In this paper I will look at the presentation of female narrator figures in Graham Swift's novels. Such a perspective limits the corpus of texts to be analysed considerably as only three novels by Swift feature female narrators: Sophie and Anna in *Out of this World* (1988), Amy and Mandy in *Last Orders* (1996) and Paula in *Tomorrow* (2007). In analysing these figures, I am particularly interested in the way Swift transfers narrative control to the women and what image of femininity is thereby created. In doing so, I will first focus on the story itself and second on the narrative discourse and how the latter contributes to gendering the figures in question. It will be shown that, although Swift's narrative technique can at times be called postmodern, his representation of women and their sexuality is rather conservative.¹

In her discussion of father-daughter relationships in Swift's novels, Harriet Blodgett arrives at the conclusion that the author is the spokesperson of a "[q]uiet feminism" (Blodgett 2008, 312). In her view, Swift explicitly employs the Iphigenia myth in order to validate "the importance of daughters" and to "repudiate patriarchal abuse of them" (300). She sees Irene and Dorothy in *The Sweet Shop Owner* (1980) as estranged daughters "wronged by patriarchal codes" (301). Conversely, Swift's depiction of the "loving, conventional relationship" (303) between Mary Metcalf and her father Harold as well as Mary's abortion in *Waterland* reveal, according to Blodgett, that Mary stands for the young females in Swift's canon who "do not exert themselves to please them [their fathers] but instead follow the calls of their own nature" (304). Similarly, she argues that in *Out of this World* Swift grants the daughter Sophie the right to refuse "to be sacrificed to parental objects" (305).

As plausible as some of these insights may seem (to some) at first glance, Blodgett's diagnosis of Swift as a 'quiet feminist' who "takes a feministic stand" (310) is not really convincing. As Katrina Powell plausibly argues in her interpretation of *Waterland*, the portrayal of Mary Metcalf is deeply rooted in traditional gender roles where females are mainly defined as wives and mothers. Mary, for example, is punished for her youthful sexual curiosity and independence in her later life when she is sent to a mental hospital for having kidnapped a baby. She is displaced within society and portrayed as insane, an act that is not questioned by the narrator Tom Crick, who is also her husband. The abortion in her youth plays a vital part in this act: "When Metcalf's womb no longer designates maternity, she is subject to displacement within society. […] representing Metcalf's body as primarily seeking motherhood is problematic because it is the only option for women (Powell 2003, 61-62).

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¹ I would like to thank Jonas Wrede and Carolanne Weidle for valuable comments, proofreading and formatting the manuscript.

² Cf. Powell's comment on Swift's representation of Mary Metcalf in *Waterland*: "[…] while Swift's narrative is postmodern, his representation of women's sexuality is not" (2003, 60). See also Blodgett on *Last Orders*: "Swift can prove to be quite traditional, even in postmodern dress" (2008, 309).
Unlike other heroines in postmodern fiction who are able to construct their own multiple identities, Metcalf "is represented primarily as a potential other or insane, a flatness that limits her character" (63). Powell cites other features to support her reading. For example, Metcalf is also shown to repeat patterns and mistakes made by the many women in the Atkinson family before her, whose valorisation by the narrator "as traditional mothers limits the options for Metcalf" (63). Powell concludes:

While she is both under control of men and potential mother, Metcalf is constructed as sane. But when Metcalf breaks free from control and makes her own decision regarding her body, she suffers the consequences of, first, barrenness, and later, insanity – both traditional alternatives for literary representations of women who enact control over their bodies [...] (68).

A first look reveals the similarities between the stories and the portrayal of women in Out of this World and Waterland. Both novels feature women who have an abortion and are consequently shown to suffer from this event: Mary Metcalf becomes insane and Anna, the male narrator's wife, dies in a plane accident on her way to the clinic in Salonika, Greece, where the abortion is scheduled to take place. In the only chapter narrated by the dead Anna, she establishes a link between her decision to have an abortion and the plane crash:

It was all like a reproof. I thought: I should get rid of it here, somehow, here in this country. I phoned the hospital in Salonika and they said there was little time. It was still raining the next morning when I took the plane north. The sky was dark with clouds and I thought: Even the gods are angry. (Out of this World, 181)

Anna, who was born in the Greek town of "Drama," retrospectively interprets her own death as the inevitable punishment for what she was about to do and aligns herself with the protagonists in Greek tragedy. Speaking as it were 'from the grave' (and thus endowed with some kind of superordinate authority) she seems to suggest that there was no alternative for her actions and, consequently, for her punishment.

