Romance Novels in American Public Libraries:
A Study of Collection Development and Promotion Practices*

Denice Adkins, Assistant Professor**
School of Information Science & Learning Technologies, University of Missouri
303 Townsend Hall
Columbia, MO 65211
Phone: 573-884-9804
Fax: 573-884-4944
E-mail: adkinsde@missouri.edu

Linda Esser, Associate Professor of Practice
School of Information Science & Learning Technologies, University of Missouri

Diane Velasquez, Assistant Professor
Graduate School of Library and Information Science, Dominican University

Heather L. Hill, Doctoral Student
School of Information Science & Learning Technologies, University of Missouri

**Corresponding Author

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ABSTRACT

In library literature, the collection of romance novels has produced a fairly vociferous debate that has not surrounded other genres. However, there is relatively little in the literature that examines current practices. The authors conducted a national survey, asking libraries how they acquired romance novels for their libraries, what their proportional expenditures were for romance, and the extent of their romance collections. Responses suggested that libraries in general have sizeable romance collections. Some libraries do indeed have smaller collections and spend little or no money on the romance genre. Little is known about public libraries' collection development practices for any genre, and these results help fill that gap in the library literature. Results also suggest that library and information science education, beyond supporting leisure reading, ought to emphasize the roles that leisure reading serves for readers.

INTRODUCTION

Statistics suggest that romance novels are widely purchased and enjoyed by their readers. Library and information science (LIS) literature suggests that librarians are biased against romance novels and that romance novels often considered "scorned literature" (Schurman & Johnson, 2002). As both romance readers and librarians, the authors of this article each have vivid and different experiences with the collection of romance novels in public libraries, from outright refusal to purchase romance novels to a wholesale acceptance of the genre based purely on motives of increasing circulation. The existing LIS literature presents limited information

regarding what collection development practices have grown up romance collections, or for that matter, around any popular genre fiction collection in public libraries. Opinion pieces and collection guides abound, and while these works suggest the attitudes and practices that librarians ought to adopt toward romance novels, the literature does not document the attitudes and practices that librarians have adopted. Moreover, the authors' experiences were sufficiently diverse to suggest that there is no accepted foundation for collecting romance fiction other than librarians' personally held opinions. The development practices of public libraries' popular genre collections seem to be taken for granted by library and information science researchers.

To provide a benchmark for future studies of public library practice, the researchers surveyed public libraries nationwide to determine their methods of acquiring romance novels, the collection development funds available for those novels, and the types, or subgenres, of the romance novels they collected. The study asked the following questions:

1. How large are libraries' romance collections, on average?
2. Do public libraries acquire romance novels through donations, through new purchases, or both?
3. Do public libraries that purchase romance novels have a standard budget for the genre?
4. Which romance subgenres are found in public library collections?
5. In which formats (paperback, hardcover, audio book, etc.) do public libraries acquire romance novels?

BACKGROUND

Without doubt, readers are able to access romance novels from a variety of sources, and the library is only one of those sources. In 2005, 25% of romance readers obtained the last romance novel they read from a library (Romance Writers of America, 2005). This is a marked increase from 2003, when only 14% of romance readers got their book from the library (Romance Writers of America, 2003). Nonetheless, it seems libraries are not readers' choice of first resort for obtaining romance novels.

That romance readers do not rely on public libraries for romance novels may be due to "persistent misperceptions about romance fiction still harbored by library staff" (Charles & Linz, 2006, p. 44). Supporting this, Saricks (2001, pp. 222-3) notes that romance readers "have low expectations of the service and respect they will receive in libraries." Supporting evidence for this perspective might be taken from Saricks' further suggestions that some libraries' romance collections may rely mainly on donations (p. 224) and may be incompletely cataloged (pp. 224-225). Chelton (1991, p. 45) suggests the situation is further exacerbated by libraries' practice of indiscriminately mixing different romance series and notes that libraries purchase series inconsistently (pp. 48-49), leaving patrons unable to find previously published titles.

Little empirical research has been published regarding public libraries' romance collection development practices. Several studies have examined fiction collections geared toward special user groups such as evangelical Christians and lesbians in relation to the demographic representation of those groups (Dilevko & Atkinson, 2002; Pecoskie & McKenzie, 2004. Research on public libraries' collections of popular fiction genres (mystery, science fiction, etc.) is essentially missing from the literature regarding collection development practices. In contrast,

there is a considerable amount of descriptive literature that advises librarians on developing romance collections (e.g., Bouricius, 2000; Charles & Linz, 2005) along with articles that focus on the appeal of romance (e.g., Chelton, 1991; Radway, 1991).

