

# Global Infatuation

Explorations in  
Transnational Publishing and Texts

THE CASE OF HARLEQUIN ENTERPRISES AND SWEDEN

Eva Hemmungs Wirtén









SKRIFTER UTGIVNA AV  
AVDELNINGEN FÖR LITTERATURSOCIOLOGI  
VID LITTERATURVETENSKAPLIGA INSTITUTIONEN I UPPSALA  
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*Till Mamma och minnet av Pappa*

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### Abstract

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This dissertation deals with the Canadian category publisher Harlequin Enterprises. Operating in a hundred markets and publishing in twenty-four languages around the world, Harlequin Enterprises exemplifies the increasingly transnational character of publishing and the media. This book takes the Stockholm-based Scandinavian subsidiary Förlaget Harlequin as a case-study to analyze the complexities involved in the transposition of Harlequin romances from one cultural context into another. Using a combination of theoretical and empirical approaches it is argued that the local process of translation and editing – here referred to as transediting – has a fundamental impact on how the global book becomes local.

The study is divided into six chapters, with an Introduction and Conclusion. The Introduction outlines the theoretical and methodological background. The first chapter uses Pierre Bourdieu's concept of field to examine the North American romance phenomenon, and is followed by a chapter entirely dedicated to Harlequin Enterprises in Toronto. Chapter Three turns to Sweden and the category book before Harlequin's arrival on the Scandinavian book market in 1979. Chapter Four draws on six "participatory observations" made at the weekly editorial meetings at the Stockholm office to discuss the work of the editors. Chapter Five analyzes the practice of transediting, exploring local choices and deliberations made by editors and translators in Sweden. Chapter Six is entirely devoted to a reading of fifty-six Harlequin romances published in Sweden between 1980-1992. Finally, the Conclusion attempts to draw together and develop the implications of some of the more important points argued in previous chapters.

*Keywords:* Sociology of Literature, Transediting, Globalization, Localization, Romances, Category Publishing, Translation Studies, Cultural Studies, Popular Culture.

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PTA-meetings, weekly cleanings, TGIF's, and less exhilarating dental appointments all are part of it. I am as sure of the fact that there are other, new journeys to be made (- Anywhere but Japan, mum! - as I can see two of you thinking with horror right now), as I am of the fact that I would not want to go there with anyone else than my family. I love you.

*Huddinge, March 1998*



## INTRODUCTION

### Making the Case

*This is a business where we try to mold the product to the consumer,  
and we think we have a certain expertise in that.*

MARSHA ZINBERG

Interview with author, 29 July 1993

*Theory is always a detour on the way to something more important.*

STUART HALL

“Old and New Identities, Old and New Ethnicities” (1993)

Picture this: one of the most unexpected events in modern history has just taken place. The Berlin Wall, forever symbolizing the East-West partition of post-World War II Europe, has ceased to be. No more iron curtain meant that no more film adaptations of John Le Carré novels, complete with heavy fog hanging over Checkpoint Charlie exchanges, would be forthcoming. Almost overnight, a dubious cultural icon no one had even remotely thought would be temporary had become obsolete. Literally chopped down, the crumbling Wall suddenly enabled people to move freely over a border where only a few weeks before they would have been shot down instantly. As they made their way back home from that first miraculous visit to the West, it is quite conceivable that those crossing the border returned, holding not only a piece of concrete in their hands but also one of the 720,000 books that Cora Verlag, Harlequin Enterprises' joint venture with German publisher Axel Springer, had distributed to returning East Germans at several border points during that historic fall of 1989. What Harlequin Enterprises described as “an exciting new friendship cemented by a unique romantic encounter” would, despite the unintentional irony of the word “cemented,” be precisely that in the years to come.<sup>1</sup>

Whether an accurate account, part of a company's own folklore or perhaps both, such a story is undoubtedly what corporate dreams are made of. At a

place previously associated with lost hopes and despair, other feelings now reigned supreme. Until that time, Eastern Europe had come across as a distant, impenetrable fortress, its inhabitants clad in dark colors and driving hopelessly outmoded cars while “clamoring” for Western commodities. When country after country unexpectedly closed in on the blessings of market economy, the dreams of multinational corporations came true. Now, open frontiers could if not immediately, then in time, fulfill years of pent-up consumer longing. Handing out books to passers-by was only one flamboyant marketing gesture promising to satisfy newly ignited desires in what was increasingly being thought of as a global marketplace.

Three years after the momentous changes in Berlin, the Canadian Harlequin Enterprises, drawing on the commedia dell’arte figure of the *Arlecchino* for its name and logotype, witnessed the best year so far in its forty-four-year history. 1992 saw 205 million books sold in twenty-four languages, on six continents, and in a hundred markets around the world.<sup>2</sup> Releasing more than eight hundred new titles and 6,600 foreign editions during that same year, Harlequin referred to themselves as the world’s most prolific publisher of paperback fiction.<sup>3</sup> Classified as a *category* publisher, Harlequin had global sales of Can\$484.8 million in 1995, publishing books which Margaret Ann Jensen has characterized as: “formula romances, regularly released, usually monthly, in a numbered series.”<sup>4</sup> With offices in countries ranging from Italy to Japan, Harlequin romances can be bought in Saudi-Arabia as well as South Africa and read in Mandarin Chinese as well as in Finnish.

Since they sell nearly fifty percent of their books outside what no longer easily defines itself as a “home market,” “home” in fact stretches far beyond the confines of the nation-state.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, if the global cultural economy is distinguished by any specific attribute, then it has to be that its complex flow of money, people, products, and information is becoming increasingly difficult to envision as spatially grounded, particularly within any unreflected notion of territoriality. As I say this, I am aware of the contradictions; at the same time we are still very much unable to “unthink” the nation-state as being what Gage Averill calls “a critical level of organization,” setting at least parts of the parameters involved in the distribution of cultural artifacts and products, a dissemination still retaining a bias towards the Anglo-American.<sup>6</sup>

Distributed, sold and read in the most remote corners of the world, the

Harlequin book seems smoothly to fit the description “global.” Making such a claim however warrants a further discussion on the two essential characteristics that distinguish the Harlequin romance in its global setting, centering in particular on the tension *and* interaction between them.

To begin with, the same books bought at a kiosk in Budapest or by subscription from an office in Tokyo or Stockholm, are written by authors sharing English as their common language. Although Harlequin romance writers come from the United States, Canada, Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand, which allows for some very real cultural differences between them, there are none from China, Sweden, Russia, or Italy. To suggest that Harlequin’s international success has something to do with a specific Anglo-American condition described by Lawrence Venuti as “imperialistic abroad and xenophobic at home” is hardly controversial.<sup>7</sup> Primarily, Venuti is referring to the uneven distribution between import (books being translated *into* English) and export (books being translated *from* English). In 1990, only 2.4 percent of the total output of books in Britain were translations; in the United States they amounted to 2.96 percent. That same year in Germany, 14.4 percent were translations. In 1985, 9.9 percent of the French output were translations, in Italy four years later, they accounted for 25.4 percent. (With English generally representing between sixty and eighty percent of translations).<sup>8</sup>

Unchallenged as the *lingua franca* of the world, the English language makes its presence known in music, movies, advertising, on the Internet and at academic conferences, proving that global capitalism speaks it quite fluently. Here, I have no intention of underestimating its diversity, suggesting that “English” is a category that does not incorporate an extremely diverse body of dialects and accents that may be close to incomprehensible to one another, carrying in them conflicts and power relations that require an extended discussion far beyond the scope of this present study. One should not forget that English is the native tongue of many who are perceived of as marginalized in a global configuration that presupposes their subordinated position to be at least partly the result of a language that in fact is theirs by birth. Still, English and global capitalism are bedfellows in much the same way as Latin and the Catholic Church once were. While Venuti’s label is dangerously close to suggesting a kind of homogeneity on both sides that might be too simplistic, I would nonetheless argue that it is virtually impossible to think

of media, publishing, and the global cultural economy today without taking into account the relationship between the English language and the kinds of processes that I delineate in this introductory chapter.

With this in mind, yet another indispensable feature of the global/local needs to be addressed in order for the core issues of this book to come into fuller view. Whether located in Paris or Stockholm, each Harlequin office functions independently in that each decides what books to publish, they edit, translate and print. This is done to ensure maximum adaptability to the particulars of their respective markets. Thus, what in one sense stands forth as the quintessential global product *becomes local* through the tangible influence of a crucial set of key players on the local level; it is incorporated, appropriated, even altered, to fit another cultural context. Hence, Harlequin is a prime exponent of what is sometimes called “global localization,” or, alternatively “customized globalization,” a process in which a company by virtue of its own products symbolizes the Western flow of the global cultural economy, while simultaneously embodying the transmutational practices of locality. Stuart Hall’s outline of the changing face of globalization as a new, specific form of homogenization, rooted in the West and always speaking English, “multi-national but de-centered,” comes to mind.<sup>9</sup> Despite occasional drawbacks, this duality in corporate strategies has in less than fifty years rocketed Harlequin from its modest beginnings as a reprint paperback operation in Toronto to being, perhaps matched only by Reader’s Digest, one of the few examples of a publisher with the power of global brand name recognition.

While the *point of departure* of this book can be located in the space *between* these two major considerations and the way in which they come about in the broadest sense of what the publishing process entails, this should not detract from the prominence of the “local;” the place where the nucleus of this study lies. My overarching ambition is to analyze what Henry Louis Gates, Jr., calls “transnational transposition,” or in this particular case – the way in which the Harlequin book, through what I have termed *transediting* – or the combined process of editing and translation – is given a Swedish identity.<sup>10</sup>

Johan Svedjedal has drawn attention to the significance of imports in Swedish culture, attributable at least in part to the peripheral status of a “minor” language spoken only by about nine million people.<sup>11</sup> Translations accounted for fifty-four percent of all fiction published in Sweden between 1866 and 1870,

sixty-one percent between 1896 and 1900, fifty-seven percent between 1926 and 1930, and sixty-five percent between 1966 and 1970.<sup>12</sup> In his statistics pertaining to books printed in 1985, Yngve Lindung clearly demonstrates that regardless of category (“quality,” “mass market,” and so on), English accounted for sixty percent of the 1,597 books printed that year, Swedish for twenty-eight percent while “other languages” represented thirteen percent. Turning to the category of “populärpocketromaner” [mass market paperbacks], which includes Harlequin, the statistics become even more spectacular, with eighty-six, nine, and five percent respectively.<sup>13</sup> Compared to the previously mentioned European countries, the Swedish ratio of translations is substantially higher, making the Swedish case an excellent vehicle for the purposes of this study; namely, to answer the following questions: What is the nature of the process of localization? What is the relationship between “initial” place of production (in the form of the author) and “ensuing” place of production (in the form of editor and translator)? and finally: To what extent, how and why is the global book in fact local, and what consequences does the answer have?

Arguably, while “real” readers are consciously absent, “readings” are very much at the center of this book. Because of their critical, yet largely uninvestigated positions in the process of “transnational transposition,” I have chosen to focus on the work of editors and translators. Like Morris Eaves, I argue that editing (and in this case transediting) is “a social act with political implications.”<sup>14</sup> The tacit assumption behind such a claim rests on the premise that editor and translator – both key positions in a publishing house relying on locality in the way Harlequin does – are functions that through their combined transediting practices may serve as a decisive component in understanding the relationship between the global and the local in this particular context.

Moving along a North American-Swedish axis, this study obviously operates with its own inherent limitations. The expressions global and local should in this book be seen as nodes used in order to capture a process common to all of Harlequin Enterprises’ operations involving languages other than English. Förlaget Harlequin’s Stockholm office takes on the role of a case-study; a strategy not intended to map out everything that either “makes similar” or “makes different,” designating Sweden and North America as mutually exclusive fields or social universes with the universalistic prerogative to anticipate the results of any other perspective. My aim has rather been to insist on a

simultaneous approach. Attempting to negotiate a specific set of theoretical assumptions within a comparative framework, leads to an analysis of popular culture in an age of globalization that almost automatically requires some form of comparative method or transnational theory. Consequently, I am subscribing to the general notion that cultural production in whatever form needs to be studied not only as aesthetic representation, but also as a social, economic, and cultural set of practices – in this new, global cultural economy likely to be more fully grasped by a critical stance across and inside local and global parameters.

Perhaps Marshall McLuhan's famous "global village" is closer than ever at hand, but it is also an anomaly – revered and promoted at the same time as only a fraction of us are in a position to consume or exert influence of any kind, be it political or economic. Nonetheless, it is marketed as "being out there;" one only needs to think of the religiously utopian overtones in most advertising for the Internet, where we are repeatedly told that no gender, race, age, or class exists in cyberspace – while our everyday life shows us with equal intensity that they actually still do. While IBM in a series of highly sophisticated TV-spots under the heading of "solutions for a small planet," would like us to think that Philippine bus drivers are experts at stock analysis because they rely on IBM, that Polish nuns know all about new operative systems and that an old Hungarian street entertainer would be a likely buyer of a new Thinkpad, this only upholds a myth of wishful thinking – that equal distribution of power and knowledge is made possible by more sophisticated technology. Indeed, if the global village exists, then it is still as much about exclusion as inclusion.<sup>15</sup>

Cyberspace may have given Western academics, corporate executives and business women, scientists and journalists, access to cutting edge technology that appears to be everyman's because in their lives it *does* make the world smaller – but those fancy gadgets that enable a select few to roam the computer freeway or to communicate with colleagues in the other room or on the other side of the Atlantic by a simple click on the flickering screen, are still largely the reality of a privileged minority. Considering that two out of three human beings alive today have never made a telephone call, it would seem an infinitely more realistic scenario for the majority of the world's population to worry whether they can afford (and use) a telephone, than to dissect the intricacies of the Internet.<sup>16</sup> However, between the two diametrically opposed

poles of absolute empowerment by superior technology and popular culture, on the one hand, and gray repression by the heavy-handed gulags of market capitalism, on the other, lies an interesting potential for rethinking flows of global cultural production and consumption. Provided we accept that the precise beginnings and ends of this process are becoming increasingly difficult to pin down, the search for what transnational companies do, how and why, constitutes a challenge that resists straightforward cause and effect analysis. Rather, it presents us with a configuration of both the local and the global as context-bound, fundamentally fluid, but also as interrelated and interdependent in a multitude of complex ways.

At this point, something should perhaps be said about words like “globalization,” “internationalization,” and “transnational,” used frequently and with ease in academic as well as corporate contexts. In this book, I will use “globalization” as a term denoting a view of these processes as increasingly nonlinear, contradictory, and fluid, represented by a number of scholars whose work is mentioned below. This as opposed to the vaguer “internationalization,” which suggests a more conventional representation of power and subordination. “Transnational” refers in this case to an organization whose activities in accelerating degree is becoming less dependent on national perimeters; and instead oriented towards viewing and treating the market as if it indeed were a “global home.”<sup>17</sup>

Obviously, infectious diseases, environmental disasters like Tjernobyl or forced migration have never respected, nor ever will respect boundaries of any kind. Today’s financial markets rely on telecommunications to move trillions of dollars over thousands of miles in milliseconds, creating a new world order some straddle more easily than others. Multinational or transnational corporations operate not only by sheer financial prowess, but also through their implication of interconnectedness and transgression in a world disconnected. Nike, Levi’s, Coca-Cola, Apple, Sony, Disney, IBM, to name but a few, are brands of mythical proportions, icons of unification, run by companies with turnovers of minor countries. Not only is it the drink Coca-Cola we consume, or the Mickey Mouse hat; it is the image, the value, that elusive *something* that comes with the world’s most renowned soft drink or a house in Disney Corporation’s “real” city: Celebration, Florida.<sup>18</sup> Nor is it the superiority of the Apple computer that makes Macintosh users, despite high prices

and notorious delays in production, faithful – it is the combination of smart marketing and loyalty to a perceived way of working as expressed in a particularly clever interface.

Between eighty and ninety percent of all new products apparently fail, despite extensive advertising.<sup>19</sup> From this we should be able to conclude that consumers cannot be forced into buying indiscriminately whatever is offered to them. The fact that there is such a thing as a market in the first place, should consequently not be taken to mean that consumers are mere dupes or victims of an all-powerful and constantly pervasive sales strategy on the part of the producers. As Barbara Herrnstein Smith so eloquently has pointed out, the value placed on an entity by an individual can be described as a sophisticated negotiation between market economy and personal economies (needs, interests, and resources) – two systems that are interactive and interdependent, and in their complexity never absolutely fixed.<sup>20</sup>

In the company of the odd tennis shoe or Coke bottle, “books,” “literature,” “writer” and “text” might come across as oddly mismatched companions. But publishing in fact offers us an excellent opportunity to delve further into the inner workings of the global cultural economy, and it does so in large part as a business that to a fascinating degree encapsulates both the “old” and the “new.” The cultural markers “books” and “literature” are emblems that despite continuous reconstructions carry tremendous signifying power. Hence, they provide us with access to an ongoing struggle with the weight of history and the uncertain prospect of a globalized and technologized future.

What has distinguished itself as an “occupation for gentlemen,” as well as nationally bound by language and tradition, publishing is a business that has undergone changes of paradigmatic scope since World War II, shifting its emphasis both in gender and location. What I would like to call the “myth of the patriarchal publisher;” the man who is “vain, pompous, affected” but also “brilliant, charming and zestful,” is a standard trope in publishing history, symbolizing a nostalgic longing for a time when the publisher was the ultimate (male) custodian of taste and distinction.<sup>21</sup> Gaston Gallimard, Alfred Knopf, and Karl Otto Bonnier are men who have come to personify publishing as an exclusive male endeavor, dedicated to the preservation of allegedly universal cultural values. Mass market publishing as we know it from the 1950s onward, both in North America and in Sweden, has fundamentally reshaped this image.

First, although women have entered the ranks of publishing and book-selling in substantial numbers, coming close to carrying parts of the book industry on their shoulders, they are still subject to a distinct hierarchization; men remain at the helm as presidents and vice presidents, while women work as editors and booksellers. In the mid-1970s, there were only six female executive heads of publishing (president and editor-in-chief) in the United States, and Candy Lee, the first woman to reach the unprecedented board position of Vice President of Retail Marketing and Editorial within the overwhelmingly female oriented Harlequin Enterprises, did so only in 1992.<sup>22</sup> In Sweden, Eva Bonnier took charge of the prestigious publishing house Bonniers förlag after leaving the family business and setting up her own publishing house with Eva Bonniers förlag between 1990 and 1992; Solveig Nellinge, co-founder with Adam Helms of Trevi and Dorothea Bromberg of Brombergs förlag are two others who have arrived at their present positions (directly or indirectly) as a result of starting new publishing houses, not by rising within the established ranks of old ones.<sup>23</sup>

Secondly, publishing houses are today increasingly part of huge media and entertainment conglomerates, where the business of books tend to be relegated to play a minor role, a development intrinsically tied to the same media industries' reliance on product diversification and globalization as constitutive components of the market. On the threshold of a new millennium, the global media galaxies are in themselves excellent examples of the complexities of this framework, because even as production and distribution (and ultimately ensuing consumption) are becoming increasingly dislocated in space, the decisive controlling power over these giants is strikingly tied to a handful of individuals. Such a concentration in the midst of dislocation resembles that of the most global of all businesses: the financial markets, where seven countries accounted for sixty-five percent of the international bank lending in 1980 (\$1.9 trillion) and in 1991 (\$6.2 trillion); the United States, the UK, Japan, Switzerland, France, Germany, and Luxembourg – prompting us to keep Saskia Sassens crucial observation that: “the more globalized firms become, the more their central functions grow: in importance, in complexity, and in a number of transactions,” in mind.<sup>24</sup>

Eight such media conglomerates basically control much of the global publishing landscape; Hearst, Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, Pearson PLC,

Viacom, Advance Publications, Bertelsman AG, Time Warner, and Holtzbrink. Four of these are entirely privately held; Hearst, Advance Publications, Bertelsman AG, and Holtzbrink - the latter two by Germans. Of the four remaining, CEO Rupert Murdoch controls thirty percent of the stock in News Corporation and CEO Sumner Redstone sixty-one percent of the voting stock in Viacom.<sup>25</sup>

The top-grossing Bertelsman is a case in point. They own magazines in France, Spain, Poland, and Italy; thirty-four magazines (including *Stern* and *Der Spiegel*) and six dailies in Germany; fifty percent of Ufa-CLT, the largest European broadcaster with television and radio stations; Arista, RCA and other record companies (representing a total of 14 percent of music sold worldwide); a partnership with America Online in Europe, and finally several book clubs (among them the Literary Guild) and Bantam Books, Doubleday, Dell, and a number of other American publishers. Other names that could be mentioned in this group are Reader's Digest, the second-largest overall publisher in the United States (\$2.1 billion in revenue 1995), the Axel Springer Group in Germany, Hachette in France, Silvio Berlusconi in Italy and, of course, the Disney Corporation, Sony and Matsushita.<sup>26</sup>

Correspondingly, North American bookselling has moved away from what was perceived of as the threatening retail giants twenty years ago; Waldenbooks and B. Dalton, who by 1980 were firmly established in malls across the United States. At that time reducing the independents' market share by forty percent, they have now in turn been ousted by the Big Two: the super-stores Borders (who own Waldenbooks) and Barnes & Noble.<sup>27</sup> As reassuring as it would be to think that this concentration limits itself to the United States, the situation is not much different in France, where ten publishers are said to control ninety percent of the market, or in Sweden, where the two major publishers Bonniers and Norstedts today each constitute divisions within the conglomerates Bonnierföretagen and Kooperativa Förbundet.<sup>28</sup>

Bonniers occupies an extremely powerful position in the Swedish literary field. Regrouping formally on 1 January 1998 as Bonnierföretagen, this is a company with a history of actively pursuing corporate diversification into other media, while also reaching out beyond the borders of Sweden.<sup>29</sup> Certainly envisioning themselves as one of the key players in a market by now referred to as Scandinavia rather than Sweden, this media conglomerate has

announced its continued commitment to multimedia and movies, while still maintaining a firm grip on the Swedish publishing scene. Bertelsman might have a turnover ten times the size of Bonnierföretagens SEK 9.2 billion, but the four publishing divisions (Cappelen in Norway, Bonnierförlagen in Sweden, Lindhardt & Ringhoff in Denmark, and Tammigruppen in Finland), are hardly the Little League. In fact, every sixth book published as a Swedish original and every third sold in 1996, came from Bonniers (or from a publisher owned by Bonniers). Looking at translated literature, the numbers are even more astounding; every fifth book means that forty-four percent of the total output of translations from members of the Swedish Publishers' Association in 1996 originated from Bonniers.<sup>30</sup>

While corporate amalgamation has led to widespread concern about the future of publishing in North America, as well as elsewhere, such fears may be exaggerated. Books represent the highest sales of any product on the Internet, and John Suhler, president of the banking firm Veronis, Suhler & Associates, has been quoted in *Publishers Weekly* as saying: "The book business outperforms perception," basing his statement on estimates that consumer expenditure on books in the United States in 1994 totaled \$15.2 billion, as opposed to money spent on movie tickets, estimated at only \$5.4 billion.<sup>31</sup> Put into perspective, global retail book sales in 1995 were estimated by Euromonitor at \$80.1 billion, an increase of approximately eight percent over 1994, and although the Americas remain the largest regional market in the world, per capita books sales were the highest in Western Europe, outperforming the Americas with \$64.70 to \$45.90.<sup>32</sup>

Add to this one of the main reasons why literature still has a marked specificity today – translations – and the backdrop to this study becomes complete. Because even if music, advertising, CD-ROM games, and movies are cultural artifacts that rely heavily on visual effects and perhaps are as easily consumed without translation, when it comes to books, a certain self-evident quality is attached to a process that has been integral to language for so long, and best-sellers, academic criticism, poetry, but also computer-, video manuals, and movie subtitles are everyday occurrences, read and acted upon without too much reflection on part of the consumer.

No wonder, then, that Harlequin Enterprises' President and CEO Brian Hickey, reflecting on his company's worldwide reach, portrays Harlequin

romances as “storytelling that translates into any language.”<sup>33</sup> For obvious reasons, reading is of paramount importance to Harlequin Enterprises, an activity unthinkable without language, which in turn must be comprehended to be pleasurable. At present, English will not suffice to reach the number of women that constitute the company’s consumer base, ultimately making Harlequin Enterprises dependent on translation. However, the ease with which Hickey uses the operative word “translates” to describe this course of action, is, I suspect, a way of somewhat superficially taking for granted just how this publishing strategy actually works. Behind what he apparently sees as a story with universal appeal, lies instead a composite system of choices and deliberations transposing Harlequin romances into other cultures and other readings, and in doing so, changes the text as well as its production and consumption in ways that are not foreseeable from the outset.

Reviewing the arguments above: the shift from national to transnational publishing with all the connotations of conglomeratization and globalization/localization mentioned – combined with the increased presence of women, particularly within mass market publishing; as writers, editors, and readers, are embodied in Harlequin Enterprises, a publisher in light of these characteristics ideal for the objective of this study and who as such have more right than most to claim Richard J. Barnet and John Cavanagh’s epitaph as “one of the midwives of the new world economy.”<sup>34</sup>

From the standpoint of academia, inspiration for the broad approach of this study stems from a variety of disciplinary influences. The direction undertaken in the following chapters has been shaped by many fields: the Sociology of Literature; Cultural Studies as it has come to be represented by Stuart Hall, Janice Radway, and on a more speculative note perhaps, Pierre Bourdieu; the arrival of Translation Studies as an academic discipline in its own right as well as the increasingly large corpus of literature under the imprecise heading of “Globalization,” and finally, ethnography and my relationship to a company and those who work for it.<sup>35</sup>

To begin an overview of these academic areas by focusing on previous research on romances seems like an obvious point of departure. One of the first to seriously treat romances as worthy of analytic reflection rather than straightforward dismissal, Tania Modleski’s *Loving with a Vengeance. Mass-Produced Fantasies for Women* (1982) is clearly influenced by psychoanalysis in its analysis

of both consumer and text. Recognizing that “each novel [...] is as much a protest against as an endorsement of the feminine condition,” Modleski is all the same pessimistic about the effect of accumulated romance reading, making an analogy between reading Harlequins and using drugs, arguing along the lines that: “The user must constantly increase the dosage of the drug in order to alleviate problems aggravated by the drug itself.”<sup>36</sup>

As she underlines this tension between protest and acquiescence, Modleski touches on a recurring theme in feminist romance critique, a problematic and deeply felt ambiguity towards the notion of consumption and pleasure – where there is no possible reconciliation between what is perceived of as “good” in romances and the narcotic-like dependency that is the result of consuming them. As in Kay Mussell’s *Fantasy and Reconciliation. Contemporary Formulas of Women’s Romance Fiction* (1984) readers tend to be faceless unknowns, and the construction of “the other” made easier by distance and difference. Through its lack of self-reflection, such a strategy cannot serve as the basis for a credible interrogation into romance reading.

A far more constructive view of both readers and the reading process, as well as the motivation of the scholar herself, is developed in Janice Radway’s pathbreaking book *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy, and Popular Literature* (1984 [1991]). The most influential contribution to romance research to this day, as well as a prime example of new theoretical and methodological directions being sought at that time within academia, her study merits a lengthy discussion.<sup>37</sup> Radway was not primarily interested in traditional textual analysis, but rather set out “to see whether it was possible to investigate reading empirically so as to make “accurate” statements about the historical and cultural meaning of literary production and consumption.”<sup>38</sup> The fieldwork allowing her to do so took place in a small mid-western town, to which she gave the pseudonym of Smithton. Through a previously arranged contact with “Dot,” bookseller and local authority on romances whose advice is appreciated to the extent that she compiles her own romance newsletter, Radway was supplied with a “community of readers,” all of whom were then interviewed as a group, as well as individually, on several occasions. Her interviews showed that the reading process constituted a way for the Smithton women (all essentially caregivers) to achieve an emotional state otherwise denied to them. As they take control over their own time and space by

reading, they have in fact gained access to “a room of their own.” Concentration and solitude are prerequisites for this passionate relationship between reader and text, and not forthcoming when watching television, a medium that instead allows for simultaneous activities (ironing, talking, eating). Allegedly, several of the Smithton women did not watch television together with their husbands, an activity they found far more passive and debilitating than reading.<sup>39</sup> In seeking out this desired state, by becoming the object of the nurturing text, the reader opens up to the romance fantasy, which ultimately then, is a fantasy of being loved in the same way yourself.

