



\*!0%#, ('8'3('.\$!0!6:MG; )'3%(",\$#7%-#8\*!. \$#!.4/0\$3%\*8/4('0\$%#7%3/1%  
6\$!-\$3%#H\$-#('9%)'3(#-'\*49%, \*-!\*#-8\*49%NOP; QR9%'13, '-\*(#!\*49%"#/!6%\*0/4(9%  
\*!0%8\*!"%8#-\$K9&'). )%\*4(#6\$())\$-%\*..#/(%7#-%LE%, \$-\$! (%7%())\$%S!'(\$0%  
States fction market.%P\$.\*/3\$%#7%())\$%5\*-'\$0%3/16\$!-\$3%\*!0%1-\$\*0( )%#7%  
authors and readers, it can be deceptively difficult to nail down similarities  
( )\*(% /!('\$%\*44%-#8\*!. \$#!#5\$439%1/(%#!\$%)'!6%()\*(% '3%.#!3'3(\$!(\*. -#33%())\$%  
-#8\*!. \$!6\$!-\$%3%())\$%)\*, "%\$!0!6:??3%\*O\$3.\$!0\$!(%#7%())\$%O-\$2\$. #8\$0"9%  
-#8\*!. \$!\$!03%&'())%\*&\$00!69%#-%\*(%4\$\*3%())\$%, -#8'3\$%#7%3#8\$2!0%#7%  
. #88'(\$%!(%1\$(&\$!%)\$%)\$-#!\$%\*!0%\$-%)\$-#%; )'3%. #88#!%0\$!#8!'\*(#-%  
has been the target of criticism since feminist critique of the genre began,  
1/(%T\*8\$4%\*U\$6'39%\*/( )#-%#7%/+0)\$.( )1+2-3\$"( \*+ "4\$5%+6"& )#7%+0"8%19%  
\*-6/\$3%()\*(%7#-%-#8\*!. \$!-\$\*0\$-39%3\$3\$!6%())\$%)\$-#!\$%#5\$-.#8\$%()\$%1\*--'\$-%  
'3%())\$%-\$\*40-\*&%#7%())\$%3(#-\$39%!(%())\$%&\$00!6%\*(%())\$%\$!0:< )\$%\*33\$-(3%)(%  
“the heroine of the romance novel...overcomes the barrier and is freed  
from all encumbrances to her union with the hero,” and “her choice to  
8\*--"(%\$%)\$-#%'3%1/3(%#!\$%8\*!'7\$3(\*('!%#7%)\$-%7-\$0#8:ME%U\$\*0\$-3%5\*4/\$%  
the freedom of their heroine, not just a ring on her finger.

So where did the negative attitude toward these happy tales begin?  
W#-%()\*(%&\$%. \*!%14\*8\$%())\$%P-'('3)%6#5\$-!8\$!(; ; )\$%-'3\$%#7%())\$%#5\$4%. \*8\$%  
'!%\$!6)(\$!())\$. \$!(/-"%D!64\*!0%\*3%\*-\$3/4(%#7%3\$5\$-\$4%7\*.(#-3%\*!%!'. -\$\*3\$%  
'!%4('\$-\*. "9%() \*!23%(#%())\$%T/-('!3%& )#%5\*4/\$0%\*!0%, -#8#(\$0%())\$%\*1'4'("%#7%\*%  
, \$-3#!(%#-\$\*0%())\$%-#&!%1'14\$Y%())\$%\*1'4'("%#%, -#0/.\$%\*!0%0'3(-1/(\$1##23%  
\*3%\*-\$3/4(%#7%())\$%. #88\$-.'\*4%, -#3,\$-('"%&).' )%\*44#&\$0%())\$%, /14'3)!6%

