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**History of Romance**

Most people are excited when they hear the word “Romance”, now what is romance? Romance is a feeling of excitement and mystery associated with love. People crave romance because it’s a source of entertainment, a sense of hope and a learning lesson. There are five characteristics that identify that what you are reading is a romance novel: Interest in the common man and childhood, strong senses, emotions and feelings, Awe of nature, celebration of the individual and importance of imagination. Romance is a genre that is very vague, it’s a genre not only in itself but would have to really dig deep into it. As in there’s more to it, Romance has various subgenres including: Contemporary Romance, Historical Romance, Romantic Suspense, Erotic Romance, Religious/Spiritual romance, Paranormal romance, Science Fiction Romance (Sci-Fi), or Fantasy Romance and last but not least, Young Adult Romance.

According to the Romance Writers of America (RWA), contemporary romance is characterized as modern novels, “set from 1950 to the present that focus primarily on the romantic relationship.” (Romance Writers of America) As more time passes, that date is subject to change (i.e., soon the ‘80s will be considered historical, so contemporary romance would be any story set in the ‘90s or later).

In general, contemporary romances focus on the developing relationship between two main characters with a satisfactory emotional ending. Contemporary Romance authors include Nora Roberts, Susan Elizabeth Phillips, Jennifer Cruise, Jill Shalvis and Sonali Dev. Then there is Historical Romance; historical romances are novels set prior to 1950. In general, the same rules and characteristics apply as those found in contemporary romances, minus the time period shift. Few historical romance authors to consider are Diana Gabaldon, Sarah MacLean and Lisa Kleypas. Romance novels where suspense, mystery or thriller elements are integral to the plot. From drug deals and murder to cybercrimes and more, you can satisfy your “Law & Order” hankering with a romantic suspense. Notable authors include Linda Howard, Pamela Clare and Suzanne Brockmann. Erotic romance generally, one of the more explicit types of romance, erotic romance is characterized by sexual interaction that is key to the story, here are some notable Erotic Romance authors: Anne Calhoun, Olivia Cunning, Rebekah Weatherspoon. Romance Writers of America says it best when it comes to Religious/Spiritual Romance: “Romance novels in which religious or spiritual beliefs are an inherent part of the love story, character growth and relationship development and could not be removed without damaging the storyline” (Romance Writers of America). Religious romance titles from these authors: Karen Witemeyer, Olivia Newport. While paranormal, sci-fi and fantasy novels can easily be divided into their own categories with their own specific set of parameters, in the case of paranormal romance, sci-fi romance, and fantasy romance, the common denominator is that each one’s respective features are integral to the progression of the plot. Authors of note: Ilona Andrews, Jeaniene Frost, Nalini Singh.

Last but certainly not least, we have young adult romance. As you can probably guess, young adult life is a must for the progress of the plotline. Combining elements from other genres (i.e., contemporary or fantasy), these stories run the gamut. They include most of the hallmarks found in typical young adult novels, but with an amped romantic plotline. Look for indicators such as: Teenage relationships or issues related to young adult lives. Empowerment, coming-of-age, and other standard tropes. Love is a primary driving force behind the plotline.

Romance is an important genre because it gives us better insights into relationships. Most well-known people who have written this genre include Jane Austen, Danielle Steele, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Edgar Allen Poe and Zane.

According to Jody Hedlund she states “While I’m writing, I love being able to delve into the various ups and downs of relationships, the push and pull, what works and what doesn’t, and all of the nuances that go into love and romance”(Hedlund, J 2017) this just demonstrates that people learn from reading romance novels. In order to understand how a relationship works is to realize nothing is perfect, there are some obstacles to go through in order for a relationship to strive. Romance can inspire hope in life, “When we’re immersed into writing or reading a romance novel, we often become intertwined with the characters. Their experiences become ours. We have the potential to deeply feel their emotions, including hope for a better life.” Now hope is a dangerous thing to lose, hope is essential to build the other elements of a healthy relationship.

Authors associated with discourse communities would be the ones who specialize in romance novels are focused in entertaining the readers and giving them hope that there is a happily ever after.

