

I just reread an old romance novel

11 upvotes | 18 April, 2020 | by stevierose789

After forbidding myself from reading romance for a few years, I just picked up an old favorite and sure enough for a time it whisked me away to an exciting, worry-free state of mind. What was different as I read now after finding RPW was recognizing how so much of it was opposite of RP theory. I thought about it for awhile and recognized that I, like many women my age, once believed the behavior of the heroine was the way to snare a man's interest. Some examples: playing hard to get, acting tough, making him jealous. All of these were ways to build sexual tension in the plot, but really do not work in real life. Can you think of other behaviors in romance novels that go against RP theory? I have not read any new romance novels. Most of the ones I have read are twenty to thirty years old. I am interested if feminism has completely changed the nature of romance novels or if the basic themes still prevail.

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Comments

HappilyMrs • 9 points • 18 April, 2020 07:01 PM

I read historical romance, it's generally pretty RP I find

wlucascampbell • 5 points • 18 April, 2020 07:38 PM

I love historical romance ☐☐

HappilyMrs • 6 points • 18 April, 2020 08:39 PM

Modern romance does nothing for me, but I love that "we want each other but absolutely must not give in to temptation" stuff

stevierose789[S] • 1 point • 18 April, 2020 07:52 PM

I agree that the male characters are usually red pill'd, but do the women show RPW behavior?

HappilyMrs • 2 points • 18 April, 2020 08:37 PM

I suppose not, actually. They can be argumentative and stand-offish. Much less casual sex and trying to incite jealousy though.

Mollusc6 • 5 points • 18 April, 2020 10:15 PM

I tried to read the sookie stackhouse mysteries, but the 'mystery' was essentially a pretense for her to screw a new monster / guy each book. Basically a slutty check list of different guys to screw.

This is playing on the hedonism/ quick fix urge prevalent in society. However what is really funny and interesting is that while each novel tends to attempt to get more 'progressive' they actually usurp themselves ultimately with the old archetypes which often support/ reflect redpill values. They just try and garnish it up to hide it.

For example, playing hard to get / acting tough / making them jealous. what are those things? 'shit tests' for the main guy to pass. and oh he passes them with flying colors and ultimately no matter how you 'garnish' it up, the heroine submits to the man who passes these tests and ultimately proves himself worthy (no matter if she is a worthy person or not, remember this is fantasy for WOMEN, so the focus here is her getting what she wants, not getting what she deserves in real life, or accurately reflecting having a decent personality).

Instead of avoiding content, I look at it critically, and admittedly enjoy picking apart the content because it becomes so flagrantly obvious that they can't as much as they try change human nature and what we are attracted to.

For example there is a remake of Sabrina the teenage witch which and it is a *nightmare* for progressive sjw crap.

Main cast:

The white 'boy' harvey, is a weak mild mannered kid who draws comics and is in love with Sabrina, he comes from a 'blue collar family' with an alcoholic father and they hunt and 'murder animals'.

Trans best friend 'Rosie' aka Ross who is terribly bullied by the 'ultra masculine' school jocks.

Token black best friend who suffers from blindness but this 'curse of blindness' also gives her a 'second sight' so its really a strength (never mind that they cure her blindness later (but wait I thought it WASN'T a bad thing to be

handi-capable? ableism much?)

Sabrina- the ultra feminist, I'm going to change the system ultra powerful witch!

Sabrina is raised by two white aunts but they have a black cousin who lives at the house who is bi (believe me their sexual orientation is brought up a LOT).

Now, personally I don't care about any of those things, but each episode is a train wreck centered around some 'oppression' and woman rights etc. they worship 'Satan' blah blah blah. god is oppressive blah. The real entertainment is watching how they attempt to make one statement but ultimately unwittingly undo themselves with the Archetypes which sneak in despite their best efforts.

Now an example of one of the episodes which they usurp themselves as they do EVERY episode.

Rosie/ aka Ross the trans character wants to be on the sports team. She/he's tiny and is obviously doing terribly. Sabrina comes in and does some magic for Rosie/ Ross to get the slam dunk and win.

Equality for all!

wait what? So your saying that the only way for a trans person to be equal is for them to cheat and this magically means they deserve to be on the sports team? She/He also critically injures the jock out of vengeance crippling him which makes him guilty and repentant of his previous bullying.

Every episode is like this.

They try so hard to remake the world to their narrative, but ultimately they can't escape it, they just try and 'spin it'.

stevierose789[S] • 2 points • 18 April, 2020 11:58 PM

Sorry to hear they ruined Sabrina the teenage witch.

