

Volume 15 Issue 1-2
1-2/2017
tamarajournal.com



The Meaning of Work and the Absence of Workers in *Les Mandarins*: Irony at Work through the 'Essential Accessory'

Robin Patric Clair

Purdue University, United States
rpclair@purdue.edu

Lauren Berkshire Hearit

Purdue University, United States
lhearit@purdue.edu

Keywords

*accessoire-indispensable-
mais-camouflé - essential
accessory*

Les Mandarins

Meaning of work

Simone de Beauvoir

Workers/working class

Abstract

Building on past studies that assert that novels provide pedagogical promise as well as organizational insight for students and managers, we take up Simone de Beauvoir's classic novel *Les Mandarins* which questions the meaning and value of literature to act as a form of resistance and activism, especially on behalf of the working class. We point out that 'the workers' are both present and absent in the novel, as they are the central point of discussion and yet no working class characters are developed within the pages of the novel. We address this as a rhetorical/literary device - *accessoire-indispensable-mais-camouflé* or more succinctly, the essential accessory, which future studies might invoke in assessing organizational practices.

Postmodern perspectives assert that the meaning and organization of work in society depends on discursive constructions (Bakhtin, 1981; Bourdieu, 1991; Foucault, 1979). Bourdieu's contribution on the power of language to symbolically situate workers demonstrates the possibility of symbolic violence. Indeed, such bureaucratic discourses hold the power to damage the humanity of workers (Clair & Mattson, 2013). Such discourses come in multiple forms, of which narrative is one of the most relevant to organizational life (Boje, 1992, 1995; Browning & Morris, 2012). Narratives, in turn, may range from the local and personal stories to the grand narratives that represent ideological paradigms such as socio-economic structures (Lyotard, 1979) and power relations (Mumby, 1987). Organizational scholars have been thorough in their study of local organizational stories and meta-narratives, even of the relationship between the two (Clair, 1996). However, according to Czarniawska-Joerges and de Monthoux (1994), few organizational scholars have undertaken the analysis of narratives considered outside the organization and yet related to organization in the form of classic literature. They provide the example of *The Ladies' Paradise* by Emile Zola. (Other examples can be found in the 2012 special edition of PMLA edited by Vicky Unruh and dedicated to exploring the theme of work and novels.) And they make the case that novels can be significantly revealing of ideological stances concerning work. Thus, we propose an undertaking of an award-winning novel to explore

Irony at Work through the 'Essential Accessory'

literary constructions of work and more specifically of workers, especially in light of Bourdieu's (1991) discursive organizational theory of bureaucratic discourse and symbolic violence. We suggest that 'the workers' and their 'work' are positioned in a peripheral position that is crucial to establishing *les mandarins* as protagonists; in turn, this may speak of the level of narrative empathy (Clair & Mattson, 2013; Clair, Carlo, Lam, Nussman, Phillips, Sanchez, Schnabel, & Yakovich, 2014; Clair, Rastogi, Blatchley, Clawson, Erdmann, & Lee, 2016).

When literature on work has been explored, it has generally been done so by literary experts rather than organizational scholars (e.g., Unruh, 2012; Weinstein, 1995; for an exception see Czarniawska-Joerges & de Monthoux, 1994). Putnam and Conrad (1999) agreed that studying literary works from an organizational perspective by organizational scholars could shed light on important connections between literature and the world of work (also see Linde, 2009). In addition, they encouraged professors to assign novels as readings in the college classroom as a pedagogical means of enhancing learning about the organization of labor. Yet professors and managers have few examples other than Czarniawska-Joerges and de Monthoux's (1994) edited collection to guide these endeavors. Having additional interpretations of novels and especially of novels that highlight labor and or organization as its primary subject could be of great benefit in understanding the discourses that surround and influence work and the symbolic creation of workers.

With that said, no existential novel captures the complexities associated with the meaning of work and the work of creating meaningful expressions of art with the same integrity and power that does Simone de Beauvoir's classic novel—*Les Mandarins*. More importantly, it is a novel about activism on behalf of the working class. The novel has received serious attention for its contribution on the meaning of work for writers and activists from literary critics (e.g., Keefe, 1998; Tidd, 2004) but how it contributes to the meaningful construction and definition or positioning of workers more generally has yet to be undertaken; and more pointedly, undertaken by organizational discursive scholars. The novel certainly addresses the existential notion that art is a form of labor and can act as resistance¹; however, neither literary nor organizational scholars have delved deeply into this award-winning novel to explore how it speaks of the working class.

Les Mandarins is not only a work of art, it is a work of action (i.e., it speaks in a candid form, *parrhesia*, against the stereotypical job placements of women in society and openly addresses the brutality of labor camps as well as the exploitation of workers via capitalism and thus acts as a rallying discourse) that comments on the organization of society with regard to labor, from daily tasks to the intolerable establishment of Russian labor camps. In this way, it refuses to accept the *habitus* of gendered work, questions exploitation, and dismisses the devaluation of art. Its focus, however, is squarely on the role of intellectual's labor and its relationship to politics, philosophy, and aesthetics. And although it questions gender roles and work, it does not delve deeply into the role of the working class. Beyond the role of the intellectuals and artists is the life of the worker and the meaning of various forms of work; these are deserving of further attention and have not received that attention with respect to *Les Mandarins*.

Thus, the purpose here is to provide an organizationally-driven critique of one of the most famous works to grapple with the meaning and organization of intellectual labor, as well as the role that fiction plays in providing political commentary on work and workers. This critique aims not only to provide educators with a well-grounded organizational look at the text to be used in the college classroom, but also to uncover the hidden ways in which work and workers are constructed by intellectuals. We are especially concerned with whether intellectual artists can provide a view of the working class so that the workers' stories, within the grander story of the novel, are not silenced (Clair, 1993, 1998; Cloud, 1995; Linde, 2009).

Les Mandarins: D'ouverture

Simone de Beauvoir's award-winning novel, *Les Mandarins* opens with the character of Henri Perron looking at the sky—"a clear, black crystal dome overhead." Although difficult to imagine, Henri envisions "hundreds of planes shattering that black, crystalline silence! And suddenly, words began tumbling through his head with a joyous sound—the offensive was halted . . . the German collapse had begun . . . at last he would be able to leave." Life would return to normal, he thinks as he continues his walk home. "The streets would smell again of oil and orange blossoms, in the evening there would be

¹ The creation of as well as discussion of works of art as critiques of the organization of labor has a long history. A classic in the area is Jean-Paul Sartre's "*Qu'est-ce que la littérature?*"

light, people would sit and chat in the outdoor cafés, and he would drink real coffee to the sound of guitars” (de Beauvoir, 1956, p. 11)².

