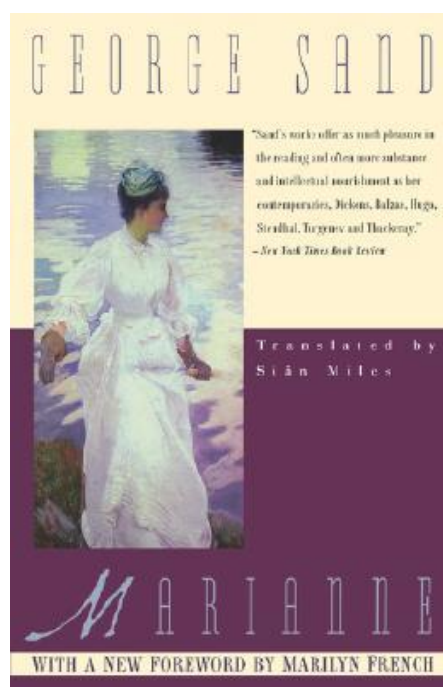




Marianne

George Sand , Sian Mills (Translator) , Marilyn French (Foreword by)

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Sand takes the timeless theme of a younger woman in love with an older man to create a romance with a feminist twist. Her vivacious heroine is both the author's ideal of female emancipation and a subtle attack on the other Marianne, the French Republic's convention-bound Muse.

Marianne Details

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Author : George Sand , Sian Mills (Translator) , Marilyn French (Foreword by)

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From Reader Review Marianne for online ebook

Elizabeth Hunter says

The edition I read included an extensive biography of George Sand and that was a fascinating read. The novella itself is a fairly simple, romantic story about two people realizing they are right for each other. Oddly enough, having loved Sand since seeing the movie *Impromptu* ages ago, this is the first of her writing I've actually read.

kasia says

A very pleasant story to read on a snowy day. It features many of Sand's typical themes - gender, courtship, independence, country life - but in a somewhat more complex and intriguing way. It would be a good choice if one wanted to read/teach/think about the affinities and contrasts between Sand and George Eliot.

Diane says

This was something of a disappointment. I've heard a great deal about George Sand and was expecting an interesting story. Instead, I got a rather dull account of a country romance. About half of the book is taken up by Sand's biography, which is the most interesting part of the book. I gave this book three stars largely because of the biography. I am in no hurry to read any more George Sand after this.

Marianne defies convention by living on her own and refusing marriage. Pierre Andre, an older man, has known her since she was a young child. He does not realize that he is in love with her until he is asked to introduce a prospective suitor to her. Pierre is jealous and miserable, but does his best to hide it. Marianne mostly acts bored and annoyed by it all. I actually felt sorry for Philippe, the suitor, who is so utterly oblivious to what is going on around him. In the end, I just did not care what happened.

Devo says

I didn't expect to like this book at all, but I did! Marianne is a great female character, especially for the time period, and I enjoyed the book's focus on the natural world. My one complaint is that I wished the book was longer!

Allison says

A simple novel about simple 19th century French country folk. Read this book over coffee and a baguette.

Fiona MacDonald says

Lovely, underrated story of a man and a woman in love. I had never heard of George Sand, but researching her now I see she was at one time one of the most popular women's writers in circulation. O can see why, for her prose, beautiful lyrical descriptions and simplicity are divine. I am exceedingly pleased with the story I read, and will be looking into her other works when at all possible.

Sara says

The things that made the character, Marianne, shocking in the 1800s, make her seem somewhat provincial today. She is an unmarried twenty-five year old with land--unheard of. She is unafraid to ride her horse about the countryside alone--unheard of. She knows what she wants in a husband and refuses to settle for anything less--unheard of. I think the affect of people being shocked is lost and that probably diminishes the impact that this novel would have had when released.

It is short, even for a novella, but it makes its point with some beautiful prose stylings. I was anxious to read something from George Sand. The forward, which consumes almost a half of this edition, made me all the more interested in her as a person and author. I am now quite anxious to read *The Dream Lover*, a biographical novel of her life.

I could have gone 3.5, but not 4, so I have rounded down.

