

Editor's Note: Issue 15.1

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In the very first [Editor's Note to issue 1.1](#) of the *Journal of Popular Romance Studies* (JPRS), back in 2010, Eric Selinger and Sarah S. G. Frantz posed a question: "Is there an academic field of Popular Romance Studies?" Their answer was: "it *abounds*." The abundance of popular romance scholarship is partly the reason for a change to our publication approach here at JPRS; we are returning to a biannual publication model. Twice a year (in July and December), we will publish a new issue of JPRS, sharing the latest academic work in the study of popular romance media as well as the logics, institutions, and social practices of romantic love in global popular culture. Articles, book reviews, and Notes and Queries pieces will be available "[early access](#)" throughout the year, and everything we publish will remain open access.

Issue 15.1 contains six new research articles offering new perspectives on popular romance. Two articles explore the shifting nature of romance tropes and conventions. Maria Butler's article, "[Marian Keyes' This Charming Man: an alcoholic love story](#)" reads the Irish chick lit author's 2008 novel as subverting romance tropes, specifically the love triangle, to offer a reparative reading of addiction. Erika Kvistad, in "[Happily Ever After?/Happily Ever After! Negotiating the Gothic in Contemporary Dark Romance](#)," argues that two 2021 dark romance texts use Gothic intertexts to reframe the happily ever after as alternately emotionally satisfying, disturbing, or a combination of both.

If romance is more commonly thought of as a 'feel good' genre, Alicia Leigh's "[Romancing the Darkness: Understanding Trauma in the Romance Genre](#)" offers a perspective on the darker side of romantic fiction, expanding on work in trauma genre to identify three "trauma-themed romance subgenres" and argues for the importance of being "trauma-informed."

A pair of articles offer new perspectives on historical romance. Lasya Tandon, in "[\(Dis\)Honourable Escapes: Reassessing Sexuality in Georgette Heyer's Historical Romances](#)" takes a closer look at how sexual activity is revealed and made invisible in Georgette Heyer's

novels, countering the idea that Heyer's historical fiction was not interested in desire. Sarah Ficke's ["Narrating Histories of Love and Violence: The Civil War and Alyssa Cole's A Hope Divided"](#) focuses on the second book of Alyssa Cole's Loyal League trilogy, set during the American Civil War, arguing that the novel is engaged in "reparative history," especially for marginalized characters and voices.

Finally, Bancha Rattanamathuwong's ["Bodies that Become Content: Reading Fujoshi's Voices and Discursive Construction of Cuteness in Thai BL Novels"](#) take *fujoshi* as its focus—female fans of romantic texts featuring male-male homoerotic relationships—analysing the attribution of cuteness to characters and arguing for that this supports a consumerist approach to the genre.

Issue 15.1 contains three Notes and Queries pieces. ["Defining the Trope in Romance Fiction,"](#) authored by a collective led by Heather Schell, offers one of the first academic definitions of romance tropes. Francesca Pierini's ["Literary Fiction from the Perspective of Romance Scholarship: André Aciman's Room on the Sea"](#) reads Aciman's novel alongside Gillian Beer's *The Romance*, and Nafees Alam offers a reading of polyamory in the reality TV show *Sister Wives* in ["Addressing Bias Against SOPO VEE OPP Polyamory."](#)

The issue is rounded off with three book reviews of recent scholarship relevant for popular romance research. [Amy Doung's double review](#) of two volumes in historical romance edited by Hsu-Ming Teo and Paloma Fresno-Calleja maps how the books and their diverse contributors reflect current scholarly thought on historical romance fiction. Marisa Mills reviews Michelle Janning's [Love Letters: Saving Romance in the Digital Age](#) and its contribution to scholarship on material and digital culture. Finally, Prayash Gupta reviews [Publishing Romance Fiction in the Philippines](#) by Jodi McAlister, Claire Parnell and Andrea Anne Trinidad, and its overview of Filipino romance publishing culture.