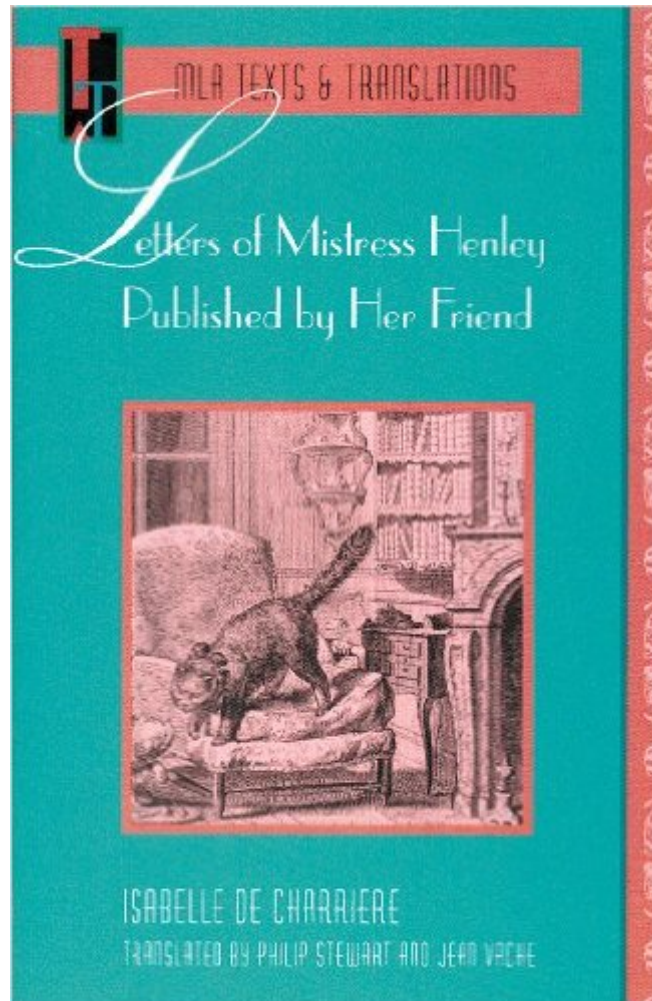


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Letters Of Mistress Henley Published By Her Friend (Texts & Translations)



Synopsis

Considered by many scholars to be among the most brilliant novels written in French during the eighteenth century, *Lettres de Mistriss Henley publiées par son amie* was composed as a response to Samuel de Constant's misogynist novel, *The Sentimental Husband* (1783). *Charrière* presents six letters penned by a Mistriss Henley, who has chosen a decent and affectionate man as her life's companion only to discover that she cannot bear sharing his life. An immediate success on its publication in 1784, *Mistriss Henley* was greeted with acclaim and controversy: one reader called the book "literarily excellent" but "morally dangerous in various ways." Remarkable for its empathy for both spouses, *Mistriss Henley* is not only a moving work of fiction but also one of the most modern novels of its day.

Book Information

Series: Texts & Translations (Book 1)

Paperback: 42 pages

Publisher: Modern Language Association of America; 1 edition (January 1, 1993)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0873527763

ISBN-13: 978-0873527767

Product Dimensions: 8.4 x 5.8 x 0.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (1 customer review)

Best Sellers Rank: #648,715 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #124 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Epistolary](#) #292 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > History & Criticism > Regional & Cultural > European > French](#) #352 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > History & Criticism > Women Authors](#)

Customer Reviews

This book is both an interesting read by itself, but is also a "response" to another story of the same era. The original story being from the man's point of view about his unsatisfactory wife; this being the same story from her point of view, of a husband who is picky and impossible to please, of every point of conflict resting on her as her fault. In that sense it is very frustrating to modern readers, and also an excellent window into the mindset of the time period, where marriage was the one "work" goal of women, and then so often it was not a gilded cage, but a gilded torture rack, and which it was depended entirely on the whim of the husband and his essential nature. This small book is an

easy read, by today's standards would be a short story, but it was shocking in its day both because people liked to gossip that it was about Charriere's marriage (probably not), and because it definitely DID shed light on women's dissatisfactions in marriage (and that was considered to be speaking "out of school" to air this thought process).[If you read the large tome of Charriere's letters to D'Hermences, it is most likely that this little book serves as a defense of women like his wife... a defense which she eventually rose to in her friendship with him; "how can you blame your wife for being distant and unfriendly when you are so perpetually unfaithful to her and ignore her unless no one else is around".]

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