**Elaine Showalter**

Elaine Showalter is an influential American critic who coined the term gynocriticism, which is a woman-centric approach to literary analysis. Elaine Showalter's essay "Twenty Years On: A Literature of Their Own Revisited" is a retrospective reflection on her influential book A Literature of Their Own: British Women Novelists from Bronte to Lessing, which was published in 1977 in which She proposed a model of three phases of feminism. The three phases are:

- \*\***Feminine**\*\* (1840-1880): Women writers imitate men and write in an effort to equal the intellectual achievements of the male culture, and internalize its assumptions about female nature. Examples of writers in this phase are Jane Austen, the Bronte sisters, and George Eliot.

- \*\***Feminist**\*\* (1880-1920): Women's writing protests against male standards and values, and advocates women's rights and values, including a demand for autonomy. Examples of writers in this phase are Virginia Woolf, Katherine Mansfield, and Dorothy Richardson.

- \*\***Female**\*\* (1920-present): The focus is now on women’s texts as opposed to merely uncovering misogyny in men’s texts. Women writers explore their own identity, sexuality, and creativity, and challenge the patriarchal norms and structures. Examples of writers in this phase are Doris Lessing, Margaret Atwood, and Toni Morrison.

In the essay, Showalter revisits the main arguments and themes of her book, such as the development of a female literary tradition, the representation of women's madness and hysteria, and the challenges and opportunities for feminist criticism. She also discusses the changes and continuities in the field of women's writing and criticism since the publication of her book, such as the emergence of new theoretical approaches, the expansion of the canon, the impact of multiculturalism and postcolonialism, and the rise of popular culture and media. Showalter evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of her book, acknowledging its limitations and biases, but also defending its contributions and insights. She concludes by affirming her commitment to the feminist project of recovering and celebrating women's literary heritage.