Female Novelists in the 21st Century: Not Your Grandmother's Sense and Sensibility

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Abstract
Mary Gaitskill earned her B.A. from the University of Michigan and was a Guggenheim Fellow in 2002. In 1998, her collection of short stories, Because They Wanted To, was nominated for a PEN/Faulkner Award. Other short story collections include Bad Behavior and, more recently, Don't Cry. Mary has published two novels, Two Girls, Fat and Thin and Veronica. Her stories and essays have been published in Harper's Magazine, Esquire, and The New Yorker. Mary's honest portrayals of taboo subjects such as sadomasochism, addiction, and prostitution permeate a great majority of her work.

Sarah Shun-lien Bynum's debut novel, Madeleine is Sleeping, was chosen as a finalist for the National Book Award and won the Janet Heidinger Kafka Prize for 2004. Her second book, Ms. Hempel Chronicles, was a finalist for the PEN/Faulkner Award in 2009, and The New Yorker included her in their "20 under 40" list of fiction writers "key to their generation" alongside the likes of Jonathan Safran Foer, Karen Russell and Joshua Ferris. She has taught and directed the MFA program at UC San Diego and is a graduate of Brown University and the Iowa Writers' Workshop. Selected for The Best American Short Stories 2004 and 2009, her short stories and novel excerpts have appeared in numerous publications and journals, including The New Yorker, Tin House, The Georgia Review, and others.

Cheryl Strayed is the author of the upcoming memoir, Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Coast Trail, to be published by Knopf early in 2012. Her novel, Torch, has been a finalist for the Great Lakes Book Award and was selected by The Oregonian as one of the best books of 2006 by Pacific Northwest writers. She is the winner of a Pushcart Prize for her essay, "Munro County" in the Missouri Review, and her work has appeared in New York Times Magazine, The Washington Post Magazine, Allure and others. She has received fellowships to the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference and Sewanee Writers' Conference, and has pieces anthologized in Best American Essays, Best New American Voices, and various collections. A founding member of VIDA: Women in Literary Arts, she is an MFA graduate of Syracuse University and holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Minnesota. She currently lives in Portland with her husband and their two children.

Maile Chapman is the author of the novel Your Presence is Requested at Suvanto (Graywolf Press, 2010; Jonathan Cape, UK, 2010). Her stories have appeared in literary magazines and anthologies in the United States, the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Finland. She was a fellow at The New York Public Library's Dorothy B. and Lewis Cullman Center for Scholars and Writers and is currently an assistant professor of English at UNLV.

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Feminism and literature; Feminist literature; Fiction; Women authors; Women novelists
Sense and Sensibility study guide contains a biography of Jane Austen, literature essays, a complete e-text, quiz questions, major themes, characters, and a full summary and analysis. Analysis: The themes of money and inheritance are of immediate importance in the novel; the Dashwood women are immediately cast into a dire situation, since none of them have money themselves, cannot inherit because they are women, and cannot earn a living either. Gender is also a deciding issue in this, since the reason they cannot keep Mr. Dashwood's property or money is because women are not legally entitled to receive or own property at this point in history. Jane Austen: Sense and Sensibility. Chapter 1 (continued). He was not an ill-disposed young man, unless to be rather cold hearted and rather selfish is to be ill-disposed: but he was, in general, well respected; for he conducted himself with propriety in the discharge of his ordinary duties. Had he married a more amiable woman, he might have been made still more respectable than he was:--he might even have been made amiable himself; for he was very young when he married, and very fond of his wife. But Mrs. John Dashwood was a strong caricature of himself;-- more narrow-minded and selfish. When