The promise of living utopian moments in the aesthetics of everyday life offered to the reader in the opening paragraph is challenged with each turn of the page. Life in the aftermath of WWII brought a new set of problems to the world. Problems that would consume European intellectuals like Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus, Arthur Koestler, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Simone de Beauvoir, all of whom are portrayed as characters in this *roman à clef* masterpiece. Specifically, the main characters of Henri Perron and Anne Dubreuilh are meant to represent Albert Camus and Simone de Beauvoir, respectively. Simone de Beauvoir not only tells the intriguing political and romantic story of these individuals, but also presents provocative themes concerning the role of the intellectual, the power or impotence of the written word, and the means and methods of addressing the injustices of the world³. The plot of *Les Mandarins* explores whether a work of art can change society, whether political essays can be compared to activism or whether resistance can only be measured through the characters’ decisions, actions and outcomes. In short, de Beauvoir asks, what is the role of the artist, the intellectual, and the activist? How does the work of each impact society? Do these pursuits count as work? And is this work valuable? What the novel does not seem to address, and deserves a deeper exploration, is the material existence of the worker/laborer to which the activists in the novel devote their energy. In short, the dialectical figure/ground relationship is complicated (i.e., Is the relationship of activist/artist central and activist/worker secondary? Or is the latter relationship of key importance.) Do the double tensions oscillate or is one relationship marginalized? Furthermore, how work is dialectally constructed through contrasts between *les mandarins* (here in lower case to indicate the intellectuals) and the workers, and their respective activities, is at the heart of this study. A discursive, organizational lens (that draws from Bourdieu’s theory as well as dialectical narrative theory) is applied to the novel to better understand the discursive creation of workers in society by one of societies acclaimed authors and philosophers.

Dialectics in *Les Mandarins*

Each of the themes in *Les Mandarins* can be seen in terms of an “overlapping dichotomy” (Keefe, 1998, p. 110)⁴. They include the “nature and importance of literature,” (Keefe, p. 108) the “inter-penetration of the private and the political,” (p. 109) the psychologically and socially-constructed gender roles, activism or lack thereof in art, and the complicated relationship of loyalty and betrayal. Within each of these areas are sub-themes which also demonstrate dialectical tension. For example, under the category of literature, “fiction” is depicted “as a kind of indulgence” that also “enables us to understand the viewpoint of others” (Keefe, p. 110). Psychiatry is defined in terms of the dialectical practice of “remembering and forgetting” (Keefe, p. 114). Relationships are fraught with the tension of loving someone enough to let them be free, as seen in the case of Paule’s neurotic love for Henri. Works of art speak of resistance just as they are entangled in oppression. Keefe’s dialectical narrative approach is applied to understanding *Les Mandarins*.

We wish to highlight and add to this dialectical discussion by asserting that the simultaneous opposite what Nicholas of Cusa called *coincidentia oppositorum* is a critical dialectic for any discussion of *Les Mandarins*. We explore and highlight the literary construction of the workers which may evidence this simultaneous co-existence for the workers—present while absent. In the following sections we search out the literary portrayal of the workers, how the workers oscillate between central and visible to marginal and invisible, which may be linked to *les mandarins*’ unrelenting need to write, sometimes at the expense of taking action or overshadowing the subject (the workers). As de Beauvoir said of herself, “I am not a woman of action. I live to write” (Bair, 1990, p. 477); “I am a writer” (p. 543). And yet her writings are a form of activism. Furthermore, she bifurcates the definition of writer as artist in contrast to workers. As an early scene in the book depicts (to be discussed in detail in following sections) points out, writers are not laborers; they do not lift the hammers. The book

² de Beauvoir, *Les Mandarins*. All page numbers referenced in the text concerning quotes in English are from the 1999 paperback version of the 1954 English version. French phrases are taken from Gallimard’s 114th edition.

³ Excellent overviews and critiques of *Les Mandarins* are available to readers. See Fallaize (1980), Keefe (1998), Klaw (1995), Simons (1977).

⁴ Keefe (1998) writes on several dialectical relationships in de Beauvoir’s work.

pointedly positions writers and artists as central and questions the role of activists, but lets the definition, position, and placement of workers fall into the shadows of *les mandarins*.

***Les Mandarins*: An Overview with an Historical Background**

The historical era following WWII brought a confusing array of possibilities for the characters of *Les Mandarins*. For Henri the possibility of writing “a light novel” as opposed to serious philosophical-political essay acts as the opening tension. (de Beauvoir, 1956, p. 12)⁵. De Beauvoir has created characters based on the real lives of existentialists who were grappling with these issues. The characters, like their real life counterparts, are enveloped in existential angst—what is their life work to be once the horrors of fascism have receded? Do they continue their cause to support the workers by way of leftist newspapers, organize rallies, write plays, or engage in vigilante violence? And how should society be organized with respect to labor and production?

Drawing from Heidegger, de Beauvoir argued “that the human condition is ambiguous, by which she means that the meaning of human existence is not fixed, but must be constantly created within the parameters of seemingly opposed conditions of existence” (Tidd, 2004, p. 37). These opposing conditions are represented initially in the novel by the use of not one but two narrators, Henri Perron and Anne Dubreuilh. Although the narrators are in some ways opposing figures, they also live parallel lives. Each character speaks from his or her situated experience⁶. Perron is the activist editor of a leftist newspaper, an author, a playwright, a friend to Robert Dubreuilh (representative of Jean Paul Sartre), and the unhappy lover to Paule who is replaced by the romantic love interest of Nadine, who is also Anne Dubreuilh’s daughter. Anne Dubreuilh is a practicing psychologist, an author, a mother, Robert Dubreuilh’s partner, a friend to Paule and the lover of American author Charles Brogan (representative of Nelson Algren). The subjectivities are multiple and multi-layered. They experience the same world from different vantages. There is no one truth⁷. Thus, the novel breaks with the European tradition of a single protagonist, asserting that one narrator is not enough to understand the position of various individuals; perspectives are multiple. Two perspectives allow the reader to see the inequities of gender among the intellectual class as both narrators are intellectual writers. But of note is that no narrator speaks of the inequities of labor from a class perspective. There is no working class character. Although the double narration is unique and laudable it is also contestable considering the subject matter.

