



Pursuing Happiness: Reading American Romance as Political Fiction

Laura Vivanco

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The dominance of popular romance in the US fiction market suggests that its trends and themes may reflect the politics of a significant proportion of the US population. Pursuing Happiness explores some of the choices, beliefs and assumptions which shape the politics of US romance novels. In particular, it focuses on what romances reveal about American attitudes towards work, the West, race, gender, community cohesion, ancestral "roots" and a historical connection (or lack of it) to the land. "Pursuing Happiness explores the ways that popular American romance novels engage such matters as US gender roles, attitudes toward disability, the myth of the frontier, individualism and community, and racial violence and discrimination. A thoughtful study with a refreshingly topical focus." Professor William Gleason, Princeton University. "An insightful and entertaining look at the inherent, often invisible, politics that underlie America's most popular genre of fiction." Isobel Carr, romance author

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