CRASH COURSE IN ROMANCE
Panelists

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The top ten books published this month that librarians across the country love.

libraryreads.org
What makes a book a romance novel?

1. A happy ending, also known as a HEA (happily ever after)
2. A central love story

A book *must* have both to be a romance. That’s why these are not romances:
Are romance novels for teens?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Happily ever after?</th>
<th>Central love story?</th>
<th>Sexual content?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Romance</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Optional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erotic romance</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Explicit sexual content that advances the plot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erotica</td>
<td>Probably not</td>
<td>Probably not</td>
<td>Lots of explicit sexual content</td>
</tr>
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Vivian Stephens, a romance editor, founded the Romance Writers of America in 1980. RWA is now 9,500 members strong with 140 chapters throughout the world. RWA hosts an annual conference and a series of awards for romance writing.
History of the Genre
Early Influences

1813

1847

1972
Twentieth Century (American)

1961

1972

1995
Why read romance?

❤️ Emotion-filled story
❤️ Character development (Those sassy heroines! Those brooding heroes!)
❤️ Focus on the relationship
❤️ Escape (Don’t let anyone tell you that’s bad)
❤️ Satisfying sexy times
❤️ And of course, a happily ever after
Romance leads all other adult genres in sales

Romance readers are:

❤ Female: 82%
❤ Male: 18%
❤ Average age of the romance reader: 35–39 years old
❤ Ethnicity: 73% White/Caucasian, 12% Black/African American, 7% Latino/Hispanic, and 4% Asian/Asian American.
❤ Sexual orientation: 86% heterosexual or straight; 9% bisexual, pansexual, or other bi+ identity; 2% gay or lesbian.

From "The Romance Book Buyer 2017: A Study by NPD Book for Romance Writers of America."
Reading romance as a feminist endeavor

Romance is generally written by women, for women.

Concern with:

- Personal agency
- Womens’ pleasure
- Gender equity
- Personal fulfillment within a healthy relationship
- And increasingly...CONSENT ON THE PAGE
The romance genre has undergone remarkable changes in the past 30 years. Romance readers give a variety of reasons for why they love the genre: It's empowering, it's an escape, it explores the complexities of relationships in ways that cause them to reflect deeply on their own lives. Incidentally, they're the least cynical people you'll meet, and that makes them especially wonderful — necessary, actually — in this day and age. It is never a romance novel if it condones or normalizes abuse or makes a woman less than she is.

Lisa Kleypas

Washington Post, Dec 8, 2017
But it’s so emotional and formulaic!

♥ Genre, as a rule, is formulaic
♥ Horror and Suspense are emotionally driven genres
♥ Mystery and Fantasy rely on tropes and formulas
♥ Tropes/themes can help a reader find their book
NoveList Themes
Characters

- Best friend’s sibling
- Childhood sweethearts
- Enemies to lovers
- Famous flings
- For richer for poorer
- Friends to lovers
- Opposites attract
- Second chance at romance
- Together again
Enemies to Lovers

There is a thin line between love and hate in these stories where the characters start out as adversaries but end up romantically attached.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home again</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Love abroad</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love in a small town</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>New in town</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Snowbound &amp; stranded</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Workplace romance</td>
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</table>
Love Abroad
A travel adventure leads to everlasting love.
<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Plot</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Captive hearts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Childhood sweethearts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fake relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love in disguise</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marriage of convenience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No strings attached</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once upon a time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unforgettable love</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Fake Relationship

What begins as a pretense ends in a happily-ever-after.
Find the right Romance

Chaste
Pure & Romantic

Mildly Sensuous
It’s getting hot in here

Steamy
Getting busy & happy about it

Explicit
All kinds of action
Romance Subgenres
Characters or Events

Multicultural

LGBTQIA

Holiday

Sports
Genreblends

- Romantic Suspense
- Time Travel
- Paranormal
- Gothic
RA Romance Conversations
“How spicy do you prefer your romance?”
“Do you have any favorite tropes?”
“Who’s your favorite romance author?”
“Do you like romance novels?”
Historical Series

- Bridgertons
- The Wallflowers
- The Loyal League
- Spindle Cove
Contemporary Romance Series