The uncomfortable feeling such reasoning by a female voice produces in the reader is furthermore intensified by the fact that the unborn child is the product of an extramarital affair between Anna and her husband's business partner. It is implied that not only the abortion but also the fact that the child was not fathered by the husband deserves 'punishment by the gods.' Bearing in mind Powell's reading of young Mary Metcalf's sexual independence in Waterland that in the course of the book is subjected to (narrative) male control, Anna's sexual independence is likewise

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4 Powell also draws attention to the fact that during the abortion Metcalf is described as "a monster" (68). This "masculinist way" (Jones 1993: 357) of seeing the world is reinforced in Waterland by the narrator lecturing the pupils "that women are equipped with a miniature model of reality: an empty but fillable vessel" (42) and his repeated references to an innate mother's instinct (cf. 225, 228, 230).
5 As mentioned above, Out of this World is narrated by a number of characters. The novel is divided into 35 chapters, 17 of which are told by Harry, 16 by his estranged daughter Sophie and one each by Anna, Harry's wife, and Joe, Sophie's husband. The 'trick' of letting a dead character appear as a narrator is one Swift repeated in Last Orders (also a novel told by different narrators) where the dead butcher Jack reflects on his father (Last Orders, 285). For Swift 'borrowing' several narrative techniques and story parts from Faulkner's As I Lay Dying and the charges of plagiarism put forward by the critic John Frow see the latter's interesting summary of the debate (Frow 2009) and Flint (1998, 43-44).
portrayed as dangerous not only to her own life but also to her family. Her daughter Sophie suffers her whole life from her mother’s disappearance and subsequent death, which occurred when she was five years old.

Sophie is characterised as a deeply troubled person who tells her story in the form of internal addresses to her psychiatrist, whom she sees on a regular basis. Sophie, too, has extramarital relationships, one of them being a spontaneous sexual escapade with a “big and ugly” plumber in her kitchen while her children are sleeping upstairs. In the self-portrayal of both women a connection is thus suggested between their (neglect of) maternal duties, sexual behaviour and their identity as human beings. Just like Mary in Waterland, both women are mainly defined by their inability to fulfil traditional gender roles of mother and wife.6

The novel seems to end on a positive note: unlike Martha in Waterland and Anna in Out of this World, Sophie is spared mental hospital or death. Willing to reconcile herself with her father, Sophie has accepted her father's invitation to his wedding. However, such an ending also emphasises the novel's, and thereby the implied author's, precarious view of gender roles. In her last paragraphs, when she sits on the plane to England with her children, Sophie reflects:

> Let's not watch the movie, my angels. Let's not even listen to the music on the headsets. Don't neglect your mother. […] Let's just be together, here, above the world. […] It'll be tomorrow before it's even stopped being today. And your mother has only six hours. (Out of this World, 202)

For her the only way to regain some sense of identity, after neither the estranged years from her father nor her therapy were able to provide her with a sense of independence, is to fall back into traditional gender patterns and accept the only roles that seem to be available to her: mother and daughter. This conclusion is also emphasised by the fact that now for the first time in the novel the internal addressee has changed from the psychiatrist to her children, a narrative technique that Swift was later to repeat and maintain for the length of a whole novel in Tomorrow.

In this respect it is interesting to note that Amy, the widow of the deceased butcher Jack in Last Orders,7 only seems to be able to gain some kind of 'independence' and 'freedom' by attaching herself to a new man. Sitting in a bus visiting her handicapped daughter June for one last time she decides to start her "own" life now:

> What I'm trying to say is goodbye June. Goodbye Jack. They seem like one and the same thing. We've got to make our own lives now without each other, we've got to go our different ways. I've got to think of my own future. It was something Ray said, about how much was I short. You remember Ray, Uncle Ray? He and I came to visit you once, that summer I missed those Thursdays. I've got to be my own woman now. (Last Orders, 278)

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6 Powell (2003, 73) draws attention to the fact that at the end of Waterland the ‘unnatural’ mother Mary is contrasted with the ‘natural’ mother of the abducted baby, who is described by the narrator as a mother who “knows, without thinking, her role” (Waterland 314).