identification.”<sup>F</sup>

“( )’3(’ 8 9\$’6)(\$\$!( )b.\$!(/-“%#!5\$4%8 #3(4“%(##2%)\$3)\*,\$#7%&)\*(%  
&#/40%(#0\*“%1\$%\$\*3’4“%-\$.#6!=\$0%\*3%\*%,#,#/4%-#8\*!.\$7%\*!%\*77\*’-1\$(&\$%\$!%  
3(\*-b.-#33\$0%#5\$-3&’())3\$\$8’!64“%!”\$3.\*,\*14\$#13(\*.4\$3%&)#%8’-\*/4#/34“%  
7#/#!0%\*%)\*,“%\$!0’!6%&\*3%\*%.4\*33’.%!#5\$4%,4#(:`%;)’3%(",\$#7%-4\*(’#!3)’,%  
\*!0%#7(\$!%.4\*33b1\*3\$0%0-\*8\*%,#3\$0%\*%()-\$\*(9%’!%)\$6#5\$-!8\$!(c3%\$"\$39%  
(#%())\$&\$41\$’!6%#7%())\$#.#!(-"c3%.’(=\$!39%,\*-(’/4\*-4“())\$&#8\$!%&)#%  
8\*0\$%/,%8#3(%#7%())\$-\$\*0\$-3)’,-%;)’3%.#!.\$-!%7#-%&#8\$!c3%&\$4b1\$’!6%  
led to the equivocation of libraries with brothels and a condemnation of  
( )\$-\$\*0\$-3%&)#%. )#3\$%(#, \*-( \*2\$’!%)\$8 :c#5\$4-\$\*0’!6%&\*3%\*33#.’\*(\$0%  
with moral shortcomings: “Their regard for such low literature was seen  
to reflect their own bad taste and dubious personal traits: they were said  
to be fanciful and superficial, indolent and hasty, incapable of any serious



and does not rely on downplaying or redefining the domestic betrothal \$!0!6\*3%.\$!(-\*4%(#())\$%3(#-":%g\$39()(\$%)\$-#!\$%6\$(3%\*)/31\*!0%\*(())\$%\$!09% and no, that doesn't make her a disempowered woman. "Domesticity is not the necessary equivalent of oppression, either externalized or internal, \*!0%(#0'38'33%'(%\*3%3/. )%'3%(#%/!0\$-8'!\$%\*%5\*4'0%\*3, '-(\*#!%#-%4'7\$.)#'. \$%7#-% &#8\$! :M>F% f /3(1\$. \* /3\$(())\$-#!\$%3\*8 \*--'\$0%\*!0%) \* , "%\*1#/(%)#0\$3!C(% mean that she is brainwashed or stifed. It means that she values that form #7%-\$4\*('#!3)',9%&'). )%'3%\*7#-8%\*!0%-(/\*4%.\$4\$1-(\*#!%())\*(%) \*3%1\$!%5\*4/\$0% 7#-%.\$!(/-\$3:%a7%'\*8 \*--'\$6\$%\*(())\$%\$!0%-#!7#-.\$3(())\$%5\*4/\$%#7%\*0#8\$3(' . )#'. \$%7#-%-\$\*0\$-39(())\$!%())\*(%)#3%#(%)!)\$-\$(4"%-\$!7#-.'!6%,\*(-'-.)\*4%#!(#4% #5\$-%())#3\$3\*8\$%-\*\$0\$-3%U\*(())\$-9%'(%'3'8'--#!6(())\$-%&!%,-#-'(\$3%\*!0% 4#5\$1\* .2%(#())\$8%'!%\*%-\$,-\$3\$!(\*(#!\*4%\*!0%\$8,\*)\$'(%&\*": ;#%0\$7\$!0(())\$)\$-#!\$9%\*/( )#-%f\$!!'7\$-%d-/3'\$%.'(\$3( )\$%-#8\*!.\$% )\$-#!\$!3\$3\$47b0\$(\$-8'!\$0%5\*4/\$%\*,\*(-%7-#8(())\$)\$-#%\$!(-\$4":%< )%3\*((\$3% that her heroine "doesn't have to earn her hero's love; she gets it as a 7-\$1\$9%/!.#!0'(#!\*44"9%1\$.\*/3\$3%)\$3%\*!(-'!3'.\*44"%&#-( )"#7%1\$!6%4#5\$09% \*!0% )\$-%&#-( )%'3%0\$8#!3(-(\$0%(#( )\$-\$\*0\$-%1"(%)\$%&\*"%3)\$%#.#!0/.(3)\$-\$% quest."?>"; )'3%&#-( )&'4\$%)\$-#!\$%3%. \* ,\*14\$%#7%#5\$-.#8'!6( )\$%#13(\*.4\$3\$ ( )\*(%\*-\$% ,/(%!%7-#!( )#7%)\$-9%\*!0%& )\$!3)\$%0#3%#5\$-.#8\$%(\$8%3)\$%6\$3( )\$%-\$&\* -03%#7%, \$-3#!\*4%6-#&( )&'(%)\*%1#! /3%#7%\*%4#5'!6%8\*!\*(%)\$-3'0\$%#( . )\$%-\$)\$-##!% ; )'3%4#5\$0%\*!0%4#5'!6%)\$-#!\$%3%\*-\$,-\$3\$!(\*(#!%#7%5'.(#-"% #5\$-%.)\*44\$!6\$39%&'). )%'3%\*43#%4##2\$0%0%&!% / ,#!%\*3%1\$!6%'0\$\*4'3'.%\*!0% 14'!0%(#( )\$%)\*-3)\$-\*\$4'(\$3%#7%&#8\$!3%4'5\$0%\$+,-\$-\$!.\$3%:d-/3'\$%\*-6/\$39% )&#5\$-9( )\*(%)%\* , , "%\$!0!6'3!#(!\*5\$X