Radway’s most important contribution lies in that she took the study of romances out into “the real world,” and through her encounters with actual readers was able to drive one crucial point home with clarity: romance readers knew what they liked and disliked, they were quite verbal about it and had no problems in defining a “good” romance from a “bad” one. They consumed selectively, consciously, even productively, and she could disprove the myth that popular culture is singularly monolithic. Leaving romances after *Reading the Romance* for a study of the Book-of-The-Month Club, *A Feeling for Books. The Book-of-the-Month Club, Literary Taste, and Middle-Class Desire* (1997), Radway has revised and questioned her own stand in her first book to the point that she would now “be less heavy-handed about the feminist politics and more open about the projection into the future.”<sup>40</sup> This modified and possibly radicalized view of romances is expressed in her essay “Romance and the Work of Fantasy: Struggles over Feminine Sexuality and Subjectivity at Century’s End” (1994).<sup>41</sup> In it, she revisits *Reading the Romance* in light of the substantial changes in the genre taking place after its publication, now situating romances as a more deliberate site for feminist discourse, albeit a discourse that have yet to discard the overriding principle of heterosexuality.<sup>42</sup>

Readers also play a role in Bridget Fowler’s *The Alienated Reader. Women and Romantic Literature in the Twentieth-Century* (1991). Based on a political agenda that uncritically espouses the idea that if an author is working-class and writes about working-class conditions, this automatically makes the romance “better,” Fowler’s discussion makes strained generalizations. In presenting a reader survey referred to as “the Scottish study,” she describes a woman in the so-called “Mills & Boon group” in a passage that presents

a trivial cause-and-effect argument, according to which consuming a particular type of romances leads to real-life failure:

A cook who had been unemployed for several years was an avid reader of Mills & Boon, as well as of Agatha Christie. She was medically unfit for work and looked much older than her 31 years. Heart failures resulting from constitutional weakness had allowed her husband to gain the legal custody of her children after divorce.<sup>43</sup>

But the arrival of real readers in romance research did not mean that thematic and historical analysis had become obsolete. Madone M. Miner's *Insatiable Appetites. Twentieth-Century American Women's Bestsellers* (1984), explores bestsellers such as *Forever Amber*, *Gone with the Wind*, and *Scruples* through a thematic mother-daughter approach, and Leslie W. Rabine combined the analysis of Harlequin romances with both Stendhal and *Manon Lescaut* in *Reading the Romantic Heroine. Text, History, Ideology* (1985). Looking at the conception of romantic love from the twelfth century to this present day, Rabine also noted the growing influence and importance of romance writers, thereby opening for further exploration into their conditions. Two American dissertations, defended nine years apart, confirm the viability of this project. Catherine Kirkland's "For the Love of It. Women Writers and the Popular Romance" (1985) shows convincingly through interviews with fifty-four anonymous romance writers, both published and unpublished, how close the ties between romance reading and romance writing appear to be, an aspect that Beth E. Kolko affirmed through her participatory study of a Romance Writers of America (RWA) critique group in "Writing the Romance: Cultural Studies, Community, and the Teaching of Writing" (1994). Carol Thurston added to this picture by stressing the importance of editors in her *The Romance Revolution. Erotic Novels for Women and the Quest for a New Sexual Identity* (1987).

In the beginning of the 1990s, Anglo-American romance research had definitely "come of age." As in Deborah K. Chappel's "American Romances: Narratives of Culture and Identity" (1991), it was now possible for a romance buff to argue in her dissertation for "a canon in a field where no canon exists."<sup>44</sup> The same mechanisms that allowed Chappel to take her pleasure in romance reading to academia, certainly also helped *Dangerous Men and Adventurous Women. Romance Writers on the Appeal of the Romance* (1992), secure academic accolades. In it, editor Jayne Ann Krentz and fellow romance writers

discuss their profession, their relationship to academic criticism, and of course, the appeal of the romance. Hardly conceivable ten years earlier, the volume was published by the University of Pennsylvania Press and notable because it now even granted romance writers access to a prestigious scholarly publishing outlet.

None of these books expressly focused on Harlequin, nor on the increasingly important international romance market. Here, Paul Grescoe's *Merchants of Venus. Inside the Empire of Romance* (1996) filled a void. While not written for an academic readership, it is a book loaded with valuable information – primarily in its outline of the company's expansion strategies and editorial policy. Previous studies on Harlequin had mainly centered on changing themes, like Miriam Darce Frenier's *Good-Bye Heathcliff. Changing Heroes, Heroines, Roles and Values in Women's Category Romances* (1988) or, as in Margaret Ann Jensen's *Love's Sweet Return. The Harlequin Story* (1984), combined a large reading sample with a fairly straightforward descriptive inquiry into the company.

Swedish academic research dealing with aspects of mass market literature, both in a historical and a more current setting, is generally informed by the knowledge that Sweden is and has been, a country substantially influenced by international literary currents and trends. The comparative perspective is evident in dissertations such as Margareta Björkman's study on lending libraries in late-eighteenth-century Stockholm: *Läsarnas nöje. Kommersiella lånbibliotek i Stockholm 1783-1809* (1992) and Anna Williams's work on Swedish-American literature in *Skribent i Svensk-Amerika. Jakob Bonggren, journalist och poet* (1991). These books have, however, largely analyzed the relationship between Sweden and the "foreign" from a historical viewpoint. A distinctly contemporary perspective, the study of corporations, and especially transnational ones, tend on the other hand to be unusual objects of study in Swedish Comparative Literature. Rather encountered within Social Anthropology, an approach similar to my own is found in Christina Garsten's *Apple World. Core and Periphery in a Transnational Organizational Culture* (1994) – a study attempting to capture Apple's corporate culture through accounts of lived experience in three of its divisions: the Stockholm office, the European office in Paris, and the head office in Cupertino, California.

Swedish research on popular fiction with a more direct bearing on my own work has mainly centered on short stories or serialized fiction in magazines.

Introductory essays like Gun-Britt Sundström's "Från den stora, stora kärleken till Lasse, Lasse liten. Analys av 124 populärpressnoveller från 1944 och 1970, med tonvikt på intrig och idéinnehåll" (1971), were followed by two dissertations in the 1980s. Lisbeth Larsson takes the development of the Swedish weekly since the late nineteenth century as object of study in her 1989 dissertation *En annan historia. Om kvinnors läsning och svensk veckopress*. Expanding on the intense reading experience of the Smithton women in *Reading the Romance*, Larsson identified a unique female mode of reading, one where closeness and empathy are hallmarks. Never to be accepted by a patriarchal society that gives precedence to analysis, distance and critique, both readers and text become marginalized. Despite the fact that she apparently wishes to reinstate the status of such committed reading and does so from a perspective influenced by recent international feminist critique, Larsson curiously enough ends up relying on the negatively charged German expression "triviallitteratur," privileging it on the expense of more affirmative aspects of romance reading. Using a very different methodology but also dealing with short stories in weekly magazines is Britt Louise Wersäll's *Veckotidningsnovellen 1950-1975. En sociologisk analys* (1989). Taking 741 short stories from 450 issues, she has certainly enough data to support her conclusions. On the other hand, the abundance of data is hard to penetrate and one is left searching for larger contextual lines in a mass of statistics and numbers.

Gunnar Hansson's *Inte en dag utan en bok. Om läsning av populärfiktion* (1988), combined reader-response theory with a substantial number of interviews with readers of mass market paperbacks, among them Harlequin romances. The international, and above all Anglo-American, presence on the Swedish mass market has been recurrently documented and noted by for instance Hans-Olof Johansson in "Utgivningen av populärpocketböcker 1965-1974" (1977) and by Yngve Lindung in several studies, notably the article "Den angloamerikanska litteraturens dominans" (1993). As much as their contributions have added to our overall knowledge of the commanding position of Anglo-American popular culture, none of them went on to look at what actually does take place in translation and editing.

For the reasons mentioned previously, translation occupies an important place in the Swedish context. Despite translation's long history, it is only fairly recently that Translation Studies have developed as a academic field in its

own right; for example, Translation Theory did not figure as a separate entry in the *Modern Language Association International Bibliography* until 1983. Lawrence Venuti's *The Translator's Invisibility. A History of Translation* (1994) demonstrates how Translation Studies increasingly tries to formulate a tenable theoretical framework where theory and practice are combined.

The bilingual or multilingual quality of Translation Studies, together with the unequivocal strength of the English language in global academia, has tended to assign the discipline a place in the margins of Cultural Studies or more established departments of Comparative Literature. Controversial in its argumentation for a strategy of active subversion against the hegemony of the English language, Venuti's book can, together with a volume like *Between Languages and Culture. Translation and Cross-Cultural Texts*, edited by Anuradha Dingwaney and Carol Maier (1995), be seen as taking its bearings from, as well as contributing significantly to Cultural Studies, thereby fitting Edwin Gentzler's description of current trends in Translation Studies as "a move away from looking at translations as linguistic phenomena to looking at translations as cultural phenomena," very well.<sup>45</sup> This shift in emphasis can be traced through several comprehensive and useful volumes, for instance in Susan Bassnett-McGuire, *Translation Studies* (1980); the more issue-oriented and current *Contemporary Translation Theories* by Edwin Gentzler (1993); and in André Lefevere's introductory volume: *Translating Literature. Practice and Theory in a Comparative Literature Context* (1992). In Sweden, Dorothea Hygrell's dissertation *Att översätta komik. En undersökning av funktionsförändringar i tyska översättningar av svensk skönlitteratur* (1996) analyzed the treatment of humorous passages in translations from Swedish to German.

Neither North American nor Swedish academic research have, however, inserted Harlequin or the category book into a larger discussion on globalization. A different and relatively recent perspective suggests how one might approach this issue.

Growing out of the Social Sciences and Cultural Studies since the beginning of the 1980s, the discourse on globalization has at the present time evolved into an academic "Klondyke," and the output of books currently being published with either "globalization," "internationalization," or "transnational" in their titles, is becoming increasingly difficult to oversee. Locating the precise disciplinary home of this discourse is equally problematic; studies on glob-

alization cut across areas like the Sociology of Literature, Social Anthropology, Public Policy, Comparative Literature, Cultural Studies, Geography, Urban Planning, and Communication Studies.

Thus, at first it hardly seems possible to distinguish a common denominator. One suggestion, however, would be that what unites across disciplinary borders is an attempt to analyze fundamental *shifts* in the late-twentieth-century economic, political, and cultural world arena, where a question like the disintegration or construction of a real or “imagined” nation-state plays an important role. A book like Benedict Anderson’s seminal *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1983) tends to resurface in discussions on globalization. On a more general note, the journals *Theory, Culture & Society* (Sage) and *Public Culture. Bulletin of the Center for Transnational Studies* (University of Chicago) consistently publish interesting contributions with a bearing on globalization. A special issue of the former, edited by Mike Featherstone and entitled *Global Culture. Nationalism, Globalization and Modernity* (1990), reads as an useful introduction to some key concepts and scholars.

The increasing and divergent number of researchers who have taken an interest in these questions obviously stands for a multitude of methods, approaches, and point-of-views. The up-side to this is the vitality and cross-disciplinary enthusiasm that informs many conferences and volumes, the down-side the fact that many of these books not only are densely written, but also display highly theoretical approaches that privilege “theory for theory’s sake” – at the expense of anchoring large-scale questions in specific, empirical studies on cultural artifacts, businesses, or events.

More clearly directed towards the role of culture in this configuration; Arjun Appadurai’s essay “Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy” (1990) and *Modernity at Large. Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (1996), highlights the irregularities of globalization – moving beyond models and systems. In “The Local and the Global: Globalization and Ethnicity” (1991), Stuart Hall emphasizes how globalization relates to localization, and that almost by necessity then, these two categories presuppose one another. The question of how to understand this relationship without relapsing into positioning the one or the other as the determinate partner, stands out as a theoretical epicenter within the discourse on globalization. One example illustrating the importance of an alternative perspective to a discussion that at

worst has been both a-empirical as well as gender-unconscious is the interesting volume *Scattered Hegemonies. Postmodernity and Transnational Feminist Practices* (1994), edited by Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan. Wanting to move beyond the designation of new dichotomies in the form of unreflected gender analysis of categories like center/periphery, or global/local, Grewal and Kaplan stress in their introduction that “there remains a great need for *feminist* critiques of the Western model of sisterhood in the global context.”<sup>46</sup>

As far as the media and globalization are concerned, the increased concentration in publishing in the 1980s has been noted for instance by Thomas Whiteside in *The Blockbuster Complex. Conglomerates, Show Business, and Book Publishing* (1980) and by Lewis A. Coser, Charles Kadushin and Walter W. Powell in their *Books. The Culture and Commerce of Publishing* (1982), studies that nonetheless were written only from the point-of-view of the United States. Richard J. Barnet & John Cavanagh’s book *Global Dreams. Imperial Corporations and the New World Order* (1994), is useful as a background to global companies in general through its incorporation of more recent events, but only marginally devoted to publishing and media. In fact, most inquiries into the media and globalization tend to orbit around television, news, and music videos rather than publishing. The highly informative *The Global Media. The New Missionaries of Global Capitalism* (1997) by Edward S. Herman and Robert W. McChesney confirm, together with books like David Morley’s *Spaces of Identity: Global Media, Electronic Landscapes and Cultural Boundaries* (1995) and Ien Ang’s *Living Room Wars. Rethinking Media Audiences for a Postmodern World* (1996), that it is mostly within communication research efforts to this end have been made.

The actual fieldwork following in the footsteps of these various theoretical approaches has involved a number of interviews, meetings, and visits both in Toronto and Stockholm, but also relies on information picked up at informal conversations or seminars at the romance conferences I have attended; the Romance Writers of America’s Annual National Conference in St. Louis, Missouri in 1993 and Honolulu, Hawaii in 1995, and the Georgia Romance Writers Moonlight and Magnolias Writers Conference in Atlanta, Georgia 1994.<sup>47</sup> In September 1994, I visited the Harlequin head office in Toronto for two days, and during the first half of 1996, I conducted a “participatory observation” that took place as I sat in on six weekly editorial meetings at the Stockholm office.

It is important to recognize that my relationship to Förlaget Harlequin is marked by both closeness and distance. I have been dependent on their good will to gain access to material necessary for the analysis, but it is an access that obviously to a large degree has taken place on their terms. Clearly, some information has been both withheld as well as “filtered.” Initially, my background outside academia certainly helped in letting me in, and so did perhaps their implicit assumption that I, as opposed to many previous forerunners, was not out to once and for all prove the indiscriminate power of the global transnational organization. This precarious balancing act, which, involves a measure of affinity and understanding, as well as analytical distance, is no doubt unavoidable when working with a living entity like a corporation; a mode of critical analysis that neither diminishes the researcher’s ethical responsibility towards the people concerned, nor means a disavowal of the critical vantage point underwriting its execution. To an equal extent, my work has of course also taken place in a more traditional investigative mode: the overall perspective used here to insert Harlequin into a larger framework is based on a number of sources independent of the corporation itself.

As my work progressed, I would say that my interviews moved from a more structured format towards an increasingly conversational form, in particular with the editors in Stockholm, whom I have come to know quite well during the course of the last six years. While some interviews have been more systematic than others, especially those I made with the two Harlequin writers Karen Stone and Phyllis Strobler, I feel a clear affinity towards the idea of what Pierre Bourdieu calls “active and methodical listening,” informing his and his collaborators most recent study *La Misère du Monde* (1993), and far removed from the quantitative data and surveys of *La Distinction* (1979); recognizing the need for understanding and empathy, rather than insisting on maintaining a detached “scientific” position.<sup>48</sup>

Moving on to the general outline of this book, the first chapter “Un Jeu à Qui Gagne, Gagne: The Affirmative Economics of the Romance Field” opens with a brief outline of the paperback and its history in the United States and Europe, delineating the context of Harlequin’s emergence as a publishing house. Here I argue that in order to understand Harlequin Enterprises’ current transnational position, one needs to explore the notable role that romances occupy in North American publishing today, and in particular as the genre

has been divided into the two publishing principles of category and mainstream. Chapter Two, “Professional Readings, Professional Writings: Harlequin Enterprises, Toronto” sketches the early years of the company and takes the reader through the practicalities of category publishing, as they are displayed in writing and editing within Harlequin Enterprises in Toronto.

The third chapter, “Rearing Their Ugly Heads: Feminization, Americanization, and the Category Book in Sweden,” traces the category book in Sweden before Förlaget Harlequin established its Scandinavian office in Stockholm in 1979. Unveiling some of the historic specificities that have come to characterize the Swedish mass market, this section discusses a few Harlequin predecessors, their output and identity.

Chapter Four, “Hardly Work on the Assembly-Line of Literature: Förlaget Harlequin, Stockholm,” investigates local choices and decisions, analyzing the key factors that in the end influence the way in which the global becomes the local. The practical outcome of this discussion, as the process of transediting takes shape in the readings of five books, is the focus of Chapter Five, “Transediting: The Global Made Local.” Chapter Six, “The Relentless Pursuit of Happiness: Reading *Harlequin Special* and *Exklusiv*,” is entirely devoted to a reading of fifty-six books; twenty-eight titles taken from the line *Harlequin Special* (*Harlequin Romance* and *Presents*) and twenty-eight from *Harlequin Exklusiv* (*Harlequin Superromance*), published in Sweden between 1980-92. To simplify, as I continued to read for different purposes, these two series crystallized as the textual focal point of the whole study, providing me with an obvious base from which I could then take my bearings in different directions.

Under the auspices of the “transnational transposition” theme, the final chapter “Tying Up Loose Ends,” attempts to answer the initial questions posed in this chapter by drawing together theory and practice, global and local into a tenable and persuasive conclusion.

CHAPTER ONE

“Un Jeu à Qui Gagne, Gagne”:  
The Affirmative Economics of  
the Romance Field

When Elizabeth Bennett consents to Mr. Darcy's second proposal in *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), she does so thoroughly rebuked, but also in possession of sufficient proof of his indeed noble and generous character. Equally passionate, Jane Eyre in Charlotte Brontë's novel (1847) cannot return to Rochester until both mutilated and blind, he has been made to pay for his bigamous intentions and she, in turn, is a “woman of independent means.” Generations of readers have rejoiced in these heroines' triumphant victories over male pride and conceit to see them gain the ultimate prize: family *and* fortune. Writing from a socioeconomic vantage point light-years from nineteenth-century Britain, a group of women who on the brink of the twenty-first century generate a multi-million dollar book industry hail these authors as generic foremothers.<sup>1</sup> The reason for their alleged loyalty is perhaps that Jane Austen and Charlotte Brontë are seen not only as the creators of fictitious worlds that have lived on as far as characters, style, and narrative is concerned, eventually to become part of the literary canon, but also and more to the point, as initiators of “stories that women tell to themselves ... and to each other.”<sup>2</sup>

Despite the long and checkered past of the term *romance*, whose presence in most dictionaries of literary terms is self-evident, one seldom finds references (other than fleetingly and in a detrimental way) to the modern, mass

market exponent.<sup>3</sup> To that end, most textbook definitions are, however outmoded or disparate, united by their tendency to emphasize the textual parameters of the romance. On the other hand, one could hardly disagree with best-selling author Jayne Ann Krentz when she says: “In a romance novel, the relationship between the hero and heroine *is* the plot. It is the primary focus of the story, just as solving the crime is the primary focus of a mystery.”<sup>4</sup> Coming from a source quite different from those who might wish to uphold the distinctions between “high” and “low” romances, this definition is equally inadequate in that it once more privileges the text at the expense of larger social, economic, and historical events that also shape the production and consumption of literature. To do justice to the complexity of the romance for which Jayne Ann Krentz is a primary exponent, one needs not only to account for its generic identity, but also to trace the specific history of the present-day romance phenomenon.

Going back in time, John Tebbel outlines three distinct periods in American publishing with significant impact on today’s mass market paperback in his book *Between Covers* (1987). The first takes place between approximately 1830 and 1845, the second occurs after the American Civil War, and the most recent is the result of circumstances surrounding World War II.<sup>5</sup>

To capitalize on what in the mid-1830s was becoming a burgeoning mass market, made possible by new technological advancements in printing and distribution as well as an increased literacy, two journalists, Park Benjamin and Rufus Wilmot Griswold, designed *Brother Jonathan* in 1839 as a “story” newspaper, containing pirated British serials. By labeling it a magazine, it qualified for free distribution as a newspaper and in contrast to their competitors, using more traditional channels of distribution, the two men were able to keep the price down. What they had not foreseen however, was that rather than wait for the coming issue of *Brother Jonathan*, people went out and bought the book right away. In true entrepreneurial spirit, potential disaster was turned into success when they instead “created the ‘supplement,’ a complete novel printed on cheap paper, priced at fifty cents, and disguised, still, as a newspaper.”<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately, the competition had now caught on. As the market became saturated with similar extras, prices and profit-margins dropped, and not until 1843, when the United States Post Office ruled that supplements no longer could be distributed at newspaper rates, was order

restored to the publishing world. *Brother Jonathan* quickly collapsed when the advantageous market conditions disappeared, but the point was made: books could be sold, based not only on their being unique esthetic representations, but also on predictability, repetition, standardization. And they could be sold to new readers, who through these cheap editions were to gain access to literature and reading in unprecedented numbers.

Events in Europe followed a similar itinerary. Although serialized novels were an essential part of the British daily newspapers, beginning with *The Times* in 1785, it was not until at least half a decade later that the paperbound book became firmly established in European culture.<sup>7</sup> Between the years 1848 and 1859 over sixty million copies of “romans à quatre sous” were sold in France.<sup>8</sup> Rapid industrialization added to the boom in cheap volumes. From 1850 to 1870 railway mileage increased from 1,000 to 24,000 kilometers in Britain, with similar figures in the rest of Europe. The analogy between trains, railway lines, and mass market publishing is worthy of more attention than this present study allows for, but without doubt, they came together in embodying public as well as private aspects of the modernization process. Trains were far more than a transportation novelty, linking those who now moved into urban areas with their agrarian past, as well as providing the means to commute to and from work; the very fact that they did so in a collective, yet isolated fashion allowed for books and reading to be used as an obvious exponent of leisure, pleasure and entertainment. In 1848, W.H. Smith had acquired a monopoly on railway bookstalls, and in France Hachette would follow suit a few years later, both companies designing railway libraries consisting of reprints, as in the case of W.H. Smith’s “Yellow Backs.”<sup>9</sup>

Arguably, the German publisher Tauchnitz was as a more direct precursor for the modern mass market paperback. Since 1837, Tauchnitz Editions had published pocket-sized books in English by writers such as A. Conan Doyle and Charles Dickens for a European audience, even being noted for paying royalties to writers despite the fact that there were no international copyright law at the time.<sup>10</sup> In the United States, the second wave of paperback publishing that followed the Civil War was in large part due to the availability of unprotected French and English novels, a source that would be permanently closed off with the international copyright law of 1891.<sup>11</sup> Tauchnitz’s longevity proved that it was possible to publish paperbound reprints regularly and under

a uniform appearance, and although the company founded as the 1930s became a political hotbed in Germany, its operations was eventually taken over by another paperback publisher: Albatross Modern Continental Library.<sup>12</sup>

A British publisher would instead be one of the first to reap the profits that lay ahead for the paperback. When Allen Lane in 1935 launched his first ten books under the name Penguin Books, he had learned a great deal from his German predecessors. Like the Albatross Books, Penguin Books were color-coded after content (orange for fiction, green for mysteries and so on), but they were much cheaper than their competitor's and above all, profited from an Anglo-American export market of substantial proportions. When news of Penguin Books' success reached the United States, Robert de Graff approached the New York publisher Simon & Schuster and suggested an American paperback series. With the launch of Pocket Books in 1939, exactly a hundred years after *Brother Jonathan*, the third "paperback revolution" had arrived, made possible by a century of dramatic changes. The close ties between newspapers and book publishing had been one of the founding principles, now increased literacy and public education broadened the consumer base, better and sophisticated technology made books cheaper, a heightened awareness of packaging, advertising, and design had come to stay and so had the realization that extensive and effective distribution networks were crucial to the continued prosperity of the paperback.

Janice Radway has pointed out in reference to the critique directed against the Book-of-the-Month Club at the time of its inception in 1926 that standardization – a constitutive part of mass market publishing to begin with – not only had an impact on the construction of individual identities, but also carried with it the potential for a more "democratic" cultural consumption; and as she says, those in a position of cultural authority found it "extremely difficult to think democracy *together* with standardization."<sup>13</sup> Nonetheless, the mass market had brought with it new forms of disseminating texts and books. In 1931, the so-called Chaney survey, commissioned by the publishing industry, had declared dismal findings; there were only around five hundred legitimate bookstores in the United States: "stores catering to an elite clientele in the nation's twelve largest cities. In two-thirds of America's counties, there were no bookstores at all. Thus only half of the books produced by American book publishers sold more than twenty-five hundred copies."<sup>14</sup>

As more paperback publishers entered the industry and bookstores multiplied as part of a growing infrastructure, it became clear that mysteries and detective stories were the first genre to dominate mass market paperback publishing. American Mercury Books had concentrated on mysteries since 1940, drawing on a tradition of dime novels and pulp magazines which had already established a “generic orthodoxy.”<sup>15</sup> There had of course been extremely successful women writers drawing on the romance tradition during the infancy of paperbacks, like E.D.E.N. Southworth, who from 1854 onwards made a fortune for herself and the sensationalist publisher Theophilus B. Peterson with her romantic books. And then there was Elinor Glyn’s heavy-scented and scandalous *Three Weeks* (1907) and Edith M. Hull’s *The Sheik* (1921), both of which became international bestsellers. Furthermore, two British writers with tremendous impact on the romance, began their writing careers in the 1920s. Barbara Cartland epitomizes the prolific romance writer *par excellence* since her *début* in 1925 with *Jig-saw*. More than seventy years and five hundred books later, she continues to write in her own mold and ranks as one of the most prolific authors ever. Georgette Heyer, active for more than fifty years between 1921 and 1974, became synonymous with the Regency, a type of romance which is still popular and always set in the so-called Regency period in England.<sup>16</sup>

Lacking the same kind of publishing history as the mystery or detective novel, the romance genre did not begin to have a serious and lasting impact on the book market until the 1950s. By that time, the American paperback scene had come of age and new publishing houses proliferated. The popularity of the mystery novel had however begun to wane, and as other possibilities were explored, the recurring success of Daphne de Maurier’s book *Rebecca* (1938) came to publishers’ minds. Tracing its roots back to Ann Radcliffe and *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), Mary Stewart, Victoria Holt, Phyllis Whitney, and others were to achieve market triumphs with their Gothic romances during the following decade.<sup>17</sup>

Even so, the gothic faced serious competition in the early 1970s. It all started in 1971, when Nancy Coffey, an editor at Avon Books, needed something to read over the weekend. According to publishing myth, she picked an unsolicited manuscript by Kathleen Woodiwiss from the so-called “slush pile” – books not requested by the publisher and usually destined for rejection.

What she found was *The Flame and the Flower*, the story of Heather Simmons and Brandon Birmingham, beginning in London 1799 and written by a thirty-two-year-old housewife from Minnesota.<sup>18</sup> Woodiwiss created almost overnight a new genre, and an infinite number of books began to appear in the wake of what would later be commonly known as “bodice ripper” or “savage romance” (so named after Rosemary Rodgers *Sweet Savage Love* [1974]). The “bodice ripper” featured several recurring themes: rape stood out as one of the most prominent, but marriage of convenience, kidnapping, and mistaken identities were other popular elements. Twice as long as previously had been common, it enabled better characterization, more detailed milieus (preferably many and exotic) and above all, made explicit sex an indispensable part of the story, described in detail and from the woman’s point of view. Heather was not the only female protagonist who, by traveling from the old continent to the new, simultaneously made a journey of coming to terms with her own sexuality and femininity.