The History of Romance dates back to the 1400s, according to Donna Hatch, “the first book to be printed using movable-type was the Guttenberg Bible, published around 1450. However, Don Quixote, which is frequently cited as the first novel wasn’t published until much later in 1605. The first romance was, probably, Samuel Richardson’s Pamela – or Virtue Rewarded which was published in 1740. The Pamela of the title is Pamela Andrews, a fifteen-year-old servant, who has to deal with the improper and unwanted advances of her employer. Pamela resists him and, eventually, he proposes marriage to her. She accepts and eventually becomes an esteemed member of society.” (Donna Hatch 2019)

The romance audience as depicted by some people is for single women who has cats and in want of a man are the ones who tend to read romance novels. Some might say that women who are bored in their marriages tend to read romance novels in order to satisfy their imagination of a strong hard chiseled man. None of these are true, According to survey results from Romance Writers of America, “84 percent of romance readers are women and 16 percent are men—up from 9 percent a few years ago” (Romance Writers of America) Women are a targeted audience for romance due to the fact that it’s a form of entertainment , it relaxes the mind and leads to an escape of real life world problems.

Examples of Young Adult Romance novels include: *The Divergent Trilogy, The Fault in Our Stars, The Outsiders, The Book Thief and The Hate You Give.* The main message of these examples is young love. Romantic relationships are usually a huge obsession for young teens like me. Young adults don’t really have experience with real life experiences with love genre so by creating these novels, it demonstrates main characters experiencing of their first love, their first kiss, heartbreak, rejection and acceptance.

These examples are targeted towards teenagers between 16-18 years old they are directed towards them mostly because teaches teenagers the process of coming of age and specific challenges that young adults tend to have, so they are meant to soften the transition between childhood into young adulthood.

In order to compose a young adult romance novel, one must get the POV right. This is not about first person or second persons point of view. It is more of an immediate perspective. This is a very important step because as a writer you have to be able to think and talk like a teenager. Voice/Language is key also because no teenager would want to read about an author talking down on their reader, teenagers would rather feel at ease like it’s okay to have this sort of feeling or to experience this. That way they would feel more comfortable about what they are experiencing.

*The Fault in Our Stars* is an example of a popular romance novel that was produced by John Green. The main theme of the *Fault in Our stars* is love. Two teenagers are battling cancer and worry about what their families will do once they are no longer around. Since they share the same fears, the two young adults draw strength from each other. This strengthens their love for one another. The main message is that love goes on through hard times. This is for people who think that love is easy to fulfill but doesn’t realize the hard work it takes in order to strive. When I read the book and saw the movie I actually cried and gained hope. It made me realize that everything is going to be okay. This book made me appreciate life, it gave me hope in humanity. This is the kind of book that you can read over and over and still be able to feel the same emotions again. An example I would say is movie I was watching called “Seventeen Again” starring Tia and Tamera Mowry. This movie was about elderly parents who are divorced, bitter and bickering while visiting their grandchildren. They finally get a chance to be a teenagers again and from there they grow jealous and possessive of one another even starting to fall in love again. This is good for people wanting to learn life lessons, it shows that it’s never too late to love someone or care for someone.

**My Short Story**

You would think you have enough time to do anything. But in reality, you don’t, time goes by so fast. Sometimes you are worried that time went by that you didn’t have the chance to everything. That’s my life. All I’m guaranteed is now. I don’t have much time left; I have to keep myself distracted from all these thoughts I have. Like what if I die tomorrow, what if my boyfriend leaves me due to the fact that I’m sick with this deadly illness. Of course, I don’t regret falling in love it’s just that how could I allow a person into my heart just for me to end up losing them. It hurts to know I don’t have forever with him. Not only that but it hurts to see my parents the other day my daddy pulled me into a tight hug. I felt him start shaking. I knew he was crying. I felt myself about to cry. I told him “Hey daddy, don’t cry. I know my time is getting short but when I die, I don’t want you to cry. Think of it as I’m going to a better place.” Saying all of this made me started crying. It was even harder for my boyfriend. When I found and I told him he dropped to the floor. When a love one tells you, they have cancer some might ditch the person and go find someone who has a full long life. Not him he wanted to be with me through the whole process and that is why I love him. It was going to be hard but as long as I have him and my family members, I will be happy until it’s time.

I’ve been lying about having cancer to my family and my boyfriend. You must think I’m messed up, but I had too. For my family I did it because the show love to my sister more than me. My sister gets anything she wants no matter what she does. But when I do something wrong, I’m quick to get yelled at. When she hurts herself, they all have sympathy for her. She’s the first child so of course But I feel unloved so I had no choice

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