

Conclusion

The popularity of the genre of romantic fiction can be explained by the fact that it has become another form of entertainment. Marketing places emphasis on the fact that the novels are relaxing and entertaining. They offer its readers a chance to forget their daily troubles and enter into a fantasy. More importantly, the genre has a wide selection of fantasies to fit each reader's individual fantasy. The readers know what to expect when they pick up a novel of romantic fiction. The novel offer its reader an emotional journey of a relationship between a woman and a man and the satisfaction that at the end of the novel, the couple will share each other's future.

Love has also become a commodity. Marketing and new technologies have played an important part in this development of the genre. The novels of brand-name romantic fiction have become a product of the masses. Everything from content, length, size and looks has become standardized. There is a promise that lies in the standardized looks of the novels. It offers the readers a guarantee that the essence of the novels within the same series is similar. Furthermore, certain marketing strategies have also influenced the development of the genre. The cover is designed to attract the readers, the title is designed to entice them and the blurb of the novel and the anticipatory excerpt are supposed to seal the deal. My study shows that the most important of the three was the blurb. I believe that the blurb has more influence on whether or not the readers want to read certain novels because it opens a window to the emotional turmoil of the relationship in the novel.

My findings confirm that the readers of romantic fiction are diverse in the terms of age, education, employment and in household income. The readers enjoy these types of novels because they are relaxing and entertaining. The readers read these novels because of interest in the relationship between the heroine and the hero, the happily-ever-after ending and the most wanted resolution at the end of the novel, to have reassurance of the couples' future together. The readers enjoy the genre because the novels offer a release for the readers' own fantasies.

It is of interest, since I based my survey on Radway's survey that according to my study, the Icelandic readers differ from American readers. I found it fascinating that many of the readers' female guardians or mothers read novels of romantic fiction during the readers' childhood. I believe that this shows that the tradition of romantic fiction in

Iceland has been strong. However, despite the strong tradition in Iceland, many of the readers do not speak openly about reading romantic fiction. In order to erase the prejudice still found in today's society, the readers have to speak openly about their form of entertainment and stop justifying the reasons for reading novels of romantic fiction.

Despite the fact that the publication of translated brand-name romantic fiction novels in Iceland is dependent upon personal preferences. Rósa Guðmundsdóttir tries to choose novels that are more compliant to the interests and culture of Icelandic readers. Because, on the one hand, the Icelandic readers have strong opinions about what they consider *not* appropriate in a novel of romantic fiction. The emphasis is on the relationship between the heroine and the hero. Therefore, among the things that are not appropriate is rape, physical torture of the hero, bed-hopping, a sad ending, a cruel or a weak hero. On the other hand, readers are less strict about what they consider appropriate. I think that the genre of romantic fiction has become more open to its readers. For example: the heroine can be average looking, sex is allowed before marriage and the heroine can be stronger than the hero and vice versa. The readers are less strict about what is appropriate because they are open to the possibilities of new fantasies within the genre.

I believe that my survey has helped to establish who the Icelandic subscribers are, why they read romantic fiction and what influences their choice in novels. However, I do not think I can generalise about the Icelandic readers of brand-name romantic fiction because the subscribers are only ten percent of the buyers of brand-name romantic fiction in Iceland. I believe that further research is required to try and establish on a larger scale who the Icelandic readers are and the reasons why they read novels of romantic fiction.

After having conducted the survey and gone over the results. I have come to the conclusion that there are several weaknesses to my study. In my study, I am enquiring about the reading habits of the Icelandic subscribers of brand-name romantic fiction. Many readers may or may not be aware of their own reading habits. If they are not aware of their habits and they answer the survey, the answers I receive are then most likely written in haste and the readers do not necessarily give truthful answers. The length of the questionnaire may also influence the respondents' answers, because there

are forty-one questions and the respondents may get annoyed and tired of answering so many questions. Therefore, the answers do not necessarily reflect the answers of the readers since they have lost interest in the survey.

Furthermore, I realised that the wording of my questions needed, in some instances, to be more precise. In question seventeen, “do you read every day?”, the wording has to be clearer, “do you read every day in general?” This enables the respondents to know that I mean reading in general, not only reading of novels of romantic fiction. This does also apply to question eighteen, “how many hours per week do you read?”, the question would be more concise if it were worded like this, “how many hours per week do you read in general?” In question twenty-nine “which of the following best describes what you do when you realize you don’t like a book that you have already begun reading?”, the wording is also a problem in item c, “I read the ending to see how it ends”. It would be much clearer if the question was, “I read the ending to see how it ends and then stop reading”. Question thirty, “which of the following do you feel should never be included in a novel of romantic fiction? Please choose either the option appropriate or not appropriate” has a similar problem, a better way would be, “which of the following items do you feel are either appropriate or not appropriate in a novel of romantic fiction?” In question twenty-two, “who do you discuss novels of romantic fiction with *most* often”, nearly fourteen percent chose the option “other” and many mention that they discussed romantic novels with their husbands. If I were to do conduct the survey again I would add the option “my spouse”.

In conclusion, I have high hopes for the future of the genre of romantic fiction. I think that the genre will continue to evolve and increase its domain within the industry of popular fiction. I think more variety in the genre and sub-genres will continue to surface to maintain the various needs of the readers. However, the essence of the genre will remain the same. The emphasis will continue to be on the relationship between the heroine and the hero, their relationship and the future of the couple. As my results suggest the resolution in the end about the couple is important to the readers and I believe that this element will only get stronger in the novels in the near future. Furthermore, the Internet will continue to play a huge part in the development of the genre. Many publishing houses of romantic fiction have begun to market romantic fiction novels, which are only available online, and this offers the readers a new way to

approach the genre. Within minutes, the readers are able to download a copy of a novel of romantic fiction. This is in accordance with the fast-paced society we live in.