

## The 7 Question Interview with Katharine Weber



Katharine Weber's fiction debut in print, the short story "Friend of the Family," appeared in The New Yorker in January, 1993. Her first novel, *Objects in Mirror Are Closer Than They Appear* (of which that story was a chapter), was published by Crown Publishers, Inc. in 1995 and was published in paperback by Picador in 1996. She was named by *Granta* to the controversial list of 50 Best Young American Novelists in 1996. Her second novel, *The Music Lesson*, was published by Crown Publishers, Inc. in 1999, and was published in paperback by Picador in 2000. *The Music Lesson* has been published in twelve foreign languages. *The Little Women* was published by Farrar, Straus & Giroux in 2003 and by Picador in 2004. All three novels were named Notable Books by The New York Times Book Review. Katharine's fourth novel, *Triangle*, which takes up the notorious Triangle Waist company factory fire of 1911, was published in 2006 by Farrar, Straus and Giroux and in 2007 by Picador. Her fifth novel, *True Confections*, the story of a chocolate candy factory in crisis, will be published

next January by Shaye Areheart Books. She is under contract with Harmony Books for a memoir about family stories and the narrative impulse, *Symptoms of Fiction*, which will be published in 2011.

Some of her novels are:

- True Confections
- Triangle
- The Little Women
- The Music Lesson
- Objects in Mirror Are Closer Than They Appear

Her official website can be accessed here: <http://www.katharineweber.com>

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### The WritingRaw.com 7 Question Interview

Please let us know who you are and how we might know you:

I am the author of five novels, the newest being **TRUE CONFECTIONS**. My previous novels are **TRIANGLE, THE LITTLE WOMEN, THE MUSIC LESSON**, and **OBJECTS IN MIRROR ARE CLOSER THAN THEY APPEAR**. WritingRaw readers might like to know that I have not followed the traditional path so many people seem to believe is necessary for becoming a published novelist. My first novel appeared the year I turned 40. Although I taught fiction writing at Yale for eight years, and now teach in the



graduate writing program at Columbia, I do not have an MFA, or, for that matter, a college degree -- or a high school diploma.

Any news you would like to share concerning upcoming projects:

I am eagerly awaiting publication of **TRUE CONFECTIONS**. It is always an odd thing to finish a book and then wait for the months of production before publication finally arrives. Meanwhile, I am working on a memoir about family stories, memory, and the making of narrative -- **SYMPTOMS OF FICTION**. All my current news and information is here:

[www.katharineweber.com](http://www.katharineweber.com)

Thoughts concerning the current state of the literary world:

I think there is a lot of wonderful writing being created, but the path to publication is that much trickier, and I do think it is harder in this "broad tail" world to get a critical mass of attention onto any one thing for any sustained period of time. Good writing is everywhere, but good traditional publication is increasingly rare. The internet offers many new opportunities to the new writer -- I think, for example, of Verbsap, or FiveStories -- but at the same time, I am troubled by the way that the false equivalency of the "democracy" of the internet means that just about everyone with an internet connection feels equally qualified as a critic. Rating books is really not the same thing as rating toasters.

Who is your favorite author and why?

On any given day my answer to this question could change. But always in the rotation would be Muriel Spark, Vladimir Nabokov, and Edith Wharton. Each of these writers has a profoundly brilliant and original way of making the world new on the page, and each of them has taught me, and continues to teach me, a great deal as a writer.

Have you written a book you love that you have not been able to publish?

Not exactly, but I would very much like to publish a collection of my short stories (most of which have been published), and there is apparently little chance of that any time soon, because story collections simply don't sell as well as novels, and the numbers on such a book would then hurt the novel that would follow it.



Do you have anything specific that you want to say to your readers?

I am always grateful to readers for their time and energy, and I deeply appreciate the commitment that every reader makes when he or she engages in the act of reading one of my books.

How do you feel about what WritingRaw.com and other literary sharing sites are attempting to do for new writers?

I admire the collective energy of sites like this. I think it's wonderful that the new writer doesn't have to struggle in isolation and can depend on pooled wisdom and community. At the same time, struggling in isolation is the only way to get the work done, and it is essential that every writer develop an ability to preserve that isolation and not use every available writing hour for endless sharing and caring online about the writing. The moment comes when you have to disconnect and just write.

WritingRaw.com would like to thank Katharine Weber for taking the time out of her busy schedule for this interview.