

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

This thesis explores the journey of self-discovery and the complexities of faith as depicted in Jeanette Winterson's *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*, focusing on the protagonist's struggle to embrace her identity amidst a restrictive religious upbringing. The novel highlights the tension between Jeanette's yearning for self-expression and the suffocating constraints of her mother's fervent faith. This analysis delves into the intricate interplay between Jeanette's personal journey, her relationship with her mother, and the impact of her religious upbringing on her identity formation.

The analysis reveals the profound impact of Jeanette's upbringing on her identity formation. Her mother's unwavering belief in God and her desire to raise Jeanette as a servant to the Lord create a sense of isolation and conflict for Jeanette. The novel explores the complexities of Jeanette's relationship with her mother, highlighting the challenges of navigating personal identity within a restrictive social environment. The analysis further reveals how Jeanette's struggle with her sexuality, her sense of self-worth, and her desire for acceptance are deeply intertwined with her religious upbringing.

The novel's exploration of Jeanette's journey carries significant implications for understanding the complexities of identity formation, particularly in the context of religious and familial pressures. Jeanette's struggle to reconcile her sexuality with her upbringing demonstrates the challenges of navigating personal identity within a restrictive social environment. Furthermore, the evolving relationship between Jeanette and her mother highlights the complexities of parent-child dynamics, particularly when beliefs and values clash. The novel suggests that the search for self-acceptance and authenticity can be a

challenging and often painful process, especially when individuals are constrained by societal expectations and religious dogma.

Further research could delve deeper into the role of religion in shaping Jeanette's identity, exploring the ways in which religious beliefs can both empower and constrain individuals. A comparative study of other characters who grapple with similar challenges could provide further insights into the impact of societal pressures on self-discovery. Additionally, exploring the novel's portrayal of the LGBTQ+ experience within a religious context could offer valuable perspectives on the intersection of faith and sexuality. Further research could also examine the role of language and narrative in shaping Jeanette's identity, analyzing the ways in which she uses language to express her thoughts, feelings, and experiences.

*Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit* offers a compelling testament to the transformative power of self-acceptance and the enduring strength of human resilience. Through Jeanette's journey, the novel underscores the importance of embracing one's true self, even in the face of adversity. Jeanette's story resonates with readers who have faced similar struggles with identity, family, and faith, reminding us that finding our own path often requires challenging societal norms and embracing our authentic selves. The novel serves as a powerful reminder that the search for meaning and belonging is a lifelong journey, and that finding our own truth often requires courage, resilience, and the willingness to embrace the complexities of our own experiences.

This analysis has explored the dynamics of Jeanette's relationship with her mother, the impact of her mother's beliefs on Jeanette, and how their relationship evolves throughout the novel. It has also analyzed how Jeanette uses language to express her identity, her struggles, and her rebellion against societal norms, and examined how her experiences in the city, her encounters with other people, and her evolving understanding of her sexuality shape her

identity. Finally, it has compared and contrasted Jeanette's journey to other characters in the novel, such as the other members of the religious group, to further understand how they contribute to her journey and understanding of her own identity.