7 Last Orders is about the trip taken by four men on 2 April 1990 from Bermondsey to Margate where they scatter the ashes of Jack Dodds. Jack's request is carried out by his friends Lenny Tate, Vic Tucker and Ray Johnson and his adopted son Vince. During the course of the novel the characters (including those who are left behind) reflect on their past lives and relations with each other. On the same day Jack's widow Amy goes to visit her handicapped daughter June for one last time.
Mentioning Ray, one of Jack's friends whom the reader knows to have had an affair with Amy, puts Amy's decision to be her "own woman now" into perspective. Although not explicitly stated, this reference to Ray and the latter's plans to take Amy with him to visit his daughter Sue in Australia in the very next chapter, imply that Amy's future may in the end be decided for her (cf. Last Orders, 282).

It has been argued that in Last Orders, in describing different forms of dysfunctional father-daughter relationships, Swift criticises an outdated model of patriarchal authority and draws the readers' attention to the problem of "paternal failure" (Cooper 2002, 52). Seen from this angle, Swift would indeed be writing from a feminist's point of view. However, this critique of paternal authority is itself embedded in a predominantly male narrative and thematic framework. To begin with, of the book's 75 chapters only six are told by Amy and one by Mandy, Vince's wife. Hence, most of the time the events, and thus also the female figures, are perceived through the eyes of male narrators. In fact, most of the chapters (39 out of 75) are narrated by Ray who, along with all the other men in the novel, has been seen as an embodiment of "chauvinism and backward-minded nostalgia" (Henke 2004, 376) and as Swift's attempt at creating an ideal "working class camaraderie" (O'Mahony 2003).

This penchant for stereotypes is also reflected in the language that the male characters employ. They all seem to share the same lower middle class idiom, which, as David Malcolm has pointed out, is characterised by the frequent use of "ain't," constructions of double negation, "don't" instead of "doesn't" and the jumping between present tense and past tense in narrations. That characters speak in a specific idiom is by itself not an indication of stereotypical presentation. The striking linguistic similarities between the men in Last Orders seem to imply, however, that they also "think in very similar ways about things" (Malcolm 2003, 165).

Many of the aspects discussed in the two novels so far also appear in Tomorrow, Swift's only novel told entirely by a female voice. What sets this novel apart from Swift's previous presentation of female figures is the exclusive focus on the female narrator Paula and her views. Some reviewers did not take kindly to Swift's portrayal of Paula's mind and world: "The secret is ordinary and wouldn't merit airtime on the most timidly confrontational shows," there is a "disproportion between the slim story and its overcontrolled telling" (Mars-Jones 2007), "the narrator's heavy-handed manipulation becomes annoying," the style resembles a "tsunami of triteness" (Mewshaw 2007). I would like to argue that the main reason for the rather reserved reception of the novel is Swift's handling of gender and its ideological implications.

To begin with, Paula's conviction that the news about Mike not being the twins' biological father will completely shatter their children's lives ("I picture a bomb going off and this house falling to bits," 155) is grounded on a very conservative notion of family. Time and again, Paula reminds the reader that only a biological father can be

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8 Others speak of the theme of the "failed father" (Wheeler 1999, 66) that runs through Swift's entire canon.
10 The time of narration covers a few hours in the night between 16 and 17 June 1995. The narrator Paula lies awake next to her sleeping husband Mike, a week past the 16th birthday of her twins Nick and Kate. She reflects on the family's life, its past and also its future as the parents will inform their children about a "monstrous" (Tomorrow, 1) secret the next day. The secret, which is revealed half way through the book, consists in the fact that the twins are the product of artificial insemination as Paula's husband is infertile. The narration ends before the reader hears how the children will respond to the news.
a 'real' father: "Your dad was already staging his disappearance" (58; emphasis in original), "Your father isn’t your father" (155), and:

Your dad isn’t your dad. It wasn’t ever possible that he could be. But what I want you to know is that I wanted him to be. O how I wanted him to be. I still wanted him to be even when that decision [about the artificial insemination, R.W.] was taken that, though he wouldn’t be, you would still have a father. I only wanted him to be, in a way, even more then. I still want him to be now. (157; emphasis in original)

The importance of biological fatherhood is further underlined by Paula consistently emphasising the momentous character of the secret to be revealed the next day11 and the narrator's underlying assumption that artificial insemination is something abnormal, a "point of no return, […] a strange bypassing path we’d taken" (203, my italics). One may ask why Swift, almost thirty years after the birth of the first baby to be conceived by in vitro fertilisation,12 has the female narrator attach so much importance to biological fatherhood and 'natural' reproduction rather than focus on the much more problematic aspect of withholding that information from the children for so long.

