

Book review

Food for Thought!

Books are a person's best friends as the saying goes. The best thing about them is that there are books for every season, mood, time, age etc. Books just fit in anywhere and everywhere. Now though some people will say that a woman's best friend is more likely to be diamonds, I would disagree! The numerous books which are written for women alone, every year have been rising steadily, yet rapidly over the years. Following are a list of women authors and their books, which have been written, about, to and for women alone.

1) Victoria Holt
My Enemy, the Queen

This book is about Queen Elizabeth's cousin, Lettice, who is far more beautiful than her, and is secretly married to Robert Dudley, the Duke of Leicester, the same man Queen Elizabeth loves. Before the marriage, Lettice was the Queen's woman-in-waiting, but after the Queen finds out, she cuts all ties with Lettice, and tries and manages to make her life the definition of the word "hell". But she remains over-the-top friendly with Dudley and even falls for Robert Devereaux, Lettice's son by another man.

2) Georgette Heyer
Venetia

Venetia is a 25 year old woman who lives with her young brother. She hears stories about the notorious owner of an estate, on which she loves roaming about. There is a guy named Edward who wants to marry her, but she is not interested because she is more interested in having adventures. However, after she meets the mysterious man she has heard so much about, she gradually realizes that she is in love with him.

Black Sheep



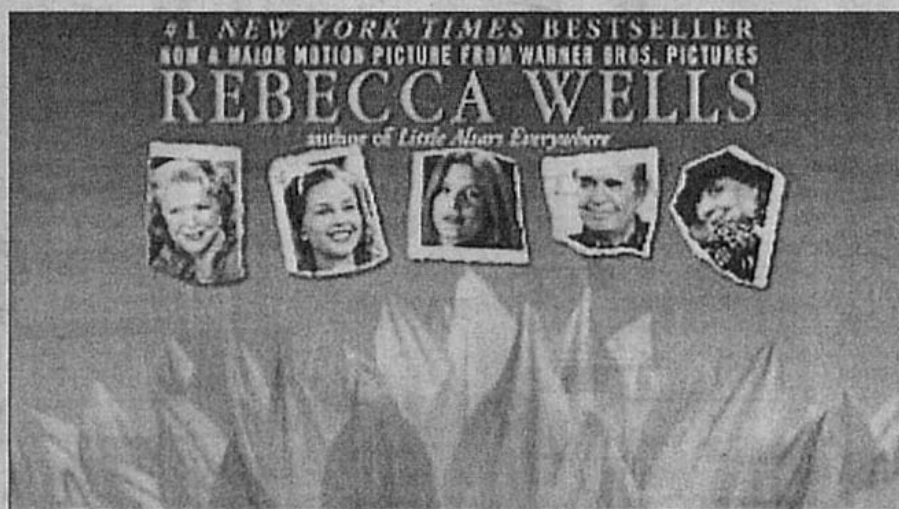
This book is about a woman named Abby, who takes care of her niece and her sister. She is 28 and does not feel the need to be married, that is, until she meets the black sheep of the Calverleigh family, Miles Calverleigh. To make matters worse for the poor woman, Miles just happens to be the uncle of the gold-hunter Stacy Calverleigh, who is after Abby's niece's money.

3) Melissa Nathan
The Nanny

At 23, Jo Green feels her life might be over. Still living at home, working as a nanny with no chance for advancement, and dating the same guy for six years, she's in a real rut. So she answers an advertisement for a live-in nanny in London, and soon she's more shaken up than she planned for. Her new employers, the Fitzgeralds, are a real mess. The kids are brats. The mother, Vanessa, is conflicted about her career, and the father, Dick, appears to be an ambitionless philanderer. Then there's Josh, Dick's son by a previous marriage, who is the most confusing of all. Gentle with Jo one minute, then horrid the next.

4) Meg Cabot
The Princess Diaries

For fifteen-year-old Mia Thermopolis, life doesn't get much worse than high school. She's too tall, too thin, and too flat-chested. She hates algebra; she's fighting with her best friend; and her mother is sending her math teacher! She has a weird haircut and the only boy she likes is intimidated by her intelligence. Then the day comes when her divorced parents sit her down together and tell her that, since her father is the king of Genovia, she's the princess! Now, on top of everything else, she



has princess lessons with her prissy grandmother and a slew of popular kids who only wish to befriend her because it's cool to hang out with a princess. The whole series is about how Mia deals with various situations in her life, and about her many experiences as she grows up.