Romance fiction places women at the center of the story by -7/3'!6%(##, \*%4', %3\$-5'. \$%#( )\$% , #3(b8#0\$-!3(5'\$&#( )\*(%4'7\$'3% hopeless and we're all victims. Instead, romance fiction almost /!5\$-3\*44""-\$!7#-.\$3( )\$%)\$\*4( )"% )/8\*!% , \$-.\$, ('#!% )\*( )\$% &#-40%'3!#(%\*%5'. #/3(-\*6'.% , 4\*.\$9%\$3, \$.'44"%7#-%&#8\$!-% ; )'3% has often been cited as evidence that romance fiction does '!0\$0%0&\$44%'!7\*!( \*3"%4\*!09%1/(%3)#&!6%&#8\$!3%5'.(#-\$3% '3!#(% /!-\$\*4'3'!.9%#-%'3(-\*6\$0"%!)\$-\$!(4"%3/ , \$-#-%#-%8#-\$% -\$\*4'3'(%)\*%!%#8\$0":6!

Romance heroines reflect the reader's world back to them through complex,

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d /4(-\$9M%Convergence%GF9%#:%L%h>` \`ZK9%J>bJJ:

% 18 Janet, "Romance Is Not a Feminist Genre – And That's Okay." >%) (+/. \$5"(f \* !/\*-" [9%G!>Z9%0\$\*"/()#-:#8]7\$\*/(-3)]\$(-3b#7b# , ' !#!]#8 \* ! . \$b'3b!#(b\*b7\$8'!3(b6\$!-\$b\*!0b )\*(3b#2\*"):

% 19 Jenny Crusie Smith, "This Is Not Your Mother's Cinderella: The Romance Novel \*3%W\$8'!3(%W\*"-"; \*4\$9M%!%6" )&#-7+! "#8%#-\$#39%0%?!!\$%h:h\*4\$-%!0%U#3\$8\*-"%D: f#) !3#!bh/-\$2%HP#&4'!6%O-\$!%P#&4'!6%O-\$!%<(\*\$S!5\$-3'("%T# , /4\*-%T-\$339%>` ` `K9%ZZ:

% 20 "Romancing Reality: The Power of Romance Fiction to Reinforce and Re-Vision the U\$\*49M%Paradoxa: Studies in World Literary Genres%#:%>bG%h>` ` JK%`>b`G:



liberation. A common critique is that romance novels don't give women readers instructions or a "comprehensive program" for reinventing their by asking: which novels do? standard of social revolution for which no other genre is held responsible?