A search of Library Literature & Full Text Database yields two empirical studies related to romance collection development. Funderburk's (2004) comparison of lists of award-winning titles in romance and other genres to the genre holdings in North Carolina libraries indicates that North Carolina libraries were less likely to hold romance titles than they were to hold titles in other genres. According to Funderburk, a potential confounding factor is that romance titles are less likely to be reviewed in standard collection development journals (pp. 19-22). The author raises the possibility that the lack of representation of published reviews of romance fiction in standard review journals may be a critical factor in impeding collection development.

The second published work was the pilot study for the current project (Adkins, Esser, & Velasquez, 2006). The authors examined the presence and size of romance collections in public libraries throughout the State of Missouri. Data indicated the libraries' mean romance collection size was 2,819 paperbacks and 2,995 hardcover romances. Urban libraries had the largest collection sizes, followed by suburban and rural libraries. Most of the libraries studied use both donation and purchases to build romance collections, with 6% of respondents using donations as the exclusive method of collection building. Over 50% indicated devoting more than 2% of the collection budget to romance purchases.

METHODOLOGY

This investigation used a quantitative survey method to isolate information about the practices public libraries use to develop their romance collections.

The Population

Surveys were sent to 1,020 directors of public libraries identified in *American Library Directory*. A purposive sampling technique was used to select libraries in 49 states and the District of Columbia. (Missouri was excluded from this population, as a previous version of this survey had gone to Missouri library directors.) Public libraries were then randomly chosen from state listings. Directors were asked to forward the survey to the person on staff who was best suited to answer the survey.

Although the population was randomly selected, there is a possibility of self-selection bias among respondents. The respondents may represent librarians who hold stronger opinions than the normative population, either for or against the collection of romance novels. Similarly, non-respondents may have chosen not to respond due to their disinterest in the issue.

The Instrument

A survey was designed and subjected to expert review for content validation. During 2004, the survey was tested in the State of Missouri. Based on those results, the survey was slightly modified for national distribution. A cover letter, included with the survey, explained that completion of the survey was optional and that directors should return the survey envelope empty to indicate they not to participate in the survey.

The survey instrument (available from the authors) was four standard (8.5" x 11") pages long, and contained 28 questions, ranging from facts about library practices to librarians' attitudes toward romance novels. Questions about romance fiction in libraries asked about the size of the romance collection, acquisition practices, collection development funds allocated, and romance subgenres collected. Another question asked the respondent to indicate whether the library served an urban, suburban, or rural community.

Procedure

Surveys were mailed out in the summer of 2006, and by the end of 2006, 436 surveys had been returned, of which 40 were empty envelopes. Discounting the empty envelopes, 396 surveys were received, for an effective return rate of 39%. Surveys were received from 48 states; As previously noted, Missouri was excluded from the data collection; no surveys were received from Delaware or the District of Columbia.

Quantitative survey results were coded and analyzed using SPSS v. 14. Most variables used in this were categorical. For instance, a question asked which romance subgenres were collected, with a checklist of choices. One variable, percentage of collection development funds allocated to romance, was ordinal; choices ranged from "0%" to "more than 3%." Another question, asking respondents to indicate the size of romance collection, produced a ratio variable. This number produced responses that were clearly estimates, rounded to the hundred or thousand, and also produced very exact numbers that may have come from collection management systems.

The disparity between these two types of answer led the researchers to treat this variable as an estimate, rather than an exact count of existing collections.

Descriptive statistical data was extracted for questions about libraries' romance collection size, means of acquisition, and subgenres collected. This descriptive data was used to measure frequency and central tendency (means) for number and type of romance novels held by public libraries, how public libraries funded their romance collections. Comparisons of means between library types (rural, suburban, and urban) were also performed to demonstrate differences that may have been based on the size of the community being served.

RESULTS

The survey asked respondents to indicate how large the romance collections were, what formats and subgenres were held, whether collection development funds were specifically allocated for romance novels, and what percentage of funds was allocated. Informal communications with librarians, in addition to the previous study, suggested rural libraries are faced with more restrictions in developing a romance collection than their urban and suburban counterparts. In order to control for this potential difference in romance collection development philosophies, respondents were asked to self-identify whether the library served a rural, urban, or suburban population. Of the 396 respondents, 70 (18%) were urban libraries, 140 (35%) were suburban, and 180 (45%) were rural. Six responses (2%) did not indicate the community setting. National results are presented below, followed by results broken down by library type (rural, suburban, urban).