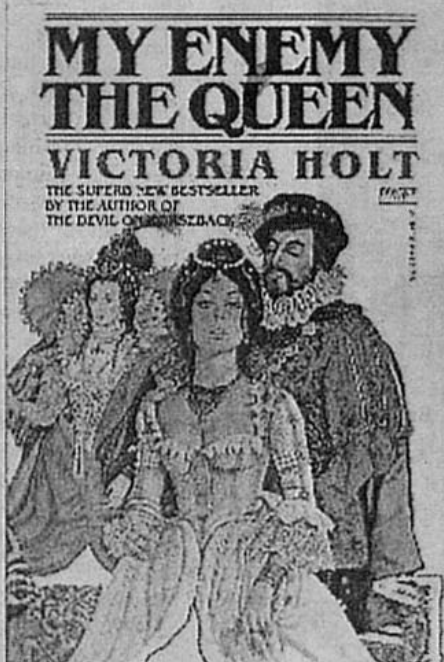
All American Girl

Samantha Madison is just your average disenfranchised sophomore gal living in D.C. She is really into art, and tries to express the modern day teenager's feelings via her artwork. Her life seems to be fine, with no worries at all, except for the fact that she has a major crush on her sister's boyfriend. One day her mother sends her to an art class where she meets a guy called David. Bunking her art class one day, in an idle moment sandwiched between cookie-buying and CD-perusing, she puts a stop to

disciplined, and definitely practically nonsmoking heroine, is about to discover what happens when you have the man of your dreams actually in your flat and he hasn't been to the supermarket not just tonight, but ever. Lurching from the cappuccino bars of Notting Hill to the blessed-out shores of Thailand, searching for The Truth in spite of pathetically un-evolved men, insane dating theories, Smug Married advice, Bridget experiences a zeitgeist-esque Spiritual Epiphany somewhere between the pages of *How to Find the Love You Want Without Seeking It* (can self-help books really help self?), protective custody, and a lightly chilled Chardonnay.

7) Rebecca Wells
The Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood

Wells tells the story of Siddalee Walker, a



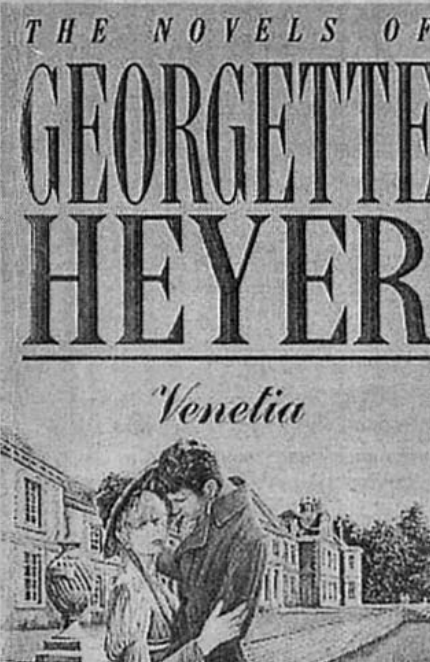
an attempt on the life of the president. Before she can say "MTV2" she's appointed Teen Ambassador to the U.N. and has caught the eye of the very cute First Son, who just happens to be David!

5) Sophie Kinsella
Can You Keep A Secret?

Emma Corrigan isn't a twit, but she does have a tendency to fall into awkward situations, mostly because her insecurities rule her personal roost. Emma is a marketing assistant - mostly a glorified secretary. She yearns for a promotion to marketing executive so that she can show her family and especially her overachiever cousin Kerry that she is a success. When no one is available to nail down a done deal in Glasgow, Emma's company, Panther Corporation, sends her up there as the fill-in body. But when she gets there she realizes that the deal has gone sour. Her attempts to shore things up fail miserably, and she makes her way to the airport lounge to drown her sorrows. Midway through the rocky flight home, a tipsy and frightened Emma winds up spilling her life's secrets to her seatmate, a young American guy who is an astonishingly good listener. It is really quite amusing to watch Emma deal with all the things she told Jack on the plane. She is no longer able to use all the small social lies she would normally tell to smooth things over or make a good impression on him, and he knows it - and rather enjoys twitting her about them. The two of them have a nice, subtle chemistry together.

6) Helen Fielding
Bridget Jones- The Edge of Reason

A new year begins and Bridget Jones, the globally bestselling, unflinchingly self-



theatre director in need of inspiration for her new play. Sidda looks to her mother's past and her own childhood for answers. Growing up, Sidda was a Petite Ya-Ya, as the offspring of the Ya-Yas were called, and loved her strange childhood in the Louisiana bayou. The Ya-Yas consist of her mother, Vivi, and her best friends Teensy, Necie and Caro, whose wild attempts to be different make an impact on Sidda. She, however, has no idea how much the Ya-Yas have been through, and it turns out to be just what she needs for her play. Sidda's journey begins when she is confronted by the Ya-Yas for calling off her wedding. She asks them to help her with her inspiration problem. Sidda fights with her mother, which makes it hard for the other Ya-Yas to convince Vivi to give Sidda the Ya-Ya-rabilia - a scrapbook of letters and articles that give her a different look at not only her mother's life but also the hardships and glory of being a woman. Sidda's research turns out to be a self-exploration, and helps her discover who she and her mother really are.