***L'exposition*: The Subject of Work**

The novel has been praised and critiqued for its use of the double narrator, notions of space, conceptualization of identity, feminist constructions of womanhood, narrative structure and much more⁸. Yet it has not been read with a close eye as to how the novel conceptualizes the essence of work, at times demeaning physical labor, which is addressed from the very beginning of the novel within early dialogues between the characters. The novel tackles the major socio-political issues of the times, criticizing capitalist imperialism and the brutal repression of communism, as well as the patriarchal subjugation of women. And it especially focuses on white, privileged women stunted by domestication and lack of professional outlets by way of specific dialogue or through characters’ actions. However, as the novel explores issues of privilege (patriarchal, imperialism, etc.), it appears to be oblivious to class concerns. The attention to detail found in the opening pages (and perhaps the lack of attention to similar details later in the novel) subtly speaks of the meaning, value and essence of work beyond that of *les mandarins*. *Les mandarins* (be they intellectuals, artists or activists) are defined in contrast to workers, as if the two could never overlap. *Les mandarins* very existence concomitantly defines them in contrast to workers, thus making the workers, Other and marginalized. The focus of the book is placed squarely on the dialectical tension between the role of

⁵ “There were so many different ideologies...in postwar France that she [Beauvoir] found herself constantly bombarded by the fragmentation of ideas” Bair, 1990, p. 318.

⁶ See de Beauvoir’s *The Second Sex* (1952, p. 58). Also see Marso & Moynagh (2006, p. 1) and Clair (1998, pp. 27-28) for a discussion of de Beauvoir’s influence on postmodernism.

⁷ Simons (1977) credits de Beauvoir with the origins of existentialism, see *Feminism, Race, and the Origins of Existentialism*, while Kruks compares and contrasts de Beauvoir to Foucault (Kruks, 2006, pp. 55-71). Also see Simons’ work *A Phenomenology of Oppression*.

⁸ (Fallaise, 1980, 1988, 1998; Kristeva et al., 2008)

Irony at Work through the ‘Essential Accessory’

the literary artist and political intellectual, and later on the role of the artist/intellectual in contrast to the activist. These are the most obvious dialectical tensions arising in the novel, others emerge with more subtlety, intentionally or unintentionally, constructing the meaning, and at times, the privileging of some forms of work over others.

Of note is that the novel both speaks of and does not speak of the everyday practices and meaning of work and workers⁹. It is this phenomenological construction of work and workers through the everyday dialogues (and absences) that begs closer attention as they are subtly and with sophistication woven into the novel. We need only to open the cover of the book and turn to the first pages to find such discourse.

Arriving at the apartment, Henri finds Paule hanging decorations in preparation for a party:

<p>“Veux-tu que je t’aide?”</p> <p>“Les Dubreuilh vont venir m’aider.”</p> <p>“Pourquoi les attendre?” Il prit le marteau; Paule posa la main sur son bras.</p> <p>“Tu ne vas pas travailler?”</p> <p>“Pas ce soir.”</p> <p>“Tu dis ça tous les soirs. Il y a maintenant plus d’an que tu n’as rien écrit.”</p> <p>“Ne t’inquiète pas : j’ai envie d’écrire.”</p> <p>“Ce journal te prend trop de temps...” (de Beauvoir, 1954, p. 10).</p>	<p>“Want me to help you?” He asked.</p> <p>“The Dubreuilhs are coming over early to give me a hand.”</p> <p>“Why wait for them?” he said, picking up a hammer.</p> <p>Paule put a hand on his arm. “Aren’t you going to do any work?”</p> <p>“Not tonight.”</p> <p>“But you say that every night. You haven’t written a thing for more than a year now.”</p> <p>“Don’t worry,” he said, “I feel like writing now, and that’s what counts.”</p> <p>“That newspaper of yours takes up too much of your time...” (de Beauvoir, 1956, p. 12).</p>
---	---

Henri sidesteps Paule’s criticisms and solicitude as she attempts to get him to eat and nap before company arrives and adds:

<p>“Je peux meme te dire ce que j’écrirai : ça sera un roman gai.”</p> <p>“Qu’est-ce que tu veux dire?” dit Paule d’une voix inquiète.</p> <p>“Juste ce que je dis : j’ai envie d’écrire un roman gai” (de Beauvoir, 1954, p. 10).</p>	<p>“I can even tell you what I’m going to write,” he said.</p> <p>“A light novel.”</p> <p>“What do you mean?” Paule asked, her voice suddenly uneasy.</p> <p>“Exactly what I said. I feel like writing a light novel” (de Beauvoir, 1956, p. 12).</p>
---	---

Henri was feeling the jubilation of the war’s end, the ability to travel and to write whatever he pleased. Paule was feeling the desperation of losing her lover, as Henri seemed disinterested in her and possibly, she thought, pursuing another woman. Paule further worried about his losing focus on his career.

. . .you’ll be going to Portugal, now?

Naturally.

And you won’t do any work during this trip

⁹ See Clair (1998) on organizing silence through sequestered stories and Glenn (2004) on the unspoken.

The Meaning of Work and the Absence of Workers in *Les Mandarins*:

Irony at Work through the 'Essential Accessory'

I don't suppose so (de Beauvoir, 1956, p. 13).

Simone de Beauvoir set the stage within this early dialogue for the themes to follow. Within this conversation, however, more is revealed about the meaning of work than may be readily apparent to the reader. For instance, Paule puts her hand on Henri's arm, stopping him as he picks up the hammer and asks, "Aren't you going to do any work?" This comment indicates that 'real work,' at least for Henri and according to Paule, is not physical (using a hammer) nor trivial (putting up decorations)¹⁰. Henri is an intellectual and an artist. Paule's response to Henri further solidifies the kind of work that is respectable for him to do and she judges him accordingly¹¹. Working at the political newspaper, *L'Espoir*, as the editor "takes up too much time," Paule contends. She is marginalizing journalism as inferior to novels, works of art, something that Henri also deprecates on at least one occasion. Nor is "a light novel" acceptable to Paule. She has higher standards for Henri; she expects him to write a masterpiece.

