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Women Writers in *The Atlantic Monthly*: 1865-1900

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Abstract

We are studying how women writers who were published in *The Atlantic Monthly* influenced women readers and the women's suffrage movement in the post-Civil War period. Specifically, we will be looking at publications between 1865 and 1900. This project is important to us because we are both women who are interested in literature and want to shed light on how women influenced what we read today as well as our rights to vote and be heard. If it were not for strong female writers and our nation's women's suffrage movement, then neither of us would be able to share this research with our peers today. Our project will be a culmination of historical evidence that we hope will inspire those who lay eyes upon it at the conference. Our project will be in the format of a poster with our research gathered from primary and secondary sources. We will be accessing the Albertsons Library's microfilms and online archives of *The Atlantic Monthly* issues from 1865 to 1900 and reading the publications of writers such as Kate Chopin, Edith Wharton, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Julia Ward Howe, and Emily Dickinson. In addition to the primary publications, we will be using the America: History and Life, MLA International Bibliography and other similar databases to learn more about the history and life of the women authors who influenced reading and writing in our country today.

Women Writers in *The Atlantic Monthly*: 1865-1900

by Sydney Kuisti and Karah Frazier-Harrold



BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY

Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811-1896)



A founder of the magazine, Stowe was an advocate for women's and civil rights. Her novels, like *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *Pink and White Tyranny*, exemplify her influence before and after the war. She founded the genre of domestic fiction and was an advocate for married women and their rights to their talents and money.⁴ Stowe was widely popular during her lifetime because she wrote about issues and complexities concerning equality.⁷

"But as at the bottom of Pandora's box there was a grain of comfort, so there was in ours. Though we made nothing, and lost all we invested, our hands were all duly paid." -from "Our Florida Plantation" (May 1879 Issue)¹

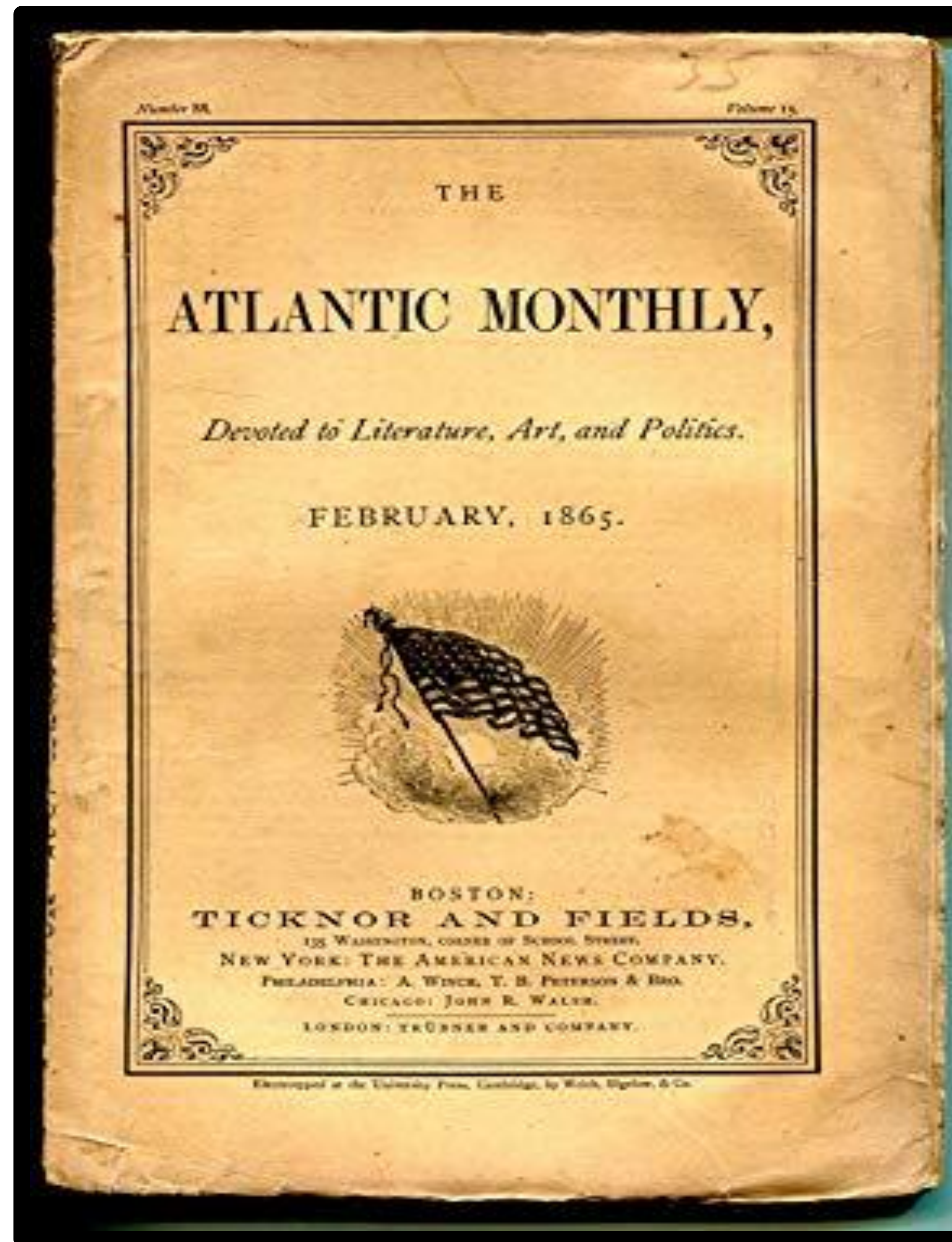
Kate Chopin (1850-1904)