Why then the immense impact of this book? *The Flame and the Flower* differed from its predecessors on precisely those two levels of integration of text and production that are embedded in the romance, and became seminal in reinforcing this close relationship in the future. What Avon did under the direction of Peter Meyer, was setting a double trend. First, by promoting and giving full attention to an unknown author and publishing her book as a paperback original, the market potential of the genre was proven beyond a doubt; and second, by launching new imprints, they showed that even backlists could be revitalized and expanded.<sup>19</sup> Woodiwiss epitomizes the coming together of changes within the text (content) with changes outside the text (the editor’s professional know-how becomes more important, the publication of paperback originals takes off). From a broader perspective, *The Flame and the Flower* once and for all anchored the American presence in a genre that until that time, had been dominated by the so-called “traditional” or “sweet” romance, or, what Jayne Ann Krentz refers to as “the British take on the fantasy.”<sup>20</sup>

But more things than innovative marketing stood to change North American publishing. Some of the well-known publishing houses in New York had owners who were getting older, planning for the continued survival of their companies. There was a *Catch-22*-situation. Estate-tax law made it nearly impossible for any remaining partner to take over without going bankrupt,

and instead many companies opted to go public. As Thomas Whiteside has noted, the fact that they did so, in turn, made it impossible for them to run their companies the way they had previously (Thomas Guinzburg, former president of Viking Books, referred to his own presidency as “a benevolent dictatorship”), and as media and electronics companies considered publishing a logical complement to their own business structure, mergers and acquisitions became increasingly common. Random House was the first major publisher to merge into a communications giant. The company was privately held until 1961, when it went public, and five years later, it was bought by RCA.<sup>21</sup>

In fact, a historical and technological abyss stand between what some claim as those first constitutive texts by Brontë and Austen and their generic sisters of today. Reportedly 177 million romance novels were sold in the United States in 1992 – a figure that translates into sales of approximately \$885 million, or 46.8 percent of all mass market paperbacks sold.<sup>22</sup> While sixty percent of all American households bought no book at all in 1991, the average romance consumer at the Barnes & Noble bookchain spent \$1,200 on romances.<sup>23</sup>

Owing a great deal to the coming together of the specific conditions only sketchily outlined here; a fully developed and elaborate mass market for paperbacks appears, coupled with a distinct feminization of both production and consumption within that market. The romance industry has in fact grown to the extent that it should be possible to regard it as a separate field within what Pierre Bourdieu terms *le sous-champ de grande production*, which itself, then, is part of the larger *champ de production culturelle*.<sup>24</sup> This is possible not only because of overwhelming statistics in title output and consumer spending, but also because so many people, individually and collectively – publishers, agents, writers, readers, booksellers, distributors, or, in other words: an “interpretative community” – all have a say-so in setting the limits of *what a romance is and should be*.<sup>25</sup>

For a number of reasons, it is important to keep in mind Loïc J. D. Wacquant’s well-phrased suggestion: “An invitation to think with Bourdieu is of necessity an invitation to think beyond Bourdieu.”<sup>26</sup> Although it is hard to disagree with Bourdieu’s laudable and continuous efforts to erase the gap between theory and research or subjective and objective, or to conceive of a new path for the social sciences where “des théories qui se nourrissent moins de l’affrontement purement théorique avec d’autres théories que de la

confrontation avec des object empiriques toujours nouveaux,” unfortunately, his own forays into literary analysis are distinctly lop-sided.<sup>27</sup> Far too sophisticated to allow such a bias when it comes to other empirical objects of study, ironically, when he turns to literature and art, Bourdieu situates *practice* as firmly within the male (Manet, Duchamp, Flaubert) as he does within the consecrated, the tradition emphasizing individuality (how are we otherwise to make any sense of remarks such as “to realize how *truly original* [my italics] Flaubert or Manet were, you must locate them?”), “high art,” and French culture in general.<sup>28</sup>

In view of the particularities of this present study, which hinges on what at first glance may appear as pure opposites to those categories just mentioned – the “female,” “the popular,” and the relationship between “global” and “local” – thinking “beyond” means using the concept of the field in conjunction with a number of other points of reference. An understanding of the historical emergence of the modern mass market becomes essential to such an undertaking, as does the discussion of the generic identity of the romance and various modes of production and consumption of meaning within popular culture as a whole. The concept of the field, then, is attractive, not because it supplies all the answers to all the questions, but because it allows for a *methodology* of continuous rethinking, or “a general mode of generating questions and building answers.”<sup>29</sup> The theoretical strength of the field makes it possible to elaborate, use and question its composition and logic, while at the same time addressing what may be perceived of as gaps or exclusions in an otherwise intricately woven net. By saying this, I am in no way arguing that popular culture does not have a place in the framework that is Bourdieuan theory and practice, nor saying that popular forms of consumption and taste do not figure in his work, because they do – most notably perhaps in *La Distinction* (1979) – but it should be noted that the literary examples that have come out of his epistemology have taken this general direction. This is a far cry from Richard Jenkins’s critique “that he [Bourdieu] consistently says he is doing one thing while actually doing something else.”<sup>30</sup>

Undoubtedly, from romance writing to editing, and from selling to buying, the proportion of women to men is overwhelming. Even though men have written and still do write romances – from Samuel Richardson with *Pamela; or Virtue Rewarded* (1740) to the more recent Ned Ackerman, who finds romances

compelling because of their values, and Vince Brach who “haven’t had a desire to write in other fiction genres” since he discovered romances – they are a clear minority and as their colleague Robert L. Rodgers a.k.a. Jean Barrett points out: writing under a female pseudonym is essential to success.<sup>31</sup> It follows that the multimillion dollar romance revenue mentioned earlier is generated by women who interact on a number of levels within a subfield where their gender has a contradictory position. Being a woman is in one sense sanctioned as a requirement – or, as we have seen, at least it is important to be *perceived* as one. Men however tend to occupy seats on the board, whereas women still mainly work with the text in its multifarious variations. Keeping this in mind, these identity-tags take on a far more complicated edge than any dismissive label of subordination might lead us to think. The romance field is a gendered field, but it is not a field of gender, and by this my point is that although a full-blown feminist critique will hardly evolve from this contextualization, it is nonetheless possible to shed some light on the issue of whether or not this particular field, because of its inherent criteria, displays different traits simply because women are a majority within its space, or reversibly, to see what features that might be more or less “neutral” – imposing their qualities on whoever enters, regardless of class, age, gender or race.<sup>32</sup>

Before addressing these issues more succinctly, I believe that one needs first to accentuate the close ties between the field and the romance genre, and it is interesting to note how Jim Collins’s description of a genre in general as an “intertextual arena,” where texts do battle with other texts according to certain ground rules, is reminiscent of Bourdieu’s own analogy with the field as a game or a space of play.<sup>33</sup> The 46.8 percent above should therefore not be taken as evidence of romances being one monolithic unit, looking exactly the same from any perspective or at any given time, but rather to suggest that behind the designation “romances” lies a diverse set of texts, united by their emphasis on heterosexual love – but little else. In the late 1990s this diversification can be seen in a number of subgenres of which these are just a few: Regency Romances (“set in England between 1800-1821”), Fantasy/Futuristic Romances (“romance novels with mystical worlds, planets or other elements of fantasy”), Paranormal Romances (“in which ghosts, angels or vampires play a major role in the plot”), Romantic Suspense/Gothic Romances (“in which suspense is a major element of the plot”), Young Adult Romances

(“geared toward young adult readers”), Time Travel Romances (“where characters travel back in time, forward in time and sometimes even in to the future”), and Inspirational Romances (“where religious concepts are conveyed as a major element of the plot”).<sup>34</sup> The increased presence of ethnic or multicultural romances should also be mentioned here. It is true that unsuccessful efforts to introduce series with non-Caucasian heroes and heroines were made earlier in the 1980s and that characters with, for instance, Native American backgrounds have been present in romances for some time, but when Pinnacle Books launched *Arabesque* in July 1994, it was the first line with an exclusive focus on African-American characters, apparently tapping into an hitherto underdeveloped market that even warranted an increase in titles in May 1996, from two to three a month.<sup>35</sup>

As any other genre, be it crime, mysteries, or horror stories, romances offers its readers a “smorgasbord” of texts, from which the reader then makes a choice, picking the one text (or texts) that best represents individual experience. To read “generically” is to read selectively, with a competence and skill that reaches far beyond what the uninitiated only perceives of as minor nuances. Genre readers discriminate fiercely and are highly aware of differences between texts and their own preferences relating to a particular genre. This skill is crucial to the reading experience, and I have been asked countless times about Harlequin at the same time as writers like Shirley Conran, Jackie Collins, and Judith Krantz, where the person asking apparently considers them related – but it is unlikely that any of these women would be considered romance writers by the “interpretative romance community,” which would probably see them as writing instead what some call “women’s fiction,” stories where the romantic relationship is not necessarily the focus of the story at all, but rather careers, sex and money.<sup>36</sup>

Consequently, the question of whether or not an individual text belongs “inside” or “outside” the genre of your choice is a matter of great importance and a decision that is both fundamentally personal and also collective, based on previous experience or preconceptions of the genre, always entailing some form of evaluation, where, as Stanley Fish puts it: “the act of recognizing literature [...] proceeds from a collective decision as to what will count as literature, a decision that will be in force only so long as a community of readers or believers continue to abide by it.”<sup>37</sup> Due to the expanding and

contracting movements within the field and genre, the committed reader needs to keep a certain vigilance over parameters that are constantly altered, changed and stretched. Thus, one could say that the reader actively pursues the genre rather than claiming that the genre usurps the reader, which I think in a sense is what John Cawelti does when he says: “We learn in this way [by repetition] how to experience this imaginary world without continually comparing it with our own experience.”<sup>38</sup>

In 1985, Carol Thurston distinguished three classifying lines for the then booming romance: “*sexual content* (sweet or erotic), *setting* (historical or contemporary), and *degree to which content is shaped and controlled by publishers* (category or mainstream romance).”<sup>39</sup> Thirteen years later, the romance has become extremely diversified in content, spanning a multitude of texts that defy insertion in either sweet/erotic or historical/contemporary categories. Even though category and mainstream have gone through similar changes, they remain more rooted by the way in which they as publishing criteria fuel the logic of the romance field.

Despite competition from a few other publishing houses in North America, Harlequin remains *the* quintessential category publisher. The definition of category by Margaret Ann Jensen in the previous chapter as resting on the marketing of a brand-name or the concept of “lines,” or “series,” rather than on the name of individual authors, is worth remembering. Each title in such a series is subsequently given a number and a cover that conforms to the type that distinguishes its line visually. The print run of a category romance is basically determined by the fact that each book is sold during the course of one month, and then replaced. Since publishing operates on a return policy, the print run may be adjusted up or down depending on sales, but it will have to have some kind of consistency, meaning that even if return rates should go up to sixty-five percent one month, the print run cannot be decreased too much for the next title because exposure would be lost. If this book then is a success, there could suddenly be too few books to sell. A category romance is seldom reprinted, and the combination of all of these factors will reflect on royalties, as well as author advances. Category romances are comparatively short books, between 50,000 and 85,000 words, which requires them to stay within a limited time frame, be straightforward, and primarily focus on the relationship. The editorial “guidelines” that are elaborated at Harlequin’s

combined editorial offices are perhaps the most known feature of category publishing and will be discussed in the following chapter. Language should be proper, and characterization based on likable, ordinary people who may have flaws, but who are basically sympathetic persons facing problematic situations. In an audiotape aimed at prospective writers, Harlequin explains through a soft-spoken voice that: “they [the characters] may occasionally waffle when deciding what to do in a difficult situation, but they will always do the right thing.”<sup>40</sup> Finally, the one non-negotiable feature of the category romance is that it always ends happily.

Mainstream on the other hand, is more difficult to describe. Carol Thurston has made the following attempt: “A ‘mainstream romance’ conforms only to the loosely defined formula associated with genre writing and ranges from 235 to 500 pages in length. In the romance publishing business these novels are referred to variously as single-titles, one-offs, and fat books.”<sup>41</sup> Not published in a numbered series, the print run is generally more substantial and sales not limited to one month. Covers are less standardized than in category and a mainstream romance can be, and often is, reprinted and may even make *The New York Times* bestseller list – a feat no category romance has ever achieved. As a longer book, it spans several generations if necessary, even including characters that are unsympathetic, making room for a more elaborate plot and several subplots. Avon, Bantam, Fawcett, Leisure, Penguin, and Pocket Books are only a few mainstream romance publishers.<sup>42</sup> No real limitations are placed on language, and the end may be more unpredictable. For instance, when asked how she would define a “mainstream end” writer Nora Roberts used the word “satisfactory,” having *Gone With the Wind* in mind.<sup>43</sup>

The limitations placed on category romances are therefore both directed toward the text, but also predetermine what kind of marketing, distribution, and sales the book is likely to get; taken together, mainstream will be regarded as representing more money, freedom and status. One of the basic tensions within the romance field is that writers tend to want to go from writing category to writing mainstream, and the driving force behind this cannot be pinned down to either straightforwardly economical or openly creative reasons. Category publishers are perhaps not so far off the mark when they claim that writers aspire to more money, while category writers stress the potential for more artistic freedom, but also perhaps the fact that the category market

places quite different, and sterner demands on the writer than mainstream does. As Phyllis Strobler, a.k.a. Margot Dalton, one of Harlequin's Canadian *Superromance* writers wearily notes of category readers: "It doesn't matter how much you do, they want more. They're out fast, they're gone quick, they're really consumed rapidly. [...] The more you give them, the better you get, the more they want and the faster they want the books."<sup>44</sup> Jayne Ann Krentz has however pointed out that real and lasting changes in content in the romance genre seem to occur within category romances and not, as one might suspect, in mainstream romances.<sup>45</sup> Category publishers are more willing to gamble according to Krentz, precisely because each title "drowns" in the large amount of books published every month, and then only sits on the shelves for one month.

Before elaborating further on what these two publishing principles have come to mean more directly for the romance field, I would like to step back and look at what constitutes the overarching logic of the literary field more generally. According to Bourdieu, the field of cultural production is divided in two sections: the *sous-champ de production restreinte* (in which the producers produce for other producers) and the *sous-champ de grande production* (which is symbolically excluded and discredited).<sup>46</sup> How this comes out in "real life" is not solely the business of the field in question. The literary, the academic, or the financial may be distinct from one another and answer to their own inherent logic, but they also share certain common structural denominators, as the relation to the surrounding field of power, and to the even larger all-encompassing "social space." On paper, the field of cultural production may appear flat and square, but it is obvious that in reality it is a formation based on a set of continuous oppositions.<sup>47</sup>

The first subfield, that of limited production, is governed by a pervasive negative economics – an inversion of the forces at play in the field of power, discrediting any pursuit of economic gain in monetary terms and promoting the search for "pure" literature, or "pure" science. The fundamental law of this subfield is the notion of *l'art pour l'art* as the highest achievable order, the most sanctified version of text and writer. Since the mid-nineteenth century this ongoing project has rested on the principle of "tuer le romanesque," or what Bourdieu so aptly calls the efforts to purify the novel from that which once distinguished it, action, adventure, heroes, traits that today instead have

come to be associated with popular fiction.<sup>48</sup>

On the other end, the *sous-champ de grande production* rests on immediate remuneration and recognition, public success, substantial print runs, being asked to appear on talk shows, and so on. *Production restreinte* stands for autonomy and independence as opposed to heteronomy and subordination, but both are historically contingent and vary in space, and because of this polarizing tendency, those who enter the field tend to orient themselves towards either side. An understanding of a specific writer in this context, is subsequently *not* biographical but the result of locating the writer *as position* within a “network [...] of objective relations between positions” of which she or he is both a result and a force.<sup>49</sup>

One of the basic points of the literary field, is the struggle for the prerogative to name and consecrate; to say with authority what *makes a writer*, what a “pure” writer *is*, but also to defend the borders and to be able to impose and dictate the field’s entrance fee, to delimit the number of people allowed inside. By virtue of entering the field in the first place, romance writers as well as Nobel prize winners are actually in the game together, this despite the fact they may never meet but rather be firmly defined by their very oppositionality. In reality however, the *avant-garde* has the upper hand and romance writers do not have to power to define literature in any way other than negatively – as representing that which literature is not.

Bourdieu is of course right in his vision of popular culture as marginalized in every aspect and doubly so if feminized, and there seems little doubt that writing, reading or editing romances does not entitle you to any credits in literary circles. All the same, the romance field functions partly as an autonomous entity and in view of this it should be possible to outline its relationship to this larger logic either by emulation or differentiation. To see what results this possibly might yield here, one needs to address the presence of romance writers, both as individuals and as part of a larger group.

Romance Writers of America is, according to the organization itself, “the world’s largest nonprofit genre organization” and although obviously not all romance writers are members, the fact that it has grown into of the most important lobby organizations for romance writers around, makes a case for its strategic importance in the field. Equally important in discussing RWA at length, is that the organization points to the fact that romance writers not

only strive to construct themselves individually as writers through their books, but that they *also* use the strength of the collective in order to guarantee and reinforce their creative, economic, and legal position on the market. Finally, the magnitude of the romance industry in North America is nowhere more visible than in the activities of RWA.

Founded in 1980 to “promote excellence in romantic fiction” partly on the urgings of editor Vivien Stephens, RWA membership to the annual cost of sixty dollars is open to both unpublished and published writers and associate membership to editors, booksellers, agents, and other industry professionals.<sup>50</sup> In early 1996, its headquarters in Houston, Texas had four full-time and two, sometimes three part-time employees, serving members all over the North American continent but also in Britain, Australia, New Zealand, and in other countries. It is divided nationally into six regions, and each area elects two regional directors to sit on the organization’s National Board of Directors together with the four national officials of president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. On a national level, RWA publishes *Romance Writers’ Report*, a bimonthly magazine dedicated to everything from negotiating new contracts with your publisher, getting an agent and managing the tax authorities to writing better sex scenes, characterization, and plot. It also runs a national conference that annually draws between fifteen hundred and two thousand established and would-be authors to network with editors and agents, and where the best published romances and the best manuscripts in several categories are honored with the RITA and The Golden Heart awards.

As a member of RWA you automatically belong to one of the six regions, in turn subdivided into local chapters, and while all members belong to the national organization, they can choose whether or not to join a local chapter.<sup>51</sup> In 1987 there were a total of sixty-five chapters, in 1997 more than 160 in the United States, Canada, and Australia. As the genre has grown, special interest chapters that organize members around subgenres have also developed; a few of these are the Multicultural Chapter, the Beau Monde (Regency), and the Young Adult network, as well as a special Outreach Chapter, open to those who because of distance might be unable to partake in any organized chapter activities. The size of the North American continent may of course also be one of the reasons why romance writers have taken to the World Wide Web with enthusiasm. There are newsgroups, bulletin boards, bookshops, author

homepages – everything that you could possibly want as a romance writer or reader can be found on the Internet – even a virtual chapter; RWA on-line.<sup>52</sup> Diana Gabaldon, one of the most successful romance writers of recent years, was, according to *Romance Writers' Report*, discovered through the computer network CompuServe, “when she posted some bits of her as-yet-unfinished novel *Outlander*, to strengthen her point in an argument with another net-worker. One of the readers, a science-fiction writer, introduced her to his agent and ... a novelist was born.”<sup>53</sup>

Local chapters function independently and mirror the activities of the national organization; they, too, publish newsletters and organize conferences, contests, and workshops. The end pages of *Romance Writers' Report* invariably list any number of local events. A random sample from number 3, 1996 ranges from the “Fourteenth Annual Maggie Award” sponsored by the Georgia Romance Writers, to the Aloha Chapter RWA “Describe a Hunk”-competition, to “The Plums and Pitfalls of Publishing” where agent Evan Fogelman, sponsored by the Greater Detroit RWA explains “the inner workings of the publishing industry,” to the “Second Annual Silken Sands Conference” organized by the Gulf Coast Chapter RWA. Although RWA is both powerful and interesting as a national organization, it is at the local level that it has developed into a veritable producer of writers, many times through the benchmark feature of critique groups.

In recognizing that popular culture has a potential for *productivity*, John Fiske has specified three such forms relating to “fan culture”: *semiotic productivity* (readers making meaning from texts), *enunciative productivity* (“fan” talk), and *textual productivity* (the making of new texts from old).<sup>54</sup> The best-known examples of the latter, are probably the so-called “Trekkies,” who are constantly involved in rewriting or elaborating on Star Trek episodes and characters. RWA offer one such “productivity exchange” dedicated to romances; there are countless others where readers share their experiences with other readers through networks, electronic mail, and magazines. Similarly, editors talk to aspiring writers, writers to agents, agents to editors, in what is both an economic and a cultural system so fluid that it is extremely difficult to discern any clear lines between what would constitute the one or the other. Hypothetically, if a group of readers are verbal enough in their contacts with a publisher about unwanted features in a line of romances, and the

publisher does something about it – where does culture end and economy begin? “Romance talk” is an *enunciative productivity* – a shared frame of reference, generated and communicated between these different groups. Obviously, the romance as a textual category or genre is what is primarily at stake here, but one should keep in mind that the romance field circulates products within it that need not be literary or textual in themselves; like workshops and conferences aimed at aspiring writers, How-to-write books, software on writing romances as well as travels and cruises for romance fans, but to which the final affirmation of the importance of the written text is attached nonetheless.<sup>55</sup>

To look up any local chapter on the Internet is to explore this ongoing romance productivity. South Louisiana Romance Writers of America (SOLA), is only one of many local chapters. Their homepage tells me that they convene every third Saturday in downtown New Orleans, beginning at 10.00 A.M with a business meeting, followed by a program. On 18 January 1997, Norman Marmillion of Laura Plantation spoke on life on the River Road in the Civil War era, after which those attending dispersed to continue with work in their critique groups.<sup>56</sup>

Romance writers constantly verge battles against prejudices and contrary to what many may think, they make up a heterogeneous group of women spanning all segments of society; Jayne Ann Krentz has a B.A. in History and an M.A. in Library Science; Julie Tetel, who writes historical romances for Harlequin is a Professor of English at Duke University, one of the most prestigious academic institutions in the United States. Eighty-nine percent of RWA members have attended college and fifty-six percent have four years of college education. The cadre of members include lawyers, scientists, housewives, and journalists.<sup>57</sup> As their varied background is listed, this fragmented group seem to have a few things in common – a ceaseless tempo, a passion for writing, and an attitude that Karen Stone a.k.a. Karen Young summarizes in her description of herself as a writer:

I consider myself an absolute professional. I consider what I do to be... I know that I have a talent for writing, and I think that Hemingway had a talent for writing. In that, we are absolutely alike. The tone of his work is absolutely different from the direction that I take. But I don't think that I have something world-shaking and terribly important and socially relevant to say, particularly. But I do have something to say and in that way I feel that I, as I say, I am a professional. Writing is my job, I sit down, and I am no more impressed with the fact that I am a writer

and that is my job than my husband who is an engineer and that is his job. He is just as good at what he does as I am at what I do, and I'm just as good at what I do as he is at what he does.<sup>58</sup>

At the same time as professionalism and business savvy are necessary to advance in a highly competitive climate, words like sincerity and dedication are repeatedly stressed. "It is a genre that requires absolute sincerity" is not an altogether uncommon version on this theme.<sup>59</sup>

Janet Dailey, Jude Deveraux, Jill Marie Landis, Nora Roberts, LaVyrle Spencer, Jayne Ann Krentz, and all the others who have their names on RWA's Honor Roll; or whose books have appeared on one or more of the following mass market, hardback or trade bestseller list: *The New York Times* (top 20), *Publishers Weekly* (top 15), *USA Today* (top 50); or who have been given the RWA Lifetime Achievement Award have definitely made it. These women are paragons to both readers and fellow colleagues, not only because their books are appreciated and considered model romances, and as such able to transform and change the romance genre, but more to the point, because they as individuals have gone through the trajectory of beginning in category romances and ending up writing those big, fat books on *The New York Times* bestseller list. The fact that Waldenbooks increased its sales of hardback romances by 212 percent in 1992, owes much to the strength of these and other romance writers' names and a loyal public that will not wait until their favorite author's new book comes out in paperback, but buys it in hardcover straight away.<sup>60</sup>

It is crucial, however, that those who have reached this coveted position, affirm their "dues" to category writing, as Debbie Macomber does in *Romance Writers' Report*, where she acknowledges what category taught her; the business, honing her skills and delivering on time, in short, to be professional.<sup>61</sup> By saying this, she and others are confirming what Bourdieu terms *illusio*, the belief that the value of romances is such that despite the years of rejection-letters and hard work, the game itself is worth playing. Thus, you may become an idol to your peers by behaving in a manner consistent with what is expected of you, that is, respecting and expressing your love of the romance, showing due reverence for the craft, sharing your know-how with others, never devaluing the romance publicly, and always striving to improve it.<sup>62</sup>

Janet Dailey was the first who made the transition from category to

mainstream – at age thirty-five, her fifty-three books for Harlequin had sold eighty million copies. Featured in *The Guinness Book of Records* for setting novels in each of the fifty American states, and sometimes working twelve-hour days, turning out 7,500 words a day, but always stopping on the twentieth page even in midsentence so that she would be able to begin the next morning no matter what, she decided to move on to mainstream romances in 1984 and made a well-publicized change of publisher.<sup>63</sup> Dailey is a phenomenon with her own quarterly newsletter, the *Janet Dailey Newsletter*, keeping her more than 53,000 subscribers up-to-date on her projects. In 1993 she instituted the Janet Dailey Award, a \$5,000 annual award to the author whose romance novel best addresses a social issue, and for a long time her career has been managed by husband Bill – who left his own business to devote himself to hers full-time when the money started pouring in.<sup>64</sup>

This account should not be interpreted as a description of this gendered field as a worldly embodiment of pastoral feminism. As Bourdieu notes, the history of the literary field is the struggle between “les tenants et les prétendants;” it is rejuvenated by the arrival of newcomers, a feature apparent within the romance field in general and RWA in particular.<sup>65</sup> In the beginning of the 1980s there did not seem to be enough romances to go around and writers were actively sought after – a situation that has changed. Today, when less than two thousand romances are published each year, the arrival of new writers onto an already crowded scene, makes for an ambiguous conflict. Since there are around six times as many unpublished as published writers in RWA, and because both groups are given equal voting rights in the organization (not an altogether common procedure), published writers tend to feel that too much attention is given to the needs of the unpublished (who might take their places, of course). This particular situation has even resulted in the creation of a rival organization, called Novelists Inc., open only to published writers, and the formation of PAN (Published Authors Network), a separate network for published writers within RWA. Today, PAN is an important instrument in making RWA more visible (organizing booths at the conventions of the American Library Association, the Public Library Association, and the American Booksellers’ Association) as well as initiating the annual Publishers Summit in New York, where more formalized discussions between RWA and the publishers take place.

On the one hand, the romance field celebrates sisterhood, collective strength and sees itself as a carrier of communality. As Beth Kolko notes in her work on the women in an RWA critique group: “writing is by definition a social activity for them, even as they wrestle with the isolation inherent in the act. The energy they derive from being writers is grounded in their participation in the group.”<sup>66</sup> As much as critique groups are there to critique, they are also forums of empowerment and celebration within a field where sustenance and support are directed *from* women *to* women. It can be seen in the constantly recurring ads in *Romance Writers’ Report* where local chapters salute those within their ranks who have made their first sales, or in other forms, like when the writer Deb Stover tells of her critique group giving her a dozen red roses when her first book was accepted by a publisher.<sup>67</sup> Tales of disenchantment and bad experiences are also circulated, but ultimately they tend to be less frequent. Stories of those who never made it hardly serves the purpose of continuous and necessary affirmation.

The romance field marks its boundaries differently, because so many are part of the field and not yet writers, or writers but at the same time something else. The women who aspire to this romance career undertake a precarious balancing act when they seek out a public space in critique groups while simultaneously striving to formulate a more private identity and voice as individual writers. Their ambition becomes even more diverse as one realizes that many of them aim to take the pleasure they have derived from romance reading and use it as capital in order to create a new career as writers. Suddenly, the very private has become the very public. *Textual productivity* within the romance field is therefore based on the fact that many of those who become writers in this genre frequently have been dedicated readers of the same. This makes it different from fan culture, where fans generally do not wish to make money from their productivity, but rather spend money on it.

Beckoning us to rethink the notion of what we mean by a writer in the first place, questions of transgression between fields are also raised. The very fluidity of reconciling divergent roles of housewife and writer, or police officer and writer, prompts us to understand our own and other’s careers and insertions in fields not as mutually exclusive, but as inclusive. Consider, for example, Julie Tetel – a writer of historical romances for Harlequin (and thus marginalized and excluded) as well as a professor (and thus consecrated). Her

position(s) and what it (they) might tell us points to the importance of viewing both fields (romance and academia) historically in order to see their possible interdependency and connection. In the case of Patricia Reynolds Smith, previously editor at the romance publisher Silhouette Books but now acquisitions editor at the University of Pennsylvania Press, her successful transposition has taken her from romance to academia, where she has converted romance capital into a more acceptable currency, while promoting and actively working to change the perception of romances in her new field – as was the case with the previously discussed book *Dangerous Men and Adventurous Women*.

On the other hand, the romance field reproduces the game of distinction, where certain critics and authors will receive higher status, just as certain texts will be considered “better” than others. The canonization of both texts and writers on the basis of unique and distinct voices, the same tendency of placing value on individuality, exists in the romance field, as it does in popular culture and of course, most forcefully in “high” culture. So, while Linda Barlow and Jayne Ann Krentz may try and argue for the collective even in the text itself by saying: “what is usually regarded as ‘good’ prose style – presupposing the value of the original, individual voice over the value of merged voices – is not necessary for writing romances. This is true because in romance novels the shared experience is more valuable than the independent one,” they are denouncing a process that they are *also* arduously embracing, and that singles out writers by reviews, contests and awards.<sup>68</sup>

It is interesting to note how suppressing individuality as in the quote above, goes hand in hand with the celebration of finding “your own voice,” to develop a style and to expand on it, to be *unique*. Embedded in the structure of both field and organization, lies therefore a fundamental conflict between the individual and the collective, seen in both physical and textual form as shifting aligning identities of woman as social and private writer. Consequently, the romance field ambiguously constructs a different form of writing tied to social activity and space, while at the same time it reproduces the value of originality and individuality.

