

*Matchmaking Librarians:
Pair Your Readers with the
Perfect Romance*

State Library Services
February 2018



Class Objectives

- ♥ Genre Overview
- ♥ Subgenres
- ♥ Readers' Advisory

Genre Overview



Where's the Love?

Romance Stats:

- ♥ About \$1.08 billion spent annually on Romance books
- ♥ About 84% of Romance buyers/readers are female, ages 30-44 years old
- ♥ Average annual income=\$55,000
- ♥ **How do romance readers acquire romance books?**
Top answers: (1) Buy them in stores (2) Buy them online at a retail site
(3) Borrow them from a library (4) Download them to an e-reader
(5) Receive or borrow them from friends/relatives (6) Buy them via a mobile app (7) Acquire them through book club subscription
(8) Acquire them as part of a subscription service (Amazon Prime)

Romance Writers of America website - <https://www.rwa.org/p/cm/ld/fid=1>

Where's the Love?

♥ **Top 10 ways romance readers are most likely to discover new romance authors or titles (ranked from most likely to least):**

- (1) Browsing in a bookstore
- (2) In person recommendation from people you know
- (3) Browsing online book sites
- (4) Best-seller lists
- (5) From books they've sampled
- (6) Following favorite authors on social media
- (7) From book recommendation lists
- (8) Library or library staff recommendations**
- (9) Book review blogs and sites
- (10) From online retail sites that recommend based on what I've bought/read before

Romance Writers of America website - <https://www.rwa.org/p/cm/ld/fid=1>

It Must Be Love!

Romance Elements:

- ♥ Main focus is on the developing romantic relationship between the two main characters
- ♥ Must have an HEA (Happily Ever After) ending
- ♥ Although there is an HEA, not all are sweet, light-hearted stories

"Social issues and taboos have long found a forum in the Romance genre"
Readers' Advisory Guide to Genre Fiction – Joyce G. Saricks



I ♥ Romances

Appeal Factors:

- ♥ Emotional involvement in the story, connection with the characters
- ♥ Growth of the characters
- ♥ Built-in guarantee of a happy ending
- ♥ Diversity



Genrelecting: A Guide to Popular Reading Interests
by Cynthia Orr & Diana Tixier Herald

Not Feeling the Love

Romance Reader Myths

- ♥ The romance reader is likely to be a desperate housewife/SAHM, or lonely spinster or a sorority sister.
- ♥ Romance readers are stupid.
- ♥ Romance readers lack romance in real life.
- ♥ Romance readers don't know good writing.

"It is a truth universally acknowledged that romance readers are single women in possession of cats and in want of a man."

*Dangerous Books For Girls:
The Bad Reputation of Romance Novels Explained – Maya Rodale*

History of the Genre

- ♥ 18th Century: *Pamela; or Virtue Rewarded* by Samuel Richardson (1740)
- ♥ 19th Century: Jane Austen and the Bronte sisters
- ♥ 20th Century: expanded in new directions



History

- ♥ Rise of Romantic suspense with 1938's *Rebecca* by Daphne Du Maurier



- ♥ New brand of Historical Romances with Kathleen Woodiwiss' *The Flame and the Flower* (1972) and Rosemary Rogers' *Sweet, Savage Love* (1974). Also start of the "bodice rippers."

History

- ♥ Contemporary romances became popular in the 1980's and 1990's with the popularity of Nora Roberts, Sandra Brown, etc.



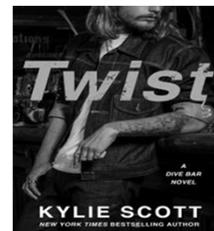
- ♥ Early 21st Century is all about the Supernatural!



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What's New and Popular?

- ♥ Alpha males are bigger and badder than ever (ex. wounded warriors and pro sports players – hockey anyone?)
- ♥ Builders and men who work with their hands (cowboys and ranchers especially)
- ♥ New Settings – particularly for historicals, settings outside England.
Contemporaries – big cities and bars
- ♥ Highland romance is still hot



What's New and Popular?

