

Editor's Note: Volume 13

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In early April, 2007, a group of American, European, and Australian scholars of popular culture dreamed up an academic organization, the International Association for the Study of Popular Romance, and a journal to promote its mission, the *Journal of Popular Romance Studies*. At the time, my only editorial experience was that of *being* edited—very well edited, I should say, with exquisite attention to my prose—by the redoubtable Herbert Leibowitz, the founder and editor of *Parnassus: Poetry in Review*. On that slim basis, cocky with youth and tenure, I volunteered to serve as Executive Editor of *JPRS*; with this volume, after nearly twenty years of planning, fumbling, learning my way, and gradually turning over the journal to my fellow editors, I say farewell.

Reading over the table of contents for Volume 13, I am struck as always by the range of topics and approaches that fall under the rubric of popular romance studies. This year's journal includes seven impressive essays on popular romance fiction, chick lit, and film, addressing topics as varied as **trauma and recovery in two novels by KJ Charles**, the treatment of **sexual consent in the romantasy of Sarah Maas**, reparative (and self-exculpatory) political fantasies in **American love stories set during the mass incarceration of Japanese Americans**, nationalism and local identity in **"Wellywood" (Wellington, NZ) chick lit**, the construction of **heroic masculinity in procreative and contraceptive contexts**, post-marriage-equality LGBTQ romances that **queer the "betrothal" aspect of their happy endings**, and the relationship—both theoretical and legal—between sexually explicit popular romance fiction (in this case, **C. M. Nascosta's *Morning Glory Milking Farm***) and **pornography**. (Broadly speaking, that relationship also sparks one of the seven Notes in this volume, Jonathan A. Allan's **"Forever Amber, Censorship, and Popular Romance Studies."**)

In Volume 12, we called for Notes on two ongoing topics. The first topic, "Instigations," will be an ongoing series of short essays reflecting on the start of a romance scholar's interest in a past or current project, or simply in this academic field. Four of our Notes fall into this group, and in keeping with the breadth of popular romance studies, they address texts and topics as disparate as **Shirley Conran's "bonkbuster" *Lace***, the **"Junior Novels"** aimed at young women in the middle of the 20th century, a **19th-century marble statue, *The Greek***

Slave, and the Burt Bacharach / Hal David song “**Alfie**.” The second topic, Popular Romance Pedagogy, comes up in the “Alfie” essay, and is the central focus of two other Notes: one on the personal roots and professional development of a course on **past and present Gothic Romance**; the other on the delightful but challenging process of **text selection for a popular romance course**.

Rounding out the volume are a half-dozen substantial book reviews—some on studies of recent romance **fiction**, some on **film**—that look at popular romance media in a range of global contexts (notably **South Asia**) and from a range of disciplinary perspectives, including **philosophy, queer history, and African and Black Diaspora Studies**.

It has been a pleasure and an honor to serve as Executive Editor of *JPRS*. The journal has grown well beyond my initial vision for it, and so has the field it serves. Well done, everyone, and thank you.