Collection Size and Format

Library respondents were asked how many romance novels were held and in what formats: paperback, hard cover, audio book, or "other," with respondents most frequently indicating that "other" formats were large print or electronic books. Many respondents indicated collecting various subgenres, but left collection sizes blank on the surveys. In any instance where a format category was filled in with the number "0," the researchers input "0" into the data file. If a category was left blank, the researchers left that entry in the data field blank. Because the survey went to large library systems with many branches and small libraries, collection sizes varied considerably. Total collection size ranged from 0 to 75,000 romance novels, and this wide range of collection sizes produced large standard deviations. Table 1 shows the mean format collection size and standard deviations for libraries reporting collection sizes of each format.

[Insert Table 1 about here.]

Of those libraries reporting collection size, it was clear that urban libraries had some of the most obvious collection extremes, but had larger collections on average than their suburban or rural counterparts.

[Insert Table 2 about here.]

Urban, suburban, and rural libraries seem to hold similar size collections in various formats. While the largest mean number of paperback, hardcover, and "other" romance novels were held in urban libraries, the largest mean number of audiobooks were held at suburban libraries.

Table 3 presents format holdings by library type. All types tend to hold more hardcover romances than paperbacks, with audiobooks and "other" formats making up a modest fraction of the total romance collection. Suburban libraries were somewhat more likely to hold audiobooks than their urban and rural counterparts, possibly in response to the demands of suburban commuters. The relatively large collections of "other" formats in rural and suburban libraries, as compared to urban libraries, suggests that rural and suburban libraries might be using a wider definition of "romance" materials, possibly including manga comics or *fotonovelas* in this category.

[Insert Table 3 about here.]

Libraries collect romance in a variety of formats and subgenres. The popular conception of the romance novel is a paperback book, but libraries defy expectations here. Though paperback romance collections are not insignificant, hardcover romance collections were typically larger. The size of libraries' hardcover romance collections may suggest libraries' desire to spend their money on less ephemeral materials; it may also suggest that more romance novels are available in hardcover in recent years. Another possibility is that libraries use a looser definition of hard cover "romance" novels which includes women's fiction. Libraries had small collections of romance audiobooks and "other" materials like electronic books, suggesting that as romance novel formats expand, libraries are exploring those new formats. The increased availability of hardcover and audiobook formats suggests an increased "gentrification" of the romance genre, similar to the change the mystery genre went through in the last century.

Subgenres

As shown in Table 4, historical romance was the most frequently collected subgenre, held by 89% of libraries surveyed. This is in marked contrast to Romantic Erotica, the least frequently collected, with 20% of libraries having holdings in this subgenre. The majority of libraries held multiple subgenres. Of the 13 subgenres mentioned in the survey, 11 libraries (3%) collected all 13, and 158 libraries (40%) collected between 9 and 12 subgenres. Another 158 (40%) collected between 5 and 8 subgenres, while 62 libraries (16%) collected between 1 and 4 subgenres. Only 7 libraries (2%) did not collect any subgenres. (Total percentages add to more than 100% due to rounding.)

[Insert Table 4 about here.]

Table 5 illustrates subgenres collected by library environment type. Subgenres tend to be collected relatively consistently across library types, with a few exceptions. The staples of the romance genre – historical romance, romantic suspense, series romance novels – are collected relatively consistently regardless of the library's rural, suburban, or urban setting. Rural libraries were less likely than urban or suburban libraries to collect chick lit, contemporary, paranormal, regency, erotica, and futuristic/time travel romances, but more likely to collect inspirational romances. Urban libraries were significantly more likely to collect multicultural romance novels than suburban or rural libraries.

[Insert Table 5 about here.]

Libraries with larger total romance collections also collected a larger selection of subgenres. There are several possible explanations for the phenomenon. Since large romance collections tend to be found in urban libraries with widely divergent populations, the collection of multiple

subgenres could be the result of serving many different types of romance readers. It is also possible that the collection development personnel at those libraries are more familiar with the romance genre and are providing a diversity of selection to their patrons.

