



## Dangerous Men and Adventurous Women: Romance Writers on the Appeal of the Romance (New Cultural Studies)

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In *Dangerous Men and Adventurous Women*, Jayne Ann Krentz and the contributors to this volume—all best-selling romance writers—explode myths and biases that haunt both the writers and readers of romances.

In this seamless, ultimately fascinating, and controversial book, the authors dispute some of the notions that plague their profession, including the time-worn theory that the romance genre contains only one single, monolithic story, which is cranked out over and over again. The authors discuss positive life-affirming values inherent in all romances: the celebration of female power, courage, intelligence, and gentleness; the inversion of the power structure of a patriarchal society; and the integration of male and female. Several of the essays also discuss the issue of reader identification with the characters, a relationship that is far more complex than most critics realize.

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## **Editorial Review**

### Amazon.com Review

Why read 'em? Why write 'em? Some of us may scoff at romance novels, yet they make up 35-40% of mass market paperbacks. They have a language and a genre all their own that non-readers don't (or won't) understand. This series of essays by popular romance novelists explores the unique qualities and purpose of romance novels.

### From Publishers Weekly

In 22 essays, romance novelists address why romances are popular. These authors are convincing when they simply write what they think, as when Sandra Brown flatly asserts that romances "are fun--fun to write, fun to read, fun to dissect and discuss." Some more complex arguments, which invite closer scrutiny of their logic, don't always fare as well. For example, Linda Barlow and Jayne Ann Krentz maintain that "outsiders tend to be unable to interpret" the language, images and symbols that recur, but only a few pages later they claim that such "codes" are "universally recognized by women." When disjunctions arise from the arguments of different authors, however, they can be intriguing: Elizabeth Lowell says of romance heroes that "at core, they are decent"; Anne Stuart maintains that her heroes are men "whose sense of honor and decency is almost nonexistent." There are hints of how interesting these authors could have been, had they not been tied to the book's fairly defensive theme. Notable are Kathleen Gilles Seidel's comments on the nature of romance (prompted by her judging a Valentine's Day essay contest) and her suggestion that information theory might offer useful insights on repetitive reading of romances. Krentz is a bestselling romance novelist who also publishes under the pseudonym Amanda Quick (see Fiction Originals).

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### Review

"This book will interest feminist literary and media critics as primary source material for their efforts to understand the impact of the romance genre. . . . It demonstrates eloquently that thinking about the contemporary state of culture goes on beyond the ivory tower and that it is cohesive and compelling."—Janice Radway

"Krentz and her 18 collaborators, all best-selling romance writers, unleash a veritable arsenal of pro-romance arguments: that romances are a subversive feminist art form. That romances, far from degrading women, actually celebrate and empower women, since they always emerge triumphant over men in the requisite happy ending. That romances are the modern-day inheritor of the heroic tradition in storytelling."—*Seattle Post-Intelligencer*

"The romance writers in Krentz's book are themselves a cross-section of educated women—geologists, lawyers, historians, librarians—who are now among the few hundred people in the United States who make a living writing books. They also battle for women's voices and values."—*Women's Review of Books*

"*Dangerous Men and Adventurous Women* has attracted unprecedented attention. . . . The book will be found useful by feminist and media critics. It will certainly change their perception of the genre as well."—*San Francisco Review of Books*

"Readable, fascinating looks into the fiction read by real women in the real world."—Augusta Wynde, *Whole Earth Review*

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Katherine Anderson:**

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