'3% 3(44% (\*1##9% #, \$!4" \* .2!#&!\$06'!6% ( )\$ 3\$+ / \*4% ( )\$ 8\$3% #7% 3#8\$ 1##23% 3\$5\$83% (#5\$-3) \*0#&%( )\$-\$3(%#7% ( )\$ 5\*4 / \$%#7% ( )\$ 6\$!-\$:

% B\$3, '(# ( )\$ 3\$ 3 / -7 \* . \$b\$5\$4% 8'3 / !0\$-3 (\*!0'!639% \*!0% , \*-( '44" 1\$. \* / 3\$ ( )\$ " . ) 44\$!6\$ \* 3 ( / 0\$! ( ( # & #-2% , \*3 ( 8'3-\$, -\$3\$! (\*('#!9% -#8 \* !. \$ ! #5\$43 3) # / 40 1\$ 1-# / 6) ( ' ! ( # ) ' 6) \$- \$0 / . \* ('#! 4' (\$- ( / -\$ . / --' . / 4 / 83% 1\$. \* / 3\$ ( )\$ " & # / 40 7 / - ( )\$- \* \* , -' 8 \* -" 6# \* 4% #7% 4'1\$- \* 4% \* - (3% education: empathy. Empathy, or "the ability to understand and share the 7\$4'!63%#7% \* !# ( )\$-9W% \*4#&3% , #, 4\$ ( # . # ! ! \$ . ( & ' ( ) % # ! \$ \* ! # ( )\$-0\$3, '( \$ 0'77\$-\$! . \$3% ! ( )\$ ' -%4'5\$0\$+, \$-\$! . \$3%#-1\$4'739%\*!0% ( )'3%\*1'4' ( " ( # # ' 8 \* 6' ! \$ # ( )\$-3% . # 8 , 4\$+4" '3% \* 7# / ! 0 \* ( # ! \* 4%32'44% ( # & \* -0' ! ( \$- , -\$3# ! \* 4% . #44 \* 1#- \* ( # ! \* ! 0% -\$3, \$ . :L% @ # 8 \$ ! \* -\$ ( \* / 6) ( # ' 0\$ ! ( ' 7" H#- \$ 8 , \* ( ) = \$ K% & ( ) % 8 \$ ! % because, as Jane Tompkins points out, "stories about men...function as stories about all people," so "women learn at an early age to identify with 8 \* 4\$ ) \$-#3:ML The same kind of practice in empathy is rarely required or 5\$5!\$! . # / - \* 6\$0' ! % 8 \$ ! ( # & \* -0' 7\$ 8 \* 4\$ . ) \* - . ( \$-39% \* ! 0% ( ) ' 3% ' 8 1 \* 4 \* ! . \$ . # ! ( - 1 / ( \$ 3% ( # ) \$ % , \$- . \$ , ( ' # ! ( ) \* ( % 8 \$ ! \* - \$ 3 ( \* ! 0 \* -0% \* ! 0% & # 8 \$ ! \* - \$ % , \$- , ) \$-4% 0'5\$! ( ) \* ( # & # 8 \$ ! \* - \$ % ! # ( 9' ! 7 \* . ( 9' 3' 0\$ . ) \* - . ( \$-3% ! ( ) \$ % ) / 8 \* ! % 3 ( # - " \* ! 0% ( ) \$ % . # ! ( ' ! / \* ( ' # ! # 7% ( ) \$ ) / 8 \* ! % & # -409% 4' ( \$- ( / - \$ & ) ' . ) % \$ + , 4#-\$3% 3#8\$#7% ( ) \$ ' -% \$ + , \$-\$! . \$3% . # / 40% , -#5'0\$# , # - ( / ! ' \$ 3% 7#- \* 44% 3 ( / 0\$ ! ( 3% ( # 3\$ \$ 7\$ 8 \* 4\$ . ) \* - . ( \$-3% , 4 \* . \$ 0% 7-# ! ( % \* ! 0% . \$ ! ( \$- \* ! 0% 3 , \$ ! 0% ( ' 8 \$ % / ! , \* . 2' ! 6% their stories, encouraging identification with and appreciation for women's \$ + , \$- \$ ! . \$ 3: % ? % . - ' ( . \* 4% \* . \* 0\$ 8' . % . # ! 3' 0\$- \* ( ' # ! # 7% -# 8 \* ! . \$ % ! # 5\$ 43% & # / 40% help the situation by encouraging a female-centric identification outside #7% ( ) \$ 3\$ 47% ! ( ) \$ % . 4 \* 33-## 8 % 7-# 8 % \* % & # 8 \$ ! b & - ( ( \$ ! 9% & # 8 \$ ! b . \$ ! ( - . % \* - \$ \* % # 7% 4' ( \$- \* ( / - \$- < / - \$ 4" \* ! % \* - \$ \* % # 7% 4' ( \$- ( / - \$ % ( ) \* ( % 7# . / 3\$ 3% # ! ( ) \$ % \$ 8 , # & \$- 8 \$ ! ( % # 7% ( ) \$ % \$ 8 # ( ' # ! \* 4% 4' 5\$ 3% # 7% & # 8 \$ ! % . # / 40% 6\$ ! \$- \* ( \$ 5 \* 4 / \* 14\$ 0' 3 . / 33% # ! % ( # \* ! % \$ 0 / . \* ( ' # ! \* 4% 3\$ ( ' ! 69% 3 , \$ . ' 44" % & ) \$ - \$ . / --' . / 4 \* 3 ( ' 44% 7# . / 3% , - \$ 0# 8' ! \* ! ( 4" % # ! % & #-2% 1 " \* ! 0% \* 1# / ( 0\$ \* 0\$ 8 \$ ! : % @ ) ' 4\$ 4 \* . 2% # 7% 0' 5\$-3' ( " ' ! ( ) \$ % . \* ! # ! % ) \* 3% 34#&4" % 1\$ \$ ! \* 00-\$33\$0% & ' ( ) % 6- \* 0 / \* 4% \* 0# , ( ' # ! % # 7% ( \$ + ( 3% & - ( ( \$ ! 1 " % & # 8 \$ ! \* ! 0% , # , 4\$ # 7% . # 4#-9% ( ) \$ % \* 00' ( ' # ! % # 7% -# 8 \* ! . \$ 9% & ) ' . ) % ) \* 3% \* 4% -6\$ 4" % 6' ! #-\$0% 4' ( \$- - " ) ' 3 ( # - 9% & # / 40% ) \$ 4 , 0' 5\$-3' 7" ( ) \$ % . \* ! # ! % ! % \* 8 \$ \* ! ! 67 / 4% & \* - %