Libraries that collect romance collect widely among subgenres, with 43% of libraries collecting more than eight of the thirteen subgenres indicated on the survey. Historical romance titles, including Regency romances, represented only 17% of all romance titles published in 2006 (Romance Writers of America, 2006, p. 36). However, the historical category dominated the subgenres collected by libraries. A similar situation was found with inspirational romance novels, which make up only 6% of all new romance titles released. The inspirational subgenre is collected by 83% of responding libraries. Contemporary romances, including romantic suspense, series, and multicultural novels, made up 63% of all titles published. Libraries are clearly providing homes for a variety of romances, including niche subgenres such as the inspirational romance.

Some interesting differences were revealed when the researchers broke down the subgenre analysis by library type. Urban libraries were the most likely to hold a variety of subgenres, while rural libraries were less likely to do so. If there is a limitation to rural libraries' collection of romance novels, it seems to be manifest here. Inspirational romances, with religious-oriented content and gentle themes of redemption and love, were held in 88% of rural libraries. By contrast, only 11% of rural libraries stocked the more explicit erotica. Paranormal romances often feature elements of witchcraft and the supernatural, and these were held in only 32% of rural libraries. Multicultural romance novels, emphasizing black, Latino, and Asian cultures,

were held by only 32% of rural libraries. These subgenres may be more challenging to introduce into a conservative environment. Moreover, the patron base for rural libraries may be more familiar with traditional subgenres such as historical and series romance novels, and less interested in these unfamiliar subgenres.

Acquisition and Funding Allocations

The majority of responding libraries, 331 or 84%, obtained romance novels through a combination of purchasing and receiving donated romance novels. Fifty libraries (13%) only purchased their romance novels, while another 13 (3%) only received romance novels via donation. Of the remaining two libraries, one respondent indicated that romance novels were not collected, while the other did not mark any option for this question.

Table 6 looks at romance collection size by means of acquisition. The largest mean romance collections were reported by libraries which acquired romances both by purchasing and by donation. Those libraries that relied on donations only reported the smallest mean collection size, which is consistent with results indicating that libraries relying on donations were also unlikely to devote a percentage of their collection development budget to the romance genre. Those libraries that only purchased romance novels had slightly smaller collections than the libraries that used both means, suggesting once again that a library open to collecting romance novels is more likely to have a larger collection.

[Insert Table 6 about here.]

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A total of 307 libraries (53%) provided usable answers to the question of whether they specifically allocated funds for the development of romance collections. In most cases, however, the funds allocated represented a small portion of the total book budget. When asked the approximate percentage of the collection development funds spent on romance novels, 46 (12%) spent less than one percent of their book budget; 79 (20%) spent between one and two percent, 56 (14%) spent between two and three percent, and 92 (23%) spent more than three percent. Another 34 respondents (9%) said that no money was specifically allocated for the purchase of romance novels. One library said funds were allocated for romance "as needed," and 88 respondents (22%) left the question blank. Non-respondents may not have been able to isolate the amount of money spent on romance fiction out of their total fiction budget, or they may have been less involved in purchasing and budgeting decisions

Table 7 compares libraries' romance novel acquisition methods to the percent of funds specifically allocated for romance purchases. Libraries which use only one method (donation or purchase) to collect romance novels are likely to allocate a smaller portion of their collection development budget to romance collection development, comparative to libraries that acquire romance novels from both donation and purchase. This also tends to suggest that libraries which are open to collecting romance make more concerted efforts to collect the genre.

[Insert Table 7 about here.]

Table 8 illustrates the relationship between allocation of collection development funds and romance collection size. Unsurprisingly, the largest mean romance collections were found at libraries which allocated more than 3%, and the smallest mean collections were found at those

libraries that devote 0% of their book budgets to romance purchases. However, the second largest collection was found at libraries that allocate less than 1% of their book budgets to romance.

[Insert Table 8 about here.]

While the majority of libraries tend to use both donation and purchase to develop their romance collections, there are some differences between these groups. Noticeably, almost a quarter of all urban libraries rely upon one method (either purchasing or donations) to acquire romance novels. Suburban libraries were very unlikely to acquire collections through donations. However, rural libraries were more reliant on donated romance, though rural areas were also more likely to use both methods of collection development than their suburban or urban counterparts.

[Insert Table 9 about here.]