Marked Men

Winston Bros

Chicago Stars

Troubleshooters
Paranormal Romance Series

Charley Davidson

The Black Dagger Brotherhood

Immortals After Dark

Fever
Romantic Suspense Series

- I-Team
- In Death
- Cutler, Sutter & Salinas
Awards

The Rita Award is the most prominent award in romance fiction. It is presented by Romance Writers of America and awards books in 13 romance categories.
Romance Starter Pack

- Representative of genre
- Well-reviewed
- Wide appeal
- Stand-alone or series starter
- Available on audio
The Kiss Quotient
by Helen Hoang (2018)

❤ Own Voices
❤ Ability diverse heroine
❤ Multicultural cast of characters
❤ Explicitly erotic
❤ Fake relationship
Slave to Sensation by Nalini Singh (2006)

❤️ Paranormal
❤️ Steamy
❤️ Rich world-building
❤️ Action-packed
The Hating Game
by Sally Thorne (2016)

♥ Romantic comedy
♥ Witty banter
♥ Enemies to lovers
♥ Australian setting
♥ Likeable characters
Indigo
by Beverly Jenkins (1996)

❤ Culturally diverse cast
❤ Rich detail
❤ Well-crafted dialogue
❤ Underground Railroad
The Lawrence Browne Affair
by Cat Sebastian (2017)

❤ LGBTQIA romance
❤ For richer, for poorer
❤ Love in disguise
❤ Regency setting
❤ Witty
NoveList Resources
Genre outlines

What is Romance?

Romance novels have a central plot revolving around a developing romantic relationship and with an "emotionally satisfying and optimistic ending." (Romance Writers of America), which can be a happily-ever-after or a happy for now. While the genre includes books with a wide range of subgenres—from historical to science fiction to suspense and more—those extremes are secondary to the love story. Romance also includes a wide range of sexuality. In inspirational romance, when the characters may share one gentle kiss to erotic romance with explicit love scenes and more than one partner.

What happens in a Romance novel?

With such a wide range of subgenres to pull from, almost anything can happen in the secondary plot of a romance novel. However, the central plot remains the same. Romance follows a romantic relationship from its beginnings through to a satisfactory conclusion, while exploring the misunderstandings that threaten to scuttle the relationship along the way. As the main character explores their growing passion for one another, the character growth that accompanies love sets the stage for a happy ending. No matter the depth of the sea, the backdrop of sexual tension beforehand is a must.

Why do people like to read Romance?

Romance is a genre of emotion and character. Readers read to feel an emotional link with the protagonists and become invested in the outcome of their story. As the genre has changed, character stereotypes have changed too. The rogues who bring a rich and powerful Man of industry to his knees remain popular, but sexually confident heroes exist as well, with heroes who admire their power and succeed.

Because romances are stories of emotion, they are written so that readers are pulled immediately into a story that keeps them there. Even if the complete them to read in short bits. While the genre has changed to allow notes that follow a relationship over a series of books, the emotional pull and happy ending remain sacrosanct. While many readers will read a trilogy with a relationship cliff hanger in Cokie and two readers do not want an unhappy surprise at the close of the relationship's journey.

Key titles

- The Kiss quotient
  - Karen Hesse
  - A charming and vivid love romance in which Stella Lane, who has Asperger's Syndrome, decides that she needs to know more about dating and sex and takes logical steps to get up to speed. Enter Michael, the escort Stella hires as a teacher. While their original relationship is strictly business, their emotions and sex are all subplot.

- A night to surrender

- Getting Up To Speed in Romance
  - Print the genre outline

Recommended reads lists

Men in Kilts

Document Type: Recommended Reads

Description:

Fans of Scottish and Highland romances will find this doury list full of spirit—and, of course, men in kilts. Enjoy the biding speech, fine scenery, and passionate love stories to be found here!

- No other Highlander
  - (Aug 2017)
  - by: Basso, Antene
  - Popularity
  - Check Availability

- Tea Scott to handle
  - (Jul 2017)
  - by: Bournes, Grace
  - Popularity
  - Check Availability

- The Scott beds his wife
  - (Oct 2017)
  - by: Byrne, Kangan
  - Popularity
  - Check Availability

We Recommend...