Similarly irritating is the reason Paula gives for her affair with the veterinarian Alan Fraser. For her, receiving donor sperm and sleeping with another man (and thus betraying her husband) are pretty much one and the same thing (cf. Roblin 2009, 84), an affair would therefore in her reasoning, like "prior experimentation" (Tomorrow, 165), prepare her for the clinical process:

It's just something that happens in a clinic. But it's the union (can it be disputed in this age of DNA?) of two people. And the only way I could surmount this obstacle and know my own mind on the matter was to exorcise this ghost-in-advance, to do the real thing, in the flesh yet hypothetically, and see how it felt. (166-167)

The affair becomes a "test case" (176) for her, a dress rehearsal. But this is not only Paula's view of the affair. In imagining how her husband would view the artificial insemination she arrives at the conclusion that he, too, would automatically equate it with unfaithfulness:

But then, at this time, the very same proposition would have been going through Mike's head too: this primitive obstacle, this crude, unscientific bugbear to be overcome, that his wife, that Paula would have to do it, if not exactly at close-range or in hands-on fashion with another man. (176)

At this point (like in so many other places in the novel13), the female narrator assumes the right to speak for other people, in particular for her husband, and to surmise his thoughts. In doing so, Swift not only presents the reader with Paula's views and ideology but also implies that this ideology is shared by other characters as well.

There are further elements in the novel's story which show that Swift's presentation of gender is problematic, to put it mildly. For example, Paula's description of her husband in many ways affirms traditional gender stereotypes. Often he is presented as

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11 Cf. e.g. 1, 2, 36, 58, 61, 128, 231.
12 Louise Brown, born 25 July 1978 at Oldham General Hospital, United Kingdom.
13 For example, Paula repeatedly stresses the fact that – unlike herself – Mike has always been faithful to her (cf. 11, 19, 20, 30). As a homodiegetic narrator who is unable to focalise her husband from within, how does she know? Cf. also her statement, "Sometimes a woman can feel like a man feels" (31).
a 'master of the house'-type who commands and is in control of things. He gives "lectures that almost stop you in your tracks" (18), is credited for his knowledge and wisdom, and when courting the narrator in the past is described as a "knight in armour" (29). In the same passage, describing Mike's "chivalrous presence of mind" (31) after their first night together and inviting Paula and her flat-mates to a picnic at the beach, the narrator even seems to borrow the sun-metaphor from absolutist political philosophy to portray her husband as a benign lord and sovereign:

[...] he spoke like a lord. These days, as you know, it's your father's business to command. He has to address those board meetings, give little rallying speeches at conferences, generally come up with the right message – he'll need all his skills tomorrow. [...] Undoubtedly one of your father's finest moments – [...] As he spoke the sun came peeping through those pale clouds. (31)

Whether or not the symbol of the sun is a conscious choice by Swift cannot be answered. The fact, however, that it is employed but not reflected upon supports the impression that Swift's "quiet feminism" (Blodgett 2008, 312) may in fact be an instance of a not so quiet male sexism.

The novel abounds with statements that signal a rather antiquated understanding of gender roles. To name but a few: men do the proposing (Tomorrow 6), a wife does not ask a man about his previous relationships (30), women are programmed "to select a mate" (30) and "true men" disdain cycle clips (32). The narrator's embracing and acknowledgement of traditional gender roles finds its truest and strongest expression, however, in her self-perception as mother and wife and her realisation that she is controlled by an "indefatigable maternal instinct" (222). Several times she expresses her belief in an "eternal" (203) female instinct that guides and controls her actions. At the end of the book, she says that "[m]others can tell things" (232) and, like Sophie in her last paragraphs in Out of this World, identifies herself exclusively as "Mike's wife and a mother: my complete and exact position in life" (245).

So far, the analysis of Tomorrow's story has revealed the female narrator's "phalocentric" (Jones 1993, 357) view. Yet, I would like to argue that this male-centred bias is not only limited to the diegesis but also evident on the level of the discourse, i.e. in the narrative strategies that Swift employs.