♥ The romance industry has finally started to embrace diversity

♥ Paranormal continues to have a loyal fan base, particularly among e-book readers



<http://www.heroesandheartbreakers.com/>

<https://bookriot.com>

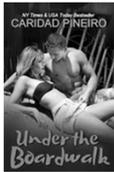
<http://reviews.libraryjournal.com/2017/10/books/genre-fiction/romance/love-is-all-around-genre-spotlight-romance/>

Subgenres



Contemporary Romance

- ♥ Set from 1950 to the present, focus is primarily on the romantic relationship
- ♥ Can be humorous and sexy or compelling and emotionally intense
- ♥ 2nd most popular romance subgenre print and e-Book



Contemporary Romance

Author	AKA	Comments
Karen Templeton*		Humorous, emotional, family-oriented stories
Kathleen Creighton*		5 time RITA winner
Susan Elizabeth Phillips*		Football stars series
Nora Roberts*	J D Robb – paranormal, mystery	21 RITA award winner, changed industry in 80s
Kathleen Korbel*	Eileen Dreyer - historicals	Has started writing suspense as well
Brenda Jackson		African American contemp., suspense
Jennifer Crusie		Chick lit, NYT Bestseller
Kristan Higgins		Clean – no explicit sex
Caridad Piñero		Hispanic characters, paranormal

Erotic

- ♥ Romance novels in which strong, often explicit, sexual interaction is an inherent part of the love story.
- ♥ Character growth and relationship development cannot be removed without damaging the storyline.
- ♥ These novels may contain elements of other romance subgenres (such as paranormal, historical, etc.).
- ♥ 4th most popular subgenre in print, 3rd in eBook

FantasticFiction Adults Only- <https://www.ffadultsonly.com>

Erotic

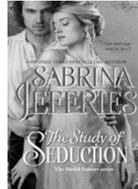
Author	AKA	Comments
Sylvia Day	Livia Dare, S J Day	R T Reviewers' Choice Award
Lora Leigh		KY author, overlaps with paranormal
Maya Banks		Mostly contemporary
Shayla Black	Shelley Bradley	Doomsday Brethren series, paranormal
Megan Hart		The Resurrected, a monthly short-story serial
Lorelei James	Lori Armstrong	Overlaps with western
Tiffany Reisz		KY author, think E L James
Jaci Burton		Contemporary erotic
Rebekah Weatherspoon		African American characters, multicultural

Historical Romance

♥ Set prior to 1950

♥ **Popular eras:** Regency period (1811-1820); Victorian Era (1830-1890); Medieval (11th-15th centuries); post-Civil War America, especially in the West

♥ 3rd most popular subgenre in print, 4th in eBook

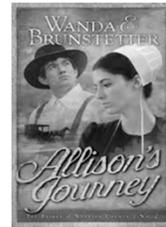


Historical Romance

Author	AKA	Comments
Julia Quinn*		Queen of Regencies
Jodi Thomas*		Texas settings
Lavyrle Spencer*		Mending broken relationships
Teresa Medeiros		KY author
Amanda Quick	Jayne Ann Krentz, Jayne Castle	Also writes paranormal and romantic suspense
Lisa Kleypas		Series including the Hathaways, Wallflowers
Beverly Jenkins		African American characters, 2017 RWA Lifetime Achievement
Courtney Milan		Eccentric characters
Sabrina Jeffries	Deborah Martin	Series - School for Heiresses

Inspirational Romance

- ♥ Religious or spiritual beliefs are an inherent part of the love story.
- ♥ Sweet in tone - no sex scenes, although sexual attraction or tension may be described.
- ♥ Garneres 17% of print reads and 14% of eBook reads

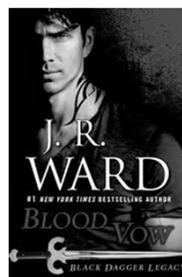


Inspirational Romance

Author	AKA	Comments
Irene Hannon*		Some romantic suspense overlap
Francine Rivers*		Biblical era settings
Tracie Peterson		Series like Land of the Lone Star
Wanda Brunstetter		Amish
Mary Conneally		Western settings
Brenda Barrett		African-American characters
Beverly Lewis		Amish, also some young adult
Jill Eileen Smith		Biblical settings & figures
Rachel Hauck		Contemporary settings

Paranormal Romance

- ♥ Fantasy worlds or paranormal or science fiction elements are an integral part of the plot
- ♥ Became popular in the late 1990s and early 2000
- ♥ Range from light and humorous to intense and explicit
- ♥ Paranormal makes up 19% of reads in print, 30% in eBook