- Love aboard
  - A travel adventure leads to everlasting love.
  - Find more books with this theme at about themes here.

FOR LIBRARIANS: Free printables &...
I’ve read it all!
Try... Beta Males!

Sweet

Spicy

Virgin Hero

Mr. Nice Guy
Try Novellas...

- The Worth Saga
- Reluctant Royals
- Legionnaires
- Nice Girls Don’t Ride
  - stand alone novella
Try Humorous Romance...

Contemporary

Historical

Paranormal

Inspirational
trends

loading...
LGBTQIA on the rise!
Own Voices
Mainstream-ification
Books we can’t wait to read

1. **Get a Life, Chloe Brown**
   - Author: Talia Hibbert

2. **Bringing Down the Duke**
   - Author: Evie Dunmore
   - Description: "An achingly romantic celebration of the power of love and the passionate fight for women’s rights." —CHARLIE CLAYTON, USA Today bestselling author of Best Year in Havana

3. **The Right Swipe**
   - Author: Alisha Rai
   - Description: "Rai crafts some of the best romance writing of the year." —Entertainment Weekly
CRASH COURSE IN HORROR

September 24, 2019 at 2pm Eastern

NovelList

Library Reads
Questions?

Are You Enough of a Bad Girl?

1. Rumors swirl that your ex has been talking trash about you to mutual friends. How do you respond?
   - By laughing it off
   - By trying to get as much dirt on your ex as possible
   - By trying to corrupt his friends

2. The kind of man you usually date is not the best conversationalist.
   - So what? They make up for it with great sex.
   - He's great, he just needs to listen a little more.
   - He's got a good heart, but you need someone who can hold a conversation.

3. Your closest girlfriend always contacts you first when she's in a crisis situation.
   - She's been doing it for years, who's to say it will change now?
   - She's been doing it for years, who's to say it will change now?
   - She's been doing it for years, who's to say it will change now?

4. Which phrase is your most likely to overhear someone saying about you?
   - "She always acts like she's pregnant"
   - "She's always the life of the party"
   - "She's always late to events"

5. Which is the most outrageous thing you would do for cold, hard cash?
   - Use a fake ID to get into a bar
   - Sell your prized possession
   - Steal from a friend

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Do You Know When a Guy's Into You?

1. You're grabbing a beer with your BFF when she says a hottie across the room is eyeing you. You say:
   - "It's probably just my imagination. Men are all the same these days."
   - "I'm not even looking at him. He's just a distraction."
   - "Wow, he's cute. Let's go say hi.

2. A month after meeting your new male coworker, you notice he's Facebook friends with several of your coworkers...but not you. Your:
   - "That's weird. Maybe he's just not interested in my work."
   - "I'll make sure to tag him in our next project update."
   - "I'll make sure to tag him in our next project update."

3. You're hanging out with a friend and her man, and while she's in the bathroom, he gives you a kinda-friendly, kinda-touchy shoulder:
   - "Are you sure you two are just friends?"
   - "Are you sure you two are just friends?"
   - "Are you sure you two are just friends?"

4. If you were a TV character, you would be:
   - He/She/Them with a hilarious accent
   - He/She/Them with a hilarious accent

5. While checking the Missed Connections on Craigslist (it's a guilty pleasure...), you usually:
   - Read an ad out loud and laugh at the ridiculousness.
   - Read an ad out loud and laugh at the ridiculousness.
   - Read an ad out loud and laugh at the ridiculousness.

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Balls-Out Badass

- Balls-Out Badass
- Balls-Out Badass
- Balls-Out Badass

Naughty When Necessary

- Naughty When Necessary
- Naughty When Necessary
- Naughty When Necessary

Too Good for Your Own Good

- Too Good for Your Own Good
- Too Good for Your Own Good
- Too Good for Your Own Good

Blind-to-Love Babe

- Blind-to-Love Babe
- Blind-to-Love Babe
- Blind-to-Love Babe

Men-Reading Mama

- Men-Reading Mama
- Men-Reading Mama
- Men-Reading Mama

Coefficient but Clueless

- Coefficient but Clueless
- Coefficient but Clueless
- Coefficient but Clueless
Thank you

Learn more at ebscohost.com/novelist & libraryreads.org
THANK YOU