Although she enjoyed only modest success during her lifetime, Kate Chopin is now recognised as a unique voice in American literature. Her seminal novel, *The Awakening*, published in 1899, explored new and startling territory and stunned readers with its frank depiction of the limits of marriage and motherhood. Chopin’s aesthetic tastes and cultural influences were drawn from both the European and American traditions, and her manipulation of her ‘foreignness’ contributed to the composition of a complex voice that was strikingly different to that of her contemporaries. The essays in this Companion treat a wide range of Chopin’s stories and novels, drawing her relationship with other writers, genres and literary developments, and pay close attention to the transatlantic dimension of her work. The result is a collection that brings a fresh perspective to Chopin’s writing, one that will appeal to researchers and students of American, nineteenth-century and feminist literature.
# CONTENTS

**Notes on contributors**  
Kate Chopin chronology  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Introduction

**JANET BEER**
1

### 1. What we do and don’t know about Kate Chopin’s life

**EMILY TOTH**
13

### 2. *At Fault*: a reappraisal of Kate Chopin’s other novel

**DONNA CAMPBELL**
27

### 3. Kate Chopin and the subject of childhood

**PAMELA KNIGHTS**
44

### 4. ‘Race’ and ethnicity in Kate Chopin’s fiction

**SUSAN CASTILLO**
59

### 5. Kate Chopin on fashion in a Darwinian world

**KATHERINE JOSLIN**
73

### 6. *The Awakening* and New Woman fiction

**ANN HEILMANN**
87

### 7. Reading Kate Chopin through contemporary French feminist theory

**MICHAEL WORTON**
105
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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

**Question** (1998). Her most recent publication is a five-volume scholarly edition of *The Collected Short Stories of George Moore* (2007, with Mark Llewellyn), of which she edited three volumes.

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**Bernard Koloski** is Emeritus Professor of English at Mansfield University of Pennsylvania. He has published articles about Kate Chopin in *American Literature, Studies in American Fiction* and *Louisiana Literature*, and has written several books. He edited the Modern Language Association’s *Approaches to Teaching Chopin’s ‘The Awakening’* (1988), authored the Twayne volume *Kate Chopin: A Study of the Short Fiction* (1996) and edited two editions of Kate Chopin’s work: *Bayou Folk* and *A Night in Acadie* (1999) and *At Fault* (2002). He is currently editing a volume about the Kate Chopin revival of the 1970s and 1980s.
NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS


HELEN TAYLOR is Professor of English at the University of Exeter. She is the author of Gender, Race, and Region in the Writings of Grace King, Ruth McEnery Stuart, and Kate Chopin (1989), Scarlett’s Women: Gone With the Wind and its Female Fans (1989) and Circling Dixie: Contemporary Southern Culture through a Transatlantic Lens (2001), and is Co-editor of Dixie Debates: Perspectives on Southern Cultures (1996) and Editor of The Daphne du Maurier Companion (2007). She is writing a book about transatlantic representations of New Orleans’ prostitution district, Storyville.

EMILY TOTH is Professor of English and Women’s Studies at Louisiana State University and is the author or editor of ten published books, including Ms. Mentor’s Impeccable Advice for Women in Academia (1997); Inside Peyton Place: The Life of Grace Metalious (1981) and five books related to Kate Chopin. These include two biographies – Kate Chopin (1990) and Unveiling Kate Chopin (1999); two collections of Chopin’s private writings – A Kate Chopin Miscellany (1979) and Kate Chopin’s Private Papers (1998) and an edition of her last, unpublished short story collection A Vocation and a Voice (1991).

MICHAEL WORTON is Vice-Provost and Fielden Professor of French Language and Literature at University College London. He has written extensively on modern French literature and on issues in critical theory and gender theory. His publications include Textuality and Sexuality: Reading Theories and Practices, co-edited with Judith Still (1993), Michel Tournier (1995) and Typical Men (2001; catalogue of the exhibition Typical Men: Recent Photography of the Male Body by Men, co-curated with Judith Still; Nottingham, Colchester and Glasgow, 3 March 2001–27 January 2002), Women’s Writing in Contemporary France: New Writers, New Literatures in the 1990s, co-edited with Gill Rye (2002), and National Healths: Gender, Sexuality and Health in a Cross-Cultural Context, co-edited with Nana Wilson-Tagoe (2004). He is also the author of sixty articles and chapters in books on modern European and American literature.
**KATE CHOPIN CHRONOLOGY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>Born Catherine O’Flaherty, 8 February in St Louis, Missouri to Thomas O’Flaherty, an Irish immigrant, and Eliza Faris, a French-Creole. Their home is at Eighth Street.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1855</td>
<td>Kate enrols at the Academy of the Sacred Heart. Her father, Thomas O’Flaherty, dies in a railway accident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1863</td>
<td>Her great-grandmother, Victorie Verdon Charleville, and her half-brother George, a Confederate soldier, both die.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1865</td>
<td>The family moves to 1118 St Ange Avenue. Kate attends the Academy of the Visitation but then re-enrols at the Sacred Heart Academy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1868</td>
<td>Kate graduates from the Sacred Heart Academy. She enters into St Louis society as a debutante.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869</td>
<td>She writes the short story 'Emancipation: A Life Fable' (unpublished).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>Kate marries Oscar Chopin, a cotton trader and the son of a plantation owner. The Chopins embark on a three-month honeymoon tour of Europe, spending time in Germany, Switzerland and France. They return and set up home in New Orleans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871–8</td>
<td>The Chopins have five sons: Jean Baptiste (1871), Oscar Charles (1873), George Francis (1874), Frederick (1876), Felix Andrew (1878).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1873</td>
<td>Kate’s brother Thomas dies in a buggy accident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1879</td>
<td>Following the failure of Oscar’s cotton business, the family moves to Cloutierville, a rural area of Louisiana. Kate’s daughter, Lélia, is born.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>Oscar Chopin dies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
KATE CHOPIN CHRONOLOGY

1883-4  Kate Chopin likely to have been in a relationship with Albert Sampite.

1884  Kate Chopin returns to live at St Ange Avenue, St Louis.

1885  Death of mother, Eliza O’Flaherty.

1889  She publishes her first literary work, a poem, ‘If It Might Be’. Her first short story, ‘A Point at Issue!’ is published in the St Louis Post-Dispatch. She begins work on her first novel, At Fault.

1890  Publication of At Fault, at Chopin’s own expense.

1894  Publication of Bayou Folk, a collection of short stories. Vogue publishes ‘Dream of an Hour’ (‘The Story of an Hour’).

1895  A collection of Guy de Maupassant translations by Chopin is rejected by the publisher Houghton, Mifflin.

1897  Publication of second collection of stories, A Night in Acadie. Kate’s grandmother, Athénaise Charleville Faris, dies.

1899  The Awakening is published to mixed reviews.

1900  The publisher Herbert S. Stone declines to publish the collection of stories, A Vocation and a Voice.

1902  Kate’s last published piece of work, a story, ‘Polly’, appears in Youth’s Companion.

1904  Kate Chopin dies in St Louis on 22 August.