Jenn says

It's not often you can whip through a classic in one day. Marianne is really a novella rather than a novel. I have to say, my positive rating of this is probably more for George Sand, who's biography makes up the first half of the book, than for Marianne itself, which is a sweet but disposable little tale about romance in the French countryside. It does plug some of Sand's philosophies on nature, education, human nature, etc, but for the most part it will seem to modern readers like much-trod territory--man doesn't realize he loves woman until he has competition for her. Woman tries to make him jealous. Third party gets strung along. Happy ending! However, George Sand=Total Badass. I will be reading more of her work.

Marie says

The introduction - which was quite as long as the novel itself - contained a passage decrying how only Sand's more romantic books were translated into English, giving English readers a misunderstanding of her... and then I found this was, in fact, a romance. Rather a straightforward one, too. It does have some hints of deep, philosophical things, I guess, but ultimately it's about two people learning that their love for each other is requited and then cutting through to actually being married. The end.

This is my second George Sand book, the last she wrote, I believe, and the first I read was the first she wrote. I can say that this one is very obviously a more mature effort, with the caveat of course that I'm reading in translation. It was smoothly written and enjoyable, though I felt the end was a bit... meh. The main characters

spend two whole pages, saying, essentially, "Gosh I love you." I suppose it wasn't overblown for the time, though it was a flaw to me.

I'm hoping to read more by George Sand, particularly if I can find a really UNromantic book by her.

Marianne Broadgate says

Obviously I selected this for entirely narcissistic reasons! It was an interesting insight into eras and times about which I previously knew very little. I enjoyed it and found it very interesting although it wasn't an easy read.

Kelly says

Uncertain about this one. Part of the oddness is the English translation. I'm sure it would read better in French, but I don't think my French comprehension is quite that good.

I have to say that I don't like Pierre much. He's kind of an idiot. Too busy thinking to see what's right in front of him!

Marianne is likable, though she tends to fall into the same trap.

Crys Wolf says

I was pleasantly surprised that this was such a quick and easy read. I liked the characters and plot as well as the philosophical discussions about domesticity versus worldliness, age and experience, intelligence and modesty, and love of nature. I can see why George Sand was such an influential writer in her day.

Erika Schanzenbach says

I enjoyed the read. I came in with no expectations, as I knew remarkably little about Sand and even less about what she wrote. The telling of the story had a casual aire about it that I was pleasantly surprised by. It was uncomplicated. I didn't like Pierre or Philippe at all. As others here have said before me, they were idiots.

Catherine says

"On the page where he had written the previous day, he found a little wild pansy he could not remember having placed there. It set him dreaming. It should be possible to make a little herbarium of experiences he said to himself. A flower, a sprig of this, some moss, could become as precious as relics if they reminded one of the great events of the inner life, moments of great emotion or perception. People remember the risks and dangers of picking certain specimens. Huge vistas of the world unfold before us as before: yet they only reflect time in the external world. How different would be the vision of the soul's unfolding." (page 62)

Janyla says

tried to read it in french which was a challenge but still understandable. Im not used to reading romance novels so I'm not exactly sure how to feel about this exactly but it was good overall nonetheless.

J M Padoc says

Very enjoyable little novella. I think Marianne and Lizzie Bennet and Bathsheba Everdeen would get along quite well. I will be looking for more works by George Sand.

Heather says

I would like to clarify that I did not give this book a low rating because of its writing quality. The reason it was on my radar in the first place was because I wanted to read something--anything--created by this fascinating woman I've been reading about, who essentially lived her life as a man in order to gain the autonomy and freedom that she craved, and whose work inspired many of the greatest novelists of her generation, including the Brontes. After hearing that, I had to see what kind of writer she was, and on that score, I was not disappointed. I look forward to exploring more of her work in the future. In fact, part of me realizes that my rating is a bit unfair, because it stems from something that can't exactly be helped, given that the story was published sometime around 1875. Sand might have been a revolutionary, but she still had to work within the borders of her dysfunctional society, just like anyone else.

Sorry, Let me back up. Although I enjoyed the writing style of "Marianne" I was honestly a bit annoyed by some of its ideas--a short list of teeth-grinding "romance" fiction tropes that still plague fiction--especially fiction aimed at women--to this day. Granted, in 1875 these things weren't tropes; they were just commonly accepted ideas about how female lives should be lived. Even so, it still hurts my heart to see them turn up anywhere, whether it be in modern YA, a bad Rom-Com, or in otherwise lovely fiction from over a hundred years ago; and it hurts a little extra that a woman like Sands, who was determined to live a different "life script" than the one the world offered her, would be content to write the script that she rejected for her characters to live, instead.