The "gendering of narratology" (Allrath 2000, 394) that began in the 1980s has not only triggered a reawakened interest in l'écriture féminine, but also opened up new research perspectives, the most prominent of which being on gendered authorial narration (Lanser 1999; 1986 and Schabert 1992), the relationship between male writers and feminist criticism (Boone/Cadden 1990, Brooks 1985, Foster 1981; Hornick 1992 and Ruthven 1983) and gendered narrative strategies (Lanser 1999 and 1986; 14 Paula calls him "Professor Mike" (98) for his wisdom and knowledge – a title he actually does not have. "Your dad strikes me as exceptional not just in being able to pinpoint the circumstance, but in being pretty confident of the hundred-per-cent intention" (99). Cf. also: "Your dad, the biologist, the wise expert on animal behaviour" (127).

15 Further statements and descriptions of this kind can be found on pp. 8, 50, 51, 68 and 79.

16 Cf. also: "my perfectly appropriate mother's instinct" (179), "it was just the old, eternal, ever-crafty maternal instinct, using me as its tool" (203), "the authentic taste of maternity" (244). The male narrator in Waterland, Tom Crick, has similar convictions.

17 Cf. also: "But mothers know things, they can just tell" (248), and: "Perhaps I'm wrong, but sometimes mothers can just tell things. In any case, they only want the best for their children" (248). The last statement closes the novel.
In her study *Gendered Interventions. Narrative Discourse in the Victorian Novel* (1989), Robyn Warhol analyses narrative strategies employed by male and female authors between 1845 and 1865. She comes to the conclusion that in the 19th century some narrative strategies were associated with female writing and some with male writing. Female and male authors, however, were able to employ both types "for specific rhetorical purposes" (Warhol 1989, 18).

It is not my intention to either discuss or criticise the validity of Warhol's conclusions about the "rhetorical purposes" of 19th-century novelists. Instead, I would like to argue that Swift clearly defines his female narrators by way of their narrative strategies as Victorian and in doing so enforces the masculinist ideology articulated on the story level.

Warhol differentiates between two types of narrative intrusions in 19th-century novels: "feminine-gendered engaging interventions and masculine-gendered distancing interventions" (18). Where the latter discourage the reader from identifying with the narratee, the engaging narrator encourages such an identification. According to Warhol (1989, 33-44), the differences between 19th-century male distancing and female engaging interventions occur on five levels.

1. **The names by which the narratee is addressed:** where a distancing narrator may address the narratee by a specific name ("Miss Bullock," "Miss Farthingale"), an engaging narrator usually avoids naming the narratee or uses names that "refer to large classes of potential actual readers" (33). Very often the engaging narrator calls the narratee simply "you" or "reader."

2. **The frequency of direct address to the narratee:** a distancing narrator often refers to the narratee as a third person, someone who is not part of the narrative conversation. Pronouns such as "he" and "she" can – in the case of *Tom Jones* – refer to the eponymous protagonist, Sophia Western or even the "readers." The actual reader "gets to choose whether to take such narrative interventions to heart" (34). The engaging narrator, on the other hand, addresses the narratee more frequently – "like an evangelical preacher" (34) – as "you" and thus leaves the actual reader virtually no choice in identifying with the narratee.

3. **The degree of irony present in references to the narratee:** the narrative stance of a distancing narrator involves irony, either by crossing diegetic boundaries (metalepsis) or by "inscribing flawed 'readers' from whom actual readers should want to differentiate themselves" (35). In an engaging narrator's discourse, on the other hand, there is no place for irony, as it would undermine the reader's identification with the narratee.

4. **The narrator's stance toward the characters:** a distancing narrator emphasises the characters' fictionality. In contrast, an engaging narrator "avoids reminders of the characters' fictionality, insisting instead that the characters are 'real'" (39). Both types can employ metalepses, the former to distance the reader from the characters, the latter to reinforce the "reader's serious sense of the characters as, in some way, real" (40).

5. **The narrator's implicit or explicit attitude toward the act of narration:** both the distancing and the engaging narrator intrude into the fiction and remind the narratee that the story is only a story, but where the distancing narrator does so...
to remind the narratee that story and narration are constructs, the engaging narrator intrudes in order to underline that the story told is real.

