

LISA TADDEO

The best-selling author has made a name for herself in non-fiction, fiction, and short stories, and she's now forging a new path with adaptations on the way

When I was a young girl, before I was able to read, I would basically convince myself I knew how to read. I'm a neurotic Capricorn, so I would tell stories to my stuffed animals. When I learned how to write, I wrote lots of poems and short stories and I illustrated them.

Writing short stories has always been my biggest dream. But I had this non-fiction best seller in *Three Women*, and then I had a novel, and then a short story collection. So sometimes I wonder if people are like, "Oh, now she's just trying to do short stories," when really, I have always been doing short stories. Something I find interesting is that you can have success in one thing as a woman, but if you find success in something else as well, someone is going to think you're trying to get one over on them. It's so outdated and judgmental and ridiculous. My short stories are something that I've worked on my whole life and something I care about very much.

Someone once asked me, "Did you just write a bunch of these after the success of *Three Women*?" It's weird to me that people don't do research before they make judgments. It doesn't make me upset. It just makes me confused, frankly. Another thing I find wild in the writing world, specifically, is when people say, "Oh, that was a risk." A risk is performing brain surgery and deciding to do something a little different one day. Taking a risk with words on a page and how you present an idea is not a risk that someone should be talked about for. I think that art is all about risk, but 'risk' shouldn't be the word. It should be expansion or exploration.

My favorite thing is to immerse myself in

other people's art, old and new. I used to go to coffee shops or restaurants and order a coffee or a glass of wine and sit there and read. I'd bring lit mags, short story collections, and non-fiction articles. I'd have a varied reading list and things to watch that came from different genres so I could feel inspired on multiple levels. If I don't have the chance to do that, I start to feel like I'm recycling myself in a way that doesn't feel fresh.



My biggest fear is if I don't have enough time to watch, listen, and read other people's art.

I'm writing a book about grief that I haven't fully gotten into yet, because *Three Women* is still in post-production. That's my next big thing, and then I have adaptations. I'm in a great position where if something drops off, there is something else. I feel super fortunate because that's one of the hardest things about the

creative world. You can work on something your whole life and then it can just end. It feels like if something like that happens, there are other forms I can go into.

Seeing my work transform from the page to the screen has been really cool, but a lot of that joy is edged with a little worrying about the real people seeing themselves, especially with *Three Women*. They've already read about themselves in the book. One of them is a consultant on the Showtime show and I've flown her out to watch her story being told.

My favorite time of day is in the evening after I've put my kid to bed, and I can go back to writing when there's fewer emails coming through. I can just write late at night alone. Those are my favorite times to work. That's how I escape from the grind. Writing is still my biggest catharsis and, honestly, it's short stories that I turn to when I'm wanting to explore something in my own head.

If I could wave a magic wand, I would make people not want to control anybody else. Wanting control based around fear is what's happening on a larger scale with Roe v. Wade.

I can't even wrap my head around why you would want to control a human that has nothing to do with your world — it's abhorrent. It is the most offensive thing to me, but it's a symptom of the larger feeling of wanting to control another person. People are afraid of their lives changing, so they want to control someone else's life to stop that. People judge. They're going to judge you, no matter what you do, even if you do everything right.

Standing up for what's right for you and being okay with being judged because you're going to be judged anyway is probably my best advice.

—AS TOLD TO HANNAH MILITANO

TINA CRAIG

From Bag Snob blogger to U Beauty founder, the entrepreneur found the key to career longevity is all about having fun

I don't think many people know this, but I had my first company right out of college. I was buying American licenses of different fashion brands and sub-licensing in Asia. After I got married, I had a baby and realized I really didn't want to go back to work right away, so I started Bag Snob. That was 17 years ago, and back then blogging was a way to be creative because I love beauty and fashion. It really evolved into influencing and beauty ambassadorships, and then into designing my own lines of handbags, denim and jewelry. But I've been skincare-obsessed my whole life, so that was always my first passion.

Spending years as a beauty influencer, editor, and brand ambassador gave me access to the best of the beauty world. It also made me realize that there needed to be a more streamlined, yet effective approach because cosmetic confusion was such a real thing. At one point I had a 15-step skincare day and night routine, leaving me tired and stressed with increasingly irritated skin to the point where my dermatologist told me, "You've got to stop whatever you're doing. You're using your face as a science project." I started asking, "Can I just cut out the first seven steps and combine them all into one?" And everyone kept saying no. But I just kept asking because I don't like being told no. Finally, one night I caught up with a longtime friend's wife, who was seasoned in the skincare industry, and she said yes. She became my business partner and our Resurfacing Compound replaced seven of my products and became our OG item.

The reason our products are efficacious for all different skin types is because we only give skin what it needs through our SIREN Capsule

technology. Our molecules will not release active ingredients all over your face, attacking the healthy cells, they will only burst if in contact with free radicals, which is where the cryptic damage resides. When the free radicals penetrate through the capsule wall, that's when vitamins release. That's the difference — your skin tells our products what it needs.



When we launch a new product, there's a very real and disciplined internal conversation. We ask, "Is this an additive? Is this just a trend? Are we giving people really something new? Do we really need it?" We would never create anything superfluous or mimic a preexisting formula. Everything is developed in-house within our biochemists, and ideas can come from me, my team, my followers. We're continually investing

in the business, and I think my experience as an influencer has really helped set that bar really high.

I live my life really by intuition, and when an opportunity presents itself and it feels right, I jump in. I don't hesitate. I'm unafraid and I think that's a trait that a lot of entrepreneurs share. U Beauty felt right from the beginning.

I wish I could say, "Oh I map out everything. I'm so strategic." But I'm just as surprised by anyone else by my career path. When I started blogging there wasn't a map to follow, I had to blaze my own trail, and I think that taught me so much. I've always been an oversharer and I post what's really happening in my life. I think that's one of the reasons I'm still around.

Out of all the bloggers back in 2005, I think only Bryanboy and I are still around, because we are who we are. We really were sharing parts of our lives that we hoped people found interesting and not so orchestrated.

I believe if you love what you do, you never work a day in your life. When I'm asked about work-life balance, no other question gives me more anxiety because I love my work and I really don't feel the need to escape. Sometimes I get overwhelmed with my emails and calls, and I'll turn off, but I like being connected. If I really want to chill and relax, I love massages. If I have to take a work trip, the minute I land, I get a massage. But it's not about escaping. I just think, "Why do you want to escape? That's somebody who hates their job, right?" I love what I do.

I've always hoped for a career that's fulfilling and lucrative and fun, and so I'm so lucky. Every day I'm so grateful. I have so much fun. If there's just one person left watching, I'll keep doing this.

—AS TOLD TO COLLEEN KRATOFIL