However what is really funny and interesting is that while each novel tends to attempt to get more 'progressive' they actually usurp themselves ultimately with the old archetypes which often support/ reflect redpill values. They just try and garnish it up to hide it.

I guess there is nothing new under the sun. I am going to have to pick up a newly published romance novel to see this for myself.

Mollusc6 • 1 point • 19 April, 2020 04:33 AM

Check it out for yourself! You will always, ultimately find the archetypes buried underneath. If you find one that doesn't and is a popular novel I want to see it! They are in everything from Harry potter to Silence of the lambs.

RedPillMissionary • 1 point • 18 April, 2020 11:18 PM

Thats a horrific story with awful ethical lessons!

Mollusc6 • 1 point • 19 April, 2020 04:34 AM

Which part? Lol really though, its one of those 'so bad cause they try so hard that its funny' type series.

[deleted] • 1 point • 20 April, 2020 03:15 PM

The thing is, Sookie ultimately ends up with the beta of all betas in the novel series. Her actual beta orbiter. It's a bit of a head scratcher.

Mollusc6 • 1 point • 20 April, 2020 07:29 PM

I couldn't get to the end XD, but isn't it the case with Redpill that woman, after going through the alpha's prefer the beta Bux for security and comfort?

FleetingWish • 3 points • 19 April, 2020 08:52 PM*

playing hard to get, acting tough, making him jealous.

This is coupled with a male protagonist who responds symmetrically. He will chase her, admit weakness, and act jealous. The amusing thing is that this is not at all what women respond to, and what I would consider lower beta traits.

An interesting question to ask is why are males like this written into a story that is designed to be a woman's romantic fantasy?

The first thing that happens, before any of the romance pursuit, is that the love interest is established as an attractive male. He is rich, cocky, muscled, has an over abundance of women, and saves puppies and kitties from fires in his spare time.

That's the secret sauce. The ultimate female fantasy is to have a man who could have any woman he wanted, but has an unwavering devotion to you.

To understand real life dating dynamics is to realize where this falls apart. A man who could have any woman he wanted is not going to act this way towards you. Even if you somehow end up in a long term relationship with a guy who is all that, there's no way he would have ever actively chased you, admitted weakness, or acted jealous while courting you. If he did he wouldn't have been nearly as attractive, axiomatically it contradicts the character traits that made him great to begin with. Guys with options don't do that, and if he suddenly started doing that he would be signaling to you that he didn't have options and that he wasn't attractive.

The problem with real life is that it doesn't end when the guy and the girl have the happily ever after. In real life that's the start. So while you're together and married you still have to maintain attraction for each other. That's why TRP(m) focuses on the first part of the romance fantasy, and throws out the second.

Romance fantasies are also the reason why women will often say honestly say, and believe, they want a guy with lower beta traits, because they are focusing on the 2nd half of the female fantasy. They often miss the part that the 2nd half only works because the 1st is assumed.

stevierose789[S] • 1 point • 20 April, 2020 08:02 PM

Are you saying that the protagonist, the hero, (that I consider to be an alpha because he is handsome, confident, successful, good in bed, and holds frame in spite of his tortured soul) becomes a beta when he falls under a woman's spell? Oh no! Say it ain't so!

An interesting question to ask is why are males like this written into a story that is designed to be a woman's romantic fantasy?

I guess it is because most of these romantic fantasies are written by women. They create a male protagonist who they believe will fulfill their dreams of a perfect relationship. One thing I know for me personally is that the fantasy is great for a temporary escape, but I would hate it in real life. A man who faces danger is sexy in a novel, but it would make me a nervous wreck if I had to worry all the time if my man would make it home to me. A possessive dominant man is sexy in a novel, but I would hate being married to one, if it meant my activities and my friends were restricted.

So in spite of my occasional need to live vicariously through a heroine who has excitement and romance to get me through the boring routines of everyday life, I am grateful for my secure comfortable life with a man

who is faithful and a good provider.

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Yes you are correct about this. My husband only had one moment of jealousy very early on in our relationship, but it made an impact on me to never repeat the behavior that caused it. If he had had these outbursts on a regular basis it would have definitely killed my attraction to him. And he never chased me, but he also never let me go, if that makes sense.

So while you're together and married you still have to maintain attraction for each other. That's why TRP(m) focuses on the first part of the romance fantasy, and throws out the second.

So this statement really intrigued me and I thought about for a while before it made sense. TRP encourages men to be the prize. That is what the romance protagonist is, the prize. In order to continue being the prize in a relationship a man cannot allow a woman to enter into his frame, because if he changes his behavior to fit her wishes, he loses the very thing that she found attractive about him in the first place. Am I getting this right?

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This is where you lost me. Are you saying that most romance protagonists have lower beta traits?