8) Margaret Mitchell
Gone with the Wind

Gone with the Wind is the story of Scarlett O'Hara, a spoiled southern belle, whose life is suddenly caught up in the turmoil of the American Civil War. Through her struggles during the war and the six years of Reconstruction that follow, we see her life pass through three husbands and three children as we take a deep look into the changing landscape of Atlanta (a young town at the time). Within this background, we observe Scarlett's battle against external and internal conflicts, her losses, gains, and hopes.

By Rohini Alamgir

D's DU days

Phase 1: The wait

One fine morning of 2001 the DU admission results were out at 8 am. Out of eleven thousand candidates, four thousand of them made it. D waited at the premises of the Arts Building with other girls while inside the building the boys were wrecking havoc over the result sheet. Those who could not make it tore down the sheet to vent their anger. The place was so packed with pandemonium, disorder and unruly boys that it was impossible for any girl to reach there. After three hours special arrangements were made for the girls to see the result.

Phase-2: Lucky number

At 11 am. Ms. D is yet to reach the result sheet as the place is now packed with anxious girls. She jostles her way to the sheet and sought out her roll number. Classmates from her school and college gather round her and they congratulate each other. For the first time in her life D believes she has a lucky number as her test score was 71, her position was 71 and the number on her pay slip was also 71.

Phase-3: Fraternizing with boys? Are you sure?

D had always wanted to study in Economics so that's the department she got admitted into. All of her old friends were scattered over various departments. She got only two of her friends with her in Economics. D was attentive in class. Hailing from an all girls institute, she was not sure whether or not she should talk with the boys. The first year is spent contemplating this problem.

Phase-4: The new DU 'campus' New Market

After a year a sophomore D finally decides to talk to some boys. She starts addafying, but boys are not allowed in most cases. D then discovers the hitherto unknown connection between the DU and New Market, and this new 'campus' becomes her daily destination.

Phase-5: Social Welfare

One day D was heading for the library to study, which wasn't as peaceful as the fish market at Karwan Bazaar in her opinion. She didn't understand why people had to addafy in the library. As soon as it was twelve in the afternoon the mikes started blaring from all the corners of the campus. The political parties started to preach about the social welfare of this country. D's eardrums were screaming for help as a result of this 'social welfare'. But nobody bothered.

Phase-6: there are more important things in life than Economics!

Third year begins, and a substantial part of D's campus life is now taken up by addafying. Her circle has three boys. Her favourite adda hangout is in front of the Central Library. She is slightly inattentive in class and she thinks she can avoid some of the classes, which she finds quite boring (?). There are some study freaks in her class. They do nothing but study and on the other extreme there are people who do everything but study, and D is one of them. D makes a long face and has a strong desire to get married when the results come out because she is convinced that husbands do not scold their wives for getting poor marks. But after the initial storm of berating is over at home D is thinks mum and dad are the best people in the world to live with and she is very lucky to be single.

Phase-7: D wants the disturbing elements out of the library (do you think D is getting studious?)

In her fourth year D is a great addabab but suddenly the importance of a good academic track record becomes very clear (after going through some job requirements in the newspaper). So D starts visiting the library, but the adda continues. As a consequence, she starts addafying in the library. Thank God the people who want to save the face of the library are deaf enough to study there! There are some that are not deaf enough, and actually have the guts to stop D in mid sentence and start doing *aatlami*. Most of them are freshers or sophomores yet to know the DU rules (!). D is shocked to see their impertinence towards their senior apu. She recalls her days as a fresher and tells them how she used to respect (!) the seniors in the library. D thinks these disturbing elements should be removed from the library to give her peaceful environs for a nice adda (she has already forgotten why she came to the library).

Phase-8: D is writing Study Buddies for RS readers

At home D is now writing the Study Buddy column for RS readers. She is writing 'Dear buddies, you have to study hard. There is no way out. Do not follow any suggestion' while she herself does not remember when she read her textbooks last. She is going to collect her suggestion the next morning.

Author's note: D is an imaginary girl. The author is a respectable woman and has no connection with D. If anyone thinks so, then D will show her the consequences.

By Durdana Ghias