Such incoherence may exist without any resolution necessarily being sought, but I would also like to suggest that one way of transcending the dichotomy between private and public, unique and collective, has been to

focus on the way the terms category and mainstream have come to define a different version of the logic of negative economics. They do so, because the romance field insists on financial compensation tied to consecration and creative reward. If we assume, as I have done, that the romance field may be viewed according to the same principles of division, then category surely places itself on one side (heteronomy and subordination), whereas mainstream, with its more complex, longer, and elaborate stories becomes the norm to which all aspire (independence and autonomy). However, contrary to Bourdieu's idea of a constant negation of the second, the abject refusal of monetary gain and the steadfast perseverance of peer recognition, the more consecrated you get in the romance field, the more money you make. The less consecrated you are, the less money you make. Wanting to reconcile financial remuneration for hard work with quality, individuality, and uniqueness, profoundly underscores a wish to reverse the Bourdieuan logic, because what we have here, is not a game where whoever loses, wins – but rather a game in which those who win; win twice: “un jeu à qui gagne, gagne.”<sup>69</sup>

## CHAPTER TWO

# Professional Readings, Professional Writings: Harlequin Enterprises, Toronto

Richard Bonnycastle, from a well-to-do Winnipeg family, launched Harlequin Books as a paperback reprint operation in May 1949 with Nancy Bruff's long since forgotten *The Manatee*. However, better known authors such as Agatha Christie, Arthur Conan Doyle, James Hadley Chase, and Somerset Maugham, were part of the company's list during the first years – all selling for the price of twenty-five cents.<sup>1</sup> While not expressly specializing in either gothics or romances, Harlequin experienced huge success with the British writer Eleanor Hibbert (more known under her pseudonyms Jean Plaidy, Victoria Holt, and Philippa Carr) and Paul Grescoe notes that in 1951 Jean Plaidy's "*Beyond the Blue Mountain* had only 48 copies returned on sales of 30,000."<sup>2</sup>

In 1953, as romantic fiction had increasingly proven its popularity, Harlequin began to publish medical romances. By now, Richard Bonnycastle had asked his wife Mary to help him with the business, and from the base of their home, she acted as editor, keeping an eye out for material to reprint. Through an English friend, she was to find out that the romantic books she had discovered at the public library and enjoyed reading, came from the British publisher Mills & Boon.

Gerald Mills and Charles Boon started out as colleagues at the London publishing house of Methuen and Co., but went into business for themselves

when they felt that their employer did not appreciate them enough. Mills & Boon began as a hardcover publisher in 1908, and even if their first book was a romance, *Arrows From the Dark* (1909) by Sophie Cole, their subsequent specialization on romances came later. By the 1930s, Mills had died and Charles Boon's sons Carol, Alan, and John had come into the business. Well-established in their romantic niche, they had launched their own mail-order catalog as early as before World War I, paving the way for the more elaborate mass market techniques later appropriated fully by Harlequin. Mills & Boon distributed their books through a very specific channel: the commercial tupenny libraries that had become hugely popular distribution outlets for books during the Depression. There, romantic stories showed a consistent popularity with female readers. Since the mid-eighteenth century in Britain, lending libraries had played an important role in the diffusion of reading habits.<sup>3</sup> In the 1950s, branch libraries in England had however begun to shut down, and what had previously proven a steady and reliable outlet now propelled the Boons towards almost certain downfall. Stranded with no sales force – “only two fellows over 70” – and having failed to increase their sales through mail, prospects were not good.<sup>4</sup> At that bleak moment, a letter from an insignificant Canadian publishing house in Toronto asking for the paperback reprint rights for their medical romances, must have been a godsend. In the end both profited; Mills & Boon needed to sell their books, Harlequin wanted to publish them and thereby gained access to romances already “pretested” on the British market.

When it issued its first Mills & Boon romance, Anne Vinton's *The Hospital in Buzvambo* (No 407) in 1957, Harlequin had been regularly publishing medical romances, often with print runs of 20,000 to 25,000 copies.<sup>5</sup> Seven years later, in 1964, the Harlequin-Mills & Boon liaison had proved a successful enough venture to warrant the Canadian company's decision to offer Mills & Boon romances exclusively. And Harlequin was doing well in Canada. With reported sell-throughs in parts of the country of around eighty-five percent, the publisher now looked south for distribution.<sup>6</sup> In 1970, Pocket Books began distributing Harlequin books in the United States and during the years that followed, a distinct reversal of market emphasis would take place. As Margaret Ann Jensen notes: “In 1969 78 percent of sales were in Canada, which dropped to 30 percent in 1975.”<sup>7</sup> After Harlequin went public in 1969 and continued

its expansion plans, one of the first tasks confronting its president Lawrence W. Heisey, who had been appointed in 1971, was to spearhead the company's growing presence in the United States. A Harvard Business School graduate and self-proclaimed "soap-salesman," Heisey was used to fast-moving consumer products from his thirteen years at the Toronto office of Procter and Gamble, and is even credited with his own principle: *The qualities of the product itself are unimportant in designing sales campaigns.*<sup>8</sup>

Approached about the Harlequin presidency, Heisey was quick to realize that this was a company primarily selling products rather than books. In all probability then, the same methods so successfully applied to brands like Tide or Crisco, would be equally efficient selling Harlequins. At least he was dealing with the same consumers: women. As Janice Radway has argued, the popularity of the gothic may in large part be attributed to the fact that the expansion of local drugstores and supermarkets made it easier than ever to reach women as a book-buying audience.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, they could be relied on as heavy consumers of books, and when Heisey identified the housewife as a primary target, distribution and marketing was geared towards this group. Since booksellers were reluctant to sell mass market paperbacks at this time, Harlequin chose to distribute through supermarkets and other select retail stores. In line with their brand-name profile, they focused on selling a whole line of books rather than individual titles. Faced with a modest advertising budget, more or less spectacular giveaways became early trademarks:

Other promotional ventures done on a contractual basis include a complete romance published in *Good Housekeeping* that was followed by a coupon the reader could send in to receive a free Harlequin, a romance packed in the large-size box of Kotex feminine napkins and Bio-Ad detergent; romances given away to customers at McDonald's restaurants on Mother's Day; romances given away with purchases of Avon products and Jergens lotion and a free romance given in exchange for a coupon found on the bottom of Ajax cans.<sup>10</sup>

Revolutionary as it sounded, it was nothing new. Even at the end of the nineteenth century, books and soap were a winning combination. The paperback selling slot-machine was only one resourceful trade invention, and according to John Tebbel, one manufacturer had "issued a new, trademarked product, 'Book Soap'."<sup>11</sup> Apparently it was concept with stamina: a year after Heisey's arrival at Harlequin, the company was poised to buy its British supplier. As

the Canadian company continued to grow in the United States, it had become increasingly concerned about the future. The contract with the Boon brothers had been close to non-existent, renewed with a handshake every year when Richard Bonnycastle Sr. and his son flew to London for their annual lunch with Alan Boon at the Ritz. Now, Harlequin was anxious to ensure that its source would not run dry. Wooed by other British publishers, the Boons had considered putting their business on the market before, but ultimately decided to sell to the Canadians in 1972. The merger ended with both brothers remaining at the company, John Boon overseeing the London operation while Alan Boon became head of editorial for both Mills & Boon and Harlequin.<sup>12</sup>

As imaginative as they were on one level, as remarkably traditional were they when it came to contents. Tania Modleski has described the short, British and “sweet” romance that Harlequin published this way:

a young, inexperienced, poor to moderately well-to-do woman encounters and becomes involved with a handsome, strong, experienced, wealthy man, older than herself by ten to fifteen years. The heroine is confused by the hero's behavior since, though he is obviously interested in her, he is mocking, cynical, contemptuous, often hostile, and even somewhat brutal. By the end, however, all misunderstandings are cleared away, and the hero reveals his love for the heroine, who reciprocates.<sup>13</sup>

At the time of Woodiwiss's *The Flame and the Flower* in 1972, publication was even limited to only one line, *Harlequin Romance*, issuing six romances a month. A year later however, *Harlequin Presents* appeared as a more sensual line and, as Kay Mussell writes: “to highlight the novels of three especially popular and prolific Harlequin writers: Violet Winspear, Anne Hampson, and Anne Mather.”<sup>14</sup> Initially, Harlequin was reluctant to introduce *Presents* on the North American market. Mary Bonnycastle, who still had a say in editorial matters, did not approve of the more sensual books, while Alan Boon in London pushed for them, knowing that they had performed well in Britain.<sup>15</sup> And he was right – within two years *Presents* was outselling *Romance*.<sup>16</sup>

Profitable times paired with a certain hubris was perhaps what prompted the calamitous decision in 1976 not to renew the distribution contract with Simon & Schuster and Pocket Books. The Canadians had decided to do it themselves and when they left, Simon & Schuster was faced with a complete sales force, but no product to sell. Harlequin even gave Simon & Schuster

a three-year notice on the contract, in reality handing them on a plate the opportunity to launch their own romance line.<sup>17</sup>

And so they did. When *Silhouette Romance* hit the stands in May 1980 – it was the same “sweet” romances as Harlequin’s, but with one major difference – nationality. Despite the presence of Janet Dailey, the first American to write for Harlequin, editorial practices continued to be regulated from Britain and Harlequin consistently turned down manuscripts that were set in the United States or written by American writers. Unintentionally, this proved fortuitous to Silhouette Books, who had an untapped source of maybe 180 rejected manuscripts to choose from as they began their operations.<sup>18</sup> The emergence of Silhouette emphatically demonstrated that Harlequin did not have a monopoly on romance publishing. Hiring both Harlequin executives and writers as well as pouring money into advertising, Silhouette quickly became a major competitor and a thorn in the side of those who had basically made the whole thing happen: Harlequin.

Harlequin did not launch its first original line, *Superromance*, until 1980. At times described as nothing more than a “long *Presents*,” these texts originate in North America and feature North American protagonists.<sup>19</sup> The distinction between *Romance*, *Presents*, and *Superromance* has been described in these terms: “Harlequin *Romances* take you to the bedroom door; the *Presents* series open the door; the *Superromances* actually show them doing it.”<sup>20</sup> Even so, although Harlequin tried to recuperate some of its mistakes by accepting American writers and stories, their failure to adapt had led to tangible losses and contributed to the problems the company now faced in coming to terms with the more competitive market and substantial changes in demographics.<sup>21</sup>

The mid-1980s was a period when every publisher worth the name tried to get into romances, and the years 1983-84 are often referred to by the North American book trade as “The Romance Wars,” when new lines surfaced, while others closed – three out of five of the new lines introduced during the “boom year” of 1983 folded.<sup>22</sup> By 1984, this competition had seriously affected Harlequin, who made a successful bid for Silhouette and offered to revert the distribution rights to Pocket Books, having learned the lesson the hard way. Since that year, Harlequin has only strengthened its position, until it eight years later had an estimated eighty-five percent share of the North American romance series market and were well on the way to international

expansion.<sup>23</sup> Buying the competition had become something of a company trademark, but when Harlequin tried to purchase Zebra Books in 1992, the deal fell through. The reasons behind the failed acquisition vary depending on whose side, Harlequin or Zebra's, you choose to believe, but buying Zebra would not only have given Harlequin access to a new market segment, but also perhaps made it too big for comfort in the North American market.<sup>24</sup>

Internationally, however, the expansion faced no such obstacles, and returning briefly to the years immediately following the crumbling Wall, Harlequin was quick to leap into the old Eastern bloc. Cora Verlag initiated a licensing agreement to distribute in Hungary in 1989, selling seven million romances in 1991 and an incredible two books for each of the nation's 5.5 million women the year after. Poland came along as a wholly owned subsidiary in 1991, chalking up twenty-five billion zlotys in advertising and promotional budget in 1992, broadcasting fifty television advertising spots a month, and reaching initial print runs of 175,000 a title. The Czech Republic opened as a wholly owned subsidiary in 1992 and soon grossed about \$10 million a year. Also in 1992, Harlequin established its presence in the former Soviet Union. In a Harlequin press release from June 1992, the company states that in 1995 they hoped to sell "35 million copies in Eastern Europe – a stunning 15% of world wide sales."<sup>25</sup> But the transition has been bumpy. Underdeveloped infrastructure, rampant currency problems, competition from other publishers – all combined to make the conquest of Russia more problematic than Harlequin could possibly have anticipated. Coincidentally, the same markets (Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic) that represented such astronomical sales a few years earlier, were responsible for a ten percent decline in overseas results for 1995, and that same year, operations closed in Taiwan and Bulgaria "due to insurmountable distribution problems."<sup>26</sup>

Clearly reminiscent of the structural problems that distinguishes the biggest market of them all – China – Harlequin continues to insist on a presence in what ultimately has the potential to represent a quarter of the company's entire sales. The first books were released in January 1995; 550,000 copies of twenty titles in Mandarin Chinese and 200,000 copies of ten titles in an English version. Nonetheless, the market in which president Brian Hickey has expressed special interest: "My personal goal for the 1990s is to bring romance to millions of Chinese Women," is still virgin territory, with all the

complications accompanying such a label.<sup>27</sup>

Corporate headquarters remain in Toronto, where Harlequin became a wholly owned subsidiary to Torstar Corporation, a communications company and publisher of Canada's largest metropolitan daily newspaper, *The Toronto Star*, in 1981. A European head office opened in Switzerland in 1990, making it possible to reduce taxes on royalty payments from around fifty percent in Canada to under ten percent in Switzerland.<sup>28</sup>

To this day, editorial policies are geographically divided and mirror the Canadian-British-American heritage, tangible proof of the acquisition of Mills & Boon in London 1972 and Silhouette in New York in 1984. With Toronto as head office, Silhouette still operates as a separate imprint with offices in New York, and until fairly recently, all editorial decisions regarding Mills & Boon books (published as *Romance* and *Presents* in the United States) were handled from London by British editors.<sup>29</sup>

Harlequin's commanding status becomes apparent when one looks at Romance Writers of America's "Romance Market Statistics," which tracks the various romance publishers in North America and their output. Statistics for 1995 showed that 1796 romances "by approximately 28 publishers under 54 imprints, lines and series" were published that year, the overwhelming number of which were paperbacks (only twenty-one were allegedly released in hardback), covering mainstream, category, reissues as well as new releases; adding up to 195 more titles than in 1992, when RWA conducted the survey for the first time. Of these 1796 titles, a total of 866, or almost fifty percent of *the entire output* (my italics) could be attributed to Harlequin Enterprises, who under the three imprints of Harlequin (493), Silhouette (325), and Mira (48), placed more than two times as many, or 614 more titles on the market than their closest competitor Kensington Publishing with their 252 books.<sup>30</sup>

Elaborated by Harlequin's editorial offices in order to facilitate the identification of lines, the publishing house's so-called "guidelines" may at first seem to offer a key to the inner workings of the industry. But their role should neither be over, nor underestimated. It would be a mistake to assume that writers live by them as "rules," placing them beside the computer or typewriter when embarking on a new book. To the established writer already a name within a publishing house, they have very little significance, if any. Quoting from the most recent guidelines for *Harlequin Historicals* should demonstrate this:

Set before 1900, Harlequin Historicals are romances of varying lengths that range from Medieval sagas to lighthearted Westerns and everything in between. The heroes and heroines are equally strong willed and their relationship is the focus of the story. Though historical details give each book a distinct sense of time and place, their purpose is to create an atmosphere rather than provide a history lesson. The level of sensuality in the stories varies according to what is appropriate to the characters and the writing style.<sup>31</sup>

Books are hardly produced on four sentences alone, and directions like these are more important to the writer seeking to be published for the first time, serving as a basis for the construction of the text and enabling her to “slant” the book toward a special line. At the time of writing, the complete Harlequin guidelines consists of six pages that include not only line descriptions like the one above, but also information of a more practical nature: indications that the manuscript should be double-spaced, error-free, but not stapled; that the title page must have the author’s real name on it and if applicable also the pseudonym; and that the sender needs to include sufficient return postage, preferably a money order. Guidelines are far from writing manuals equipped with a neat package of structure, plot and character that allows for the rapid construction of new texts, but more of what the term “guide” implies: handy assistance in mastering the differences between lines. In her book *How to Write Romances* (1988), Phyllis Taylor Pianka addresses these crucial issues of marketability in relation to the text thus:

An unstructured novel can too easily slip between the cracks. If the manuscript is part romance, part police procedural novel, it falls between genres and will probably be rejected. The reason? Because the art department does not know what kind of design to put on the cover, and the bookstore owner does not know where to display the book. Readers want to know what kind of book they are buying.<sup>32</sup>

Ultimately, guidelines reflect on the whole process of romance writing and reading. In addition to providing clues to a writer who because of them might find it easier to place her book, they also uphold the generic reading borders that distinguish *Silhouette Special Edition* from *Harlequin American Romance*, while letting editors walk a fine line between maintaining stability and recognition as they simultaneously seek to expand on textual parameters in order to surprise and attract new and old readers. Guidelines are continuously altered and modified in order to keep track of developments, but also used

as an instrument when launching new series.

More recently, Harlequin has departed in another direction through the editorial development of what are generally referred to as “special projects,” books that are eventually placed either within regular lines or completely outside them: “mini-series,” special editions at Valentine’s Day, books that incorporate three romances by different writers in one volume, or that are built around ever-popular themes such as marriage of convenience or single fathers. An infinite number of these special projects have been instigated in the wake of what began in 1989, when four writers from Louisiana approached Harlequin with an idea. They suggested writing one book each, involving four sisters, *Tess*, *Mariah*, *Jo*, and *Eden*, living in a small, southern town called Calloway Corners, where each sister would have her own story but appear in the other three books as well. Issued in the regular *Superromance* line, they became so popular that they were reprinted separately in 1993.

“Trilogies” are another common variant; three books published consecutively and featuring a set of characters like a family or a special community. Writing as Margot Dalton, Phyllis Strobler published her *Superromances Sunflower*, *Juniper*, and *Tumbleweed* in June, July, and August of 1992. All three books were devoted to something she is intimately familiar with – rodeos – revolving around a particular group of riders in Canada, focusing on one couple at a time while letting the two others remain in the periphery of the book. As the trilogy evolved, the two teenagers figuring in all three books seemed destined for a fourth volume. When I wanted to know if she had any plans to write that story, she answered that many readers had asked her the same thing, and then continued in a direct manner to address the conditions of writing category romances:

If I were to write that book, the first I could get to it because of commitments would be the end of next year and then it wouldn’t be out for another year and that would be far too long for people to have retained a memory of it. If you want these books to come out in sequence they have to be written altogether in a block, very, very quickly.<sup>33</sup>

The most elaborate of these new projects are however “continuities,” consisting of up to twenty-four books and involving several writers. *Tyler* was the first, a series of twelve books set in an fictitious Wisconsin town. Before initiating this project, Harlequin conducted a major reader survey, sending out a question-

naire to a sample of subscribers taken from their reader base and asking them to rate their interest in several different concepts. The top three were developed further and Tyler became the end product after which numerous others have been molded. Two other examples are *Crystal Creek*, about an extended ranching family in Texas, which was originally planned as twelve books but ended up as twenty-four; and *Weddings Inc.*, a mini-series of seven titles, each from a different Harlequin line and linked together by the weddings that take place in a chapel in Eternity, Massachusetts.<sup>34</sup>

The work on Tyler began when Harlequin commissioned a *Bible* (a term commonly used in TV-productions, designating a book where the general outline of a series is drawn up) by someone recommended to them as having a background writing for soap operas. Small-town America was already settled on, so what she did was to invent the community, the main characters and some of the conflicts. Then she sketched a brief outline for each one of the twelve books, all kept together by a mystery, introduced in the first and solved in the last book. (A way to ensure that readers would stay hooked till the very end). Harlequin then rewrote parts of the Bible in-house and decided whom to approach for the project, preferring authors who had written for some time, perhaps even originating from small towns. They then had to communicate amongst themselves to keep the books consistent and interrelated. The logistic challenge is exemplified by the couple in the first book, Liza Barron and Cliff Forrester, who were going to appear again in another, future Tyler book written by someone else. To maintain characterization was consequently crucial and as Marsha Zinberg explains, a totally new *modus operandi* for both publisher and writer:

So what we did was, we figured out that the people whose main characters were in that book, that author basically owned those characters, they developed those characters. And the other authors, if they wanted those characters to appear later, had to make sure that the characterization was consistent with what had already gone on before. [...] Carol Wagner [...] wrote two of the Tyler books. In book one Liza and Cliff decide to get married, in book ten Carol wanted Liza to be pregnant and have a baby. So this all had to be plotted out – this was not in the Bible – this was the authors talking together and thinking: – what might happen now?, you know, developing these people, bringing their lives forward, that sort of thing.<sup>35</sup>

Retrospectively, it might look strange that Harlequin has not previously taken full advantage of experiences from television, where we follow characters

faithfully over several years, but the main objection to this seemed to have been that Harlequin considered itself to be a publisher of individual titles, and had no way of determining if the reader would keep up interest in related characters or stories over a longer period of time.<sup>36</sup>

Still, even if these special projects by now are firmly incorporated in Harlequin's publishing program, they have not detracted from the lines that constitute the core of the business, and where a certain basic identity continues to be a constitutive element. Guidelines and audiotapes aimed at aspiring writers are two different ways of ensuring what Harlequin calls their "promise to the reader," a vow that is not eternally binding, but renegotiable and the result of interplay between those invested in the romance. Invariably, the editors I have listened and talked to stress that the best thing you can do when you aspire to category romance writing is to read, and read as many *recent* books as possible in the line you wish to write for. The production of texts closely relates to the reading of texts and is a process encouraged, even sanctioned as necessary, in order to write successfully. In his enclosed letter to the guidelines, Editorial Director Randall Toye writes: "The line that emerges as your favorite is probably where you should submit your manuscript," stressing once again that pleasurable reading makes for good writing.<sup>37</sup>

The way in which the writer takes on the role of the reader and vice versa has been described earlier in the shape of critique groups, but to be an editor within Harlequin, I believe, is always being in some way or other preoccupied with a "reader," a person who does not necessarily need to take on a precise statistical shape, but who lingers in the minds of writers and editors. Obviously, the company also collects hard data on readers, and in 1973, Harlequin found that the average romance reader in North America was 35.5 years old, married with two children, had a high school education, and lived in her own house. According to Paul Grescoe, Harlequin data for 1996, twenty-three years later, gives the average age as forty-two, with forty-eight percent graduating from college, fifty-seven percent employed outside the home, and an average household income of \$41,900. Although one should be wary of drawing too many conclusions from such limited material, the North American Harlequin reader today is apparently middle aged, fairly well-educated, and works outside the home.<sup>38</sup> However, when Marsha Zinberg describes how she reads a manuscript, she does so from what she perceives of as a reader's perspective, and

to do so, she tries to overcome her own proficiency – requiring very little in way of statistical data and instead looking for something she perceives as decisive: “I’m looking for voice, an individuality. Does this sound like this woman has just read twenty romances and tried to copy them? Or is she bringing something fresh to it, is there some individuality here?”<sup>39</sup>

For an editor to read as a reader is to adapt a new position, to transcend her own preferences and tastes in order to understand someone else’s. Zinberg’s description of how this comes about comes close to previous observations of the generic reading as selective and active. Harlequin editors read thousands and thousands of manuscripts and books annually (the combined editorial departments employ more than seventy-five editors and receive around twenty thousand unsolicited manuscripts each year – from which they acquire around nine hundred).<sup>40</sup> Regardless of where you turn – corporate material, guidelines, seminars and workshops at romance conferences – editors constantly repeat that they are looking for originality and individuality, for a voice.

To many, such a claim may perhaps seem like a contradiction in terms. How can there possibly be originality and individuality within books that are exchanged every month and in stories that have been told a million times over? The answer lies, I believe, in the understanding of a very real *experience* of originality and individuality that exists, not as a result of readers being tricked or duped into consumption and reading, but as a tangible reality stemming from an acquired reading competence that allow texts that are written within category romance to be understood as different from one another, as having something unique in them. In a way, a text should adhere to the requirements of a particular line, but also in a sense break out of that frame. As in any type of generic reading or in any reading for that matter, whether it be termed either “highbrow,” “middlebrow,” or “lowbrow,” this involves a certain amount of recognition and knowledge.

In this order of things, the romance editor has a pivotal role in the field and in finding the texts that make up the genre. Cast in the role of gatekeeper among the immense output of books and writers, Harlequin editors work within what can only be described as an extremely hierarchical business, where every line is structured according to a common corporate ladder. Beginning at the lowest ranks, an editorial assistant will assist an editor, do clerical work, perhaps even some readings. An assistant editor, who is under the supervision

of someone higher up, will be given her own writers to work with, and may then rise to the next level of associate editor where she will be allowed to sign contracts. After that follows increased responsibility as editor, until you finally become senior editor, in charge of a whole line and its staff and the one to whom all manuscripts are directed. Then the pyramid narrows to the extent that new professional titles will have to be invented – as in the case of Marsha Zinberg, who at our first meeting in July 1993 was Senior Editor for *Superromance*, but who in the fall of 1994, when I met her in Toronto, had risen to Senior Editor and Editorial Coordinator Special Projects, designating her new role as coordinator of all the new special projects that were beginning to evolve. When I visited the Harlequin head office in September 1994, the company had also begun to initiate teams (called Vision Teams), where an editor, art director and someone from marketing worked together to develop and promote their respective series.

Editors are always on the lookout for new voices and names, because writers disappear, stop writing, go to other publishers, or quite simply fall from grace. Harlequin's stock of fifteen hundred writers needs to be continually replenished, sometimes more, sometimes less.<sup>41</sup> New writers are found in a number of different ways. Attending conferences such as the one organized by RWA, or one of the many local conferences is one leading approach. Whether national or local, these conferences almost always host contests for unpublished writers where editors and agents are invited to act as judges. The RITA award, which I will return to shortly, is perhaps the most coveted for published writers, but RWA's Golden Heart contest for unpublished writers is equally important, since a prize is considered a sure way of getting your manuscript published. At major conferences Harlequin (as well as other publishers) will send not only editors from their different lines, but also corporate executives like the editorial director and possibly also someone from marketing or sales. At local conferences, representation might be limited to only one or two editors.

Editor/agent appointments are nevertheless an essential feature of both, and generally take place either as eight-minute individual talks, or twenty-minute group sessions. For many writers, who only have a very short time in which to present themselves and what they have written, the situation is nerve-racking.<sup>42</sup> Whether the object is to interest an agent in representing you or getting the publisher hooked on your idea, having eight minutes to

pitch a manuscript and yourself would probably make anyone nervous. Editors and agents, meeting an enormous number of people in a few days, make no commitments at a conference. They favor group appointments, knowing that individual ones very seldom, if ever, lead to a contract. As the well-known agent Natasha Kern describes it in a critical article in *Romance Writers' Report*, she has never obtained a client as the result of an individual appointment, but several from group meetings, personal referrals, or meetings with writers who have submitted to her before a conference. Editors apparently concur, finding group appointments more relaxed and informal. In any case, the very best thing a writer could hope for, is to have the editor or agent say: "send it to me," but because they see a marked increase in submissions after conferences and contests, they tend to be very restrictive in such encouragements.<sup>43</sup> Sending something in probably takes the form of either a query letter – stating the length of the manuscript together with a synopsis and professional description; or a partial – consisting of three chapters and a synopsis. Each line either accepts the first or the second, submitted by the writer herself or by an agent on behalf of his/her client, but multiple submissions (sending the same manuscript to several different publishers at the same time) are not accepted by Harlequin and in general, the turnaround time for an answer is about two to three months.

While it is not necessary to be agented to get your manuscript published, it may help, especially if you are not the most experienced marketer yourself. One of the interviewees in Coser, Kadushin and Powell's study *Books. The Culture and Commerce of Publishing* (1982) defined three tasks for an agent: "*editorial*: we help writers define their own ideas for books, we find writers ideas for books, and we revise the manuscript after submission; *placing*: we find the best publishers and subsidiary rights outlets; and *selling*: we get the best possible terms."<sup>44</sup> At the 1993 RWA Conference in St. Louis, I met one aspiring writer who told me she had hired an agent because she felt that he would sell her better than she could. Until she got published, he would take nothing, but after that magical first sale, he had the right to fifteen percent of all her earnings.