? . #-0'!6% ( # % \* G I > J 3 / -5" % 1 " ( ) \$ U # 8 \* ! . \$ @ - ( \$-3% #7% ? 8\$- ' . \* 9% ( ) \$ % \* 5\$- \* 6\$-\$ \* 0\$-3) ' , #7% -# 8 \* ! . \$ % ! # 5\$ 43% \* - \$ % F G , \$- . \$ ! ( % 7\$ 8 \* 4\$ 9% L Z b L ` % "\$ \* -3% #409% J L , \$- . \$ ! ( % & ) ' ( 9% \* ! 0% F [ % , \$- . \$ ! ( % ) ( \$ -#3\$+ / \* 4: L E ; ) \$ 3 ( \* ( ' 3' . 3% immediately raise the question: can a genre with such a homogenous

1"% , \$# , 4\$% #7% . #4#-% &'()%. ) \*- \* . (\$-3% #7% . #4#-9% \* !0% NOP ; QR% -# 8 \* ! . \$% ) \*3%  
1\$\$!% #!\$% #7% ()\$% 8#3(3(\$\*0'4"% 6-#&'!6% 3/16\$!-\$3% 3'! . \$% ()\$% >` J13:LZ



those influences. The inner lives of women deserve to be explored and  
5\*4/\$0%'!%\*. \*0\$8'-% @)'4\$-#8\*!. \$%!#5\$43%\*-\$%.\$-(\*\*'4"%!#(%())\$%#!4"%  
5\$)'4\$%7#-%()\*(%\$+,4#-\*(#!9%())\$"%0#%#77\$-%\*%5\*-\$0%\*!0%!'('8\*(\$4##2%\*(%  
women writers' and readers' interests and passions, and a prolific genre  
&'())%3/. )%\*-'. )%'3(#-"%\*!0%)\$\*4("8#0\$-!%0\$1\*(\$3)#/40%1\$%'.4/0\$0%!'%  
\*!%\$0/.\*(#!%()\*(%5\*4/\$3%4'(\$-(/-\$%\*!0%())\$8/4('8\$!3#!\*4('##7%)/8\*!%  
\$+, \$-\$!. \$:%%