paris, where she meets past friends, and a former lover. She also hopes to find solitude there, but only finds more unhappiness, as Alan finds her. As they continue their perverse game of love, the story ends ambiguously.

In *Un profil perdu*, Josée is now 30, and is still married to her neurotic, and now masochistic, husband. Again, the only way for her to find happiness is to get out of her bad marriage, but this time she is helped by Julius A. Cram, a millionaire. It is the first of the novels where the heroine forms a platonic relationship with a man. Josée struggles to be free, and become an independent woman. She comes closest of all the heroines to finding true love, happiness, and a conventional lifestyle by falling in love with Louis Dalet. The conclusion shows that she is able to break free of dependency on her husband and her older protector, Julius.
Sagan's last three heroines have all been divorced, and have experienced either misery or brief moments of happiness in the past. Paule, in *Aimez-vous Brahms*, is 39, one of the oldest heroines. She must overcome solitude before she is able to find happiness, but she is unable to break off her relationship with Roger, her middle-aged lover. She therefore resorts to Simon, a younger man, who she believes will help her find happiness. The conclusion shows that she returns to her middle-aged lover, realizing that youth is not for her, and that she can only be the older woman that she is.

Dorothy, in *Le garde du coeur*, is 45 and is the most successful, as well as the oldest, of all the heroines. She also forms a platonic relationship with a bizarre young man, Lewis Miles, and for some unexplained reason, is seeking a mysterious kind of happiness. Dorothy is bored with her current lover, Paul Brett. Her almost fatal attraction to Lewis results in his killing people that hurt her. The conclusion shows that even though Dorothy marries Paul, Lewis stays with them forever.

Alice, in *De guerre lasse* is age 30 and is involved in both love and war. For her, overcoming loneliness, and a life of misery through a divorce, an abortion, and a suicide attempt, is what keeps her from finding happiness. She believes that it is out of her reach. She acquires two young lovers, Jérôme and Charles, who compete for her love.
The conclusion shows that she chooses Charles, who at first refuses to become involved in the war, but later takes part in it. Alice lives with him, but all three are separated by events of the war at the end.

In examining the treatment of the heroines in the selected novels, this study seems to indicate that the author portrays happiness as a negative. Each of the heroines is involved in the struggle to find happiness, and each is plagued with problems relating to solitude, boredom, and the struggle for freedom. Some try to escape from solitude, boring lovers, or the boredom of everyday life. Others struggle with the opposition between dependency on men, and retaining their freedom. Sagan believes that these are universal problems, and offers no solutions for her heroines. All of the heroines find only the transitory nature of love and happiness, and the futility of all human relationships. Each of the heroines is involved in a triangular relationship with two men, and experiences only pain, suffering, and disappointment through love. All experience the contradictions and reversals of love. What little happiness they experience is short-lived. Sagan also adheres to a male-dominated society in her romances, as is evident in the relationships between the men and the heroines in these novels.
Sagan has stated that her only moral value is literature, and that the only God she knows is time. Based on her idea of morality, and a Godless existence, happiness is the key word in the Saganian universe. Since her novels appeal to a consumer society, her message concerns the emptiness of life, and a society which has no moral constraints. Although Sagan has been criticized for the amoral structure of her novels it is actually the most outstanding feature of them. Other novelists have tried to express this emptiness and anguish of humanity, but Sagan surpasses them in this regard. She depicts this emptiness through the kind of wealthy society that is portrayed in her works. Money is no problem to her characters, and thus they are able to lead idle existences. The settings are the Côte d'Azur, Florida, Hollywood, New York, and Paris. All of her heroines are amoral, they all lead an idle existence, except Paule in Aimez-vous Brahms, and Dorothy in Le garde du coeur. Josée works, but she is deceived by Julius A. Cram into believing that she can be independent, and hold down a job for which she is not qualified. Idleness results in the pursuit of pleasure for all the other heroines.

One also notes that the only material things which appear in Sagan's novels are cars, beds, mirrors, and telephones, and even at that, the descriptions are brief. All of her heroines seem timeless, as if they have no past and no future. In some of the novels, the heroines lack
physical descriptions. None of them is described in any detail. Except for Bonjour tristesse, parents play little or no role in the selected novels. No children, senior citizens, or homemakers appear in them, either. Lucile in La chamade and Dorothy in De guerre lasse have had abortions. Josée in Un profil perdu is pregnant, but the novel ends ambiguously. Many of the characters have no last names or ages, with little descriptions being given of them. All of these factors help to evoke the emptiness of lives linked to an aimless existence, and the futility of love in a world preoccupied by superficial things.

Françoise Sagan has continued to fascinate readers for over 30 years with many best sellers centered around troubled love and the search for happiness. Happiness is perhaps a state of mind, or a figment of one's imagination, but it remains something that one hopes for. Real happiness, for Françoise Sagan, is at best a transitory state, which may appear, or vanish, at any time. Perhaps the true appeal of her novels is in the same challenge she offers to her readers in finding happiness that she offers to her heroines. It is the idea that what one thinks will result in happiness, sometimes turns out just the opposite.
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