

# LOVE STORIES NOW AND THEN

Products of popular culture, romance novels are scorned by cultural gatekeepers. Yet they are among the most widely read.

The authors' premise is that love is not as spontaneous and free as one would have us believe. Not all communities love in the same way and the words used to speak of love are chosen based on everchanging norms. Moving with the trends, love stories or *romans d'amour* have amazingly reinvented themselves for upwards of two centuries.

Challenging many of our assumptions about romance and offering a glimpse into the dreams and fantasies of love, *Love Stories Now and Then* tackles questions such as: What is "love at first sight?" How have class, national identity, religion, and race influenced lovers? What are the limits to expressing one's desires? What is the place of sexuality and how does it differ in French and English culture in North America?

In this first comprehensive survey of Quebec and French-Canadian romance novels, no stones are left unturned, from the romance novels of the nineteenth century through the Harlequin explosion to today's chick lit and homoromance.

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A History of *Les romans d'amour*

Marie-Pier Luneau and Jean-Philippe Warren