Thank you for an interesting comment that gave me something to fun to think about and a distraction from the usual discouraging news.

FleetingWish • 1 point • 20 April, 2020 10:13 PM

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I think that "frame" is the wrong word to use in this instance, which is why what you said confused me a bit. But I think you get the idea. To give a more concrete example, let's say a woman falls in love with a guy who loves working on cars, and owns a motorcycle. 10 years later he's working a 9-5 job, owns a Subaru (and no motorcycle), and spends his time at home cleaning up after the kids. On paper he could be doing what the wife said she wanted, but he's no longer the guy she fell in love with. All the excitement is gone.

Are you saying that most romance protagonists have lower beta traits?

No, I'm saying that often when women create an imaginary version of their ideal partner, whether it's something that gets written into a romance novel or not, they will imagine this impossible dichotomy of traits in one guy.

"He can have any girl he wants" AND "He only has eyes for me"

"He believes he's capable of anything" AND "He's humble and admits weakness to me"

"He's not afraid to say or do what he wants" AND "He never says anything offensive or hurtful to me"

Women then say they want a guy who "only has eyes for me, is humble and admits weakness, and never says anything offensive or hurtful". They really do want those things, as shown by the fact the guy does them in her actual fantasies. But their fantasy also includes the 1st part, which is contradictory to the 2nd part, and guys with only the 2nd part (beta traits) are not attractive.

stevierose789[S] • 1 point • 20 April, 2020 11:05 PM

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I get it now. Thank you.

Do you think men imagine a dichotomy of traits in one woman?

I read an article about a mans perfect woman and it listed the usual fantasies, but what was interesting was that many admitted they would soon grow bored with her and that she had to have a couple of flaws to be perfect.

FleetingWish • 2 points • 20 April, 2020 11:25 PM

Not really in the same way. Women are unique in wanting contrary traits, they want the alpha sperm and the beta comfort.

Men have fantasies as well, but mostly those are about how attractive she is, and how well she treats him. There's no real reason a person couldn't be both of these things, within the limitations of "nobody's perfect".

The most similar thing I can think of that men have is the Madonna/Whore complex. Most men want a woman who a sexually exciting with him, but prude towards other men. As a woman, it's easy to do this by only showing sexual interest for her man. However it can be problematic in unusual cases where a man can't stand the idea of any woman he slept with, or is sexually attracted to, being the mother of his children. He has the impossible desire to see the mother of his children as "pure". Men like this are pretty rare, but they have a lot of problems in long term relationships for obvious reasons.

stevierose789[S] • 1 point • 21 April, 2020 12:39 AM

I know of the Madonna/Whore complex but it seemed too extreme. I never thought of it from the "lady in the street, a slut in the sheets" perspective. When I was thinking of dichotomies it was things like wanting a quiet tame woman and wanting a firecracker. Wanting a city woman and a country girl. Wanting an extrovert when he took her out into public and an introvert at home.

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I guess a man's fantasies are realistically attainable. I wonder how many actually achieve them and end up happy in a ever after kind of way, with the help of wife goggles of course.

[deleted] • 3 points • 18 April, 2020 06:14 PM

I only ever read one romance novel, on a dare. (Romance, YA, 'chick lit'... absolutely not my taste although I respect other folks')

The heroine has sex with every one of her husband's brothers behind his back lol. He isn't the father of a single one of the kids.

not very RPW lmao

stevierose789[S] • 1 point • 18 April, 2020 06:22 PM

Wow. That is not something I have ever encountered in a book that I read. It was usually the hero that was sexually promiscuous until the heroine made him fall in love with her and change his evil ways.

[deleted] • 2 points • 18 April, 2020 06:39 PM

It was laugh out loud hilarious. I wonder if I still have a copy floating around somewhere. There were very detailed descriptions of clothes.

stevierose789[S] • 1 point • 18 April, 2020 08:16 PM

I would be curious to know the title of that book. Was it a Bertrice Small novel by any chance? She wrote erotica long before it was a thing.

[deleted] • 2 points • 18 April, 2020 08:36 PM

I will do my best to remember. I will check my shelves in case my friend and I never traded back. We were doing a thing where she was trying to get me into her sort of books, and I was trying to get her into mine. It was not a resounding success lol

[deleted] • 2 points • 20 April, 2020 03:16 PM

Found it! The Chatelaine by Claire Lorrimer. Apparently it's the first in a trilogy...

stevierose789[S] • 1 point • 20 April, 2020 08:07 PM

Thank you for putting in the effort to do this. I am going to find out about this book. It might even be in the library.

