

♥ CHECKING OUT ROMANCE ♥

The Romance Writers of America Library Affiliates Program Newsletter

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Suggesting Romances to Non-Romance Readers

by Mimi Davis and Beth Wong, Broward County Library District, Fort Lauderdale

Librarians active in reader's advisory may have met "romance resistant" readers in their interviews. We believe this is because many of today's readers aren't aware of how diverse romance stories are, and how different they are from the romances they may know from years before. Many classic and current romances use major thematic devices or subplots beyond the main romantic storyline. These books with strong outside interests are great for introducing a romance to a non-romance reader.

From the readers that proclaim to be "not into romances" to the readers unaware of the genre entirely, here are some examples of ways to suggest romance titles with wide appeal factors. We've also included a few titles you can try on your own readers. We hope these ideas help you turn some readers on to the rich and varied world of romance novels!

- **Find a common ground.** You can put genre romances straight into the hands of readers based on their other interests. One of our formerly die-hard "non-romance" reading patrons is an avid dog lover. When she finished all of the dog themed mysteries that our library carried, we suggested several pet themed romances and she hesitantly agreed to try one. She returned the next day wanting more!
- **Show your stuff.** Crossover interests can be successfully integrated into themed displays in your libraries. Cooking romances are great additions to a cookery themed book display, for example. In our library, we were thrilled to see Debbie Macomber's knitting romances fly off our "How to Knit" book display. Romances set in exotic locales are also interesting additions to displays of travel books. We hooked a "romance resistant" colleague who loves Italy with *Breathing Room* by Susan Elizabeth Phillips this way!
- **Booklist Bonanza.** Booklists, either alone or paired with a display, are a great way to insert romance titles into a non-fiction area of interest. To be on the safe side, make sure the fiction titles are identified as such—you don't want your readers thinking that a gardening romance will help them identify the tree in their backyards!

Sports fans:

Got a Hold on You by Pat White (Wrestling)

See Jane Score by Rachel Gibson (Hockey)

Body Check by Deirdre Martin (Hockey)

It Had to Be You by Susan Elizabeth Phillips (Football)

In the Groove by Pamela Britton (NASCAR/racing)

Green Thumbs:

Garden of Scandal by Jennifer Blake

Second Thyme Around by Katie Fforde

Forbidden Garden by Tracey Fobes

In the Garden series by Nora Roberts

A Garden Folly by Candice Hern

Pet Lovers:

A New Leash on Life by Emily Carmichael

The Cat's Meow by Emily Carmichael

Stray Hearts by Annie Kimberlin

Take a Chance on Me by Susan Donovan

Anyone But You by Jennifer Crusie

Food Lovers:

Kitchen Witch by Annette Blair

Bride Wore Chocolate by Shirley Jump (1st in a series)

Marriage Test by Betina Krahn

Trouble with Mary by Millie Criswell

Bet Me by Jennifer Crusie

★

Who Reads E-Books?

by Malle Vallik, Editorial Director of New Business Development, Harlequin Enterprises

Who reads e-books? The myth is that the e-book reader is a techno-loving gadget-obsessed guy, but the truth is that the typical e-book reader is much more likely to be a passionate reader who loves the instant gratification of downloading the book she wants to read and the ability to carry many titles with her.

The dawning of the age of e-books has been trumpeted for over a decade now and while the real revolution has not happened as yet (where or where is the iPod of the e-book world?) the exciting news is that romance is the fastest growing category in the e-book market. Harlequin Enterprises Ltd. launched its e-book program in October 2005 and our titles gained eight bestseller placements in the IDPF's monthly e-book bestseller list!

E-Books are novels converted into a downloadable format (such as Adobe, Microsoft, Mobipocket or Palm) that can be read on your computer, your laptop or a reading device like your cell phone or PDA. Unlike downloadable audio they are text stories. Downloadable audio books are recorded audio versions that can be downloaded onto a MP3 player or burned to a CD

Harlequin is publishing a broad range of our editorial divided into eight popular categories: bestsellers, women's fiction, women's action adventure, passion, romantic suspense, inspirational, chick lit and fantasy.

Harlequin e-books provide fantastic opportunity for public libraries to connect with a new group of readers: women around the world who love the convenience, portability and "cool factor" of this new product format. In addition, Harlequin readers are exactly the kind of readers public libraries want since

- for every series title our series reader reads, she'll read another non-series title
- she is an avid reader, reading twice as much as her demographic counterpart
- she is loyal, returning to her favorite lines and series month after month

Just think of all those circulation statistics!

Harlequin e-books can be ordered through Overdrive. We publish in the four common formats: Adobe, Microsoft, Mobipocket and Palm (and soon the format for the Sony Reader)

-More-

Harlequin e-book categories:

Bestsellers – Enthralling stories by the brightest stars in women’s fiction — from MIRA Books. Big romances that sweep you away — from HQN Books.

Passion – Powerful, provocative tales full of heat and passion — from Harlequin Blaze, Silhouette Desire and Harlequin Presents.

Women’s – Books that celebrate the “next” stage of women’s lives...because every life has a second chapter! — from Harlequin Next.

