

Romance Fiction Genre Study
Programming and Merchandising

Lisle Public Library

October 3, 2019

Assignment: Programming and Merchandising

-Read at least one romance book of your choice. Be ready to discuss why your book would or would not be a good candidate for a book discussion.

-Come prepared to discuss some of the following subjects:

Have you personally lead a discussion of a novel with a romance thread that had a HEA? Have you participated in a book discussion that featured a romance? How did it go?

How are you displaying and promoting romance at your library (displays, signs, the location of the collection, shelving, signage, labels, etc.)? What works well? What are your challenges? What would you like to change?

Does your library provide any romance-specific programming? If so, are they effective? What are your challenges? What new, romance-specific programming would you like to test at your library?

What romance-specific RA tools and services do you offer patrons? What romance-specific RA training do you offer staff? What works well? What could be improved?

Let's discuss various aspects of romance-specific collection development at your library (selection, tools, vendors, publishers, formats, pricing, cataloging, statistics, weeding, etc.)? What works well? What are your challenges?

Do you interact with the romance community in your area? Do you engage with the online community of romance writers and readers? If so, describe how.

-Note some of your favorite romance-related resources you've used during our genre study (blogs, podcasts, publications, events, libraries, bookstores, etc.).

Displays and Promotion: how are you promoting romance at your library?

-Sample Displays: Don't Judge a Book by its Cover, Happily Ever After Starts Here, Dudes Who Lost Their Shirts, Red Hot Reads in July

-Integrating romance into other genres, for example, romantic suspense into crime displays

-Many put up a display in February

-Are you trying to entice romance readers or get non-romance readers to try romance? Both

-Every library seems to be shelving Romance differently. Some libraries separate pbk romance out and some separate all romance, pbk and hrdrv. Some interfile romance with the rest of fiction. Some sticker, some don't.

Programming: what kinds of programs are you doing?

-Book discussions-many have had successful book discussions with romance titles (50 Shades of Gray, Sonali Dev's books), add romance into the rotation or choose books that are not marketed as romance but have an element of romance.

-Author events

Romance Tools for Patrons: What do you recommend to patrons?

-Novelist

-Smart Bitches Trashy Books

Romance Collection Development: what sources are you using for publishing info?

-Smart Bitches Trashy Books

-Kissing Books newsletter, When in Romance podcast (Book Riot)

-Women of Color

-[Working list of diverse authors](#) by Anna Mickelsen and Alene Moroni

Online Romance Community: Do you engage with the online community of romance writers and readers, and if so, how?

-Facebook

-Twitter #romancelandia

-KissCon

- Ripped Bodice Bookstore
- Book Riot podcasts and newsletters
- Smart Bitches newsletter

Books we read:

Things You Save in a Fire by Katherine Center

- disgraced firefighter, family issues, feminist/#metoo issues, gentle, HEA, doesn't look like a romance; good for discussion.

Highlander Walks Into a Bar by Laura Trentham

- sweet, quirky, good romance, but not enough conflict for discussion

The Hating Game by Sally Thorne

- chicklit-ish, HEA, Reviewer's Choice on Romantic Times, very discussable

Evvie Drake Starts Over by Linda Holmes

- charming romantic comedy, romance that doesn't seem like a romance, good for a light discussion

Smitten by the Brit by Melonie Johnson

- charming, good romance, Chicago details, not a lot to discuss but may be popular locally for the Chicago aspect

The Kiss Quotient by Helen Houang

- humorous, good romance, #ownvoices, several topics that would be good for discussion

The Bookshop on the Corner by Jenny Colgan

- Scottish farmers, running away, delightful, marketed as women's fiction with romantic element, HEA

Crosstalk by Connie Willis

-genre blend, futuristic speculative fiction, humorous/satire, wildly divisive reviews, lots of things to discuss

The Right Swipe by Alisha Rai

-diverse characters, trust issues, online dating, workplace relationships, lots of topics for discussion

Pride and Prejudice and Other Flavors by Sonali Dev

-diverse characters, female doctor/male chef, HEA, lots of issues for discussion

The Truth About Love and Dukes by Laura Lee Guhrke

-good writing, well researched, true romance, good tie-in with suffragette movement

Red, White and Royal Blue by Casey McQuiston

-mixed-race relationship, bisexual, coming out, enemies to lovers, very liberal politics, #ownvoices, good writing, many topics to discuss

The Music Shop by Rachel Joyce

-not traditional romance, more women's fiction but romance is at the heart, lot of characters and slice of life (like Alexander McCall Smith), sweet, maybe for a discussion

Alyssa Cole's Loyal League series

-historical/civil war time period, well researched, good for discussion, start with something readers are familiar/comfortable with (historical) and then move towards romance

The Lady's Guide to Celestial Mechanics by Olivia Waite

-lesbian couple, science, well developed, very discussable

The Obsession by Nora Roberts

-heroine's father is a serial killer, she turns him in, violent, good for fans of crime and romantic suspense, very discussable

Royal Holiday by Jasmine Guillory

-cute, charming, older African American woman w/daughter who is close to royalty, very little conflict or angst, discussable for the British royalty aspect.

What works:

- most discussable books seem to be in trade paperback--can bring up issues with accessibility (are there large print/audio versions available)
- not lengthy
- good to balance after reading a heavy title

Next Meeting: Lunch, Book Talks, and Wrap-Up

December 5, 2019, 2-4 PM

Glenview Public Library

Assignment:

For the next time, read 1-2 romance books of your choice and come prepared to booktalk them to the group. The booktalks should not be more than 5-minutes long but the content and the approach are completely up to you. We'll also discuss your favorite styles of booktalking, your favorite places/times to booktalk, tips, pet peeves, guidelines, examples, resources, etc. Let's think about booktalking in general but also as applicable specifically to romance books and readers.

Additionally, let's look back on the last two years of the romance genre study and think of our favorite, most-instructive, most-entertaining sessions, discussions, or subjects. What did you learn? How did you benefit? What worked well? What could be improved to make future ARRT genre studies the best they could be?

Finally, don't forget to bring your completed bingo cards. We'll have some sweet prizes for you!