When asked how much of the book budget is allocated to the romance genre, the modal response for urban and rural libraries was "more than 3 percent." For suburban libraries, the modal response was "between 1 and 2 percent." A relatively large percentage of urban and rural libraries indicated expending no funds for romance collection development. However, the largest percentage of rural libraries indicated spending more than 3 percent of the book budget for romance collection development. Suburban libraries were less likely than their rural and urban peers to allocate no money to romance collection development.

[Insert Table 10 about here.]

The primary method of acquisition of romance novels for most libraries is purchase. Almost all responding libraries (97%) either exclusively bought romance novels or purchased romance novels in addition to receiving donations. Only 3% of libraries rely exclusively on donations. Those libraries that do rely exclusively on donations are less likely to allocate specific funds for romance collection development. This could mean that romance novels are considered as part of a larger collection development category; romance may not be considered a separate budget line in a larger fiction budget. However, less than half of the responding libraries did not allocate collection development funds specifically for romance, and most libraries spent a considerable percent of their budgets to obtain romance. This suggests that many public libraries look at providing romance novels as a valid part of their service to patrons.

Despite some suggestion that rural libraries face greater restrictions in acquiring romance novels, the data did not indicate overwhelming differences in acquisition methods and budget percentages devoted to romance novel collection. Rural libraries did have smaller collections than suburban and urban libraries, and were somewhat more likely to rely exclusively on donations to develop their romance collections. Slightly more rural libraries relied on both purchasing and donations than did urban and suburban libraries. This is most likely due to the fact that rural libraries have smaller collection development budgets with less discretional spending capacity. However, these results also suggest that rural romance readers use their libraries as two-way streets, both for acquiring romances to read and for sharing romances they have already read. A relatively high number of rural libraries devoted over 3% of their collection budgets to romance purchases.

Data on total library collection size were not gathered, therefore results do not include an estimate of what percentage of the total collection is romance. Given general trends in collection sizes between urban and small community libraries (NCES, 2005, p. 61), romance could make up a greater percentage of the rural library collection than it does of the urban or suburban library collections. Overall, the results suggest that many libraries make an intentional effort to purchase romance novels. Others do not isolate romance as a category of special importance, though they purchase romance novels among other fiction selection decisions.

A Note about Attitudes

The survey also asked attitudinal questions. One of those questions inquired whether the individual respondent felt romance was a high-circulating, popular item in the library. While this question clearly focuses on the individual's feelings rather than the library's policy toward any particular genre, the results are intriguing. (See Table 11.) Librarians who felt romance was not popular or high-circulating had notably smaller collections than those librarians who did, leading to the perplexing question of whether patron demand is driving collection development practices in these libraries, or librarians' personal attitudes and beliefs toward romance fiction.

SIGNIFICANCE

This study provides an overall look at the national situation regarding public libraries' collection of one fictional genre, romance and is the first to broadly examine public libraries' romance holdings and the practices used to acquire romance novels. While not as precise as the NCES Compare Public Libraries available at http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/libraries/compare/index.asp, the data and benchmarks offer public librarians an opportunity to compare some facets of their

libraries' collections and practices with those of public libraries throughout the United States. The results may also serve as an impetus to action, providing data supporting the development of public library romance collections where there is patron demand and information on funding those collections. In some instances, libraries may be encouraged to re-examine their collection development policies and practices, either to find a way to include romance collections in their mission to serve readers, or to proactively deal with potential challenges to subgenres like romance erotica.

Budd (2006/2007, p. 84) maintains that, "The holdings of public libraries are products of intentional actions by people." It can be argued that the collection of romance novels, or lack thereof, represents librarians' intentions and beliefs about romance novels and their place in public libraries. These intentions and beliefs are shaped by gender, identity, peer pressure, institutional culture and what is acceptable within that institutional culture. These intentions and beliefs are often implicit and unvoiced, perhaps even unrecognized by individual public librarians and may not be considered when the librarians make selection decisions resulting in collections that match personal ideals of what library collections should be rather than collections developed with reader preferences in mind. At the same time, given the polemic surrounding romance novels, some librarians viewed collecting romance novels as an act of "resistance" against canonical standards. The data suggests that librarians who actively collect romances may be resisting a system they feel disenfranchises readers of the romance fiction genre. This dichotomy is certainly an area that merits further investigation.