Artists and intellectuals are granted celebrity status in French society and Henri Perron is no exception. By Paule's standards, he is expected to work long hours to produce high caliber works affording him due fame, but he longs for freedom from constraints of any kind. France has been liberated and he wants to be liberated as well, specifically to travel to Portugal, without Paule. The conversation, exempt of their relationship, clearly provides distinctions between the laborer, political writer, journalist, and literary artist. But it is labor—working with one's hands to provide bodily sustenance—that becomes the most marginalized¹². Henri recalls his work in the French Resistance with a farmer and two mill hands and realizes, "that in the eyes of the three others, and in his own eyes as well, he was one of the privileged classes, more or less disreputable, even if well intentioned" (de Beauvoir, 1956, p. 17). The concept of manual labor is mentioned here through the eyes of the elite (albeit sensitive) intellectual, but given little continuing attention. De Beauvoir must make the reader pay attention to these minor reflections because there are no attempts to contrast the intellectuals with fully-developed working class characters. This absence highlights the bourgeois status of the main characters, but at the expense of the workers' voices.

Although de Beauvoir is famous for creating complex female characters who match the intensity of their male counterparts, in both personal and professional undertakings, she does not create women (or men) of the working class for this novel. Instead, she shows the relative independence of professional women and the trials to which they are subjected in contrast to their male counterparts. For example, Paule has not written at all during her marriage and Anne is cast as living in the shadow of her husband. Much like *Le Deuxième Sexe*, the book is both about and intended for the intellectual audience/reader, significantly slanted toward intellectual and privileged women. The novel also extended beyond the exclusive audience to mesmerize much of French society, resulting in a national award. Again, like *The Second Sex* it extended beyond France to American female elite. As Howard Madison Parshley wrote of the translation of *Le Deuxième Sexe* to English (*The Second Sex*), "But I think it is capable of making a very wide appeal indeed and that the young ladies in places like Smith who can afford the price, which will be high, will be nursing it..." (Bair, 1990, p. 433). Similarly, *Les Mandarins* may have had an intended audience like the "ladies of Smith," yet, it was taken up by most of France.

Although de Beauvoir creates the character of Nadine who demonstrates the various career avenues that are possible for women of the professional class, ranging from secretary to chemist, from journalist to activist, in the end, Nadine succumbs to the role of wife and mother as she has previously described such a role as distasteful, dealing with dirty dishes and crying babies. In contrast, although Paule has a nervous breakdown when Henri leaves her, she recovers, plans to become a professional writer, and is the one to point out to Anne that living in someone else's shadow is a great tragedy. Paule is

¹⁰ See Clair (1992) "Discursive Practices Surrounding the Socialization and Legitimation of Work" and Clair (1996) "The Political Nature of the Colloquialism, *A Real Job*."

¹¹ See Clair et al., (2008) refer to this as "job judgment" (p. 11).

¹² Conceptualizing labor and work has a long and complicated historical past. For instance, following the fall of the Western Roman Empire, abbots of monasteries needed to define and regulate work, as seen in Benedict's Rule --"Idleness is the enemy of the soul" and "They are truly monks if they live by the labor of their hands" ("Regula Benedicta," 1937, p. 61). There are a multitude of conceptualizations of work. Arendt (1958), for example, defined labor as that which the body does to survive and work as what individuals create. See *The Human Condition*. In addition, for a discussion of various philosophies of work see Schaff's (2001) *Philosophy and the Problems of Work*.

Irony at Work through the 'Essential Accessory'

referring not only to herself, but also to Anne Dubreuilh (Simone de Beauvoir) who lives in the shadow of her famous husband Robert Dubreuilh (Jean Paul Sartre)¹³. Alison Holland (2008) pointed to this unequal relationship between Anne and Robert when she wrote about Anne's fervor for her husband's work: "Anne garde malgré tout une immense ferveur pour l'œuvre de Robert . . . Elle est pétrifiée à la pensée que Robert s'arrête d'écrire et « que toute son œuvre passée s'engloutisse dans le vide »" (de Beauvoir, 1954, p. 368).

Although Anne is a professional woman, the less privileged reader (those unaccustomed to or unable to pay for full-time domestic work) might still expect to see her suffer the interruptions of daily life in the way of *women's work*, such as cleaning or cooking, but this is not the case, although she must attend to her eighteen-year-old daughter's (Nadine) interruptions on several occasions this seems to be the extent of her household responsibilities. The lack of description of 'women's household work' may be an outgrowth of de Beauvoir's own life. After all, the *dutiful daughter* has been described by others as a "spoiled, spoiled, spoiled brat" (Bair, 1990, p. 37) and she was accustomed to the benefits of having a household "servant," Louise Sermadira "a shy young girl from Meyrignac" who cooked and cleaned for the family (p. 29). Even after her father lost his investments and the family struggled during the war, of her own accord, de Beauvoir did not help around the house. At times she felt guilty leaving the household chores to her mother and sister, but her parents noted that she no longer had a dowry and over the years she became adamant that women seek professional work for their own emancipation. De Beauvoir made the point that women need to be educated, engaged in the public sphere and active citizens. Yet, this philosophy leaves society without anyone to do the hard, dirty or tedious work and de Beauvoir does not address this concern. In short, working class women are invisible as characters in *Les Mandarins* though they hold a place in de Beauvoir's personal life from the maid who cleaned the family's house to the factory girls she tutored (Bair).

Two minor characters in the novel, Maria Ange and Josette each demonstrate the lengths to which women will go, or have to go, in order to become professionals. Marie Ange, a young reporter, disguises herself as a maid in order to enter the Dubreuilh home and gather information and Josette a young actress sleeps with Henri in order to get a part in his play. Here we see that the job of a domestic exists only as a ruse for Maria Ange to gain entrance into the Dubreuilh home, not as a work role in its own right. As for Josette's entering the world of professional theater, the reader is exposed to the critics and the playwrights, but stage hands, ticket sellers, and costume seamstresses are absent from the portrayal of theater life. It is the role of the writer that is central to the novel, often at the expense of *the worker*. For the women writers, who are not characterized as prominent writers like their male counterparts--Henri Perron (Albert Camus), Robert Dubreuilh (Jean Paul Sartre), Victor Scriassine (Arthur Koestler)¹⁴, or Lewis Brogan (Nelson Algren)¹⁵, life apparent seems to be achieved without the assistance of laborers. Manual labor (domestic and otherwise) is marginalized and yet it takes center stage as the characters write about and speak on behalf of the rights of workers. This absent presence becomes quite clear as the pages of *Les Mandarins* unfold.

