Beyond the bodice ripper: innovation and change in the romance novel industry

Description

Title  Beyond the bodice ripper
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Date Created  2014
Other Date  2014-10 (degree)
Subject  Sociology, Love stories, American--History and criticism; Publishers and publishing--History
Extent  1 online resource (v, 185 p. : ill.)
Description  Romance novels have changed significantly since they first entered the public consciousness. Instead of seeking to understand the changes that have occurred in the industry, in readership, in authorship, and in the romance novel product itself, both academic and popular perception has remained firmly in the early 1980s when many of the surface criticisms were still valid. Using Wendy Griswold's (2004) idea of a cultural diamond, I analyze the multiple and sometimes overlapping relationships within broader trends in the romance industry based on content analysis and interviews with romance readers and authors. Three major issues emerge from this study. First, content of romance novels sampled from the past fourteen years is more reflective of contemporary ideas of love, sex, and relationships. Second, romance has been a leader and innovator in the trend of electronic publishing, with major independent presses adding to the proliferation of subgenres and pushing the boundaries of what is considered romance. Finally, readers have a complicated relationship with the act of reading romance and what the books mean in their lives. Understanding the enduring appeal of the happily ever after and the emotional escape are central to their enjoyment.

Note  Ph.D.
Note  Includes bibliographical references
Note  by Andrea Cipriano Barra
Genre  theses
Persistent URL  https://doi.org/doi:10.7282/T3416VH1
Language  eng
Collection  Graduate School - New Brunswick Electronic Theses and Dissertations
Organization Name  Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
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