If an unpublished writer is sending in a partial, Harlequin will not consider the book until completely finished. Phyllis Stroblor came to Harlequin this way. She sent in a manuscript that was turned down, but the male *Superromance* editor commented on his report: "it's not quite right, but

there's something here." Telling me about her wish to become a writer, she did so in an animated manner:

It's what I've always wanted to do. I wrote four books, four very long novels. [...] When I tried to market them, I was told that they were similar to romance novels. And I was offended, I was academic, and I was insulted, intellectually offended, and I didn't want to write romance novels. And so I quit writing for a few years and thought about it and couldn't get over the desire to write. Then I thought, well, if that's the kind of book I write, maybe I should quit being so arrogant and see if I can do it publishable for once, and I then started to work with a publisher to do that. And the first four books I wrote will never be published anyway, they weren't anything, they weren't midlist, they weren't anything, they were just a learning experience. But I started writing specifically for the market then, by doing what they told me to do.<sup>45</sup>

What she is saying is that the pleasure of writing (and her desire to be published) is so powerful to her, that despite her own objections to the way in which she had to adapt to the market, she still felt that it was necessary to swallow her pride and do everything in her power to ensure that she would after all, be a writer. Although she was turned down initially, when the editor suggested that she try and tailor her text more to what Harlequin was looking for – she did, but still did not manage to get it right. However, as he kept up the contact and told her that she showed great promise, he also urged her to continue. Eventually, she wrote three chapters on her first book *Under Prairie Skies* (1990), and submitted them. Harlequin gave her advice on how to write the rest of the book, and finally, it was accepted.<sup>46</sup>

A very different story lies behind the writing career of Karen Stone. Married to a man who had moved her and their three daughters twenty-eight times, she became a writer because it was the only thing that seemed as movable as her family. Imagining that romances might be something she could try her hand at, she submitted a manuscript to *Silhouette Romance* and was immediately accepted. However, writing short romances for Silhouette for several years made her feel restrained and after meeting a *Superromance* editor, she decided to cross over to that line. Obviously, her career came to be partly because she wanted an occupation she could pursue anywhere, but also because she had the capacity to envision herself as becoming a writer, as entering into a professional identity unlike the ones she had previously experienced. Although Karen Stone never made a detrimental remark to me about the genre,

her line of thought reminded me of the following quote. In it, an aspiring romance writer tells about her reading experience of a book by Violet Winspear:

I cannot remember the title of the book, but it's a classic, it really is. The hero was blind, and he was blinded accidentally by the heroine and she goes to save him on an island – it was an emotional blindness, it was the shock. Anyway, of course, at the very end of the book they've fallen in love but he doesn't realize who she is, and then there's some kind of a storm and he gets his sight back; and then there's this tiger and he saves her from the tiger, and his arm is chewed off! Of course, he was a surgeon, a brilliant surgeon, and his career was wrecked because he was blind, and then he got his sight back and he's going to be a surgeon again, and now he has no arm! The last line in the book is "love is never having to say 'thank you'." And I thought, oh my God! It was a classic. It was in fact the one that inspired me to write my first book. I just thought, my God, if they can print this, and I actually paid money to buy this thing, some other fool did too, I can do better than that.<sup>47</sup>

One of the most apparent changes that has taken place in category publishing as a whole, is a marked shift from the brand name publishing so closely identified with Harlequin, to a more conventional author-oriented type of publishing and marketing. This indicates a new policy for a company used to selling the name of different lines, rather than the name of individual writers. Herself a good example of a writer who is selected, marketed and allowed to stretch the limits of the category romance, Karen Stone has incorporated themes such as artificial insemination in *Compelling Connection* (1989); kidnapping in *The Silence of Midnight* (1992); domestic abuse and child pornography in *Touch the Dawn* (1993), a spin-off to *The Silence of Midnight*, where a secondary character in the first book became a principle character in the second; and finally, in the book she was working on when we met, rape. Her style is individual in that she both focuses on current topics and also writes a recognizable, well-paced dialogue, portraying strong but troubled characters. Working within the parameters of category, she is given much leeway to stretch the boundaries of what a category line can take.

In 1993, her book *The Silence of Midnight*, published as no. 500 in the *Superromance* line was awarded a RITA. The RITA awards are named after RWA's first president Rita Clay Estrada, and just like the Oscar given to the winner by her/his peers. The *Superromance* line contains many different types of books and writers, but *The Silence of Midnight* is a good illustration of both the limits and potentials of the category romance. The story concerns a couple who

have been married for eighteen years; Rachel and Jake. All things considered, theirs has been a happy marriage, but when the book opens, it is clearly about to collapse. The reason is the emotional trauma following in the wake of their six-year-old son Scott's kidnapping. All searches for him have been unsuccessful and Rachel, who on the verge of a nervous breakdown starts questioning her own identity as well as her marriage, decides to look for work. As she plans to break the news to Jake, he cuts her off, telling her that the young boy Michael, who just turned up at the precinct where he is a sheriff, is his own boy, the result of a one-night-stand with another woman – during his marriage with Rachel. This shatters Rachel to the extent that she is tempted to have an affair of her own and Karen Stone tells of this ambivalence with feeling: "Rachel actually had a scene where she was, you know, she was kissing another man and she was married to Jake! And this is an absolute no-no in category."<sup>48</sup> So, several unusual elements are introduced: an eighteen-year-old marriage on the rocks, an illegitimate child, a wife who is contemplating adultery.

Discussing the difference between writing category and mainstream romances, Karen Stone made the best possible distinction when referring to the happy ending in *The Silence of Midnight*, where Michael is integrated into the family and Scotty found after six months, completely unharmed:

If I were writing a mainstream novel, I would not have brought Scotty back. I would have killed him off. Good-bye, Scotty... you were nice when we knew you, but now we have Michael, and we pick up the pieces and go on. But I thought: – nah, I won't do that, I'll bring the baby back.<sup>49</sup>

As long as Karen Stone sells well, and continues to frame stories such as *The Silence of Midnight* within what category readers will perceive of as a category, she will be able to write what she wants, a give and take situation of which both parties – publisher and writer, are highly aware. She explains it like this: "they [Harlequin] choose a few writers that they particularly like, or who market well – the bottom line to everything – who sell good and strong and [...] who are good for the company, and they treat them very well."<sup>50</sup>

But even if Strobl and Stone are established writers who are treated well by the system, when a new book is about to be published or initiated, beginners and old-timers alike face the same process. A manuscript basically filters through two types of editing; "copy-editing," where errors like the one

the writer Heather Graham describes this way: “When George has blue eyes on page 3 and then they’re green on page 44 and gray on 85,” are corrected, and then “line-editing,” generally made by the writer’s so-called “house editor” (the editor that the writer works closest with). The latter is more directed to the logic of the whole text, where the editor may suggest small or more extensive changes.<sup>51</sup> A cause for conflict between the writer as “artist” and editor as “manipulator,” “line-editing” evokes reactions that vary with each individual. Phyllis Stobler admits that she has learned a great deal from paying attention to her editor, while Karen Stone remarks more tersely that she does not object to changes as long as it is being done by “her” editor, someone whose judgment she trusts. As Phyllis Stobler explained to me, having an editor that you know well and respect is important because it enables her to pitch ideas, to talk and develop concepts that strikes her as “too much” at the outset, but with the proper cultivation might turn out really well. So close can this relationship be that if an editor leaves a certain publishing house, the writer will follow. Of course, something akin to the reverse might also be true; writers walk out on editors and the power of personal chemistry should never be underestimated. Although this policy have now changed, before Harlequin’s acquisition of Silhouette, the two houses had contrasting editorial strategies, where Silhouette assigned one editor to each writer regardless of line, whereas Harlequin tended to give the writer a different editor for each line.<sup>52</sup>

If the writer is as dependable as Phyllis Stobler, then the time from when the manuscript is finished and submitted, until it lands on the bookseller’s shelves, is about a year. A writer is only under contract for the book, or books, she is currently at work on, and even if you have published for Harlequin for many years, the same rule applies. After a book has been sold, there is a clause in the contract giving the publisher first option on the next one. When this is under way, the writer submits a proposal, consisting of an outline and the usual three chapters. If the editor for whatever reason, still is not pleased, discussion will ensue and Harlequin may ask for a revised manuscript before going to contract. If the publisher ends up not wanting this book at all, the writer is free to go elsewhere.

Publishing contracts are fairly standardized, but exactly what a writer might ask for and get, is dependent on her track-record, that is, what she has

achieved previously and if she is writing category or mainstream romances. An advance is paid against royalties – meaning that if the writer does not “earn out” royalties on a certain book, he or she may have to pay back on the advance. Royalties follow an escalating scale, increasing with the number of books sold. The standard royalty is six percent on the cover price in North America, but it is important to keep in mind that Harlequin writers get much lower royalties on book club sales, or on what is also called direct marketing. This condition reflects Harlequin’s operations, which regardless of market around the globe, are divided into *retail* and *direct marketing*. Retail, or selling through booksellers and other similar outlets, operates on a return policy. Direct marketing on the other hand, is by far the most rewarding economically and may be best described as a book club without negative option, where you buy all or nothing, signing up for at least four books a month in your favorite line or in a combination of two lines, sent out to the subscriber/reader around the same time each month.<sup>53</sup> Direct marketing is consistently more profitable to the publisher because less money needs to be channeled into the hands of middlemen. Granted, it hinges to a substantial degree on the constant expenditure of money in the form of marketing efforts and big mailings, but even though Harlequin needs to pay for the obvious computer handling and postage, the return rate for books sold through direct marketing is negligible. Books sold through retail have to be distributed by someone, and not only is this a more costly and complicated procedure, it also entails return rates of around fifty to sixty percent.

Paul Grescoe notes that some of Harlequin’s new writers told him that they got advances of around \$3,500 to \$4,000 against royalties of six percent, standing to collect \$15,000 to \$20,000 in royalties. In light of this, someone more experienced, like Phyllis Stobler, perhaps made in the vicinity of \$100,000 on her previously mentioned “flower-trilogy.” On the other hand, a mainstream writer like Nora Roberts will collect six-figure sums for hard-cover and paperback rights alone.<sup>54</sup>

In 1995, RWA pitted its collective strength against Harlequin in profound disagreement with the implementation of a new contract. That year, RWA’s annual Publishers Summit was as usual held in New York and present to discuss contractual terms were not only the president of RWA and other high-ranking RWA officials, but also representatives from twenty-seven publishing

houses and above all, the three major players in, the romance market; Harlequin/Silhouette/Mira, Kensington Publishing, and Leisure Books. Not every issue at hand was resolved to RWA's satisfaction, but the period between this meeting in March, and the one that took place at Harlequin's request at the 1995 RWA National Conference in Honolulu, Hawaii, covered some inflammatory ground. Indeed, not only had RWA during that time reacted against the new contract in a letter of 28 June 1995, but the Author's Guild had sent a similar letter, expressing their "grave concerns" about Harlequin's new contractual clauses. The Author's Guild and RWA were distraught over several of these: for instance the fifty/fifty split between publisher and writer of license fees for exploiting "other rights" (movies, for instance) or the "gag rule" that would require writers to sign a document in which they agreed to keep everything they learned about their own royalties as confidential. But both organizations were more than troubled over one clause in particular, the so-called "moral rights clause."

In reality, this clause would give Harlequin the legitimate right to adapt the text in a way that would supersede the writer's right to her own work, and its introduction by Harlequin was in all likelihood the result of the company's increasingly important international markets. It all boiled down to country-specific changes. A heroine drinking wine would have to sip something else when that book eventually came to a Muslim country, and even though Harlequin argued that British authors have had this clause in their contracts for a long time and agent Evan Fogelman added that it is a standard feature of movie contracts, the writers refused to budge. What they objected to was signing a waiver of all rights – swearing off any possible complaints relating to the handling of their own work by the publisher. Instead they made Harlequin alter the wording to a license to sell the work according to certain rights and conditions granted. Likewise, Harlequin had to back down in other areas; raising the royalty on "other rights" from fifty/fifty to seventy/thirty in favor of the writer and rewriting the clause that regulated payment of the final advance upon "publication" to "acceptance of manuscript." Although Harlequin did not change their stand on one of the most important issues for the writers, an increase of royalty on book club sales (or direct to consumer sales, as RWA also calls them), where the royalty is based first on fifteen percent off the cover price and then on three percent on that sum, they had already at the

New York Summit won another long-sought victory: the right to their own names. No longer did they need to sign a contract that gave Harlequin the right to their book “in perpetuity” and they would finally have complete ownership to their pen names. Previously, Harlequin had insisted on what some termed “slave contracts;” retaining the rights to a book even several years after its been out of print instead of allowing it to revert to the author after a few months, and insisting that a writer switching to another publishing house had to leave her pseudonym behind. As Jayne Ann Krentz writes: “Tying up names is an old and nasty practice in romance publishing, one that is designed to trap authors so that they cannot easily go to another publisher.”<sup>55</sup> From now on however, books written under *nom de plume* were free to take to another publisher and new Harlequin writers were not required to use a pseudonym by default, only by choice.<sup>56</sup>

Able to invoke considerable power, Harlequin occupies an extremely privileged standing on the market. In the so-called “*Superromance* Top Author Report,” a document clearly intended for internal distribution only and issued by Marsha Zinberg in 1991, she elaborates on what she calls “performance factor,” a rating achieved at by a complicated set of factors, including return rates. Sandra James, who at this time tops the list with a performance factor of 6.77 gets the comment: “No contest, seems loyal to us, but just sold a Historical,” showing that even competition within the corporation itself must be reckoned with. More interestingly, number two, Sally Garrett, has her name crossed over despite her high performance factor, and Marsha Zinberg’s description of this writer is candid indeed:

She is quite difficult to work with, and cannot be relied upon to come up with consistently acceptable material. Her last submission to us would never have made it through the first round of the slush pile if it had been submitted by an unknown. She also has “an attitude” that is increasingly hard to deal with. Nor is she prolific. Finally, her foreign sales are significantly weaker than other top performers.<sup>57</sup>

Zinberg’s irritation with Garrett reflects the intricate relationship between editors and writers. Editors claim that many writers wish to become “stars,” have high expectations on what the publishing house may do for them, and call at all hours on the most trivial of matters. In short, editors expect writers to be knowledgeable about the industry and professional. Writers feel that it is rudimentary that the editor understands the book’s vision and respects it,

that they should tell the truth, be honest, and provide support for the writer.<sup>58</sup> Coser, Kadushin and Powell puts it in other words: “authors dislike publishing houses but like editors.”<sup>59</sup>

In the same report, Phyllis Strobler gets a review of a completely different sort: “She is extremely prolific, a wonderful writer, with no delusions of grandeur and a firm commitment to continue writing for us.”<sup>60</sup> These are the criteria that are desired. To be prolific and loyal and willing to remain within the Harlequin fold are seen as essential qualities for a writer, and a decision to leave for another publisher on the part of a writer such as Strobler, who has actually been “brought up” by Harlequin, would be extremely unpopular. However, a writer recurrently on the verge of writing a mainstream book might, if feeling too restrained in category, take her talents elsewhere and this is one of the reasons behind another important development within Harlequin, the launch of the imprint Mira.

At the RWA conference in St. Louis in 1993, Harlequin announced that a new line was on its way – *Privileges*. Designed to resemble, at least in part, the called “Glitz” novels of Judith Krantz or Jackie Collins, *Privileges* sported the least rigid of all Harlequin guidelines at the time. Apparently, it was intended as a way of breaking into the lucrative single titles market, a maneuver Harlequin had already tried in its unsuccessful attempt to acquire Zebra, a publisher with an established and respected record of publishing single titles. During the fall of 1994, it became obvious that the planned *Privileges* would be replaced by a completely new imprint named Mira, giving Harlequin the mainstream outlet that it so far had lacked. In reality, while only one title out of the four scheduled for publication each month is a new book, the others remain repackaged backlist. Beginning with Heather Graham Pozzessere’s *Slow Burn* in October 1994, print runs depend on author and vary from 200,000 to 800,000 copies, and pricing is set at US\$4.99 to \$5.99. Most of the books published by Mira are written by well-known Harlequin authors, and though mainly a mass market paperback imprint, hardcover is considered from time to time.<sup>61</sup>

*Privileges*, as well as Mira, can be seen as attempts on the part of Harlequin to keep certain authors from moving to other publishers such as Harper or Avon, where they would be able to write books not otherwise possible within the Harlequin fold. A direct result of Harlequin’s trying to accommodate

the need for a mainstream outlet, Mira's status as an individual imprint disassociates it from whatever negative connotations might be associated with the Harlequin name. Mira is marketed and treated in-house as a separate publisher and possibly also perceived as such by booksellers, readers, and media alike.

Walter Zacharius, Chairman of the Board of Kensington Publishing Corporation and a fixture in romance publishing for over a decade, makes some interesting observations on the current situation in an article in *Romance Writers' Report*, thus echoing concerns I heard at the 1995 RWA National Conference in Honolulu: that romances are moving towards a greater hierarchy and an even more marked competitiveness. What he is referring to is the way in which books marketed as "mid-list" (not the category romances of Harlequin nor the bestsellers of Jayne Ann Krentz) are being forced out of booksellers' shelves by bestsellers and decreasing profit margins.

So, even if writers still tend to aspire to move from category to mainstream, two things have happened. First: category books maintain their visibility on the basis of being solid sales each month and plainly speaking, because of the strength of Harlequin Enterprises, which dominates North American category publishing to the extent that they are powerful enough to see to it that their books get "out there" on the racks. And second: romance bestsellers continue to prosper on the strength of individual author names, some of whom, to the chagrin of new writers, are extremely productive. Jayne Ann Krentz and Nora Roberts certainly did learn discipline in category writing and are capable of producing several books a year. Because of their popularity and the enormous amount of books available to the romance reader, those who have left category but not yet become household romance names, get caught in the mid-list "ghetto." This situation reflects the fact that the romance, like North American publishing in general, is becoming increasingly polarized and dependent on the strength of a few book distributors and superstores, whose buyers then have considerable power in determining the road to bestsellerdom or oblivion.<sup>62</sup>



### CHAPTER THREE

## Rearing Their Ugly Heads: Americanization, Feminization, and the Category Book in Sweden

In the first two decades of the twentieth century, the Swedish book market witnessed a remarkable output of mass market literature, much due to what was, in monetary nicknames, more known as “enkronasböcker” or “tjugofem-öresböcker.” Even if translated popular literature printed in cheap editions, such as the works of the French writer Eugène Sue, had prospered as early as in the 1840s, from the 1880s onward, so-called “kolportageromaner” [colportage novels] flooded the market in the shape of widely distributed paperbound volumes, sold by book peddlers and containing more or less spectacular stories straddling generic borders.<sup>1</sup>

The previous pages explored the classification *category* in relationship to Harlequin Enterprises and the development of the romance genre, where guidelines and elaborate editorial policies revolving around the construction of serial identities are as important as the actual number of pages, packaging, and sales. This chapter turns to the historical background of category publishing in Sweden. Retracing the category book and parts of its history in Sweden before Harlequin will shed important light on the impact of “globalization” in Swedish media and literature.

It is not until the years 1900-20 that anything resembling a general and durable trend in Swedish mass market book publishing can be discerned.

Clearly, fiction was on the rise, and from the 1870s until the 1910s, the number of titles in this category quadrupled. This increase was in large part attributable to Swedish originals, rather than translations, the latter having been made more expensive when Sweden joined the Bern Convention in 1904. The daily press expanded even more rapidly, with print runs increasing tenfold between 1875 and 1920. Several publishing houses came to benefit from this expanding market (year of establishment in parenthesis), among them Ljus förlag (1898), Åhlén & Åkerlunds förlag (1906), Nordiska förlaget (1910), B. Wahlströms förlag (1911), and Dahlbergs förlag (1913).<sup>2</sup>

The corporate strategies of the majority of these houses, whether mostly inclined towards popular fiction or not, were based on a symbiotic relationship between magazine and book publishing at the time. Serialization was an aspect of Swedish publishing that recalled the evolving mass market in the United States, and would linger in modified form in Sweden until the 1970s. Henrik Koppel, the founder of Ljus förlag, was only one of many who initially started his company based on a weekly magazine with the same name, distributed both by booksellers and through subscription.<sup>3</sup> Johan Svedjedal labels Koppel “the quintessential creative publisher,” depicting a man with a mission – the distribution of good literature to the masses.<sup>4</sup> Ljus published works by August Strindberg, Elin Wägner, and Hjalmar Söderberg, among other famous writers in the Swedish canon, as well as translations of Joseph Conrad and Charles Dickens.

Even a noted quality publisher such as Bonniers jumped on the bandwagon, hoping to prevent their own authors from being reprinted elsewhere while taking advantage of a booming market. At this time, Bonniers considered Åhlén & Åkerlunds förlag its chief competitor, a publishing house brought into existence with the Christmas periodical *Julstämning* in November 1906, and who in 1912 had gone on to print 129 titles for a total of one million copies.<sup>5</sup> Rivalry aside, a few years later Åhlén & Åkerlund secured the right to publish some of Bonniers’ authors, and according to Staffan Sundin, their keen insight into the inner workings of the mass market is perhaps the main reason why they were more successful at doing so than Bonniers themselves.<sup>6</sup> To grasp the significance of this situation, one should keep in mind that Bonniers published the most prominent authors in Sweden, and had a publishing profile very different from that of Åhlén & Åkerlund.

The fact that so many publishers were able to exploit these new conditions also meant that a number of often highly productive Swedish writers could very consciously write for and profit from the market. Many of them however chose to publish under more exotic names. Writing as Tekla Winge, for example, Matilda Hallman published books for Dahlbergs förlag that had titles sounding like the “Glitz” novels of the 1980s: for instance *En dockhustru* [A Doll Wife] and *De frånskilda fruarnas klubb* [The Divorcée’s Club] (both 1917). Algot Sandberg, whose thirty titles as Felix Chamford 1916–20 made him one of the more productive in Dahlbergs’ stable of writers and others like Ivar Bjarne, who wrote detective stories for Åhlén & Åkerlunds förlag, Harald Johnsson (pseudonyms Max Miller, Robinson Wilkins), and Gunnar Serner (pen name Frank Heller), were among these early, domestic “category” writers. Perhaps indicative of things to come, all used English pseudonyms.<sup>7</sup>

Indisputably, the new mass market was not an easy thing to fathom. While hitherto unimaginable sales figures (Nordiska förlaget’s tjugofemöresböcker were likely to sell 35,000 copies) suggested the possibility of new groups gaining access to a culture so far the prerogative of an elite, fierce competition led to serious concerns for overproduction. This in turn provided the cultural establishment with sufficient fuel to seriously question if the level of quality was high enough to justify the hope that these books would become a new form of general education. To the critic John Landquist it all boiled down to one thing: “Billighetslitteraturens uppgift måste bli att grundlägga den goda smaken.”<sup>8</sup> Koppel might have been a notable exception to an otherwise bleaker rule, but what distinguished these publishing houses and their output generally, was their diversification, and the same company could issue mass market fiction alongside canonized literature.<sup>9</sup>

Three social organizations or “folkrörelser” [popular movements] with an increasing importance in the Swedish literary field further developed the efforts of a few mass market publishers during this period to combine commercial awareness with a deliberate publishing strategy: the non-conformist religious movement, the temperance movement, and the worker’s movement.<sup>10</sup> The principal objective of these were of course to strengthen and enforce (both internally and externally) values seen as paramount to the sphere, whether political or religious. Neither completely distinguishable from each other nor interchangeable, they did perhaps share a common denominator in their view

of culture and literature, regarding them as indispensable instruments in the execution of a greater political goal.

To that end, the mass market constituted both a threat and a promise. In its worst possible form it was dangerously seductive: entertainment and pleasure lured and beckoned down a path of destruction, and at the end of that road lay passivity. On the other hand, controlled, tamed and used properly, it was a democratic force, a seemingly objective apparatus capable of wondrous things. As Orvar Löfgren observes, this was however on condition that: “massorna kunde lära sig att bli rationella och moderna konsumenter.”<sup>11</sup> And as long as those in a position of cultural authority saw the distribution of quality literature as the most positive feature of mass market publishing, all was well and good; what presented itself was not only entertainment for entertainment’s own sake, but the possibility of harnessing a privileged culture to the express benefit of the underprivileged.

Founded in 1889, The Swedish Social Democratic Party (SAP) quickly saw a number of educational and literary institutions develop on its periphery, relying on a diversity of agitational devices – pamphlets, booklets, and eventually, more traditional publishing. The same applied to the temperance movement and the non-conformist religious movement. Simultaneously benefiting *from* the market and waging a battle *against* it, popular movements used the particulars of mass production, distribution, and consumption to establish their own literary institutions, their own publishers and channels of distribution. In hindsight, what began as movements outside of or in direct opposition to contemporary political and economic power centers made undeniably efficient use of the tools put at their disposal. Eventually inheriting positions of cultural authority and tools for shaping the specificity of the Swedish literary field, the popular movements are today an integrated part of the constitutive political and cultural elite. Mainly safeguarding traditional literary values, they did so at the same time as they became increasingly institutionalized in the literary field and progressively consolidated their political, cultural, and social influence. The exchange between field and popular movement has of course worked in both directions, engaging both in continuous interchanges of ideas, people, and commodities.

Actively trying to influence and educate readers was only one method, and at the beginning of this century, the Swedish Social Democratic Youth

League (SSU) formulated strong moral incentives to fight what they termed “filth literature.” “Ruthless struggle” was to weed out commercial and degenerate dime novels by the roots. Aimed at convincing youths to read differently, this campaign culminated in 1908 with the attack on the “Nick Carter books.”<sup>12</sup> Since then, the enemy may have come in retailored disguises and the critique and counteroffensives taken different forms, but they were neither a thing of the past nor unique to mass market literature. During the 1940s, the church, the popular movements and other similar groups rallied together to wage a thunderous and persistent campaign against the so-called “dansbaneeländet” [dance-pavilion misery], where a new youth culture was seen as loudly threatening old values.<sup>13</sup> The arguments were the same, the logic followed similar routes, confirming that the relationship between mass culture and “high” culture in Sweden lends itself to being described in terms of a history of struggles and counterstruggles. In light of such a scenario, the history of mass market literature in Sweden is also in a sense the history of the campaigns against it.

One way of putting it is that mass market publishers and the popular movements had contrasting goals, but used similar means. Both benefited from improved technical modes facilitating production and distribution on a larger scale, while also competing for a reading public that was becoming more educated and dissimilar. As we have seen, qualified channels of distribution and sales are crucial ingredients in the completion of such a project, and the publishing boom at the beginning of the century also saw the consolidation of structures regulating the distribution, production, and selling of books.

Despite the fact that books continued to be sold through a variety of channels, the profession of bookselling became increasingly regulated. Booksellers who considered themselves true professionals did so based on the fact that they were accredited by the Swedish Publishers’ Association and preferably also members of the Swedish Booksellers’ Association.<sup>14</sup> Authorized to sell on commission (that is, on credit and with a right to returns), many of them were reluctant to stock cheap volumes and dime novels because of a combination of aesthetic judgment and insufficient profit margins. A certain hierarchy slowly crystallized, where several different types of booksellers offered a selection of books and other merchandise according to their classification.<sup>15</sup>

However, not until the turn-of-the-century, as Svenska Telegrambyrån

(1899) became Aktiebolaget Svenska Pressbyrån in 1906, did mass market fiction find a centralized and strong retailer similar to French and British prototypes half a century earlier. With a monopoly on sales of printed material (books, newspapers, and magazines) at railway stations and on trains, but obliged to sell below a certain price, Pressbyrån was, in fact, limited to sales of mass market books. Appointing retailers, each responsible for a certain district and given provision on sales and the right to returns led to an impressive expansion – from 129 retailers in 1907 to 1,304 in 1947.<sup>16</sup> This form of franchising is still in existence, as common an occurrence in the vicinity of suburban commuter trains as in the street corner of any Swedish city. Selling everything from contraceptives to batteries, Pressbyrån marketed itself as “Sveriges minsta varuhus” [The smallest department store in Sweden] in advertising campaigns during the 1990s. Besides the magazine racks of supermarkets and department stores, this is still the obvious place to turn to when looking for a Harlequin romance. So strong, in fact, is this relationship between text and space that it even has permeated the Swedish language. Another name sometimes used for Pressbyrån is “kiosk” and mass market literature (like Harlequin romances) is still referred to in a derogatory manner as “kiosklitteratur.”<sup>17</sup>

By the 1920s, overproduction, a general economic recession, and the arrival of new media had put an end to this first boom in Swedish mass market publishing. Other forms of entertainment began to challenge publishing for consumers’ time and money. Modern contraptions such as the radio and movies competed with books and magazines head on for consumer preferences between the two wars, and several publishers went out of business or were bought up by new owners. Koppel sold Ljus to Norstedts in 1914 and left Sweden for Denmark. Bonniers strengthened their already weighty position considerably by a series of mergers and diversified into other parts of the media market; acquiring Pressbyrån in 1916, Dahlbergs förlag in 1922, their previous competitor Åhlén & Åkerlunds in 1929, and also by introducing the first Swedish bookclub in 1932: Bonniers Svenska Bokklubben.<sup>18</sup> In retrospect, the business of books seemed more and more to be a question for a select number of publishing houses with a distinct concentration to Stockholm.

Not of immediate relevance to this study, the 1930s nonetheless saw considerable changes occur in the Swedish mass market. *Alibi. Veckans kriminalroman* was a complete detective story published 1933–35 (#1–321) and in

1937, Wennerbergs förlag launched *Nyckelböckerna* (westerns), a series that remained in print until it was discontinued in 1970 with number 692, having been one of the most long-lived on the market. More significant for this study is the period that begins around 1950, after World War II and the undeniable success of Penguin and Pocket Books. At this time, the category book took on a more clearly defined generic identity, and as in the United States, male genres lead the way. Yet, a regular series conceived in a format more clearly reminiscent of the Anglo-American forerunners did not come about until 1950. That year Wennerbergs introduced *Jaguarböckerna* (crime/adventure stories), which were followed swiftly by Pingvinförlagets *Pingvinböckerna* (westerns), and in 1952 by B. Wahlströms förlag and *Manhattanböckerna* (crime/adventure stories); all close in time to the first French paperback imprint Le Livre de Poche, launched in 1953.<sup>19</sup> All romance series come into being at a later date, the first being the short-lived *Piccadilly* by B. Wahlströms förlag (1962-65).<sup>20</sup>

By the 1960s, mass market series had become a permanent fixture on the Swedish book market. At the time of the Swedish Literary Commission's Report *En Bok om Böcker* (1972), over ninety-two were listed as "mass market," but of these, only around sixty were in paperback.<sup>21</sup> Pressbyrån subdivided these into; "deckare/äventyr" [crime/adventure], "western" [westerns], and "romaner" [novels]. Together, they represented an average of thirty percent of the total number of books falling under the fiction category between the years 1965 and 1974.<sup>22</sup> A comparable study for 1985 indicates twenty-seven percent, suggesting a fairly consistent picture.<sup>23</sup> Of main interest here is the development of the third group, later labeled "romantik" [romance]. Covering a heterogeneous selection, it represented books now more distinctly geared towards a female audience, despite a textual disparity that included medical romances, romantic adventures and gothics.<sup>24</sup>

The generic distribution for mass market paperbacks published in 1965, 1970, and 1974 is shown here in Table 1. As the table so convincingly shows, at the beginning of the period, crime/adventure is the commanding genre, whereas at the end, an impressive increase in the number of titles in the romance category increases their share from 11.3 to 29.3 percent! Of equal interest is the fact that although the overall number of series went from thirty-five in 1965 to almost twice as many in 1974, the frequency of titles pub-

Table 1.

