

# Happily Ever After: The Romance Story in Popular Culture

Catherine M. Roach



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"Find your one true love and live happily ever after." The trials of love and desire provide perennial story material, from the BiblicalSong of Songsto Disney's princesses, but perhaps most provocatively in the romance novel, a genre known for tales of fantasy and desire, sex and pleasure. Hailed on the one hand for its women-centered stories that can be sexually liberating, and criticized on the other for its emphasis on male/female coupling and mythical happy endings, romance fiction is a multi-million dollar publishing phenomenon, creating national and international societies of enthusiasts, practitioners, and scholars. Catherine M. Roach, alongside her romance-writer alter-ego, Catherine LaRoche, guides the reader deep into Romancelandia where the smart and the witty combine with the sexy and seductive to explore why this genre has such a grip on readers and what we can learn from the romance novel about the nature of happiness, love, sex, and desire in American popular culture.

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