**DOMESTIC (“WOMEN’S”) FICTION**

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| **DEFINITION:** These novels explore the lives of female protagonists and focus on their relationships with family, friends, and lovers. Some books are characterized by a romantic tone and, there may be elements of suspense or mystery as well, but the main theme is of a woman overcoming and learning from crises and emerging triumphant. One current trend is to employ a lighter, sometimes even tongue-in-cheek tone.  Two subgroups of Women’s Fiction are rapidly gaining in popularity. Chick Lit, kicked off in the late 1990s with *Bridget Jones’s Diary* by Helen Fielding, is a sub-genre with titles focusing on single, 20- or 30-something protagonists usually trying to find their way in life, in the big city or in a new fabulous career. These books are humorous and generally lighthearted. On the flip side, Issue-Driven titles are darker, dealing with family problems and issues—more “hot topic,” Oprah-esque tales. |

**CHARACTERISTICS:**These arenovels exploring the lives of female protagonists, with a focus on their relationships with family, friends, and lovers.  They can be funny, sad, suspenseful, frothy, hopeful, romantic, or poetic, but the one common thread is that the main characters are women, and the main thrust of the plot follows events in women’s lives.

**APPEAL:** The two main categories of appeal for this genre are characters and storyline, which tend to be intertwined.  Often times, readers enjoy Women’s Fiction because they can identify with a character (or sometimes, it’s a feeling of relief that they are not like a particular character!). Because the storyline of the books focuses on relationships, characters are important.
Pacing is almost irrelevant in this genre, as it varies widely from book to book – some novels are slow and you can sink your teeth into them, others are quick and frothy reads.

**READERS:** Is it too obvious to say Women?  Women of all ages, classes, and races enjoy this genre. Women’s Fiction is also enjoyed by young adult readers as well, but it is likely that you will rarely find men reading this genre on a regular basis.

**TRENDS:** Much has been bantered about regarding the demise of Chick Lit, but the publishers keep cranking them out, and women keep reading them.  However, there has been quite a bit of branching out from the single-in-the-city books, with Mommy Lit dominating the publishing houses recently.  Issue driven novels continue to increase in popularity, even without the assistance of Oprah’s book club.

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| Classic Authors | Elizabeth Cadell, Mary McCarthy, Rosamunde Pilcher, Helen VanSlyke |
| Popular | Mary Kay Andrews, Elizabeth Berg, Maeve Binchy, Barbara Taylor Bradford, Barbara Delinsky, Katie Fforde, Fannie Flagg, Dorotha Benton Frank, Patricia Gaffney, Kristin Hannah, Jane Heller, Jonathan Franzen, Debbie Macomber, Lorna Landvik, Elinor Lipman, Jeanne Ray, Luanne Rice, Anne Rivers Siddons, Lee Smith, Danielle Steel, Nancy Thayer, Adriana Trigiani, Joanna Trollope, Jennifer Weiner |
| Chick Lit | Meg Cabot, Katherine Center, Jane Green, Marian Keyes, Sophie Kinsella, Sarah Mlynowski |
| Issue-Driven | Christopher Bohjalian, Jane Hamilton, Sue Miller, Jodi Picoult, Anna Quindlen, Anita Shreve |