Some public libraries focus on acquiring titles based almost purely on patron request, á la the Charlie Robinson "give 'em what they want" (Rawlinson, 1981) approach to collection development while others use institutionally traditional collection development models. There is no mandate that libraries and librarians be responsive to patron requests. However, it can be argued that patron input is integral to developing a library collection to meet community needs. The more traditional approach to collection development considers patron requests but not as the primary impetus for what to include in the collection.

In purchasing romance novels, libraries make an intentional decision to support leisure reading. Their subsequent treatment of romance novels provides material evidence of the degree and kind of support. Leisure reading has long been a motivator for public library use, but has only recently been widely acknowledged as a potential role for libraries. Ross, McKechnie, & Rothbauer (2006) discuss the "pleasures of reading" (p. 160-169) and how, for an avid reader, reading transcends individual pleasures to become a way of life. Libraries that purchase romance novels are acknowledging readers have multiple purposes for reading, and that reading is as much an emotional experience as it is an informational one.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study provide insight into some of the questions researchers raised regarding public libraries' romance collection development practices. Additional analysis of both the data collected and the results have generated topics for further inquiry. The *how* of romance collection development should be examined in addition to further investigation of the *what*. Where do future librarians learn about collection development practices and, perhaps more

importantly, what do they learn? Previous investigation suggests that reader advisory instruction is not generally provided by LIS education programs (Esser, Adkins, & Velasquez, 2008). Is genre collection development specifically addressed and, if it is addressed, in what context? Is instruction allied with research about the habits of readers and reading theory? Do most public libraries have fiction specialists selecting romance? Are the selection aides limited to those traditionally used by public librarians or are genre-specific review publications used to make selection decisions? Are romance novels from small and independent presses getting equivalent consideration with romances from mass-market publishers? Are vendors marketing romance subgenres to specific audiences, and paying less attention to other audiences? Addressing these questions can assist public librarians with developing more effective models of romance collection development for readers.

There have been few studies on the use of romance fiction by its readers and or on its readers. Radway's study, conducted in 1991, remains the pivotal reference on the topic. There is more to investigate in the area of both the use, and users of, romance fiction collections in public libraries. While some research has been done on romance readers generally, no study has examined romance readers and their interactions with library collections. LIS literature suggests that romance readers may not find the materials they desire in libraries, or may find it too difficult to find romance novels that do not have catalog data.

Romance fiction appears to be inherently gendered. Despite some male authors and readers, the romance genre is largely written for women, by women, and about women. Attitudes toward romance novels are shaped in part by librarians' views of women and an institutional culture that

assumes librarians are particularly gifted in ways that enables them to distinguish high culture from low culture; good books from bad (Harris, 1992). As the majority of public librarians are women, their selection or non-selection of romance novels suggests lines of inquiry investigating women librarians' views of stereotypically women's genres and of the women who read these genres.

The survey questions posed in this study were intended to provide a broad overview of public library collection development practices relating to romance fiction. Empirical data analysis provides averages but, in doing so, obscures the extremes and it is those extremes that provoke both the interest and ire of the romance-reading community. The data revealed extremes on either end of the romance collection spectrum. Further studies should take use both quantitative and a qualitative, in-depth approach to investigate why a library chooses one extreme or the other, whether the choice is due to patron demand, librarian attitudes and beliefs, budgetary constraints, or other factors.

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Table 1. Total romance collection sizes by format.

Format	Mean	Std. Dev.	Minimum	Maximum
Paperback (n=238)	1739.54	3720.02	0	30000
Hardcover (n=204)	2234.88	4903.87	0	50000
Audiobook (n=181)	222.55	448.01	0	5000
Other (n=25)	234.96	780.22	0	4000
Total (n=247)	2336.94	6037.85	0	75000

Table 2. Romance collection size between rural, urban, and suburban libraries, for libraries reporting collection size.

Library Type	Mean Collection Size	Std. Dev.	Minimum	Maximum
Urban (n=37)	5066.81	8817.202	4	36000
Suburban (n=89)	3966.40	9100.094	30	75000
Rural (n=117)	2971.21	4413.115	40	32819
Total (n=243)	3654.75	7181.943	4	75000

Table 3. Format holdings by library environment types, for libraries reporting format collection size.

Format	Library Type					
	Urban		Suburban		Rural	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Paperback	2555.33	4633.97	2081.75	4650.753	1109.01	1701.942
Hardcover	2790.97	6132.244	2452.12	6553.099	1953.67	2996.914
Audiobook	218.5	250.749	267.2	649.272	190.66	317.246
Other	10.2	22.253	67.75	63.615	74.0	140.373

Table 4. Number of libraries collecting romance subgenres.