(From here on there's a little bit of spoiler action):

This narrative opens with something really intriguing, especially for a 19th century setting: an independent young woman that is apparently content to live quietly, unmarried and childless, pursuing what she likes in an environment of her choosing. This set up left me hoping for a closer examination of Marianne's life--perhaps a portrait of a woman calmly living outside of the life that her society tells her is the only one that will make her happy, not to Make A Statement, but simply to make the most of her existence, her way. Instead, the narrative quickly becomes:

1. A story about a man observing a woman, rather than a story about a woman, a la Dasiey Miller--well hello, there, Male Gaze. Haven't see you out in all your blatant glory like this since the Corsett scene in the first "Sherlock Holmes" film.)
2. A modern romance, in the sense that we have a young woman caught between two men who, a. both want her, and b. are both idiots. (One of them expects her to marry him after knowing him for about the space of an afternoon, and the other spends a good portion of the story wondering whether or not Marianne has any

real intelligence, and discouraging her desire to educate herself...how lovely. Who among us wouldn't just fall into that man's arms?)

3. A modern romance in the sense that this woman who seems perfectly happy living independantly at the begining of the story ends up married by the end. (To its credit, however, at least she marries because she wants a particular person, and not because "oh my goodness every woman must have a man!" that's actually a lot more progressive than some things written less than ten years ago.)

These things would not bother me so much--would probably not even phase me--if they were relics; dim memories from a past in which women were viewed, and viewed themselves, as pretty things that needed a man's attention and affection in order to both be aware of and embrace thier own existance. No, these elements in this 140 year old story bother me because I've seen them all before. In fiction that was created in my lifetime. For example:

1. I last blatant example of the male gaze (essentially the idea that women exist, at least in part, for the purpose of being looked at by men, either in a contemplative or a sexual way, and should take pleasure in being observed and validated by male eyes), was the "Sherlock Holmes" film released in 2010. The way that the camera was caressing Rachel McAdams during that scene in which she was wearing only a corsett was pretty obviously meant to be sensual, which assumes that the only people in the audience are straight men. (Well, technically, that image would be potentially sensual to both straight men aand Lesbian/Bisexual women, but considering how hollywood tends to fetishize both of those groups in an attempt to titlate--once again--straight men, I kinda doubt that the director was thinking about drawing in his Lesbian audience when he filmed that shot). This one was pretty hard to ignore, but the Male Gaze still exists in a variety of forms in our culture, both subtle and blatant....and being reminded of how long it's been around, as a form of storytelling, no less, honestly hit me in the gut a little.

2. Examples of single, autonomous women deciding that, no, actually, they really do need to be married by the time thier stories end, abound in modern ficton. Take the protagonist of 2007's "Eat, Pray, Love," who makes a big deal of Embracing Her Independance after a difficult divorce...only to end up remarried by the end of the story. I'd be here all day if tried to list every example, but I'm sure that anyone reading this who grew up in a Western culture can think of many, many more without my healp. (Particularly if you happen to be female, since most fiction with a "No, really, you need to be married by the end," plot is geared toward women).

3. Portaying men who display a profound disrespect for the basic competence and intelligence of the women they "love" as desiraeable partners...well, that one's been at the center of a hugely successful franchise since about 2005. I won't bother to name it--I think you're picking up what I'm putting down.

So, in the end, maybe I'm being just as un fair to "Marianne" as most of the cast of her own story is. I can't bring myself to praise a piece with these themes in it too highly, but for very personal reasons. It's not simply the fact that those ideas existed in 1875, which I understand; it's the pang of being reminded that they are about as prevelant today as they ever were, which both baffles and honeestly sickens me.

Erin Schanz says

I enjoy being part of a book club that challenges me to read things I probably wouldn't otherwise. This is probably the first French literature I've ever read and maybe the first novella. Feeling just a tid bit more sophisticated for having read this entertaining little story.

Jaid says

Beautiful. This is the first of many books I plan to read of hers. Her writing is so clever and passionately feminist not in the subtle way many women writers from her time but more honest probably due to her freedom under the male pseudonym George Sand. This is a very love, the kind that makes my heart beat faster when I read of it.

HelenDolly Plumb says

This book is very short. A bit Jane Austen-y in style but ended before it really got started. The narrator is irritating but I liked the character of Marianne and would have liked to see her developed more.