Publishers repeatedly turned away Chopin for her graphic and experimental writings involving the female sexuality. Chopin believed in encouraging the cultural discussion of sexuality, divorce, and maternity.⁵ Chopin also influenced her readers to question the concept of identity. This included not only exploring what it meant to be female, but also the meaning of regional and national identity.⁷



"And again, she had liked him, and had even been rather flustered when he pressed her hands and kissed them, and kissed her lips and cheeks and eyes, when she accepted him" - from "Athenaise" (Aug. 1896 Issue)¹

English 378: American Realism



Established in 1857, *The Atlantic Monthly* was a literary magazine that used major writers to tackle modern and national issues. In a post-civil war period, these women were able to share their revolutionary and influential ideas through the reach of this famous American publisher.¹

Sarah Orne Jewett (1849-1909)



Originally, Jewett wrote moral stories for children inspired by her Christian faith spreading character and virtues to her young readers.⁷ In her later writing, Jewett embraced diversity of race and sexual orientation through her short literary works allowing her readers to empathize with minorities. Her publishings in the *Atlantic Monthly* inspired a new wave of women writers including Kate Chopin.⁷

"'Oh, my dear Martha!' she cried, 'won't you kiss me good-night? Oh, Martha, have you remembered like this, all these long years!'" -from "Martha's Lady" (Oct. 1897 Issue)¹

Edith Wharton (1862-1937)

Social standards and her family discouraged her from reading and writing, but Wharton believed women were meant for more than just proper marriages. She never stopped writing or reading, even if it was in secret or under a man's name. Wharton was the pioneer of interior decorating, the first woman to win the Pulitzer Prize,² and she never allowed the limitations of her gender to stop her from traveling, loving, learning and writing incredible novels.³



"There, on the ruined rampart climbing high, We sat and dreamed among the browsing sheep." -from "Euryalus" (Dec. 1889 Issue)¹

Works Consulted: ¹ Retrieved from *The Atlantic*; ²Wharton, Edith - National Women's Hall of Fame. (2019). National Women's Hall of Fame. Retrieved from <https://www.womenofthehall.org/inductee/edith-wharton>; ³Edith Wharton — The Mount | Edith Wharton's Home. (2019). The Mount | Edith Wharton's Home. Retrieved from <https://www.edithwharton.org/discover/edith-wharton>; ⁴EASTON-FLAKE, A. (2013). Harriet Beecher Stowe's Multifaceted Response to the Nineteenth-Century Woman Question. *The New England Quarterly*, 86(1), 29-59. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43284971>; ⁵SCHWARZ, B. (2002). Other Reviews. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2002/11/other-reviews/302623/>; ⁶Encyclopedia Britannica. (2019). Sarah Orne Jewett | American writer. [online] Available at: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Sarah-Orne-Jewett>; ⁷Lauter, P. (Ed.). (2009). *The Heath Anthology of American Literature* (7th ed., Vol. B-C). Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.