

ABSTRACT

Jeanne-Marie Le Prince de Beaumont (1711-1780) dedicated her life to writing and teaching young women. In all, she wrote 70 volumes of prose including several articles in magazines she founded and edited, novels, fairy tales and epistolary novels. Although Jeanne-Marie Le Prince de Beaumont could be considered one of the most prolific women writers of her time who championed women's education and famously rewrote Gabrielle de Villeneuve's La Belle et la Bête, her name has been forgotten over time.

Most analysis of Mme de Beaumont's works concentrates on her fairy tales, most notably the above mentioned La Belle et la Bête. Now, I suggest turning a more critical eye to two of Mme de Beaumont's epistolary novels: Lettres de Madame du Montier and Lettres d'Émerance à Lucie, to see how such a prolific writer fits into the eighteenth-century, amongst male and female authors of epistolary novels. I will examine how Mme de Beaumont's choice of genre along with her gender and historical situation shaped the content of her epistolary fiction.