[deleted] • 2 points • 18 April, 2020 08:29 PM

I love romance novels. I'm totally unashamed. I tend to read more RP ones, though. Kristen Ashley has a bunch of "alpha male saves damsel" contemporary novels. The women are never slutty or full of bravado and they don't play hard to get. As another commenter mentioned, historical romances are a lot more traditional, too. They just aren't my taste.

[deleted] • 5 points • 18 April, 2020 08:38 PM

Two things you must never be ashamed of in life:

- your taste in books
- your taste in music

[deleted] • 1 point • 19 April, 2020 01:36 AM

It's a shame more people can't just appreciate escapism and fantasy for what they are, without real world crossover.

[deleted] • 1 point • 19 April, 2020 01:59 PM

Since childhood I have read a truly massive amount of science fiction, so you have my agreement there...

Books and indeed music are a portal to somewhere else. We should never accept limits on our private thinking.

stevierose789[S] • 1 point • 18 April, 2020 08:42 PM

I am not ashamed to admit that I am a recovering romance novel addict. I have quite a collection I have amassed from garage sales and used book stores. I had to lay the habit down when it started taking too much time in my day. But I am like that with most books so I limit myself.

The biggest reason I gave up reading romance novels though was because it was really skewing my perception of men and making me wish for something that was really only fantasy. Instead of seeing my husband for the good man that he was, I was wishing he'd be more romantic, more adventurous, more spontaneous. I know that might sound ridiculous to some, but it took a little while for it to sink in that there is no real man who can compare to Jamie Fraser.

[deleted] • 3 points • 18 April, 2020 09:22 PM

Yeah, I've never really had that problem, myself. Perhaps it's because I don't find the overly romantic guy especially attractive, so I don't read those romance novels. I haven't had any real trouble separating the myth from the man.

stevierose789[S] • 1 point • 18 April, 2020 09:39 PM

I haven't had any real trouble separating the myth from the man.

In my case it was the myth that kept me from noticing the romantic things that he WAS doing, like fixing the heater in my car for instance, to keep me safe and warm. I miss sometimes that he doesn't take my hand, or lead me through a crowd, but he is my protector in so many other quiet unassuming ways.

[deleted] • 2 points • 18 April, 2020 11:38 PM

My husband is very much a touch person and an acts of service person. Any more than that usually comes off as cringey for me. It works in fantasy and not so much in reality.

stevierose789[S] • 1 point • 18 April, 2020 09:52 PM

Just curious if you have ever read the Women's Room by Marilyn French. It is one book I remember reading that summed up the second wave of feminism for me personally at the time close to when it was published.

[deleted] • 1 point • 19 April, 2020 01:37 AM

I haven't. I honestly read such a range of things that I relate very little of it to the real world.

[deleted] • 1 point • 16 June, 2020 01:55 AM

I love romance novels and it's so rare that I can openly talk about it!!!! With only a couple of exceptions, my friends either hate it for being lowbrow or hate it for being antifeminist!!!

Not to plug my own username!!!! ☐ but I've found in the series that have a permanent home in my house (JR Ward's BDB series, Kresley Cole's IAD series) LOOSELY fall into a RP dynamic. I mean, as closely as you can when people are turning into statues and vampires and so on.

If there is a plotline with the women acting tough, pushing the men away, etc. and behaving like you mentioned, it's usually what fucks up their lives. Like... "you didn't fuckin' listen, now you're shot in the head and also my mom turned you into a ghost"

stevierose789[S] • 1 point • 16 June, 2020 05:25 PM

If there is a plotline with the women acting tough, pushing the men away, etc. and behaving like you mentioned, it's usually what fucks up their lives. Like... "you didn't fuckin' listen, now you're shot in the head and also my mom turned you into a ghost"

This made me laugh. I am not familiar with either of these authors, but I remember reading paranormal before the women were tough. They tried to be independent but always ended up the care of a dominant man.

There is a great website called Smart Bitches who read Trashy Books or something close to that. I read alot of their critiques and they were hilarious, but accurate in describing the plots and the various stereotypes that are such an essential part of romance.

I actually wrote a dystopian romance novel about ten years back and went through the steps to try and have it published, but it didn't pan out. I now realize that the ideas were good but I ended up rewriting it so many times to meet different publishers criteria that is lost its appeal. I actually can't even go back and read it because every time I do I realize how bad it is.

However in the process of writing it I learned alot about the history of romance and dime novels. I am an artist and there is a big distinction between fine art and lowbrow art. I however appreciate both.

So fun to talk to you. I will try to remember the author of the paranormal series. I will also check out the two series you mentioned.

Congrats on two outstanding posts. They were a breath of fresh air and sorely needed.