Les Mandarins: The Unfolding of the Meaning of Work

Early in the novel Nadine manipulates Henri into taking her to Portugal where they enjoy the sunny beaches, but not without being subjected to the images of poverty and requests for help from Portuguese worker activists. This scene reminds Henri that the workers need him and that activist writing is an important duty. The workers, as a supporting plot device, motivate Henri to return home. The workers are the reason for the existence of the intellectuals, the workers give meaning and purpose to intellectual activists. The Portuguese workers and worker activists are not developed characters; they act as a plot device to pull the character of Henri back from a shallow, leisurely, and meaningless life. Upon his return, Henri is

¹³ Whether the characters represent Simone de Beauvoir and Jean-Paul Sartre, respectively has been contended, most notably by de Beauvoir herself who at one point explained that the novel was meant to tell the love story between her and Nelson Algren (character of Charles Brogen) (see Bair, 1990) and other times she challenges the point saying that people have not given her enough credit for having an imagination. See the 1967 interview with Sartre and de Beauvoir made public in April 26, 2013 by Claude Lanzmann and Madeline Gobeil placed on Facebook by Cathy Lynn. Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VpC6KCOEXqw> in September, 2014.

¹⁴ Arthur Koestler authored several award-winning books including *Darkness at Noon* and *The Ghost in the Machine*.

¹⁵ Nelson Algren may be most famous for his book, turned movie, about the life of a heroin addict (*The Man with a Golden Arm*, starring Frank Sinatra). Simone de Beauvoir dedicated *Les Mandarins* to Algren.

Irony at Work through the ‘Essential Accessory’

greeted by Paule who wears a forced smile as she has agreed to overlook his affairs in hopes that he will not leave her. He bestows a few gifts before leaving to see how things have fared at *L’Espoir*, the workers’ paper.

Henri meets with his friends the next day and they engage in lively political debate about the future of France, Dubreuilh not wanting to be under “America’s thumb” (de Beauvoir, 1956, p. 121) and Scriassine preferring it over the communist way of life. Both men try to persuade Henri Perron, but Henri responds with his commitment to neutrality,

“The workers who read my *L’Espoir* read it because it gives them a change from *L’Humanité*; it gives them a breath of fresh air. If I take a class stand, I’ll either repeat what the other Communist papers are saying, or I’ll take issue with them. And either way, the workers will drop me” (de Beauvoir, 1956, pp. 123-124).

Here the image of the worker must be teased out of the discourse because the critically important workers who read *L’Espoir* never make an appearance in the novel. Referencing the working class as “les ouvriers”/readers, de Beauvoir (1954), writes: “Tous ces ouvriers... dont je vous parlai” (p. 130). In short, she essentializes and summarizes the workers by way of speaking of class, making the workers both present and hidden from view. And yet, the reader is also left to wonder, has de Beauvoir captured a unique perspective of the working class who find fault with both capitalism and communism? This is a position later voiced by the character of Nadine and is a valuable insight on de Beauvoir’s part.

Later, Henri meets with Preston an American who promises Henri money for *L’Espoir*, but the promise comes with strings attached—he wants to keep Henri from voicing criticism against American policies. Henri tells Preston that the only view he will support is truth—“I’m a journalist. My job is to tell the truth” (de Beauvoir, 1956, p. 139). Here, his job is equated with a moral sense of obligation, not as if it is a calling¹⁶, but as if it defines the very essence of journalism. Over the next few months, without financial assistance, the newspaper begins to falter. Dubreuilh tries harder to persuade Henri to give the paper to the S.L.R. (*Socialisme et Libérété Resistance* is only referred to as S.L.R. in the novel; it is the writers’ resistance organization), just as Preston tries to convince him otherwise. It becomes more difficult for Henri to maintain his neutrality and his friendships. He demonstrates a loyalty to *the workers*.

Anne Dubreuilh, a psychologist, has been invited to give a series of lectures in the United States, which she accepts but not without concerns about leaving Nadine and Robert. But as she faces her friend’s comments about her life as a professional woman, she becomes more determined to accept the lecture series invitation. Her friend Claudie wonders how it is possible for Anne to keep up her professional life under the demanding personality of Robert Dubreuilh and then makes comments to the effect that Anne should take better paying clients so that she could see fewer patients and thus have more time to go to parties and “pour vous habiller” (de Beauvoir, 1954, p. 185) “dress up” (p. 202). Anne reacts with the following thoughts on the concept of careers and the value of work:

Elle croyait que le travail n’était pour nous qu’un moyen d’arriver au succès et à la fortune; et j’étais obscurément convaincue que tous ces snobs auraient volontiers échangé leur situation sociale contre des talent et des réussites intellectuelles. Dans mon enfance, une institutrice me semblait un bien plus grand personnage qu’une duchesse ou qu’un milliardaire, et cette hiérarchie ne s’était guère modifiée. Tandis que Claudie imaginait que pour un Einstein la suprême récompense eût été d’être reçu dans son salon. Nous ne pouvions guère nous entendre” (de Beauvoir, 1954, p. 185).

She [Claudie] believed that, for us, work was nothing but a means of achieving fortune and success, and I was vaguely convinced that all those snobs would have gladly traded their social position for intellectual talents and accomplishments. When I was a child, a teacher seemed to me a much greater person than a duchess or a millionaire, and through the years that hierarchy had not changed appreciably. Claudie, however, believed that the supreme reward for an Einstein would be to be received in her salon. We could hardly reach any real understanding. (de Beauvoir, 1956, p. 202)

¹⁶ Max Weber (1992) discussed work as a calling and related it to religious affiliation.

Work, especially intellectual work, is portrayed in the above excerpt as moral in and of itself. Beyond the comments that Perron makes about journalism being truth; Anne's soliloquy ratchets up the meaning of all intellectual work that contributes to society to a level of moral significance. And those who believe otherwise are snobs.

Once again we see professionals, in this case teachers, praised in the text. Although it is not at the obvious expense of the working class, it does not go without our notice that she has not praised the laundress, the seamstress, the stenographer or the waitress. Perhaps these jobs are too closely related to unpaid domestic work and thus merely reflect the positions of women as domestics. These are roles from which de Beauvoir wants to rescue women, but in so doing, she also marginalizes those who hold such jobs¹⁷.