Generic distribution of Swedish mass market paperbacks in 1965, 1970 and 1974.

Year	Crime/Adventure		Westerns		Romance		Miscellaneous		Total
	Titles	%	Titles	%	Titles	%	Titles	%	
1965	179	43,0	164	39,4	47	11,3	26	6,2	416
1970	158	37,1	150	35,2	98	23,0	20	4,7	426
1974	151	37,1	170	32,5	153	29,3	49	9,4	523

Source: Hans-Olof Johansson, "Utgivningen av populärpocketböcker 1965-1974," 12.

lished decreased. The only group contradicting this general tendency were romances, and whereas in the two other categories only twenty-five percent of the series in 1974 published ten titles or more, the share for romances was roughly fifty percent.<sup>25</sup> Data from 1970 show that the three best-selling series; *Bill och Ben* (Wennerbergs förlag), *Manhattan* (B. Wahlströms förlag), and *Succéromanen ur Allers* (B. Wahlströms förlag), all representing different genres, reputedly had print runs of around 40,000 copies and estimated sales of in average more than 25,000 copies each. This would in turn limit returns to around thirty percent, a number that in light of today's market must be considered desirably low.<sup>26</sup>

Two publishers, B. Wahlströms förlag and Wennerbergs förlag, totally dominated this market during the time leading up to Harlequin's arrival in Scandinavia and Sweden. In 1976, with thirty-four and twenty-six series respectively (fifty-two and forty percent), they held a devastating ninety-two percent of the sixty-five series listed by Pressbyrån as mass market.<sup>27</sup> In part this can be attributed to the fact that in 1975 Wennerbergs bought Pingvinförlaget (in turn acquired by Williams [part of the multinational Warner] in 1969). Williams had made a major commitment to romances during 1973-74; reflected in Wennerbergs numbers.<sup>28</sup>

As one of the early mass market publishers mentioned previously, B. Wahlströms förlag published their first "tjugofemöresböcker" in 1912. Founded the year before by Birger Wahlström, later taken over by his son Bo and today run by third-generation Bertil, the company continues as a family-owned business.<sup>29</sup> Notwithstanding early emphasis on translated popular fiction for adults, they increasingly became associated with their juvenile books, since 1914 a staple commodity for generations of Swedish readers and known in

colloquial tongue as “the red and green books” (referring to the color of the spine, red for girls and green for boys). By the end of the 1990s, this series has accumulated an impressive record: 2,816 published titles and more than fifty million books sold.<sup>30</sup>

In the romance category, B. Wahlströms published series both in hardback, mostly sold through subscription, but also in paperback, like *Lyckohjärtat* (#1-135, 1969-80) featuring three popular authors: Hedwig Courths-Mahler, Audrie Manley-Tucker, and Sigge Stark. In 1964, they launched what was to become the most known and successful of all romance series in Sweden pre-dating Harlequin: *Succéromanen ur Allers* (#1-131, 1964-72) and *Succéromanen*.<sup>31</sup> Originating as serials (often in twelve episodes) in magazines owned by the Danish publishing company Aller and later issued as books, this series followed a formula developed for all the Nordic countries with the exception of Iceland. In Sweden, first-hand publication took place in the family weekly *Allers*, established as *Illustrerad Familj-Journal* in 1879.<sup>32</sup>

Thirty-nine of the first fifty titles by B. Wahlströms förlag were written by the Dane Erling Poulsen, who used his own name but also the pseudonyms of Bodil Forsberg, Else-Marie Nohr, and Eva Steen.<sup>33</sup> Besides being one of the most prolific writers in the series, Poulsen exerted influence over the entire editorial process. The serial parameters were perfected at the Copenhagen-based *Familie-Journalen*, where Poulsen was responsible for all fiction material published in Denmark, Norway and Sweden between 1953 and 1964. When given the task of assessing a number of different magazine stories from Denmark and Sweden in 1958, he had as his explicit purpose to get to the core of the successful serial. Following his findings, he perfected twenty-five pieces of good advice, to be used by and distributed to editors and other writers for *Succéromanen ur Allers*.<sup>34</sup> Rumors that Aller should have produced a secret codebook, with forty rules to be followed in order for a serial to be accepted, remain unsubstantiated, and Poulsen’s recommendations are apparently all that lingers of any formalized efforts in constructing these texts.<sup>35</sup> Even so, this is the first case where I have found any trace of “guidelines” in Scandinavian mass market publishing, in the sense that they are explicitly designed to facilitate the production of new books.

*Barn 312* (*Suchkind 312*), originally published in 1955 by Hans-Ulrich Horster, was possibly the biggest success of them all and a good example of the series’

structure. With sales of 200,000 copies and reprinted four times in Sweden, it was a veritable bestseller and immensely popular among readers. Dealing with the separation and reunion of siblings, the general tone is profoundly sentimental and highly emotionally charged. Children were often used as a uniting force between hero and heroine but, interestingly enough, could also be the primary focus of the text – something unusual in a romance, but actually consistent with Poulsen’s advice #10: “Skriv gerne om børn og dyr, men kombinér handlingen omkring dem med de voksnes glæder og sorger.”<sup>36</sup> Consequently, children are subjected to a multitude of dramatic incidents: they can be kidnapped, rescued from diseases in *deus ex machina*-like episodes, mistreated, put up for adoption, or merely be the innocent victims of other, unfathomable disasters.

Such excessive dramatization, sometimes exemplified by the remnants of so-called “cliffhangers,” is perhaps most accurately explained by the primary structural prerequisite of these books – they were written as serials. Poulsen’s advice #15: “Glem aldrig, at en ugebladsroman læses i portioner, og at handling og personer skal leve i læserens hukommelse fra afsnit til afsnit, fra tirsdag til tirsdag.”<sup>37</sup>

The heroine in *Succéromanen ur Allers* tends to be much younger than the hero (often between seventeen and thirty). Coming from an affluent background, she is nevertheless orphaned or socially outcast. If unmarried, she probably makes her living in the “free” professions: as a doctor, journalist, actress, or teacher. Despite this, there is no question that she is perfectly willing to sacrifice her career for a more rewarding future as wife and mother. The male protagonist, in turn, is older (over thirty), unmistakably suave, also a doctor, lawyer, actor, writer, or pilot, and so far the general attributes are carbon copied on the early, “sweet” romance. The fact that there is no sex whatsoever and almost no physical contact between hero and heroine at all, is interestingly enough ascribed by Erling Poulsen to an explicit wish from female readers: “Måske fordi det berører dem pinligt, at kvinden (i den traditionelle skildring af sex mellem mand og kvinde) reduceres til et lavere væsen, object for mandens “dyriske” lyst og brunst.”<sup>38</sup>

Sexuality is accordingly off limits and tangible eroticism in whatever form something negative, to be associated with characters delineated as rivals to the main couple. Heroine and hero are soulmates, not sexmates, and they live by a romantic ideal of elevated “spiritual love.” Emphasizing the virtues of

the nuclear family, Poulsen saw his books as promoting: “god, gammeldags, kristen lykkelære.”<sup>39</sup> He might have been repeating an advertisement from the late-nineteenth century; where *Illustrerad Familj-Journal* claims to deliver romantic stories that could “tryggt [...] lämnas i händerna på hvem som helst af familjens medlemmar.”<sup>40</sup>

Even if *Succéromanen ur Allers* through its form and construction represented a logical continuation of the long-lived tradition in publishing between magazine and book publishing; there were also signs pointing in another direction. Much of the success certainly depended on a combination of editorial awareness and new approaches in marketing, leading up to results that in the past had been more haphazardly come by. This was a market-savvy publisher, who made good use of new methods, using questionnaires to obtain valuable information on consumers and offering them potential titles or concepts to see what they preferred, much in the same way Harlequin operates when planning new editorial projects, like the spin-offs or continuities described in the earlier chapter on Harlequin Toronto. Andreas Rehling, long-time editor at *Aller*:

Personligen känner jag i hela världen inte till någon litterär produkt vars mottagande blivit så genomtestat – ända in i minsta detalj. Vi vet, i en omfattning utan motstycke, vad det är som fångar våra läsare och vad som bjuder dem emot. Och vi vet *varför* – så att vi i den utsträckning vi råder över skaparkraften, kan uppnå samma effekter i nya arbeten. Vi känner våra läsares kön, ålder, utbildning, intressen och sociala tillhörighet på decimaler. När man vecka efter vecka, år efter år systematiskt och mångsidigt utforskat mottagandet hos läsarna, utkristalliserar sig naturligtvis ett väldigt erfarenhetsmaterial. Tillsammans med insikter, vunna genom sociologiska undersökningar (t.ex. vad gäller läsarnas värld) och nyare, djuppsykologisk forskning (t.ex. fiktion och det undermedvetna) ger det nämnda erfarenhetsmaterialet (vari Erling Poulsens 25 gyllene råd ingår) många förutsättningar för att förstå, vad läsarna anser vara en god historia – och varför.<sup>41</sup>

*Barn 312* is the perfect case in point and as Yngve Lindung notes: “den danska redaktionen [utnyttjade] sin kunskap om läsekretsens mycket positiva reaktioner och såg till att författaren förlängde berättelsen med några avsnitt. När berättelsen gick som följetong i svenska *Allers* 1955 gav den tidningen en upplageökning med 52,000 exemplar.”<sup>42</sup> However successful, what came out was a product based on a relationship slowly becoming extinct – that between serialized fiction in magazines and mass market paperback publishing. Follow-

ing in the footsteps of past traditions while incorporating new trends in publishing, another publishing house also spoke of things to come.

When Wennerbergs förlag started their first romance series in 1963, they did so as a subsidiary to Winther Publishers Holding Ltd. in Copenhagen, with sales in Denmark, Norway and Germany. *Vita Serien* (#1-326, 1963-91) consisted of medical romances using the attraction between ambitious doctors and dedicated nurses to explore the conflict between love and duty.<sup>43</sup> Figuring prominently in the weekly press for many years, they benefited from the popularity of writers such as Frank G. Slaughter, who frequently made the bestseller lists during the 1940s. During the first four years *Vita Serien* was completely dominated by two writers; Shane Douglas and Kerry Mitchell – pseudonyms for the Australian Richard Wilkes-Hunter. Thereafter and until 1972, all books were exclusively Anglo-Saxon and the majority of writers women. Contrary to *Succéromanen ur Allers*, where manuscripts were “domesticated” in editing (for instance by changing foreign names to Scandinavian ones, or by moving the action from abroad to Sweden) this policy was not adopted for *Vita Serien*, although for technical reasons the books were shortened to fit the number of pages required in production.

This strategy is similar to transediting as it is explored in Chapter Five, and automatically leads to a form of editing. According to the *Vita Serien* editors, omissions included old-fashioned professional convictions, unnecessarily detailed descriptions, and possible racist overtones. Wennerbergs did not buy any medical romances from Germany, and the alleged reason behind this was that they apparently were considered too conservative. An interesting development occurs in 1972, when the Swedish couple Elisabeth and Per Reymers (pseudonyms for Ann [born 1947] and Örjan [born 1946] Björkhem) began writing for the series. During the period 1972-81, they were with thirty-nine titles sole contributors to *Vita Serien*.<sup>44</sup> Writing from a contemporary Swedish perspective (she had a background in nursing), their books supposedly added both credibility and realism to the series. *Vita Serien* was the only romance series published by Wennerbergs until 1966, when the gothic *En Mysrysare* (#1-337, 1966-92), started. The year after, when *Sigge Stark-serien* (#1-78, 1967-74) was added to the list, Wennerbergs had in three years doubled their output of romances.<sup>45</sup>

As these series established themselves on the Swedish market, it became

clear that the mass market to an increasing degree was a phenomenon for, by and about women. Several Swedish female writers represent this intensified alliance between gender and genre in Swedish mass market publishing.

In what could perhaps best be described as mainstream romances; so-called “Herrgårdsromaner” [Manor novels], like *Driver dagg, faller regn* (1943) and *Moln över Hellesta* (1954) by Margit Söderholm, and Birgit Th Sparre’s *Gårdarna runt sjön* (1928), enjoyed enduring popularity with readers. When demographics changed rapidly and many abandoned the rural for the urban, farms for offices, these books evoked another, less turbulent social universe. There, class distinctions were rules to be lived by, farmers understood their place in the natural order of things and aristocrats were born with an inbred sense of duty and obligation. The Swedish countryside was the ultimate manifestation of traditional values: hard work, common goals, commitment to the family and to the land, respect for nature and animals. This ideology is clearly visible in the works of Sigge Stark (pseudonym for Signe Petersén, married Björnberg 1896-1964), a woman whose claim to fame rests resolutely on being one of the most known, most read, and also perhaps one of the most criticized and ridiculed of all Swedish category writers during this century. Her debut in 1921 with the short story “Den steniga vägen till lyckan,” marked the beginning of an extremely prolific and successful career, spanning more than forty years and several publishing houses, both highly prestigious as well as mass market ones. She often wrote in “series,” producing ten-twelve books at the same time for a particular publisher: there are different estimates of the exact number, but it is likely that the sum total lies somewhere around one hundred short stories and between 130 and 150 novels.<sup>46</sup>

Even the profession of publishing and bookselling experienced a shift in gender, coinciding in time with sizable turmoil on the Swedish book market. From 1970 on, the Swedish book market became increasingly deregulated. Until that time, books had been judged a commodity with certain inherent and unique values, and sold at fixed prices. This made books an exception from other products, for since 1953 regulated prices had been deemed a threat to competition and consumer interest. When book prices in 1970 no longer were allowed this exemption, and prices from now on could be set by retailers themselves, the old commissioners’ system was definitely laid to rest. Voluntary rather than controlled agreements between different market participants

ensued. Retailers like Pressbyrån were now given the possibility of selling books that previously only were sold in bookstores; many booksellers found the new market conditions unmanageable and went bankrupt, and book clubs prospered.<sup>47</sup> In combination with a number of other factors, these new parameters even affected the bookstore itself. The inspiration came from the United States, where the previously mentioned B. Dalton and Waldenbooks now had vanquished shopping malls all over the country. Within a few years, bookstores went from being an almost sacred space into becoming yet another consumer territory, made for browsing rather than the display of previous knowledge. Even if Daltonization arguably also meant Democratization, it nonetheless caused long and hard self-scrutiny in the Swedish book trade.

One way of illustrating this transformation is to quote Bengt Bergh, bookseller at Hedengrens Bokhandel – with its one-hundred-year-history, one of the few traditional, yet prospering bookstores remaining in Stockholm today. For a consumer of the late 1990s, it seems almost impossible to fathom the transformation traditional bookstores went through:

[Hedengrens] var en 1800-tals bokhandel fram till 1968. Det var [...] långa diskar som kunden inte fick gå bakom, böcker upp till taket med stegar. Vi hade halva lagret nere i källaren. Det låg ett exemplar av varje bok framme vid disken som kunden fick bläddra i. Alla exemplar var oerhört tummade. Sen så pekade kunden på en bok sen klättrade man upp och hämtade ner den. [...] Jag kom alltså 1964 och då var det helt manuell betjäning. Det var i princip att kunden satt på en stol – [...] som i en gammal skoaffär – och så sprang man och hämtade boken.<sup>48</sup>

As was the case seventy years earlier, campaigns against the mass market paperbacks were one proven way of dealing with the situation. The Workers Educational Association (ABF) chose a slogan for their campaign against mass market paperbacks that echoes those of earlier battles: “Köp inte skräpet!” [Don’t buy the trash!].<sup>49</sup> In the same breath they were, however, promoting something else, namely “En Bok för alla.” “En Bok för alla” is a good example of a strategy devised to ward off the onslaught of “Americanized” culture; an initiative begun in 1976 and administrated by the popular movement-owned Litteraturfrämjandet, the plan was to counterbalance the traditional mass market by distributing cheap paperbacks with a qualified content in retail outlets generally reserved for the first group.<sup>50</sup> Although not the first of such efforts in educating readers (Folket i Bild’s “folkboksserie” [people’s books])

from the 1940s comes to mind), “En Bok för alla” continues through state-subsidization to this day.

Thus, when Harlequin opened its Scandinavian head office in Stockholm in 1979, they did so in a market that had undergone momentous and complicated changes. Holland, the company’s first fully owned foreign operation, had started from nothing in 1975 with substantial marketing investments; after losing a lot of money the first year, the company broke even the second and turned a tidy profit in year three. “It was a classic case of how to introduce a brand,” as Lawrence Heisey later were to say.<sup>51</sup> Germany on the other hand was a joint-venture with Axel Springer’s Cora Verlag, a division explicitly set up by the German publisher in the 1960s to explore opportunities in mass market publishing. In the beginning of the 1970s, Cora had entered into a favorable two-year agreement with Mills & Boon, releasing two novels a month in magazine format with considerable success. By the time the deal came up for renegotiation in 1976, however, Harlequin had amassed enough clout to turn the tables on the Germans; by buying fifty percent of Cora they ensured better terms for themselves, as well as continued distribution not only in West Germany but also in Austria and Switzerland. The events that followed in 1989 would lead to even larger profits and sales in this market, and as Rolf Kläsener, international affairs director for the Springer Group that includes the joint venture with Harlequin says: “Germany is still 40 percent of the total European business of Harlequin.”<sup>52</sup>

The setting up of the Scandinavian subsidiary was tied to personal chemistry, connections, and perhaps as much as anything, coincidence. According to Paul Grescoe, Staffan Wennberg, who in 1978 worked as a Bonniers’ sales representative, met Lawrence Heisey in Toronto as the two companies were bidding over a third: “the Chris Whittle/Phil Moffat 13-30 Corporation of Tennessee, whose ad-sponsored publications targeted college and high-school students.”<sup>53</sup> The Canadian company may have lost that particular battle, but Heisey was apparently impressed enough with Wennberg to coax him into diverting his attention to Harlequin’s Scandinavian business. After learning the ropes in Toronto, Wennberg oversaw the establishment of Harlequin offices in Sweden, Norway, and Finland – all operational within a few months from each other in 1979. Extensive market research preceded the introduction, and the SEK 3 million spent on initial advertising was considered an exorbitant

amount at that time.

While expansion was rapid in Finland and Norway proved “fabulously profitable,” Denmark presented more of a challenge in 1980-81.<sup>54</sup> There, acute problems stemming from the major magazine publishers’ control over distribution channels prompted a decision to cut losses, back out of the market and license the right to publish Harlequin in Denmark to a domestic company already figuring prominently in this chapter – Førlaget Aller.

As Harlequin consolidated its presence in Sweden, they found that several Swedish publishers had established records of buying rights directly from Mills & Boon for both books and serials, rights that now had to be revoked. As I have discussed earlier in this chapter, B. Wahlströms förlag and their series *Succéromanen* was the major contender, having published a few Ann Mather titles and combining reprints of old Mills & Boon material with new books by Scandinavian authors. The inevitable standoff was solved by a “deal,” or as Editor-in-chief Agneta Knutsson puts it: “dom ville gärna att vi skulle trycka på Scand Book, som var deras tryckeri. Och det ville ju inte vi så länge som dom själva gav ut samma böcker som vi gjorde. [...] så då sa vi ‘Okey, vi kan trycka hos Scand Book och då slutar ni att ge ut den här typen av böcker.’”<sup>55</sup>

So Harlequin came to buy B.Wahlströms’ remaining series, published what was left of the stock and closed them down. Paradoxically, while Harlequin basically eliminated all existing Swedish competition from the scene, things turned out quite differently in France, where several new French romance series instead were launched in the wake of the Canadian publisher’s success, series such as *Toison d’or* by Le Livre de Poche.<sup>56</sup> The hegemony of B. Wahlströms Förlag and Wennerbergs Förlag was now broken, and by 1981, Rolf Yrlid concludes that Harlequin’s share of the mass market amounted to twenty-four percent, a percentage attained after only two years on the Swedish market.<sup>57</sup>

Nearly twenty years later, Förlaget Harlequin is matched by less than a handful of competitors. During the 1980s, the Norwegian-owned publisher Boknöje AB, made a name for themselves by virtue of two Norwegian writers: Margit Sandemo and Bente Pedersen. Sandemo blends folklore, supernatural elements and eroticism into her own particular style in the immensely popular forty-seven-volume *Sagan om Isfolket*, and Bente Pedersen describes with equal success the trials and tribulations of a young Finnish-born girl in the forty books written on *Raija*. Both series are sold not only in bookstores, but also

through subscription of special hardback editions. Finally, the Danish Egmont Fonden, with corporate interests as well as geographical distribution mirroring that of Bonniers, owns the Swedish Richters förlag, a publishing house that, together with book clubs and magazines, routinely issues romantic fiction in paperback.<sup>58</sup>

Returning briefly to the discussion of Harlequin's division of sales through retail and direct marketing in the previous chapter, it is important to remember that while romances in the United States are sold in any Barnes & Noble or Waldenbooks store, one searches in vain for Harlequins in a Swedish bookstore. Apart from subscription, Harlequin romances in Sweden are bought in supermarkets, at Pressbyrån's kiosks, or anywhere else one could conceivably go to pick up magazines or newspapers. And while Margit Sandemo's mammoth series *Sagan om Isfolket* can be found in most bookstores, Swedish booksellers justify their refusal to sell Harlequin romances in terms that remind of their nineteenth-century forebears: because new books arrive each month to replace the old ones, there is just too much work for too little compensation. Such a deliberation points to the distinctly different position category romances have in North America. There, Harlequin may dominate category publishing totally, but each new title fights for booksellers' space with an infinite number of other romances, in category as well as in mainstream. In contrast, Harlequin basically competes with itself in Sweden, but only in traditional mass market outlets. In the first years, though, rack space was tighter, and according to Agneta Knutsson, the distributor at the time even complained to Harlequin that there was no way they could expect to sell books that looked the way theirs did – with their white, standardized covers – and especially not four each month.

Because of the lack of visibility, extravagant marketing efforts in the form of billboards and campaigns directed at the retail customer have never been an obvious choice for Förlaget Harlequin. Setting aside assets for advertising guarantees very little, while money spent on direct marketing is more likely to generate immediate returns. Many of these direct marketing campaigns are translations or minor adaptations of North American versions; the major change lies not in the message *per se*, but rather to whom it is directed, and different demographics in Sweden and Europe will reflect this particular transnational aspect. Staffan Wennberg found that half of the Swedish audience

were teenagers, and to this end, the Swedish experience apparently matches the German one, where the target group is estimated to be ten years younger than the one in the United States.<sup>59</sup> However, more recent information seem to contradict this assumption. In a 1996 reader survey commissioned by Förlaget Harlequin, only forty-two percent of the readers proved to be younger than thirty, while the majority, fifty-eight percent, were thirty years or older. Sixty-one percent were married or “sambo” [couples living together], twenty-nine percent single, and forty-five percent lived in households consisting of three to four people. As far as education was concerned, thirty-one percent had finished gymnasiet [senior high school], while only ten percent had completed a university degree, painting a somewhat different picture than the North American one.<sup>60</sup>

Wrestling with severe distribution problems a few years back, Förlaget Harlequin astutely grasped the opportunity to change the categorization of their books to magazines, a move that in view of the paperback’s historical precedents was as logical as it was ingenious. There are only three formal criteria for the designation magazine in Sweden: that the publication is issued regularly at least four times a year, that it has a price on the front cover, and that there is what in Swedish is called an “ansvarig utgivare” [a legally responsible publisher], designating the person accountable for the publication in case of a lawsuit or other legal action taken against it. As there are no requirements for size or thickness, Harlequin was already qualified in the first two areas, and quickly arranged to pass the third by giving Agneta Knutsson the title of “ansvarig utgivare.”

Now officially labeled a magazine, the company could bypass what they saw as a dysfunctional distribution channel for a more efficient one: Tidsam. Owned by several of the largest magazine publishers in Sweden, Tidsam’s distribution policy has received widespread criticism and been reviewed by the so-called Konkurrensverket [The Swedish Competition Authority] on the basis of their tendency to close ranks, thereby reinforcing allegations of unfair competition on the market. Henceforth, for each new magazine published by one of the owning companies, an outsider has to be admitted. Although Harlequin is already “in” and has the possibility of increasing the number of books published in each line, their chances of launching new series are limited by the system itself, which is one explanation for the tendency to put mini-

series inside already existing lines. Harlequin then pays Tidsam to send the books out to the retail outlets and display them, take them back and calculate the returns, but Harlequin decides in-house how many books should be sent out to each individual store, based on a close monitoring of the number of books delivered and the number returned. Theoretically, this means that every month could be different from the next, but in reality it is more likely that adjustments are made according to seasonal variations. More books will go out in summer to vacation spots like the islands Öland and Gotland, and to ski resorts during winter and Easter holidays.

And since Förlaget Harlequin has a firm hold on the Swedish mass market in the late 1990s, they exemplify how the category book in Sweden moves from being both an international, but also very much a domestic issue – with prolific Swedish writers from the early century to those writing for *Succéromanen ur Allers* and *Vita Serien* gradually being pushed into the background at the same time as the mass market increasingly becomes an issue for transnational organizations like Aller, Harlequin, or Egmont.

Perhaps never explicitly formulated as such, a nationalistic fear of Sweden being overwhelmed by foreign influences shines through the critique of mass market literature. But if one considers this anxiety in the context of the history of translations and foreign influence, it seems that what occurs here is not that translated literature “takes over,” but rather that a distinct shift in language emphasis takes place. As Margareta Björkman has shown, towards the end of the eighteenth century French represented forty-one percent, German twenty-one percent, Latin eight percent, Swedish twelve percent, and English only three percent of the books in Swederus lending library in Stockholm (1784-85).<sup>61</sup> Even if these books were read as originals and thus can only with difficulty be compared with current statistics relating to translations, I am here leading up to what I believe to be a general trend – a shift away from the continental-European to the overwhelming hegemony of the English language two centuries later.

This shift thus takes place at the same time as the publishing industry in Sweden, whether in domestic or foreign companies, increasingly becomes a business for women and where the critical role of the editor, explored in the next chapter, is one of those feminized positions.



#### CHAPTER FOUR

## Hardly Work on the Assembly-Line of Literature: Förlaget Harlequin, Stockholm

Förlaget Harlequin's Stockholm office is located in Östermalm, the eastern part of the capital, still considered by many as having the most fashionable addresses in the city. In contrast to company headquarters, situated at the top floors of a high-rise out in the Don Mills suburb, which one reaches from downtown Toronto by taking both the subway and a bus, the Scandinavian subsidiary lies only minutes away from the theaters, shops and restaurants of Stockholm.

There is, however, nothing particularly fashionable about these premises on the fourth floor of a fairly modern building – reached with a minuscule, rattling elevator that takes one past both offices and private apartments. Although the layout is somewhat confusing, with narrow, book-lined corridors stretching in two directions from the entrance, the rooms are bright and spacious, with wooden floors and ordinary office furniture, neither eye-catchingly trendy, nor overwhelmingly old-fashioned. All face either the street, where open windows during the summer months take in the sounds from what is a very busy thoroughfare, or the courtyard, which is no different from most courtyards in the inner city. Sixteen people work at this wholly owned subsidiary, budgeting for 198 titles and 1.8 million books sold in Sweden in 1997 (3.5 million books in the Scandinavian market as a whole).<sup>1</sup>

The Stockholm office is a far cry from the cubicles of Toronto, where the corporate ladder determines how many windows (if any) your office space will allow (the higher the rank, the more windows and the nicer the view). One of the highly irreverent things that has struck me with persistence when spending time in these offices is that the combined lunch/coffee room in Stockholm is about the same size as the CEO's room, whereas coffee in Toronto is caught on the run, found in a minor niche somewhere that definitely does not serve as a meeting point or common ground for the employees.

