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Not Just Jane: Rediscovering Seven Amazing Women Writers Who Transformed British Literature

Shelley DeWees

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Jane Austen and the Brontës endure as British literature's leading ladies (and for good reason)—but were these reclusive parsons' daughters *really* the only writing women of their day? A feminist history of literary Britain, this witty, fascinating nonfiction debut explores the extraordinary lives and work of seven long-forgotten authoresses, and asks: Why did their considerable fame and influence, and a vibrant culture of female creativity, fade away? And what are we missing because of it?

You've likely read at least one Jane Austen novel (or at *least* seen a film one). Chances are you've also read *Jane Eyre*; if you were an exceptionally moody teenager, you might have even read *Wuthering Heights*. English majors might add George Eliot or Virginia Woolf to this list…but then the trail ends. Were there truly so few women writing anything of note during late 18th and 19th century Britain?

In *Not Just Jane*, Shelley DeWees weaves history, biography, and critical analysis into a rip-roaring narrative of the nation's fabulous, yet mostly forgotten, female literary heritage. As the country, and women's roles within it, evolved, so did the publishing industry, driving legions of ladies to pick up their pens and hit the parchment. Focusing on the creative contributions and personal stories of seven astonishing women, among them pioneers of detective fiction and the modern fantasy novel, DeWees assembles a riveting, intimate, and ruthlessly unromanticized portrait of female life—and the literary landscape—during this era. In doing so, she comes closer to understanding how a society could forget so many of these women, who all enjoyed success, critical acclaim, and a fair amount of notoriety during their time, and realizes why, now more than ever, it's vital that we remember.

Rediscover Charlotte Turner Smith, Helen Maria Williams, Mary Robinson, Catherine Crowe, Sara Coleridge, Dinah Mulock Craik, and Mary Elizabeth Braddon.

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