For Nadine, career options include studying to be a chemist, working as a secretary for *Vigilance*, a desire to be a reporter, and a reluctance to becoming a wife and mother. Nevertheless, Nadine tells Anne, that she will likely be, "like all other women. I'll scrub pots and have a little brat every year" (de Beauvoir, 1956, p. 218). These comments position the work of women and the place of women in society, while ironically being spoken by one of the most outspoken of characters who seems momentarily to be ready to resign herself to the 'life of a woman'. And yet she is so defiant that at this point in the novel the reader is not likely to believe that Nadine will succumb to such a life. That night the mother and daughter talk politics. Nadine has come to the conclusion that "the Communists are no different from the bourgeoisie. . . They're for order, work, the family, reason. Their justice is somewhere off in the future, and in the meanwhile they manage to live with injustice like all the others. And then their social system . . . Well, it'll just be another social system" (de Beauvoir, 1956, p. 213)¹⁸. De Beauvoir allows the character of Nadine to provide the view of the workers rather than creating an intellectual worker character, which might give some voice and partial agency to the working class.

Specifically, Nadine's comment on communism foreshadows the news that the Russians have opened forced labor camps. Word of this came second-hand from Scriassine who leans toward American politics. Dubreuilh is loath to have anything negative printed about communism and tries to persuade Henri not to publish this account. Henri decides to make his decision to print or not based on the evidence, which will be difficult and dangerous to obtain. Meanwhile the financial state of *L'Espoir* continues to fail. Although Dubreuilh refuses to be a part of the scheme to overtake *L'Espoir*, he does not squarely condemn it.

Henri wearies of the political systems that surround him; he wonders if communist workers are being forced into labor camps and American capitalism is exploiting workers, then can there be any hope? "If evil is everywhere, there's no way out, neither for humanity nor for oneself" (de Beauvoir, 1956, p. 323). Henri suffers the same existential angst as that of the character of Nadine.

Meanwhile Anne has thrown herself into the arms of Lewis Brogen. Traveling with him through South America, she sees rural poverty and eventually returns with him to Chicago where she witnesses urban blight, but her mind is on the love affair. Any development of the workers, of the poor, beyond the glimpse the author provides is quickly overshadowed by the character's emotional needs. But the exposure of the labor camps will renew her political interest.

Scriassine provides supporting evidence of the Russian labor camps. It would seem, "workers were treated as criminals so that they could be exploited" (de Beauvoir, 1956, p. 356). They all become "disillusioned" with Russia (de Beauvoir, 1956, p. 356). Still Dubreuilh does not support publication of the story. Even Anne begins to see Robert's silence as a form of betrayal to the workers. Henri writes a front page article on the labor camps. Work, placed in the center of the debate, is defined by Henri as something to be engaged freely and by Dubreuilh as something that must be tempered by the greater needs of the people. The working class is distanced once again from les mandarins in this portrayal, and the individuals who are forced into labor camps become visible only through a second-hand account. The reader does not travel to Russia with Scriassine, and like *les mandarins*, the reader is left with a wide chasm between self and worker. In short, workers and work exist only through the words of the intellectuals. Those words rarely directly address the actualities of the worker's lives.

¹⁷ See the work of de Beauvoir's friend Christine Delphy, also Clair & Thompson (1996) on unpaid domestic work's relationship to paid work.

¹⁸ The classic and award-winning book *Working* opens with an essay—"Who built the pyramids?" in which the steel mill worker intellectualizes that neither communism nor capitalism are created with the working person in mind. See Terkel (1972).

Irony at Work through the 'Essential Accessory'

The final chapter of *Les Mandarins* opens with Anne contemplating suicide. She realizes that Nadine is grown, married and a mother; Nadine no longer needs Anne. Anne no longer has the energy for her profession—"What a joke! How could I presume to stop a woman from crying, compel a man to sleep?" (de Beauvoir, 1956, p. 607). Robert has his work, she thinks. Without her work as a mother, a wife, a psychologist, and a writer, Anne is empty. But once Nadine encourages her to join them downstairs, she finds herself listening to the lively conversation of what they should name the new magazine that Henri and Robert plan to start.

"Where are you?" Robert asks Anne as her mind seems far away, but she answers, "Here," and continues to think to herself, "I am here. . . . Words are entering my ears; little by little they take on meaning" (de Beauvoir, 1956, p. 610). She asserts the possibility of hope by watching, listening, and engaging little by little with the words they speak. With the return of "words" Anne is able to reclaim her life. For the main characters of *Les Mandarins* the meaning of life, of existence, is found in words, but not just any words and not just any work. For it is not until she hears of Henri and Robert's new magazine—a joint venture—that she is brought back to the world of the living dismissing her thoughts of suicide.

Les Mandarins' ending draws from the general existentialist root theme that life is absurd, and perhaps meaningless, but we must go on living, until we die. De Beauvoir accepts this existentialist ending for her as portrayed in the character of Anne, but writes a happy ending for Henri and Robert (in contrast to the real life strained friendship of Sartre and Camus). But what of the workers?

Denouement

In *Les Mandarins*, Simone de Beauvoir presented the importance of work, granting it a central role in the novel and yet a role that has far too often been overlooked in discussions of the book. Work is everywhere in this novel. Each character reacts to work as if it is another character. From the beginning, Perron struggles with the concept of work: writing is his passion, journalism his duty, plays his release. His work rewards him at one moment and betrays him at the next. Robert Dubreuilh understands himself and his association with work, nothing interrupts his work; he does not suffer angst over its meaning or its balance. Work is his steadfast companion, more so than his wife, Anne. Nadine resists the mundane work of motherhood, seeking excitement, but in the end settles into a life of domesticity. Work is like a lover, thrilling her at one moment in her life; supplying her security at another. And of course there is Anne who considers suicide to a life without work, for that is a life without meaning. Minor characters are willing to put their freedom at risk for the sake of their work as in the case of Marie Ange who disguises herself to get a story, or Lambert who travels into dangerous territory. Others see illegal ventures as forms of work, ranging from the characters who undertake vigilante raids to the drug addict who exerts his efforts toward gaining his next fix. *Les Mandarins* is a statement on the essence of work which is foreshadowed in Paule and Henri's earliest dialogue pointing to the various forms of work, of 'real work.' The dialogue attests to the contribution of the novel in establishing that work is a matter of dialogical, dialectical and socio-political concern. Yet, not a single character is created in depth to express the views/thoughts/attitudes of *the worker/the laborer*.