Although the size and location of the coffee room probably has more to do with space limitations rather than the Swedish penchant for coffee at all times, the Stockholm office nonetheless gives off a feeling of being more laid-back and less preoccupied with editorial hierarchy – so much so, that some Toronto visitors have commented on the fact that everyone here has their own office; or as Agneta Knutsson tells of such visits: “Dom får intrycket av att det här är väldigt slapt. Och fria arbetstider och... Alla har egna rum, till och med ner på minsta [anställd] här..., eget rum, det är lyx, tycker dom.”<sup>2</sup>

All editorial decisions for the Scandinavian market are made by the staff in Stockholm, who are also responsible for administration, marketing, and finance for all three countries. Only one or two editors work in Norway and Finland, where their primary responsibility lies in overseeing the quality of local translations. In choosing what to publish, no particular consideration is made for Norway or Finland; and as the following table illustrates, the same series are published in all three markets simultaneously, and all under the Harlequin name.<sup>3</sup>

Table 2. Förlaget Harlequin's Scandinavian Publishing Program 1996.

North American Harlequin Series ☺	Swedish Series ☺	Norwegian Series ☺	Finnish Series ☺
Monthly Output	Monthly Output	Monthly Output	Monthly Output
<i>Easy Read Romance</i> 4			
<i>Romance</i> 8	<i>Romantik</i> 6	<i>Romantikk</i> 6	<i>Romantiikkaa</i> *)6
<i>Presents</i> 8			
<i>Superromance</i> 4	<i>Exklusiv</i> 3	<i>Exklusiv</i> 2	
<i>Temptation</i> 4			
<i>American Romance</i> 4			
<i>Intrigue</i> 4			
<i>Historicals</i> 4	<i>Historisk</i> 2	<i>Historisk</i> 2	
<i>Best of the Best</i> **) 3			
<i>Mystery</i> 3			
<i>Gold Eagle</i> ***) 2			

North American Silhouette Series &	Swedish Series &	Norwegian Series &	Finnish Series &
Monthly Output	Monthly Output	Monthly Output	Monthly Output
<i>Romance</i>	6		
<i>Desire</i>	6	<i>Passion</i> 4	<i>Passion</i> 4 <i>Viettelis</i> 4
<i>Special Edition</i>	6		
<i>Intimate Moments</i>	6		
<i>Yours Truly</i> *****)	2		
Mira *****)	4-5	<i>Harlequin Pocket</i>	<i>Harlequin Pocket</i>

Source: Förlaget Harlequin

#### Legend

\*) An additional series, *Julia*, is also published in Finland. This series is based solely on books published as *Romance* \*\*) *Best of the Best* are Audio Books \*\*\*) *Gold Eagle* is published with four titles bimonthly \*\*\*\*\*) *Yours Truly* is published with four titles bimonthly \*\*\*\*\*) Mira publishes four to five titles monthly in North America, but has so far been limited to only four titles annually in Sweden and Norway, and one title annually in Finland.

While each country used to print their own books, they are now all produced at Aktietrykkeriet in Trondheim, Norway. It takes Harlequin less than one minute to send four books by ISBN to Norway, where everything is put together by the printer, and while the color slides for covers need to go by mail, the proofs are displayed for the editor on computer and then on paper before a final go-ahead. With approximately forty-two books a month, Harlequin is obviously bread and butter for this printer, and it is no wonder perhaps that Aktietrykkeriet have installed the adequate computer hardware and software at the Harlequin office.

Even if an occasional man might be working in Harlequin's combined editorial offices, all the editors and writers I have met in Toronto and at miscellaneous RWA conferences have been women, as are the four editors in charge of the four lines that make up the base for Harlequin's Swedish and Scandinavian publishing program in 1996. Eva Susso, who has been with the company since 1994, is in charge of the six books published as *Harlequin Romantik* each month. Aside from her main editorial responsibilities, she does occasional layout and one or two of the smaller ads printed in the books. Although Eva does the bulk of these readings herself, picking her six books either from the sixteen monthly Mills & Boon titles, or from the same books published in North

America as *Harlequin Romance* or *Presents*, she has some help from one of the editors in Finland, who concentrates on reading titles from *Harlequin Romance*, primarily due to the fact that this line serves as the base for the Finnish series *Julia*.<sup>5</sup> With the company since its inception in 1979, Agneta Knutsson supervises the four books published as *Harlequin Passion* each month but also the occasional titles published as *Harlequin Pocket*. Coming to Harlequin through the buyout of B. Wahlströms' romance titles in the mid-1980s, Ewa Högberg takes care of the three books each month published as *Harlequin Exklusiv*, and is also in charge of translation. Finally, there is *Harlequin Historisk*, the responsibility of Inga-Lill Blomqvist, who besides her two monthly titles, also keeps track of Norwegian translators and everything pertaining to cover art.<sup>6</sup> As Table 2 shows, the annual North American Harlequin output under all three imprints in 1996 (Harlequin, Silhouette, and Mira) would amount to approximately 936 titles, compared to 180 for the three Scandinavian countries.

A combination of factors have led to a decision to cut down on the number of series offered: first, the need to streamline and coordinate the Scandinavian production more effectively by relying on one printer for all countries; then the fact that selling by subscription is more profitable when you have fewer series and more books in each series, and finally, the limitation placed on the publishers by distribution agreements mentioned in the previous chapter. Some series, however, are left out because they are considered "too much," such as *Harlequin American Romance*, which is deemed "too American" for the Scandinavian market, and others like it, which have come and gone through the years. Table 3 gives an overview of the series, both current and closed. Current series are chosen more in order to supplement each other and to cover Harlequin's scope of romances, than from any explicit preferences.

Every Wednesday morning, the editors meet for their regularly scheduled, hour-long, editorial conference. A genuinely informal occasion, it takes place either in Agneta Knutsson's office (the only one with room enough for all four) or, if this for one reason or other should be occupied, in the coffee room. The main purpose is not only to familiarize the other editors with upcoming titles in each series (sometimes two), but rather to discuss the text that is *outside* the book itself and in many cases might be what sells it: the title, the back blurb, and the author profile inside.

All other aspects of the fine tuning and planning of each individual series

Table 3.

Harlequin series and number of books published on the Swedish market 1979-96. Date of introduction in chronological order.<sup>7</sup>

Swedish Series	Introduced – Cancelled	Titles	Original Series
<i>Harlequin Romantik</i>	March 1979 – [still issued]	946	<i>Harlequin Romance/Presents</i>
<i>Masquerad</i> *)	October 1979 – December 1989	118	<i>Mills &amp; Boon Masquerade</i>
<i>Bianca</i>	1980-1983	31	<i>Mills &amp; Boon Medical Romances</i>
<i>Special</i> **)	March 1980 – May 1992	272	<i>Harlequin Romance/Presents</i>
<i>Harlequin Exklusiv</i> ***)	March 1982 – [still issued]	286	<i>Harlequin Superromance</i>
<i>Silver</i>	August 1983 – January 1991	88	<i>Harlequin American Romance</i>
<i>Superromance</i>	September 1984 – February 1991	56	<i>Dell Ecstasy/Silhouette Intimate Moments</i>
<i>Rubin</i>	January 1985 – December 1990	98	<i>Harlequin Temptation</i>
<i>Intrig</i>	February 1985 – February 1990	40	<i>Harlequin Intrigue</i>
<i>Succéromanen</i> ****)	January 1986 – December 1989	44	<i>Reprints from Romantik</i>
<i>Commando 5</i> *****)	March 1989 – September 1990	10	<i>SOB – Sons of Barabas</i>
<i>Action m. M. B</i> *****)	April 1989 – October 1990	10	<i>The Executioner</i>
<i>Silhouette Historisk</i>	March 1990 – December 1990	10	<i>Harlequin Historicals</i>
<i>Silhouette Romantik</i>	May 1990 – February 1991	10	<i>Silhouette Special Edition</i>
<i>Harlequin Historisk</i>	January 1991 – [still issued]	148	<i>Harlequin Historicals</i>
<i>Romantik Dramatik</i>	March 1991 – May 1992	20	<i>Silhouette Intimate Moments/Special Edition</i>
<i>Harlequin Passion</i>	January 1993 – [still issued]	192	<i>Silhouette Desire</i>
<i>Harlequin Pocket</i>	June 1995 – [still issued]	6	Mira

Source: Förlaget Harlequin, Svensk Bokförteckning

#### Legend

\*) When *Masquerad* was cancelled in December 1989, *Silhouette Historisk* became the historical series during 1990, and was then in turn replaced by *Harlequin Historisk*. Titles are numbered from no.1 with *Silhouette Historisk* and no.11 with *Harlequin Historisk*.

\*\*\*) In June 1992, *Harlequin Special* ceased to exist as a separate line. From then on, *Romantik* and *Special* become one line: *Harlequin Romantik Special*, later renamed just *Harlequin Romantik*. At the same time, the numbers also disappeared. As this is being written, the name Special is still used, not to designate a separate series, but as a marketing label on two books each month.

\*\*\*\*) Called *Harlequin Safir* from no.1 (March 1982) until no.102 (January 1991), and *Harlequin Exklusiv* from no.103.

\*\*\*\*\*) The first eleven titles came from B. Wahlströms förlag.

\*\*\*\*\*) *Commando 5* and *Action med Mack Bolan* are male action/adventure books.

take place separately between the individual editors and Agneta Knutsson, ensuring that mini-series start at the same time as a major mailing campaign is about to go out so that readers will become “hooked,” or that ads inside the books are found at the right place at the right time – in short, seeing to it that nothing is left to chance.

Relaxed, often filled with banter and laughter, the meeting is clearly an editorial one in that it provides a chance to catch up with forthcoming books, but since it grants the editors the opportunity to meet under structured circumstances, other issues pertaining to marketing or sales can be brought to the table, as well. Listening in on the discussion, one is reminded of Coser, Kadushin and Powell’s observation that, “editing seems such an intangible skill.”<sup>8</sup> There are very few formal requirements when entering the business, and it is difficult to catch on paper the essence of professional know-how where marketing and editing competence come together, a mix that even in an extremely market-driven publisher like Harlequin is largely built on hunches and intuition.

Although I was extremely conscious of my role as bystander during the six weekly meetings I attended, there to observe, take notes, and listen to what the editors said, it was difficult not to get caught up in the often agitated discussion. After all, we were all people who made our living on judging texts and writing ourselves. Displaying an inherent professionalism and respect for their books, the editors also throw in a substantial measure of irony and humor. Characters are discussed, heroes and heroines quipped at, sex scenes evaluated. Several months before publication, the editor responsible for the series currently under scrutiny comes to the meeting either with the whole book in its original version or with the original cover, plus her own suggestions for title, back blurb, and author presentation, distributed to the others on a print-out and serving as the basis for their conversation. As they read through the text silently, the editors begin a process of collective rewriting of the text that is sometimes extensive, sometimes just a matter of altering or shifting a word here or there.

In choosing a book for publication, the editor has probably arrived at her choice based on one of three main options; the first and most obvious one is that she has read the book herself and liked it, the second is that it got a favorable review by someone else, and the third is that she has read an account in a so-called “tip-sheet.” The first is self-evident enough, but because the editor

may be pressed for time, she sometimes relies on the resources of external readers. These readers (they can be translators or editors who have worked for Harlequin previously but left) do so by filling out a “reader’s report,” where they summarize the book, in the end rating it from 1-5. It is divided into four major sections: Huvudpersoner [principal characters], where the hero and heroine should be described; Innehåll [content], where the publisher has formulated a number of more superficial questions on setting and time-frame that the reader can briefly run through, and where the most interesting perhaps is a double one: “Finns det brutala/råa scener? Kan dom dämpas vid översättning?; Handling[plot]; and Omdöme [judgment], where the reader is asked to pass an overall opinion on the book.<sup>9</sup> Sari Karulahti, the Finnish editor, gave Patricia Wilson’s book *Passionate Captivity*|*Kidnappad i Grekland*, the overall score of 3, and wrote in her reader’s report: “April är en bra, positiv hjälting. Michalis är presenterad som grekiska män vanligen presenteras i våra böcker, lite för arrogant men lyckligtvis inte för chauvinistisk eller brutal. Läsarna gillar honom säkert. Boken duger.”<sup>10</sup> Hardly a superlative pronouncement, but Eva Susso decided on the book anyway, perhaps because it made for a good combination with the other titles that month, but more to the point, since it was scheduled for June publication, she expected its Greek setting to perform well in view of summer and vacation reading.

Occasionally assisting the editor in deciding on a book without reading it herself or letting someone else do it for her, the “tip-sheet” often boils down to the cover art information written in-house by the Toronto editors and is used as an aid for the production of covers. Containing similar information, they resemble reader’s reports in many ways. The synopsis on the “tip-sheet” of a book that Ewa Högberg chose for the same month, Janice Kaiser’s *Monday’s Child*|*Passion i djungeln*, can perhaps give some idea of its general attributes:

Kelly Ronan, a conservative attorney, is on a tour boat in the Gulf of Siam when the boat is attacked by pirates. With the help of undercover agent Bart Monday, she swims to an island. Bart and Kelly must survive under primitive conditions. They hide from pirates and crooked cops, eventually hijacking a helicopter. But the helicopter crashes and they’re rescued by a fishing boat. Bart promises the fishermen money to take them to Bangkok and leaves Kelly as hostage to guarantee his return. When he doesn’t show up to claim her, she is “sold” to a businessman who wants her for his mistress. Eventually, Kelly is rescued again and Bart arranges

her return to Honolulu. He promises to come for her when his mission is over. But Bart never shows up and Kelly is pregnant. The DEA claims Bart is dead and her old fiancé still wants to marry her. Bart arrives at the 11th hour, having been held captive by drug lords, to claim his wife and prospective child.<sup>11</sup>

Kaiser's style is brisk, there is ample dialogue, exotic setting, and as the synopsis implies, the book is fast-paced. Because of Ewa Högberg's workload, she did not read the book herself before acquiring it, and was less than certain about taking it. In fact, she was so unsure after reading the tip-sheet, that she scribbled "För mycket?" [Too much?] on it, adding a note to herself that she should talk to Agneta Knutsson to see what she thought. But as she explained to me, that month needed a book like this. In light of the recent outpouring of books in *Superromance* about single parents with rebellious teenagers, the prospect of two adults alone on an island indicated a welcome change in what she hinted at were too many "dysfunctional" romances.

The editors in Stockholm seem to think about their own work as autonomous and unconstrained by the parent company in Toronto. Contacts with the European head office in Freiburg are limited to the subsidiary's reports on all books sold – for royalty calculation – and the buying and administration of covers, also handled from Switzerland. Everything else, from finance to potential contacts with editors, goes through Toronto. When I asked Agneta Knutsson how she would define the relationship with Toronto, she described it as virtually nonexistent, but hastened to add that they nonetheless are very *au courant* with what is being published, and exemplified by saying that if she casually mentioned "we really love that author," a reply to the effect of: "So why haven't you published more than two of her books, then?" might be readily forthcoming.<sup>12</sup> According to her, the only form of more direct influence exerted over the editorial process is the insistence on having certain authors published. Continuing this line of thought, Agneta Knutsson says: "Under en period var det ett antal [författare] som vi var tvungna att få ut ganska snabbt, därför att dom var beredda att flytta sig därifrån [från förlaget]."<sup>13</sup> Here, she is talking about Harlequin's tendency to "milk the cow," to publish as much as possible by an author who announces her intention to leave for another publishing house, a strategy that also works as a preventive measure; proof of tangible international sales might persuade a writer from contemplating such a change in the first place.

Placed in what Robert Escarpit calls “le double representation,” the editors must consider not only the potential sales of a book but also more subtle notions of quality, personal preferences, and assumptions concerning what they can get readers to appreciate.<sup>14</sup> To use ice-hockey terminology, the editorial reading involves a kind of “split-vision.” Although a professional reading is necessitated by work, rather than chosen for private enjoyment or as a leisure activity, the editor reads analytically as well as with enthusiasm, making decisions to publish based on a number of considerations: she may judge a book a strong sale, pick a title because she liked it when she read it, choose a book because she is looking for an exotic setting that particular month, or possibly even because Toronto says so.

Once a book is chosen, Ewa Högberg starts looking for its translator. At the time of writing, Harlequin employs around thirty to thirty-five translators on a freelance basis. Their productivity and preferences vary, as do their ages (from thirty to seventy-five). Some do two books a year, others twelve, some will prefer working only with particular series, others ask for books without too much sex. Most however prefer American books to English, a fact attributed to the more humorous, easy-going, and action-oriented American romances. The editors try to grant such requests, since they know that happy translators will produce better books. In order to facilitate in-house administration, Ewa Högberg has the overall responsibility for everything regarding translations. She takes incoming calls from those interested in working as translators, gives out assignments when the editors have decided what books are forthcoming in their individual series, keeps track of the translators and what they are currently working on, and even notes what software they prefer (to enable them to work more efficiently, Harlequin will if necessary, furnish translators with both hardware and software). Although exact numbers are hard to come by, fees vary considerably from translator to translator, depending on previous experience and the length of the book they are working on. To make a living solely from working for Harlequin would, however, require an output of maybe three books a month, something that when attempted has only resulted in “the same book being translated over and over again,” in mechanistic and repetitious language.<sup>15</sup>

A steady stream of interested potential translators calls the office regularly and Förlaget Harlequin has never been forced into actively recruiting trans-

lators. The reasons for wanting to work as a translator are apparently as diverse as the people who offer their services, and range from having heard that the publisher is looking for translators (although this has never been advertised in any way), to knowing someone who already works for Harlequin. In more recent years, Ewa Högberg annually sends out maybe 100 to 150 standard packages to those making inquiries. In it are four things: a short letter signed by herself with a few hints to the translator, a more formalized list of “do’s” and “don’ts,” a translated Harlequin romance, and finally, the first chapter of Penny Jordan’s book *Island of Dawn*, a book never published in Sweden. Very few directions are given to the translator, the most important perhaps being that he or she needs to shorten the chapter by ten to fifteen percent, since all Harlequin books are shortened in translation. *Exklusiv* and *Historisk* are cut from 304 pages to 272, *Romantik* and *Passion* are cut from 192 pages to 160 (providing a few pages to work with outside the text itself, nearly always intended for promotion of forthcoming books). The reason for this seems to be a combination of considerations relating to production (the printing presses’ standard format) and to the text – the editors apparently think that many books only benefit from being shortened. The two first lines are the so-called “long” books and the two others are the “short” books. All titles published under the Mira imprint in North America are referred to as *Harlequin Pocket* in Scandinavia, and here, pages vary with each book. Apart from these considerations, the advice is far from rigid:

Det finns ett par saker du bör tänka på vid översättningsarbetet. Det viktigaste är att du inte översätter rakt av från originalet, utan tänker på hur svenskan flyter. Det betyder att det är tillåtet att frigöra sig från den engelska texten i ganska hög grad. Undvik också direkt-översättningar, anglicismer samt upprepningar.<sup>16</sup>

The first chapter of Penny Jordan’s book has been used for many years to determine if the translator has “what it takes.” Frequently debating whether or not they should try and come up with something new, so far the editors have remained faithful to this one. The fact that it is always the same text makes the editor very aware of nuances and because of her intimate knowledge of it, she knows exactly what to look for when the translation comes back. With its long, descriptive passages, dialogue, a few emotionally charged scenes, as well as the occasional standout problem, it serves its purpose as

a satisfactory instrument in judging the quality of the translation.

Ewa Högberg puts it this way: “How do you translate into Swedish something like “her bones turned to water?,” a question that may: “urskilja vilka som faktiskt tänker på svenska och inte bara direktöversätter engelskan.”<sup>17</sup> As the enclosed letter specifies, there is no demand to return this chapter within a specific time and in fact, as many as sixty percent will never send it back at all. Those who respond with a finished version will take anything from two weeks to six months to do so. Taking place in silence, the drop off indicates to the editor that to the surprise of many, it takes both time and effort to make the end result any good. When it does come back, it is either rejected (in which case it is so obvious that Ewa Högberg determines this herself) or accepted (where she makes the decision together with Agneta Knutsson). A rejection can trigger responses of doubt, even aggression, but most of all contempt, as displayed in this comment from a woman calling in to have that incomprehensible rejection letter explained: “– Ja, egentligen gillar man ju inte sådana här skitböcker,” indicating the fatal mistake of not respecting and taking the work seriously to begin with.<sup>18</sup>

If accepted, the translator will almost immediately be sent two chapters of a new book (often a short one to begin with), and asked to complete it in two weeks. This time, a more extensive sheet with information and recommendations is included, similar to the first one but more detailed, with its 166 variations on the word “said.” A second screening-out process, this will ascertain not only if the translator has what it takes to finish the work on a deadline, but also show if this translation is as good as was initially promised. It is not unheard of that these two new chapters come back looking nothing like the first effort, perhaps due to the fact that someone else assisted then who was not at hand this time, in which case the editor might decide to discontinue the relationship there and then.

Normally, though, a book is sent out together with a contract and a delivery date. Knowing that many translators will deliver on time, Ewa Högberg also recognizes that many will not, and she adjusts her own margins accordingly. When the manuscript is finished, it nearly always comes back to Harlequin on a computer disk. Each editor then edits directly on a print-out or on the computer. When she receives the Swedish manuscript, the editor never goes back – there is no time (nor is it her job) – to check the translated manu-

script against the English-language version. Certainly, she may once have read the original book and decided that it would be appropriate for the Scandinavian market – but that might have been several months ago, during which time she has read and acquired an unknown number of new ones.

When reading the finished translation, it is far more important to the editor that the text reads smoothly and with a rhythm and “feel” to it that makes it come across as “Swedish,” than it is as “faithful” or “accurate” as possible in relation to the original. The editor’s final assessment of how the book works is therefore based on its Swedish translation and not its alleged fidelity or infidelity to the original book. This means, to some extent, that the ability to write and create anew may compensate for the fact that the editors in some cases have to consecrate many hours working with the translated manuscript in order to get it as they like. As I found out, there is no direct correspondence between the amount of work the editor has to spend on the translation, and how she views its quality. Some books that are heavily edited are considered good translations and vice versa. Therefore, the importance placed on the text in its translated form hinges on a complex set of expectations that prompts the editors to view a successful translation as something that goes far beyond the translator’s ability or inability to give the book a “correct” Swedish form.

During the meetings I sat in on, and sometimes in the discussions that would linger on after they were “officially over,” I had become curious of often used comments to the effect that: “this translation made the book” or “this translation killed the book,” expressions apparently used to denote a shared consensus that needed no further explanation. Between themselves, the editors almost automatically knew what this decree meant and as Ewa Högberg observes:

Och då kunde jag ibland få en översättning i min hand av en bok som jag hade valt ut som jag tyckte var bara en femetta! – och så hade en översättare tagit hand om den och så kommer den ut som platt intet, och då blir man så himla besviken, då blir man så ledsen, för jag hade då kanske skrattat högt när jag läste den här boken, eller fällt en tår, eller, den hade gripit mig – det gör ju inte alla böcker, men det är dom böckerna man kommer ihåg och sen förväntar man sig mycket av dom böckerna. Sen har vi motsatta fallet. Ibland får man ju ta böcker som man kanske inte tror helt och fullt på – kanske på grund av att det är en speciell översättare, kanske på grund av att boken innehåller vissa bitar som då ska stå i kontrast till andra den månaden, så att man får en variation på innehållet. Och en bok som man tar, visst, den duger, men det är ingen höjdare – enligt mitt sätt att se

på det – och så kommer den tillbaka, och så är det bara: JA! – världens roligaste story, kanonbra språk och man känner bara att... Ibland har det hänt att jag har gått tillbaka till mina anteckningar: – Är det samma bok? – Kan det vara så här?<sup>19</sup>

The implications of Ewa Högberg's comments are even clearer when juxtaposed to Agneta Knutsson's answer to the same question at an interview three months after the one above. I wanted her to explain the expressions that I had heard so often in her own words. Her remarks echo those of Ewa Högberg to an extent that is almost eerie:

Om man har läst boken på engelska, och tycker att "wow, det här är en bok som vi ska ta," den är rapp i stilen, den är kul att läsa, det är humoristiskt, kanske – och sen när man får översättningen och redigerar: "åååh, vad segt det är," var tog humorn vägen? Då tycker vi att boken har "dött." Eller är det då någon bok då som har fått ett utlåtande eller man själv har läst och man tycker att "ja, den var inte så himla kul, men vi måste ju," för det här är en författare som vi måste... eller någonting, och när man redigerar, så tycker man "oh, en kul bok," det känns bra, och då har man, tycker man "lyft den."<sup>20</sup>

So the dullness and lifelessness of the first may be the vivaciousness of the next, and as both women talk about their readings, their enthusiasm is almost tangible. The book is not simply translated into another cultural context, where it comes out clothed in another language, to be sure, but essentially the same. Instead, this is hazardous territory, and what they are suggesting is that translations do matter – so much so in fact, that they can "make or break" the book. Is this really the case? The question was intriguing. Combined with the additional information on the in-house procedures gained through interviews, it worked well as a kind of mental backdrop for the comparative translation readings described in the next chapter. They in turn supplied me with the empirical material necessary to test the validity of a question that seemed of crucial importance to my continued work.



## CHAPTER FIVE

# Transediting: The Global Made Local

During the editorial meeting at Förlaget Harlequin on 28 February 1996, the three *Harlequin Exklusiv* titles scheduled for publication in June of that year were discussed: *Mariah* [*Mariah*, *Little Luke*, *Big Luke*] *Århundradets Man*, and *Monday's Child* [*Passion i djungeln*].<sup>1</sup> The first book in the mini-series “Calloway Corners,” *Mariah* was to be followed by *Jo*, *Tess*, and *Eden*. As I mentioned in Chapter Two, this series was initially published in North America beginning in 1989, and as the editors now embarked on its first Scandinavian volume, the pros and cons of the titles (and therefore names) were discussed extensively. The proximity between Maria (a common Swedish name), and *Mariah* influenced the decision to leave that title without any alterations, *Jo* became *Chris* (due to possible confusion with a Swedish orange juice sold under the name of JO), *Eden* was considered too foreign for Swedish ears (possibly because of the connotations to the Garden of Eden) and transformed into *Ellen*, and the hero in *Mariah* – Ford (Ford is a car, not a name, according to the editors), rechristened Robert. In the same way, “Calloway Corners,” in fact referring to the small, Louisiana town where the action takes place, was a name that the editors decided against. Ewa Högberg initially came up with the alternative *Kvinnor vågar* [Women Dare], but *Fyra Kvinnor* [Four Women] was also considered before they settled for *Fyra Kärlekar* [Four Loves]. The deliberate

alteration of personal names is not at all uncommon, but in contrast to the editors of *Succéromanen ur Allers*, the staff at Förlaget Harlequin in Stockholm would never give characters or setting a “Scandinavian” flavor. As a matter of fact, the previous discussion exemplifies perfectly the recommendations sent out to new translators: “De engelska namnen behålles, såvida de inte för ett svenskt öra låter mycket främmande (eller är svåra att uttala). I så fall kan de ersättas med enklare engelska namn.”<sup>2</sup>

If *Mariah* did not cause any major problems and was left intact, in the case of *Little Luke*, *Big Luke*, an exact translation into *Lille Luke*, *Store Luke*, sounds strangely odd and mismatched. Ewa Högberg instead offered four alternatives: *Århundredets kyss* [Kiss of the Century], *Månskensdoft* [Moonlightscent], *Doft av månsken* [The Scent of Moonlight], and *Tid att älska* [Time to Love]. None of the other editors were overjoyed at this, suggesting instead that *kyss* [kiss] in the first title be substituted with *man*, making the final title *Århundredets Man* [Man of the Century]. As the editors toss alternatives back and forth between themselves, they test the validity of the title in question (Does it sound good? Does it convey the content?), while they check to see if it has been used before (a large binder containing a list of all titles published through the years is always kept handy, so that the suggested version may be compared to any previous, similar ones).

Coming up with titles is an art form by itself. One Wednesday, Inga-Lill Blomqvist told me about a trick of hers: while reading the book she writes down parts of sentences, bits and pieces that strike her as good “title material,” and as a consequence, she arrives at the editorial meetings equipped with more ideas than anyone. For one of the two books in *Historisk* that she planned for June 1996, *The Gunslinger*, she came up with fifteen possibilities, ranging from *Obesegrad* [Undefeated] to *Levande legend* [Living Legend] and the witty *Med hjärtat i sikte* [With the heart in sight], making a pun that works both in English and Swedish on the word “sikte” [sight] as something on a gun – before they all settled for *Mannen i svart* [The Man in Black], more modestly tying in with the hero’s black clothing on the cover. For her other book that month, *Desire My Love*, she had eleven suggestions to choose from, while the other editors arrived with at most five or six.

As they read through their colleagues’ writing, the editors dissect the language down to its linguistic details, as well as the consistency and logic of

the presentation. Obviously guided by the back blurbs on the original book or cover when writing new ones in Swedish, their own writing nearly always results in totally new texts, which may be very different from what the American or British editors have emphasized. Although the construction of back blurbs can sound insignificant, this is yet another opportunity for the editors to focus on what they perceive of as the essence of the book, allowing themselves the freedom to express it in their own words, rather than just following in the footsteps of the original. One example is Dawn Stewardson's book *Little Luke, Big Luke*, edited by a freelance editor, but which Ewa Högberg acquired initially and for which she had the responsibility of composing a Swedish text for the back of the book. The original reads as follows:

Navy Pilot Luke Dakota – the third of Four Strong Men

Luke Dakota – His life was sent into a tailspin the day he learned that Mike Alexander, his buddy during Desert Storm, had committed suicide, leaving behind a wife and a child – a child who'd been named Luke, after him.