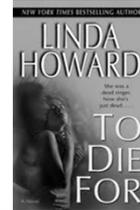


Paranormal Romance

Author	AKA	Comments
Kresley Cole*		Immortals After Dark series, Also Erotic
Justine Dare*	Justine Davis	Strong characters, dramatic tension
Christine Feehan		Early leader in the genre
J. R. Ward	Jessica Bird	KY author, Black Dagger Brotherhood series
Thea Harrison	Amanda Carpenter	Elder Races series
Sandra Hill		Time travel, Vikings
Kerrelyn Sparks		Love at Stake series, vampires
Lynsay Sands		Argeneau/Rogue Hunter vampire series, humor

Romantic Suspense

- ♥ **Suspense, mystery, or thriller elements constitute an integral part of the plot**
- ♥ **Most popular subgenre in both print (53%) and eBook (48%)**
- ♥ **Generally contemporary settings**



Romantic Suspense

Author	AKA	Comments
Nora Roberts*	J D Robb	Suspense written under Robb pseudonym
Cherry Adair		T-FLAC series (elite anti-terrorist task force)
Suzanne Brockmann		RITA award winner
Sandra Brown	Laura Jordan, Rachel Ryan, Erin St. Claire	Had a novel "French Silk" made into a movie
Linda Howard		7 NYT Bestsellers, Queen of romantic suspense
Lisa Jackson		NYT Bestseller list
Karen Robards		KY author
Carla Neggers		Sharpe and Donovan series, complex fast-paced plots
Elisabeth Naughton		2017 RITA winner

Young Adult Romance

♥ **RWA - Romance novels in which young adult life is an integral part of the plot.**

♥ **Writers' Digest – Novels written with the teenage audience in mind, with a suitably lower level of sexual content.**

♥ **18% of both print and eBook reads**



Young Adult Romance

Author	AKA	Comments
Stephanie Meyer		Twilight series
Sarah Dessen		Summer beach settings, female friendship bonds
Cassandra Clare		The Mortal Instruments series, paranormal
Jennifer L. Armentrout		2017 RITA winner YA category
Veronica Roth		Divergent series
C. C. Hunter		Shadow Falls series, 2016 RITA finalist
Kiersten White		NYT Bestseller, Conquerors series – GOT vibe

Readers Advisory



Matchmaking for Readers

Readers advisory is....

“a patron-centered library service for adult fiction readers” that provides a “vital link between the library’s fiction material and readers.”

Readers’ Advisory Service in the Public Library – Joyce Saricks

Matchmaking for Readers

S. R. Ranganathan
The Five Laws of Library Science

1. Books are for use.
2. Every reader, his book.
3. Every book, its reader.
4. Save the time of the reader.
5. A library is a growing organism.

Matchmaking for Readers

“Unlike reference transactions that can be resolved by teasing out the patron’s needs through a successful reference interview, suggesting a good book is fraught with nuances, from the reader’s mood to a book’s appeal and characteristics” – A Few Good Books: Using Contemporary Readers’ Advisory Strategies to Connect Readers with Books, Stephanie L. Maatta



Romancing the Reader

“Tell me about a romance you really enjoyed?”

♥ **Subgenre**

♥ **Character Type/Traits**

- **Hero** (alpha male, sensitive guy, wounded/brooding, cowboy, biker, soldier/knight, vampire, Highlander, Viking)
- **Heroine** (spunky, gentle/healer, bluestocking, courtesan, mail order bride, professional woman)

♥ **Tropes** (marriage of convenience, false identity, amnesia, fake relationship, friends with benefits, class differences)

♥ **Heat Level** (chaste – steamy)



Tools of the Trade

Finding Title/Author/Series Read-Alikes

♥ **NoveList** – provided through the EBSCO databases in KYVL. Includes 180,000 fiction titles.

♥ **BookBrowse**(www.bookbrowse.com) – a site that libraries can subscribe to for a small fee, but has a free section that contains author and title readalikes.

♥ **Fiction L**

(www3.mgpl.org/ae/FLbkl/FIbklauthor.html)

Features lists of readalikes by author or title based on contributions by Fiction L members

Tools of the Trade

Finding Series Order

- ♥ **FantasticFiction** (<http://www.fantasticfiction.com>) – also a great place to find new, upcoming titles by an author or in a series
- ♥ **Wikipedia** (www.wikipedia.org) – often a surprisingly good source for sequels in order
- ♥ **Book Series in Order** (<http://www.bookseriesinorder.com>) – search by author name, character's name, nice top 10 lists

Tools of the Trade

No Sex, No Violence, No Bad Language

- ♥ **That All May Read** (loc.gov/nls) – The catalog for the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

Records 3 through 3 of 47 returned.