The essence of work is interlaced with the concept of resistance. Meaningless work and forced labor must be resisted both at the micro and macro-levels, both for oneself and for others. Literature becomes a means of resistance, as a form of activism to resist the injustices of society it is juxtaposed to other forms of resistance, vigilantism, meetings, journalism, and even suicide. The novel internally, and as a meta-commentary on society, singles out writers, the intellectuals and the activists for their separate and interrelated contributions to the meaning of work and the resistance to exploitation. Yet all of this is done without giving voice or visibility to the workers themselves. Simone de Beauvoir has created within the pages of *Les Mandarins* a meaningful place for the work of intellectuals to speak on behalf of workers. However, this visibility of the writer in *Les Mandarins* ironically creates an invisibility of the worker. The novel portrays workers as voiceless and in need of someone to speak on their behalf which in turn provides meaningful work for *les mandarins*. The intellectuals of *Les Mandarins* cannot exist without the workers and yet the workers and their work barely exist within the pages of *Les Mandarins*. *The workers and their work* are absent while present.

Clearly it was not de Beauvoir's intention to provide a portrait of the workers; her intention was to provide a portrait of *les mandarins*, but this could not be done without 'the workers' as a literary device. Thus, just as scholars remind literary critics to attend to the unspoken, the sequestered, and the marginalized, they might do well to encourage critics to take notice of the particular literary device found in *Les Mandarins*, the oxymoronic and ironic, intentional or unintentional, which simultaneously expresses the faults of modernism and the insights of structural expressionism.

Casting a critical-postmodern organizational lens on this classic work of literature reveals that the 'worker,' acts as a literary device to make all possible. The 'worker' is the *raison d'être* of *les mandarins*. The workers are essential and

Irony at Work through the ‘Essential Accessory’

simultaneously deemed irrelevant—an *essential accessory*. This places ‘the worker’ (as an essential accessory) squarely in front of the reader while hiding the ‘worker’ from view—*camouflaging* ‘the worker.’ This might be called the *accessoire-in-dispensable*. At first, this expression may not seem to capture the gravity of the role played by ‘the workers’ in the novel or how they act as a plot device, as the glue that holds the characters together. This position of absent while present, used but abused, may be discussed in light of *mise en abyme* (English/French: *mise en abime*). The workers exist repeatedly within the contours of the novel and yet their very existence is as an accessory, their essence and meaning is undermined, resulting in semantic instability, and disconnection from reality. With deeper consideration, however, it may provide the perfect means to express the role of ‘the workers’ as a literary device. In this case, the entire structure of the novel, including the motives and actions of the characters, relies on the existence of the workers who are portrayed as present but absent, essential yet unimportant, necessary yet unnecessary, visible yet invisible. They become indispensable accessories to the story of *les mandarins*. They become a paradox embedded with irony.

The workers are at the core of the novel, just as they are not at the core; the working class is centered and decentered. *Les Mandarins* demonstrates an existential and a Foucauldian postmodern irony at work through the literary device of the essential accessory or *accessoire-in-dispensable*—in this case, the ‘workers.’ Perhaps even more pertinent is the relationship to Bourdieu’s theory of bureaucratic *habitus* in which cultural capital, in this case the workers, are discursively treated in such a way, as essential accessories, that an irreducible symbolic violence occurs. Absent even in their presence, the workers, their forms of work, and the contributions that they make are marginalized through the habits that society undertakes and inadvertently or intentionally repeats. This literary device is most certainly worthy of further attention on the grounds that it may act to marginalize Others in ways not yet explored.

Several future directions should be considered. First and foremost, we as scholars and critics of organization must duly note whether we have truly engaged the Other in our writings or whether we have been like *les mandarins*, speaking (sometimes in platitudes, sometimes with sincere concern) of those whom we study rather than always standing (literally) with them. Second, we should take note of the “working class” in how it (they) is (are) defined and portrayed both in relations to the greater population and relation to organizations. Third, in addition to being aware of our own weaknesses and the weaknesses of some organizational studies that conceal important aspects, we encourage researchers to learn from the humanities (e.g., novelists, artists,) as their imagination may lead us down new paths of understanding and seeing what we had not seen before. Fourth, we recognize that organizational scholars are not trained in the art of literary critique and yet they have provided scores of rhetorical interpretive analyses of stories within and surrounding organizations; likewise, we realize that literary critics are not necessarily trained in the areas of micro and macro-economics or in organizational management or behavior, but they too have provided insights on the topic of work from a literary perspective. Both deserve appreciation. Finally, the specific contribution of this article allows future researchers across disciplines to expose the device that characterizes Others as essential accessories. For example, the exploitation of women has been supplied as a justification for wars from epic poems (e.g., Helen of Troy) to political rhetoric (e.g., President George Bush’s 2003 administration argued for war against the brutal regime that especially mistreats women in Iraq). Exposing such tactics provides society with an ameliorated view of the positioning of people in society. When literary critics and organizational scholars draw their work together, they can provide resourceful theories for broader application. We recommend that each discipline open its arms to the other so that they might make greater strides in understanding the meaning and impact of narratives on work, workers, organization, and society.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank Pawel Krzyworzeka, Anna Żukowicka-Surma, David Boje, and the blind reviewers for their insightful advice and or assistance.

References

- Arendt, H. (1958). *The human condition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Bair, D. (1990). *Simone de Beauvoir: A biography*. New York: Summit.
- Bakhtin, M. M. (1981). *The dialogic imagination: Four essays*. (C. Emerson & M. Holquist, Trans.) Austin: University of Texas Press. (Original work published 1975).
- Boje, D. M. (1992). The storytelling organization: A study of storytelling performance in an office supply firm. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 36, 106-126.

The Meaning of Work and the Absence of Workers in *Les Mandarins*:

Irony at Work through the 'Essential Accessory'

