

# A Voice of Her Own

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*By Nancy M. Tischler | Reviewed by Lorraine Eitel*

Why, over the years, haven't women produced more in the arts - specifically in literature? At the turn of the century, Virginia Woolf began the answer to that important question by saying a woman could and would write given a "room of her own." This is the leisure, privacy, and financial support needed to encourage creativity that has traditionally been withheld from women either intentionally or because of the demands of other roles.

Nancy M. Tischler in *A Voice of Her Own* (Zondervan, 1987) continues the discussion, adding insight specifically for Christians. She shows how some women have overcome obstacles in history to be able to demonstrate the same quality of creativity as men. But she also delves a bit into the theory of art, showing that women artists/writers may have been excluded from the literary canon because the standards of excellence for acceptance may be male standards.

Tischler's book is an intellectual history, acquainting the reader with important women authors throughout history. She also introduces her reader to several important female literary characters.

Her book raises questions for the thoughtful Christian reader. Has the church been as restrictive and narrow as the rest of society? Have we not allowed women to be good stewards of their gifts because we were too conformed to this world?

I especially liked her chapter "Portrait of the Artist as Women" in which she discloses historical attitudes toward women as creators. Her chapter "So, What's New? and What's Good?" seemed off-focus and unnecessary.

This is a readable, gentle book. It will offend no one. It will be of special interest to people who are just beginning to read literature by or about women.

Why haven't women created as much as men? Or have they? Let's continue to discuss these and all the related questions - until they're no longer necessary.

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