Author: Kleypas, Lisa.
 Title: Because you're mine [sound recording] / Lisa Kleypas.
 Published: Washington, D.C. : National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, 2011.
 Description: 1 online resource (audio (11 hours, 7 minutes))
 Book Number: DB 73102
 Dewey No.: 813.54 AFJ 22
 Notes: A shared master program book. This Brilliance Audio recording has been adapted by NLS. Availability restricted to persons meeting the eligibility requirements of the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress. Narrated by: Rosalyn Landor.
 Digital talking book. 2 levels. Digitally mastered.
 London, 1833. Lady Madeline Matthews runs away from her arranged marriage, hoping to have an affair with famed actor Logan Scott from Somewhere I'll Find You (DB 73101). Logan resists the advances of his new assistant Madeline--at first. [Some explicit descriptions of sex](#)
 Commercial audiobook. 1997.
 Contains some explicit descriptions of sex.

Tools of the Trade

Lists, Websites, Blogs

- ♥ **Goodreads (www.goodreads.com) – Listopia!**
Browse by categories such as Best Young Adult Romance, Best Paranormal and Fantasy Romances, So You Love a Bad Boy or Tortured Hero
- ♥ **Eye on Romance (<http://www.eyeronromance.com>)** – search by author, title, time period, hero, heroine, character type, and series
- ♥ **All About Romance (<http://allaboutromance.com>)** – reviews, blog, message boards, list of top 100 romances

Tools of the Trade

- ♥ **Smart B****s, Trashy Books (<http://smartbitchestrashybooks.com>)** – blog, reviews, podcasts
- ♥ **Heroes and Heartbreakers (<http://www.heroesandheartbreakers.com>)** – blog, reviews, shopping lists by subgenre and new releases by month/year
- ♥ **Romance.IO (<https://www.romance.io>)** – best of lists; new releases; search by time period, subgenre, story themes, hero and heroine type
- ♥ **Booklist LGBTQ (<https://www.booklistonline.com/Core-Collection-Gay-and-Lesbian-Romance-Novels-Henshaw-Pat/pid=7011185>)**

Libraries ♥ *Romance Readers!*

- ♥ **Be proactive in approaching patrons**
- ♥ **Invite the reader back**
- ♥ **Provide a special shelving area to increase visibility**
- ♥ **Promote, promote, promote**
 - ***Passive promotion*** – bookmarks, lists, displays, read alike tags/lists in the stacks
 - ***Active promotion*** – book clubs, book discussion and review through blogs and social media, author signings, special programming and events (eg. workshops on writing and publishing romance, Valentine's Day Friends book sale)

Romance Reading for Librarians

- ♥ ***Popular Romance Project* website**
<http://popularromanceproject.org/>
- ♥ ***Circulating Romance* article (2013) by Christyna Hunter**
<https://ejournals.lib.vt.edu/valib/article/view/1273/1710>
- ♥ ***Promoting Romance Novels in American Public Libraries* article (2013) by Denise Adkins, Linda R. Esser, and Diane Velasquez**
<http://publiclibrariesonline.org/2013/05/promoting-romance-novels-in-american-public-libraries/>
- ♥ ***Fall Into Romance* article (2014) by Jennifer Lohmann**
<https://www.ebscohost.com/novelist/novelist-special/fall-into-romance>

Romance Reading for Librarians

- ♥ *Crash Course in Readers' Advisory* by Cynthia Orr (2015).
Also *Genreflecting: A Guide to Popular Reading Interests*,
Seventh Edition by Cynthia Orr and Diana Tixier Herald (2013)
- ♥ *Dangerous Books For Girls: The Bad Reputation of Romance
Novels Explained* by Maya Rodale (2015)
- ♥ *Beyond Heaving Bosoms: The Smart B*****s Guide To
Romance Novels* by Sarah Wendell and Candy Tan (2009)
- ♥ *A Natural History of the Romance Novel* by Pamela Regis
(2003)
- ♥ *Dangerous Men and Adventurous Women* by Jayne Ann
Krentz (1982)

Just One More Thing

Romance Writers of America Library Grant

<http://www.ala.org/pla/awards/romancewritersgrant>

\$4,500 award

Submit your application by December 2018
The winner is announced the following February.



Thank You!



Contact the State Library -

♥ **Ask A Librarian:**

<http://kdla.ky.gov/employees/sgasklib/Pages/default.aspx>

♥ **Email:**

KDLA-ReferenceDesk@ky.gov

♥ **Phone: (502) 564-8306 or**

Outside Frankfort - 1-800-928-7000, Option #3