Inspirational – Stories of faith, hope and love that warm the heart and nourish the soul — from Steeple Hill Love Inspired. Compelling suspense — from Love Inspired Suspense. Faith-inspired chic lit — from Steeple Hill Café.

Romantic Suspense – Danger...romance...adventure...suspense! Stories that will take your breath away — from Harlequin Intrigue and Silhouette Intimate Moments.

Chick Lit – Women’s fiction with attitude, these humorous, edgy, hip stories celebrate life’s little curves — from Red Dress Ink.

Women’s Action Adventure – Strong, sexy, savvy heroines who save the day...and always get their man — from Silhouette Bombshell.

Fantasy/Science Fiction – Powerful, magical tales, vivid characters and richly imagined worlds from the first imprint solely dedicated to female focused fantasy — from LUNA Books.

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Malle Vallik is the editorial director of new business development for Harlequin Enterprises. Her first part time job was in a library and her favorite past time is reading. She is also a recent e-book convert – she loves having a wide selection of titles with her at all times for a reading emergency.

NEWFLASH – Is Love Just a Second Hand Emotion?

Library staff registered for the Public Library Association conference in Boston in March can find out by attending the program “**What’s Love Got To Do With It: The Enduring Appeal of the Romance Genre.**” Scheduled for Thursday March 23, 2006 from 4:00 – 5:15 p.m., the program features four fabulous romance authors, who will be speaking on the appeal of the romance genre, which, with 1.2 billion dollars in sales in 2004, is the most popular of all fiction genres. The speakers include *New York Times* best-selling, RITA award winning author Suzanne Brockmann, whose contemporary romantic suspense and adventure novels, including her latest *Hot Target*, are favorites of millions of readers; *USA Today* best selling and *Romantic Times* award winning author Cathie Linz has written more than fifty sparkling contemporary romances for Harlequin and Silhouette, and her latest title, *Good Girls Do*, features the kind of librarian heroine we all love to read; RITA award winning Tina St. John, whose medieval historical romances bring all of the pageantry and passion of the Middle Ages to life and whose latest novel *Heart of the Dove*, brilliantly blends fantasy and history; and Cynthia Johnson, a public librarian who, as Evelyn Richardson, has written more than a dozen witty and wonderful traditional regencies including the recent release of her two early books *The Education of Lady Frances* and *Miss Cresswell’s London Triumph*. Mark this time and date down for an afternoon filled with love and laughter!

Be sure to stop by the Romance Writers of America's booth # 316 for the following author signings (Books are free - while supplies last!):

Wednesday March 22 -- 4:15-4:45 pm Cathie Linz signing her contemporary romantic comedy *Good Girls Do*

Thursday March 23 – Evelyn Richardson signing her regency *The Education of Lady Frances*

Thursday March 23 - 2-2:30 pm Tina St. John signing her historical romance *Heart of the Dove*

Thursday March 23 -- 3-3:30 Suzanne Brockmann signing her romantic suspense *Hot Target*

Friday March 24 10-10:30 Loretta Chase signing her historical romance *Lord Perfect*

RWA Librarians' Day Event 2006
Wednesday, July 26, 2006, Atlanta Marriott Marquis
Special Price -- \$25 (includes lunch)
Registration limited to first 100

Tentative Schedule

8 – 9 a.m.	Registration
9 – 10 a.m.	“Women Who Win” by Nora Roberts & Susan Elizabeth Phillips
10 – 10:45 a.m.	Publisher’s Panel with Maggie Crawford (Pocket Books), Kate Duffy (Kensington), Virginia Stanley (HarperCollins)
10:45 – 11 a.m.	Break
11a.m. – Noon	“African-American Romances: Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow” with author Sandra Kitt and editor Mavis Allen
Noon – 1:30 p.m.	Lunch – speaker Kristin Hannah
1:30 – 2:30 p.m.	“Mainstreaming the Romance” by Jayne Ann Krentz
2:30 – 3:15 p.m.	“The Ultimate Kiss & Tell: Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about Reviewing” with LJ editor Betty-Lee Fox and reviewer Kristin Ramsdell
3:15 – 3:30 p.m.	Tea break
3:30 – 4 p.m.	“Library/Bookstore Event Synergy” by Susan Gibberman
4 –5 p.m.	“Romance Readers Advisory” by John Charles and Joanne Hamilton-Selway
5:30 – 8 p.m.	RWA Literacy Autographing, several hundred authors attending. Free & open to public.

Librarian Event Registration
Atlanta Marriott Marquis in Atlanta, GA
Special Cost for Librarian/Booksellers: \$25.00 (includes lunch!)

To register for this event, please print this page and fax or mail it to the RWA office at:
RWA National Office 16000 Stuebner Airline Road Suite 140 Spring, TX 77379
Fax 832-717-5201

Registration for this event closes June 30, 2006, and is limited to the first 100 respondents.

Name _____ Title _____

Library _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

Email Address _____

Special needs (dietary or physical restrictions) _____

If you have any questions, e-mail us at info@rwanational.org. We hope to see you in there!

* If you're interested in contributing to this newsletter with an article, please contact RWA Library Liaison, Cathie Linz, at cathielinz@aol.com.