- Boje, D. M. (1995). Stories of the storytelling organization: A postmodern analysis of Disney as "Tamara-Land." *Academy of Management Journal*, 38(4), 997-1035.
- Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and symbolic power* (John B. Thompson, Ed.; Gino Raymond & Matthew Adamson, Trans.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Browning, L. & Morris, G. H. (2012). *Stories of life in the workplace: An open architecture for organizational narratology*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Clair, R. P. (1992). *Discursive practices surrounding the socialization and legitimation of work: Hegemony of a "real job."* Presented at the annual meeting of the Speech Communication Association, Chicago.
- Clair, R. P. (1996). The political nature of the colloquialism, "a real job": Implication for organizational socialization. *Communication Monographs*, 63, 249-267.
- Clair, R. P. (1993). The use of framing devices to sequester organizational narratives: Hegemony and harassment. *Communication Monographs*, 60, 113-136.
- Clair, R. P. (1998). *Organizing Silence: A World of Possibilities*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press (SUNY).
- Clair, R.P., Carlo, S., Lam, C., Nussman, J., Phillips, C., Sanchez, V., Schnabel, E., & Yakovich, L. (2014). Narrative Theory and Criticism: An Overview toward Clusters and Empathy. *Review of Communication*, 14, 1-18.
- Clair, R. P. & Mattson, M. (2013). From accident to activity: An ethnographic study of community engagement—From symbolic violence to heroic discourse. *Tamara: Journal for Critical Organizational Inquiry*, 11, 27-40.
- Clair, R. P., McConnell, M., Bell, S., Hackbarth, K., & Mathes, S. (2008). *Why Work: The Perceptions of a 'Real Job' and Rhetoric of Work through the Ages*. West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press.
- Clair, R.P., Rastogi, R., Blatchley, III E. R., Clawson, R. A., Erdmann, C. & Lee, S. (2016). Extended Narrative Empathy: Poly-Narratives and the Practice of Open Defecation. *Communication Theory*, 26, 469-488.
- Clair, R. P., & Thompson, K. (1996). Pay discrimination as a discursive and material practice: A case concerning extended housework. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 24, 1-20.
- Cloud, D. (1995). The null persona: Race and the rhetoric of silence in the uprising of '34. *Rhetoric and Public Affairs*, 2(2), 177-209.
- Czarniawska-Joerges, B., & de Monthoux, P. G. (Eds.). (1994). *Good novels, better management: Reading organizational realities*. Chur, Switzerland: Harwood Academic Publishers.
- Delphy, C. (1984). *Close to home: A materialist analysis of women's oppression*. (D. Leonard, Trans.). Amherst: University of Massachusetts. (Original work published 1983)
- de Beauvoir, S. (1956). *The mandarins*, (L. M. Friedman, Trans.). New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company. (Original work published 1954)
- de Beauvoir, S. (1954). *Les mandarins*. Paris: Gallimard.
- de Beauvoir, Simone. (1952). *The second sex*. (H. M. Parshley, Trans.). New York: Alfred A. Knopf. (Original work published 1952)
- Fallaize, E. (1980). Narrative structure in *Les Mandarins*. In C. A. Burns (Ed.), *Literature and society: Studies in nineteenth and twentieth century French literature* (221-232). Birmingham, England: U of Birmingham Press.
- Fallaize, E. (1988). *The novels of Simone de Beauvoir*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Fallaize, E. (1998). *Simone de Beauvoir: A critical reader*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Foucault, M. (1979). *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*. (A. Sheridan, Trans.). New York: Vintage Books. (Original work published 1975)
- Foucault, M. (1976). *History of sexuality: An introduction*. (R. Hurley, Trans., Vol. 1). New York: Vintage Books. (Original work published 1976)
- Glenn, C. (2004). *Unspoken: A rhetoric of silence*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Holland, A. (2008). La voix chancelante dans le monologue intérieur de Anne dans *Les Mandarins* de Simone de Beauvoir. In J. Kristeva, P. Fautrier, Strass, A., & P.-L. Fort (Eds.) *(Re)découvrir l'œuvre de Simone de Beauvoir: Du Deuxième Sexe à La cérémonie des adieux* (pp. 392-396). Latresne: Bord de l'eau.
- Keefe, T. (1998). *Simone de Beauvoir*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Klaw, B. (1995). Sexuality in Simone de Beauvoir's *Les Mandarins*. In M. Simons (Ed.), *Feminist interpretations of Simone de Beauvoir* (193-221). University Park: Penn State Press.

The Meaning of Work and the Absence of Workers in *Les Mandarins*:

Irony at Work through the 'Essential Accessory'

- Kristeva, J. (Ed.). (2008). *(Re)decouvrir l'oeuvre de Simone de Beauvoir: Du "Deuxieme Sexe" à "La ceremonie des adieux"* Lormont, France: Bord de l'eau.
- Kruks, S. (2006). Reading Beauvoir with and against Foucault. In L. J. Marso & P. Moynagh (Eds.), *Simone de Beauvoir's political thinking* (55-71). Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Linde, C. (2009). *Working the past: Narrative and institutional memory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Liotard, J. (1979). *The postmodern condition: A report on knowledge*. (G. Bennington & B. Massumi, Trans.). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. (Original work published 1979)
- Marso, L. J., & Moynagh, P. (2006). Introduction: A radical approach to political Thinking. In L. J. Marso & P. Moynagh (Eds.), *Simone de Beauvoir's political thinking* (1-10). Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Mumby, D. (1987). The political function of narrative in organizations. *Communication Monographs*, 54(2), 113-127.
- Putnam, L. L., & Conrad, C. R. (1999). Teaching organizational communication. In A. L. Vangelisti, J. A. Daly, & G. W. Friedrich (Eds.), *Teaching communication: Theory, research & methods* (2nd ed.). (141-156). New York: Routledge.
- "Regula Benedicta." (1937). *The holy rule of our most holy father, St. Benedict*. Benedictine Monks of St. Meinrad's Abbey (Eds.). St. Meinrad, IN: Grail Press.
- Sartre, J.-P. (1964). *What is literature?* (B. Frechtman, Trans.). New York: Philosophical Library Retrieved from <http://www.english.ufl.edu/mrg/readings/Sartre.%20What%20Is%20Literature.PDF> (Original published as *Qu'est—ce que la literature?* Paris: Gallimard in 1948).
- Schaff, K. (Ed.). (2001). *Philosophy and the problems of work: A reader*. Lanham, Boulder, New York, and Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Press.
- Simons, M. A. (1999). *Feminism, race, and the origins of existentialism*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Simons, M. (1977). *A phenomenology of oppression: A critical introduction to 'Le Deuxième Sexe' by Simone de Beauvoir*. Unpublished dissertation West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University.
- Smith, A. (1937). *An inquiry into the nature and causes of the wealth of nations*. New York: Modern Library/Random House.
- Tidd, U. (2004). *Simone de Beauvoir*. London: Routledge.
- Terkel, S. (1972). *Working: People talk about what they do all day and how they feel about what they do*. New York: Pantheon.
- Unruh, V. (Ed.). (2012). Special topic: Work. *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America (PMLA)*, 127(4), 721-911.
- Weber, M. (1992). *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism* (T. Parsons, Trans.). London and New York: Routledge, 1992. (Original book 1930; original essays from 1904-5).
- Weinstein, C. (1995). *The literature of labor and the labors of literature: Allegory in nineteenth-century American fiction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.