

Delve Deeper into *Guilty Pleasures*

A film by Julie Moggan

This multi-media resource list, compiled by Erica Bess, Susan Conlon and Martha Perry Liu of Princeton Public Library, provides a range of perspectives on the issues raised by the POV documentary *Guilty Pleasures*.

Every four seconds a romance novel published by Harlequin or its British counterpart, Mills & Boon, is sold somewhere in the world. Julie Moggan's **Guilty Pleasures** takes an amusing and touching look at this global phenomenon. Ironies abound in the contrasts between the everyday lives of the books' readers and the fantasy worlds that offer them escape. **Guilty Pleasures** portrays five romance devotees who must, ultimately, find their dreams in the real world.

ADULT NONFICTION

Kennedy, Miranda. *Sideways on a Scooter: Life and Love in India*. New York: Random House, 2011. The American-born author recounts her almost decade-long stay in New Delhi, meeting North Indian friends, learning about the cultural differences with regard to marriage, relationships, and roles of women, and the values placed on material things, and the social inequalities created by the caste system. She tells her story through the lives of three close "friends" she meets: Geeta, a thirty-something with a love of Western style and Bollywood, on a quest to find a husband; Parvati, successful businesswoman who shuns the traditional views of women in Indian society; and Radha, a hard-working widow and maid who is forced to work the caste system in order to provide a better life for her children.

McKnight-Trontz, Jennifer. *The Look of Love: The Art of the Romance Novel*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2002. Swashbuckling sailors, dashing dukes, naughty nurses, and sexy stewardesses caught in webs of love, passion, betrayal, and intrigue: these are the raw materials of the romance novel--and the lusty covers that advertise them. McKnight-Trontz provides a rollicking history of the covers and stories that have captivated millions of readers worldwide. More than 150 of the most sensational covers from this venerable if venal literary form are shown in glorious color, focusing on the period from 1940 to 1970, romance design's most fertile era.

Regis, Pamela. *A Natural History of the Romance Novel*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003. While it remains consistently dominant in bookstores and on best-seller lists, the romance genre is also widely dismissed by the critical community. These scholars tend to regard readers, who are largely women, as passive consumers easily manipulated by romances, attributing the genre's overwhelming appeal to inadequacies and weaknesses in the readers themselves. In *A Natural History of the Romance Novel*, Pamela Regis argues that such critical studies fail to take into consideration the personal choice of readers, offer any true definition of the romance novel, or discuss the nature and scope of the genre.

Weisser, Susan Ostrov. *Women and Romance: A Reader*. New York: NYU Press, 2001. A collection of texts specifically focused on the subject of women's conflicted but powerful urge to experience the pleasure and endure the pain of romantic love. This anthology includes historical as well as contemporary selections, personal letters as well as theoretical essays, and social science perspectives as well as literary criticism.

Wendell, Sarah. *Everything I Know about Love I Learned from Romance Novels*. Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks Casablanca, 2011. Take a dashing hero with a heart of gold and a mullet of awesome. Add a heroine with a bustle and the will to kick major butt. Then include enough contrivances to keep them fighting while getting them alone and possibly without key pieces of clothing, and what do you have? A romance novel. What else? Enough lessons about life, love, and everything in between to help you with your own happily-ever-after.

ADULT FICTION

Abraham, Pearl. *The Romance Reader*. New York: Riverhead, 1995. Raised in an ultra-orthodox Hasidic home, 12-year-old Rachel has been taught all her life to follow the conservative beliefs of her religion; to do otherwise would shame her and her prominent family. However, Rachel longs to experience the freedoms of what she considers to be a normal American life. Upon getting a library card, she secretly begins checking out romance novels, using them as her only source for information about men, sex, and relationships, before she is arranged into marriage at age 18. Through these books, Rachel develops ideas about what it could be like to escape the path that has been set for her. Can she escape the confines of her upbringing and create a life different from that of her family?

Brock, Clarke. *Exley: A Novel*. Chapel Hill, NC: Algonquin Books, 2010. When 9-year-old Miller believes he has seen his missing father, a victim of the Iraq war, lying unconscious in a hospital for veteran soldiers, he goes on a search for the one man he believes can help save him - his

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father's favorite author, Frederick Exley. Told through the perspective of Miller and his therapist, the quest also becomes a search for the truth and a struggle to differentiate what is real from what is not.

Fowler, Karen Joy. *The Jane Austen Book Club*. New York: Putnam, 2004. A group of six adults meet over the course of several months to discuss Austen's classic novels and find themselves identifying and analyzing aspects of the characters - including romantic entanglements - with the reality of their own lives.

FILMS / BROADCASTS

***Romancing the Stone*. A film by Robert Zemeckis. Beverly Hills, CA: Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment, 1984; 1999. DVD, video: English.** A homebody romance writer begins to live her stories when her sister is kidnapped in South America. Douglas is a rugged jungle hunter who comes to her aid.

***Shall We Dance?* A film by Masayuki Suo. Miramax Films, Daiei, NTV, Hakuhodo and Nippan present an Altamira Pictures, 1996; Burbank, CA: Miramax Home Entertainment, 2005. DVD, video: Japanese and English.** A middle-aged businessman's dull life takes an interesting turn when he signs up for a ballroom dance class just to meet the beautiful dance instructor. *See also the 2004 American remake of Shall We Dance? starring Richard Gere and Jennifer Lopez.*

***Strictly Ballroom*. A film by Baz Luhrmann. Burbank, CA: Miramax Home Entertainment, 1993; 2002. DVD, video: English.** A championship ballroom dancer who's breaking all the rules and his ugly duckling dancing partner make their dreams come true together.

BOOKS FROM GILL SANDERSON (featured in *Guilty Pleasures*)

Sanderson, Gill. *Nurse Bride, Bayside Wedding*. UK: Harlequin/ Mills & Boon, 2011. Dr. Ed Tremayne hasn't been home for a long time. Now he's back—and he's needed! A virus outbreak on a stranded cruise ship in Penhally Bay is threatening lives. Lives that Ed can save—but only if he can put his traumatic past behind him.

Sanderson, Gill. *The Doctor's Baby Surprise*. Harlequin/ Mills & Boon, 2007. Dr. Toby Sinclair has a reputation as a playboy. So when his baby son - who he never knew existed - lands on his doorstep, the doctor can't shy away from commitment any longer. Dr Annie Arnold knows she can't fall for Toby a second time, but when he asks her to help him...she can't refuse.

Sanderson, Gill. *The Noble Doctor*. Harlequin/ Mills & Boon, 2006. From the moment she sets eyes on gorgeous Dr. Marc Duvallier, midwife Lucy Stephens is sure he is The One. And Marc seems just as sure, just as quickly! But Marc isn't just a doctor - he's also the Comte de Montreval, with responsibilities tying him to his family estate.