Subgenre	Respondents (N=396)	Percent
Historical	354	89.4
Romantic Suspense	334	84.3
Inspirational	327	83.0
Chick Lit	300	75.8
Contemporary	290	73.2
Regency	261	65.9
Young Adult	254	64.1
Series	218	55.1
Futuristic/Time Travel	210	53.0
Multicultural	184	46.5
Paranormal	178	44.9
Romantic Erotica	81	20.5
Other	28	7.1

Table 5. Subgenres collected by library environment types.

Subgenre	Library Type					
	Urban (n=70)		Suburban (n=140)		Rural (n=180)	
	N	Pct.	N	Pct.	N.	Pct.
Chick Lit	55	79%	124	89%	117	65%
Contemporary	55	79%	113	81%	119	66%
Erotica	24	34%	36	26%	20	11%
Futuristic/Time Travel	42	60%	83	59%	80	44%
Historical	61	87%	129	92%	159	88%
Inspirational	53	76%	109	78%	159	88%
Multicultural	50	71%	75	54%	57	32%
Paranormal	41	59%	77	55%	58	32%
Regency	51	73%	107	76%	99	55%
Romantic Suspense	60	86%	115	82%	154	86%
Series	43	61%	72	51%	99	55%
Young Adult	47	67%	92	66%	110	61%
Other	6	9%	9	6%	13	7%

Table 6. Method of acquisition for romance collection and mean collection size.

Method of Acquisition	Mean Collection Size	Std. Dev.	Minimum	Maximum
Donation Only (n=7)	973.0	1048.749	4	2425
Purchase Only (n=30)	3540.47	4479.160	15	20000
Both (n=208)	3851.09	7730.827	50	75000

Table 7. Romance novel acquisition method by percentage of the book budget allocated for romance collection development (n=305)

Method of Acquisition	Percentage Allocated					Total
	0%	**< 1%**	**1-2%**	**2-3%**	**>3%**	
Donation	6 (50%)	2 (17%)	3 (25%)	1 (8%)	0 (0%)	12
Purchase	6 (16%)	6 (16%)	10 (27%)	4 (11%)	11 (30%)	37
Both	21 (8%)	37 (14%)	66 (26%)	51 (20%)	81 (32%)	256
Total	33 (11%)	45 (15%)	79 (26%)	56 (18%)	92 (30%)	305

Table 8. Percentage of book budget allocated for romance collection and mean collection size.

Percentage Allocated	Mean Collection Size	Std. Dev.	Minimum	Maximum
0% (n=23)	1627.78	2595.511	4	12000
< 1% (n=26)	2751.39	5881.911	30	30000
1-2% (n=49)	2533.59	4361.035	100	28500
2-3% (n=38)	3014.95	4426.792	60	21766
> 3% (n=70)	6685.89	11517.60	150	75000
Total (n=206)	3959.71	7846.436	4	75000

Table 9. Romance acquisition method by library type.

Library Type	Acquisition Method (Percent Use)			Total
	Donation	Purchase	Both	
Urban	3 (4%)	13 (19%)	53 (77%)	69
Suburban	1 (1%)	24 (17%)	114 (82%)	139
Rural	9 (5%)	13 (7%)	158 (88%)	180
Total	13 (3%)	50 (13%)	325 (84%)	388

Table 10. Percentage of book budget allocated for romance collection by library type.

Library Type	Percentage Allocated					
	0%	**<1%**	**1-2%**	**2-3%**	**>3%**	**Total**
Urban	11 (20%)	7 (13%)	14 (26%)	7 (13%)	15 (28%)	54
Suburban	5 (5%)	19 (18%)	34 (32%)	24 (23%)	24 (23%)	106
Rural	18 (13%)	19(13%)	29 (29%)	25 (18%)	51 (36%)	142
Total	34 (11%)	45 (15%)	77 (25%)	56 (19%)	90 (30%)	302

Table 11. Romance collection size based on respondents' perception of romance as a popular, high-circulating material.

Respondent's Consideration of Romance as Popular	Mean Collection Size	Std. Dev.	Minimum	Maximum
No (n=39)	1398.87	2026.731	15	7800
Yes (n=89)	4199.28	7854.015	4	75000
Total (n=244)	3751.68	7313.359	4	75000