A brief glance at the discussed novels by Swift will reveal that Sophie and Anna in *Out of this World*, Amy and Mandy in *Last Orders*, and Paula in *Tomorrow* almost exclusively employ engaging interventions of the 19th-century novel and are thus firmly placed in the literary and, for that matter, gendered tradition of the Victorian Age.

Regarding Warhol's first criterion, it can be said that although the narratees addressed by the female narrators can be clearly identified in *Out of this World* (psychiatrist, children and husband) and *Tomorrow* (children), they serve the function of stand-ins for internal addressees as in *Last Orders*. The narratees are mostly addressed as "you" (especially in *Tomorrow*). Even when they are given specific names, such as "Doctor K," "Doctor Klein" or "Dear Harry" (173) as in *Out of this World*, the narratees remain in the background and largely impersonal. The author’s intention to engage the reader in the narrator’s and narratee’s world is clearly manifest.

With regard to the second aspect, the frequency of direct address to the narratee, Swift’s women also clearly reveal themselves as Victorian engaging narrators. As shown above, most of the time the characters addressed are clearly part of the diegesis, and when they are not, they are internal addressees and thus even closer to the homodiegetic narrators’ world. In both cases the reader experiences the same emotional and appellative urgency behind the narrators’ story which makes it close to impossible to disengage oneself from the narratee. The only distance created between the reader and the addressee, however, is not intentional but more likely the result of a 19th-century patriarchal ideology.

Warhol’s third to fifth indicators basically deal with the concepts of realism, metanarration and metafiction. Distancing narrators employ self-referential strategies to draw the reader’s attention to the constructed nature of the novel and the textual character of the world (and to dissolve the boundaries between fact and fiction). Fiction of this kind is generally understood as "metafiction" (cf. Hutcheon 1984 and Waugh 1993). “Metanarration,” on the other hand, is “concerned with the act and/or process of narration, and not with its fictional nature” (Neumann/Nünning 2009, 205). Unlike metafiction, metanarrative “passages need not destroy aesthetic illusion, but may also contribute to substantiating the illusion of authenticity that the narrative seeks to create” (205). Paula in *Tomorrow* constantly draws the reader’s attention to the fact that she is telling a story, a “bedtime story” (*Tomorrow*, 9). But in doing so, she does not question the truth of her story. On the contrary, her constant references to the importance of the next day’s revelation attribute an even greater reality status to the story she is telling her children/herself.

The other two novels discussed can be equally understood as metanarratives, where the engaging narrators’ continuous intrusions into the story remind the reader that the narrated world “represents personal and social realities” (Warhol 1989, 33). In both novels the female narrators are overt and regularly draw attention to the fact that

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18 Cf. also: "I’m telling you this story" (41), "Has any better story ever been invented?" (144), "I am getting very close to the nub of things now" (148), "I’ve got to the nub" (162).

19 On the very same grounds I would also argue that *Waterland*, ever so often hailed as a postmodern novel, is metanarration and not metafiction. Its treatment of history and the self-reflexive comments eventually sustain a clear distinction between fact and fiction, between reality and stories.
they are telling or reflecting on their past. In both texts these references serve to validate the truth of the stories told and the characters introduced. The narrators leave no doubt as to their reliability as communicators of fictional truth. 20

Ultimately, the female narrators’ engaging narrative stance in Swift’s novels does not come as a surprise. It reveals that not only Swift’s concept of femininity but also his idea of a female voice is anachronistic. It seems almost logical that a view of women as “fillable vessels” (Waterland, 42) should be embedded in discursive strategies that, as Warhol has shown, were associated with female writing in the high Victorian era. 21

Works Cited


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20 Although Sophie’s narrative situation and state of mind in Out of this World (she confides in her psychiatrist) leave room for doubting her reliability, none of her reports are contradicted by the other narrators (father Harry, husband Joe, mother Anna) or shown to be incorrect. Cf. for example the reports of the swimming incidents by Harry (30-31) and Sophie (52-53) that agree on such small details as the blue dress worn by Anna or the fact that Harry, after getting her out of the water, held Sophie very tight in his arms. A similar example of almost identical accounts of one and the same incident by different narrators can be found in Last Orders. See my discussion in Weidle (2006, 140).

21 In this respect it is interesting to note that in the 1970s Swift began a PhD thesis on the city in 19th-century fiction, a project, however, he did not complete (cf. Brace 2007).


Writting the Female in Graham Swift's *Out of this World, Last Orders, Tomorrow*.