Caitlin Alexander – With a business in the red and a child to raise alone, Caitlin had her share of trouble. And she still couldn't believe that Mike had killed himself! Then Luke Dakota arrived on the doorstep offering to help, and he bought back feelings she thought she'd buried with her husband...

Luke soon found himself in over his head. He'd made the trip because Mike had been closer than a brother to him. But there was nothing brotherly about Luke's feelings for Caitlin (*Little*, back blurb).

As the so-called "shout-line" (the first sentence on the back, often put in bold type to draw the reader's attention) suggests, this is the third title of four in the mini-series "Four Strong Men." However, since none of the other books were to be published in Scandinavia under this caption, no reference is made to "Four Strong Men" in the Swedish back blurb. Instead, the editor suggests the following version:

Hon var hans bästa väns fru – och förbjuden frukt

Caitlin Alexander måste vara den vackraste kvinna Luke Dakota mött. Allt från det mörka vilda hårsvallet till den där speciella doften av mänsken och sommaräng... Luke förstod bara alltför väl varför hans bästa vän, Mike, hade gift sig med henne.

Det var århundradets kyss, det var Caitlin övertygad om. Denne syndfullt sexige man som plötsligt uppenbarat sig på hennes tröskel och tagit sin an alla problem... ja, nu hade han tagit sig an hennes hjärta också.

Efter Mikes död hade ranchen och företaget försatt Cailin i knipa. Så när Luke dök upp tackade hon inte nej till hjälpen. Men vad skulle Luke säga när hon

ypgade sina misstankar om Mikes död? Skulle han tvivla på det, som alla andra?  
Eller skulle han stanna och hjälpa henne finna sanningen?<sup>3</sup>

The editors immediately disagree over the final words in the shout-line: “Förbjuden frukt [forbidden fruit],” arguably on the basis of impropriety. The fact that you are about to fall in love with your best friend’s widow is perhaps awkward, but since Caitlin *de facto* is without any ties, she can hardly be considered forbidden fruit. Taking out that sentence altogether, they also remove the entire second paragraph, where Caitlin’s initiative is somewhat dampened by the arrival of Luke, who suddenly takes all her problems on his broad shoulders. The story-line has made her a widow in distress, but the editors prefer not to detract from her gratifying marriage, nor to have her come out as a woman waiting for the next best man who enters her life, throwing herself on his mercy. The shout-line “hon var hans bästa väns fru” [she was his best friend’s wife] can then work to attract the reader’s attention without giving away too much, and the rest of the back blurb is shortened, focusing on her looks and the mystery that runs through the book; Mike’s death.

Hon var hans bästa väns fru ~~—och förbjuden frukt~~

Caitlin Alexander måste vara den vackraste kvinna Luke Dakota mött. Allt från det mörka vilda hårsvallet till den där speciala doften av mänsken och sommaräng... Luke förstod bara alltför väl varför hans bästa vän, Mike, hade gift sig med henne.

~~Det var århundradets kyss, det var Caitlin övertygad om. Denne syndfullt sexige man som plötsligt uppenbarat sig på hennes tröskel och tagit sin an alla problem... ja, nu hade han tagit sig an hennes hjärta också.~~

~~Efter Mikes död hade ranchen och företaget försttt Cailin i knipa. Så när Luke dök upp tackade hon inte nej till hjälpen.~~ [Men nu var Mike död. Caitlin befann sig i knipa, så när Luke erbjöd sin hjälp tackade hon inte nej]. Men vad skulle Luke [han] säga när hon yppade sina misstankar ~~om~~ [kring] Mikes död? Skulle han tvivla på ~~det~~ [dem], som alla andra? Eller skulle han stanna och hjälpa henne finna sanningen?<sup>4</sup>

Robert Escarpit has once remarked that: “L’idéal pour un editeur, est de trouver un auteur ’à suivre,’” providing a valuable clue for understanding the role of the editor as it has evolved through publishing history.<sup>5</sup> Ever since the printing press changed the face of the profession determinably, the editor has been present in one guise or another, be it as editor/printer or editor/bookseller. However, the editor/gatekeeper, in the position to create his or her own professional mythology, perhaps more discretely and certainly today “in the line of

conglomerate fire,” but still alongside that of the author – as mentor, instigator, friend, and confidante – must, I believe, be viewed as concomitant with the conception of the author as an autonomous, self-contained entity, a legacy, at least in part, of European Romanticism. Clearly, the editor has something to do with the writer, and what that something is, reflects both their identities.

Thus, despite what the editors in Toronto and Stockholm may have in common – they are also separated by Escarpit’s very observation; the Stockholm editors are in no way involved in what some might claim that publishing is all about, an alliance involving the acquisition of book *and* author. So, even if Christian Chalmain, who led Harlequin’s extremely successful French operation once said: “We see ourselves as a French publisher because we choose what we want from the Harlequin backlist. And our expansion will be in the direction of French originals,” acquiring a book where it is written, as opposed to where it is translated, does in some sense shift the precarious balance of power of transnational publishing.<sup>6</sup> The editors at the three Harlequin editorial offices in Canada, the United States, and Britain have, at least in higher positions, a more traditional editorial role; they acquire, line-edit and write refusals, argue and become friends with, occasionally even wine and dine writers, whereas the Stockholm, Paris, Moscow editors do something else entirely. Their relationship is with the already existing text that this person once wrote, to the tangible, physical *product*, a finished book, which they eventually edit and translate. All the same, I am suggesting that as much as this obvious fact might seem to detract from any kind of “real” exercise of editorial power, the “transnational transposition” that the Swedish editors are involved in is a process that because of its very removal from the traditional core of publishing, might come across as subordinated but in fact is strikingly reminiscent of the initial editorial procedure.

The “author” in the case of Förlaget Harlequin and any other subsidiary, joint-venture or license partner is not only the “real” writer but also the local editor and translator, and to make this claim more convincing, one needs to address the ways in which editors work on translations, the particular process of translation and editing that I would like to call *transediting*. Roman Jakobson’s division of translation into first *translation proper* (interlingual translation) and secondly *rewording*, or intralingual translation, points to a compartmentalizing tendency.<sup>7</sup> In the case of Förlaget Harlequin, the categories of “translation”

and that of “editing” close in on each other, and the line between translator and editor is unquestionably a fluid one. In short, translators edit and editors translate – and this is what the process of transediting involves. When I became aware of how much time and energy the editors invested in translations (and in translators), it seemed to me that their work in this domain could be interpreted as the local equivalent to the original “global” editorial process (here, I refer back to my discussion on Harlequin Enterprises’ operations in the introductory chapter). This “hinterland” is therefore a reflection of the personal and collective ideology that permeates transediting, and comes into focus as the text is being laid out and opened up in the next pages.

Indisputably, the most obvious purpose of translation is to make a text, literary or not, comprehensible in another language. To do so, the translator needs not only whatever formal competence is necessary to understand the text in its innermost syntactical and semantic detail, but also enough insight to interpret and make it intelligible, even pleasurable, in the target language. The tangibility of such a project does not lead to invisible neutrality: the locus of translation is contingent, ultimately dependent on the socioeconomic context which produces it. Hence, it carries in it the potential for alignment with or opposition to local and global ideologies.

From the seventeenth century on, the practice of translation has rested firmly on the two pillars of “transparency” and “fluency.” These two criteria are the measuring stick whereby translation is judged and weighed – the more it is perceived of as fluent and transparent, the higher the marks. The more foreign and dense the translation appears, the harsher the critique.<sup>8</sup> The Harlequin editors would probably agree on such a call for “transparent” and “fluent” translations; and as Ewa Högberg notes, a text that reads easily is to be preferred: “Får du ett perfekt manus – dom ligger på cirka 350 sidor – ja, då kan du beta av det på två, tre dagar om du får sitta ostörd, därför att det rinner igenom.”<sup>9</sup>

Serving to uphold our perception of both writer and text as unique representations without the contamination of any kind of external influence in the shape of editing, marketing, distribution, or translation, the modernist appropriation of this stance is perhaps most distinctly and powerfully formulated in Walter Benjamin’s seminal “The Task of the Translator.” In his essay, Benjamin emphasizes the concept of *translatability*, an “essential feature of certain

works,” only mechanically relating to translation, which in turn is described as a mode. Thus, “The task of the translator consists in finding that intended effect [*Intention*] upon the language into which he is translating which produces in it the echo of the original.”<sup>10</sup> Since the intention of the poet is believed to be spontaneous, and that of the translator derivative, a “real” translation is transparent, open enough to allow “pure language, as though reinforced by its own medium, to shine upon the original all the more fully.”<sup>11</sup> The successful termination of such an undertaking directly relates to the *translatability* of the original and is a recognition of its basic quality. Outlining the involved relationship between original and translation, between languages and texts, Benjamin’s conclusions remain within a framework of a largely Eurocentric image of the world and the literature within it. The text is predetermined by itself; it simply *is*, and its potential for translatability resides in its own structure.

Robert Escarpit, who has cleverly referred to translation as “trahison créatrice” or “creative treason,” addresses the issue from another position, but all the same ends up in intentionality. Preferring books to be “misunderstood” rather than unread, there can hardly be betrayal unless there is an initial meaning to misinterpret, and like Benjamin, Escarpit is concerned about leaving a book without supervision. There is a right way to do things, and suspecting that readers from different cultural contexts might have difficulties reading the intention off the book without substantial education or knowledge, he notes that, unfortunately, “such a process of reconstruction is much too difficult to be applied to all books and to be expected from all readers.”<sup>12</sup>

Both Escarpit and Benjamin operate from a tradition that certainly notices the politics of translation and its ideological nature, but they do so from a standpoint that largely locks aesthetics *inside* the text, promoting authorial power and transcendence, originality and individuality at the expense of those factors and deliberations that are at play *between* original text and translated text, all coinciding to make the translated text different from the original. The translator’s role in this has been one of continuous self-effacement. The pervasive notion of the intimate relationship between translated and translator, which cultivated properly must lead to a similar affinity between texts, has aided and abetted in this construction.<sup>13</sup> Identified as copier rather than creator, as follower rather than instigator, whose work occupies a vacillating position between craft and art, the translator has an unfixed legal and eco-

conomic status, a situation that is especially troublesome since the practice of translation is often the work of women, whereas the theory of the same is still mostly the prerogative of men.<sup>14</sup>

As I discussed in the previous chapter, my sojourns at the Harlequin Stockholm office had already made me aware of how much effort the editors invested in translations. When Lawrence Venuti says: “Comparisons of the source- and target language texts which explore that ratio of loss and gain between them and reveal the translator’s discursive strategy as well as any unforeseen effects,” he is describing what emerges when one reads the original and translated books side by side.<sup>15</sup> In this particular case, I guessed that if I wanted to find out more precisely “how meaning travels,”<sup>16</sup> reading “according to Venuti” would not suffice. To understand more precisely how the localization of the Harlequin romance takes place, I also had to account for what happened in-between, thus adding the editor to the equation.

However, the problems inherent in coming to grips with transediting are substantial and crucial to address in detail. To be able to see both translator and editor at work on the text, I needed the original book, the translator’s manuscript as it came to the publisher, the editor’s changes to that manuscript, and then the translated book itself, which allowed for a number of variations. Two things followed from my ambition. First, because of the speed with which these books are published, making them “old” after one month, I concluded fairly early on that it would be extremely difficult for me to make this analysis based on the fifty-six Swedish books I had previously read for the discussion in the next chapter. The editor can access the original book during a very limited time and thus, when I read a book published in Sweden in 1980, the original would be older still, and unless recently reprinted, virtually impossible to find. Second, and more to the point, even if I were to find the original book, this in no way provided me with any insight into the editor’s role and actions, something I for reasons already mentioned, wanted to know more about.

Because of the practicalities involved in category publishing, arranging this required some planning, and in January 1996, it was clear that the books scheduled for June 1996 publication were a possibility. In accordance with my decision to focus on the two series *Special* and *Exklusiv*, one month’s selection in these series became the following five books: in *Special* (by now not an

individual series, but a monthly label within *Romantik*) Sally Wentworth's *Duel in the Sun* (1994)|*Månsken över Nilen* and Patricia Wilson's *Passionate Captivity* (1993)|*Kidnappad i Grekland*; and in *Exklusiv* Sandra Canfield's *Mariah* (1994)|*Mariah*, Janice Kaiser's *Monday's Child* (1995)|*Passion i djungeln*, and Dawn Stewardson's *Little Luke, Big Luke* (1995)|*Århundradets man*.<sup>17</sup> The timing was right, the original books available at the Harlequin office and although I had already decided not to interview the translators, they made up a good cross-section: two had been working for Harlequin many years, one was in reality a couple (husband and wife), one had recently come back after maternity leave, and finally, there was a man (one of the few working for Harlequin). I began by reading the original book at the same time as the Swedish translator's manuscript, given to me on a print-out straight from the delivered disk, using a highlighter and then writing down all changes, cuts and other things that in any way deviated from the original. It was time-consuming work.

After the editor had gone through the manuscript and edited it on paper (for my sake, since one of them normally does this on her computer), I compared her cuts and corrections, changes in language and in content, with my own notes. After that, I interviewed the editor responsible for each series as soon as possible. This was the only way to ensure that they would recollect anything of these particular books – simply because both of them would now be in the middle of six or four new ones and possibly also dealing with as many new translators. Finally, I read the Swedish book.

Since there is ample evidence to suggest that any given text will invariably at the hands of five different translators result in as many translations, each with its own advantages and problems, it seemed futile to try and formulate any distinct norms for accuracy, errors, or equivalence, words that are historically related. Problematically enough, translation studies presuppose bilinguality. Therefore, while the finer points of my examples make perfect sense to someone who reads and understands Swedish, unless some kind of retranslation is attempted, a person without this particular competence will not be able to follow the strategies discussed. This is in itself a methodological challenge worthy of a separate book, but I have tried to demonstrate what choices translator and editor make by consistently retranslating and also by using the more visual method of ~~strike through~~ in my quotations in order to show how trans-

editing operates in the exclusion of larger segments of the text. The choices I have made in my “translation of the translation” may be questioned, but are unfortunately an unavoidable feature of this very project to begin with.

The task of giving a text written within a specific cultural context a new form in another language and culture, revolves here around two major strategies: exclusion and substitution. Bearing this in mind, the actions outlined in the following pages fall into two clusters: on the one hand, there are changes, mistakes and choices that can be questioned but do not overturn the text in any fundamental way; on the other, there is also what looks like more substantial and interesting deliberations on part of translator and editor, indicating either that they on some level understand each other or, conversely, that they are on a collision course.

The most conspicuous cases of substitution or exclusion are references judged too unfamiliar by the intended audience, and where a person, thing, or abstract reference is taken out, supposedly on the basis of its being unknown to the reader, but also since its exclusion does not wreak havoc on the overall impact of the text.<sup>18</sup> Well-known persons in one culture may be complete unknowns in another, like the country singer George Strait. The sentence “From the brightcoloured juke-box George Strait wailed that all his exes lived in Texas, which was why he hung his hat in Tennessee” (*Mariah*, 20), was omitted altogether in the Swedish version. In the same book, Sadie Thompson is referred to twice; “no preacher in his right mind wanted to tangle with a scarlet-lipped, sultry-hipped Sadie Thompson”(37) and “In reality she was a summa cum laude graduate of the Sadie Thompson School of Destroy That Preacher” (99). The allusion to the Somerset Maugham character is logical in view of the fact that the heroine Mariah is falling in love with a priest, but for the reader to make the connotations implied, some prior recognition of the short story “Miss Thompson” or the dramatization *Rain* is required. Even though it might be an overstatement to credit all Anglo-American readers with such knowledge, the translators exclude this reference in all likelihood assuming that it would be even less the case in Sweden.

Another literary allusion is the one made to *Alice in Wonderland* in *Little Luke, Big Luke*: “Your smile’s as big as the Cheshire cat’s,” he murmured” (170). In this instance, the translator chooses to rewrite the sentence into something that will evoke a similar feeling, but without relying on the grinning cat in *Alice*:

“– Du ler som en katt som nyss fått grädde, viskade han” (*Århundradets*, 151) [You smile like a cat who’s just been given cream, he whispered]. A few pages earlier in the same book, a description of the heroine’s grandfather is based on a visual comparison: “As she said that, a man who put Luke in mind of a taller and younger version of George Burns appeared” (123). By mentioning the aging actor, Dawn Stewardson here presumably takes it for granted that readers will conjure up an internal image so strong, that no further explanation is necessary, something that will only serve its purpose if you know who George Burns is, which is not at all obvious in a Swedish context. Instead, the translator makes no references to his looks at all: “Samtidigt som hon sa det kom en man ut” (*Århundradets*, 110) [As she said that, a man ~~who put Luke in mind of a taller and younger version of George Burns~~ appeared].

The strategy of exclusion does not only limit itself to individuals, but is also used when specific references in the English text are part of the original culture, and as such make perfect sense, but where in translation they would require a footnote or explanation to be fully understood. In a scene from *Mariah*, the protagonists are working together as chaperones at a high-school dance. Approaching the locale they engage in the following repartee:

“So much for chaperones being early,” he said with a scowl.

“They’re just eager to party.”

“Or to pass around the bottle before we get here.”

“Why, Ford Dunning, you suspicious little devil. Or is it experience you speak from?”

He grinned. “I plead the Fifth.”

“Is that like a fifth of whiskey or the Fifth Amendment?”

Chuckling, he said, “Let’s just say that preacher’s kids are obliged to try everything” (*Mariah*, 127).

The key words in this passage are of course “fifth,” referring both to a measurement and to a particular section of the American constitution, and “pleading,” because *Mariah* is quick to grab the opportunities given to her by the two words in conjunction with one another. Either Ford is “asking for” a fifth of whiskey or pleading the Fifth Amendment, in which case he invokes his right not to answer in fear of self-incrimination. Maintaining this passage while making it intelligible and humorous in Swedish would be virtually impossible. Footnotes are out of the question, and even if they were not, explaining that which is supposed to be grasped instantaneously, takes the edge out of the

wordplay, particularly since the reader's appreciation of this conversation is tied, not only to the uses of "plead" and "fifth," but to an understanding of the whole concept of the Fifth Amendment and its uses in American culture. Avoiding complications, the two sentences mentioning the Fifth Amendment are simply lifted out and given no replacements.

When Luke in *Little Luke, Big Luke* is trying to find out if his Gulf War friend Mike really did kill himself, he decides to start his inquiries with one of Mike's former colleagues, nicknamed Trout: "And where better to start a fishing expedition than with a guy called Trout?" (153), counting on the successful association between the words "fishing expedition" – as not only the act of "holding a fishing rod, trying to catch fish," but also meaning "investigation" – with Trout, representing both a man and a fish. If, at this point, the translator wants to keep as much of the sentence as possible, she has the option of searching for a similar "double" expression that denotes "fishing expedition" in Swedish – for instance "fiska efter upplysningar" [fish for information]. This could work fine if only "Trout" left untranslated, would automatically be understood by a Swedish reader as being English name for *forell*; but since this is not self-evident, and since the translator does not really have the license to use the Swedish *forell* (even as a nickname, it would be preposterous), she lets the whole thing drop. To solve the problem emanating from this one sentence, the translator would have to "invent" a uniquely Swedish nickname on another fish (perhaps "Gäddis" [Pike[y)]). Considering however that this is the only instance in the book where the name Trout causes any problems, the translator preserves the name untranslated, refraining from any Swedish equivalent to the joke. "Kunde han börja bättre än med Trout?" (*Århundradets*, 136) [And where better to start ~~a fishing expedition~~ than with ~~a guy called~~ Trout?].

Puns depend on the reader being able to grasp the potential two meanings in the same word. As idioms and colloquial expressions, this is language on its "illocutionary" level, expressions that are appreciated and used in order to underscore a point, make a joke, or an ironic commentary. Catriona makes a reference to Lucas about her uncomfortable pillow in *Duel in the Sun*. Asking her why she has failed to report this to Lamia – in charge of practical matters at their excavation party – Catriona answers: "I did. She said I'd just have to – to *lump* it.' And Catriona burst into laughter at her own pun. Lucas laughed too,

but afterwards said, ‘So why didn’t you tell *me* about it?’ ”(102). Catriona’s joke is made possible by the fact that she has slept on a lumpy pillow and Lamia’s subsequent expression *lump it*. Although I will assume that the Swedish translator is aware of the double meaning intended by “lump,” both in its more physical form as well as meaning “endure,” her recourse is nonetheless to take out all indication that something amusing has been said and to make a perfectly accurate translation of “lump it,” without keeping the pun: “Det gjorde jag. Hon sa bara att jag fick hårda ut.” – Varför sa du inte till mig då?” (*Månsken*, 85) [‘I did. She said I’d just have to – to *lump* it.’ ~~And Catriona burst into laughter at her own pun. Lucas laughed too, but afterwards said, ‘So why didn’t you tell *me* about it?’].~~

Another alternative is substitution, to replace the word or person with something more likely to be recognized in the target language: Kleenex, a brand synonymous with a product in the United States (*Mariah*, 79) would be more known as simply pappersnäsduk [paper tissue] in Sweden (*Mariah*, 78). “Lead on Macduff” (*Monday’s*, 87) is replaced by a reference to Sherlock Holmes, perhaps more familiar than the character from *Macbeth*: “Visa vägen då, Sherlock, suckade Kelly” (*Passion*, 75) [Show the way Sherlock, Kelly sighed]. Even expressions that have almost identical Swedish equivalents may be substituted with different options. One example is the following: “As far as I can see, the only fly in the ointment is the older brother” (*Passionate*, 8), in which case the Swedish expression “det enda smolket i bägaren” [the only dirt in the cup], comes very close to the original – but where the translator instead settles for “spoilsport:” “så vitt jag kan förstå är den enda glädjedödaren den äldre brodern” (*Kidnappad*, 8) [As far as I can see, the only spoilsport is the older brother].

To maintain humor and wit in a sentence that defies word-for-word translation and requires some type of rewriting, is a challenge that can be met in alternative ways. When Mariah is asked to help Ford with some typewriting in *Mariah* she is definitely skeptical about her secretarial abilities:

Mariah burst into cold-clogged laughter. “You want *me* to type? The man who taught the course I took retired right afterward, and rumor had it that even after therapy he wouldn’t go near anything that had keys on it. Not even Florida (*Mariah*, 80-81).

Without adaptation, this sentence would make absolutely no sense. It would

in fact be highly comical to try and make a direct translation, since the concept of there being keys on Florida would be totally incomprehensible to a Swedish reader. The whole joke is lost on someone unfamiliar with the geographical entity known as the Florida Keys. Keys translated into the Swedish tangent, could never be associated with anything else than something on a computer, typewriter, or piano, least of all a vacation to Florida. Not being in a position to adequately play on this reference, the translators decide to rewrite the joke by referring to something with keys that would be more logical to a Swedish reader, while simultaneously striving to capture some of the irony in Mariah's comment:

Mariah skrattade rätt. –Vill du att jag ska skriva på maskin? Den som ledde kursen jag gick på förtidspensionerades och ryktet säger att han trots terapi vägrar gå i närheten av något med tangenter. Han vill inte ens ta ut pengar i en bankomat (Mariah, 79).

By having Mariah refer to an ATM-machine [bankomat] in the Swedish translation instead of Florida, they deploy a different cultural marker while being faithful to what seems to be the writer's intention; showing that Mariah is a lousy typist with a sense of humor.

Another example from the same book is the following one: "CALLOWAY MILL. While you slumber, we'll cut your lumber" (79). The rhyme lumber/slumber eludes automatic transposition and another slogan that seek to capture the essence of the lumberbusiness and the fact that their work is being done while their customers sleep, is chosen instead: "– Calloways sågverk. Vi sågar ert timmer medan ni drar timmerstockar" (Mariah, 78) [– Calloway Mill. We'll cut your lumber while you pull timber]. Settling for the expression "drar timmerstockar" [pull timber], the translators have managed to use a colloquial Swedish expression with the neat advantage of being made precisely on the word timber in association with sleep.

More problematic choices are the following ones, involving both translator and editor and all dealing with the finer points of cars. In *Little Luke, Big Luke*, Luke and Caitlin need to get Caitlin's son to hospital as soon as possible and Luke exclaims: "Then I'll drive like a bat out of hell" (122) – an exclamation that needs an equally strong translated expression to underscore the gravity of the situation. One option would be the colloquial and vehement: "Då kör

jag som om jag har eld i baken” [Then I’ll drive as if my behind was on fire]. Instead the translator decides on: “– Då kör jag som en biltjuv” (*Århundradets*, 109) [Then I’ll drive like a car thief], perhaps making it clear that Luke intends to drive fast, but using a declaration that sounds artificial, lacking the power of the more metaphorical “bat out of hell” or “eld i baken” [behind on fire].

The word trailer [husvagn] in *Mariah* (74) causes translator, editor, and ultimately reader, some unnecessary headache. What starts out as the suggested “villavagn” [villawagon] (translator’s manuscript, 89), is altered by the editor to “caravan” (both nonexistent words in the Swedish language), to which in the final version the explanation “en så kallad villavagn” [a so-called “villawagon”] (*Mariah*, 73) is added, making the confusion almost total. Another problem surfaces in *Little Luke*, *Big Luke*, where the heroine Caitlin drives and owns a minivan. This type of car is becoming increasingly common on Swedish roads, but not to the extent that it is known by a specific Swedish name. It is highly likely that one would say “van” or “minivan” even in Sweden, but this is still open to debate and the lack of a good enough name prompted one of national motor magazines during the summer of 1996 to suggest “flexibil” [“flexicar”].<sup>19</sup> However, this is still a long way from what the translators initially suggested as “lastbil” [lorry, truck] (translator’s manuscript, 38) and even further away from what the editor decided on in the final version: “skåpbil” [delivery van] (*Århundradets*, 38).<sup>20</sup>

The exclusions or substitutions discussed so far have been matters of individual choice concerning words or sentences, choices that may be debated. I now turn to those instances where it is obvious that the translator has made mistakes. A common denominator is that they share an element of carelessness, indicating that the work has progressed too quickly. In *Mariah*, a blue-suited woman (242) becomes a man in the Swedish version (215); Mike in *Duel in the Sun*, (148) suddenly turns into Brian (124) in *Månsken över Nilen*, much as Luke in *Big Luke*, *Little Luke* (11) becomes Mike in *Århundradets Man* (8) – all transformations the editor would not have been in a position to detect.

Occasional lapses are one thing, but *Mariah* is a book where some remarkable mistakes occur. It is difficult to attribute the translation of the pill (103) as petting in the Swedish version (97) to oversight, and still on the subject of sexual confusion, why diaphragm [pessar] (262) inexplicably becomes p-piller [the pill] (235), and finally, how a term like kinky (264), for

which *Stora Engelsk-Svenska Ordboken* has “bisarr, konstig; knasig; pervers” [bizarre, strange; weird; perverse], translates into kittligt [ticklish] (237).<sup>21</sup>

Far from expressly sexual, the word awesome cause the translators corresponding problems, resulting in a passage that comes out sounding bizarre in the Swedish book. Discussing his experiences in Vietnam and the fact that one of his friends died as a result of throwing himself on an exploding grenade and thus saving Ford’s life, Mariah remarks:

“It’s awesome having someone give his life for you, isn’t it?” Mariah said.

Awesome.

It wasn’t the word he’d probably have chosen, but nonetheless it was applicable.

“Yes,” he answered, it’s awesome” (*Mariah*, 107).

– Det är hemskt när någon offerar sitt liv för en, eller hur? sa Mariah.

Hemskt.

Det var inte det ord Robert skulle ha använt, men det stämde. – Ja, svarade han. Det är hemskt (*Mariah*, 101).

“Skräckinjagande” [terrifying], may be the dictionary’s first suggestion for awesome, but the following alternatives of “formidabel, väldig” [formidable, mighty], come closer to the intended meaning.<sup>22</sup> For this colloquial expression used frequently in American English to denote something tremendously larger than life or fantastic, hemskt [horrible], is a farfetched solution. Ultimately, what the translators have Ford say is that horrible is *not* a word he feels accurately describes the tragedy they are talking about, and by settling for this particular Swedish word, the outcome of the conversation strikes a curiously odd note. Another example is closure in *Little Luke, Big Luke* (291); first translated with tvångsslut (translator’s manuscript, 300), but replaced with the final avslut [bring to a close] (*Århundredets*, 262). Avslut is an expression predominantly associated with business language, denoting the finalizing of a deal and not invoking the same connotations as the more personal “coming to terms with,” intended by closure in this particular context.

In the beginning of *Mariah*, the heroine returns to her hometown Calloway Corners – arriving too late for her father’s funeral. Standing alone at his grave, she is talking out loud: “Good-bye, Daddy, Mariah whispered, gently laying the rose across the raw, heaped earth. I’m sorry I couldn’t have been her” (16). The previous sentences have made it clear that what she is referring to is the fact that her mother died giving birth to her, the youngest of four sisters.

However, when the translators, probably in too much of a haste, read her as here, the tone of the sentence alters profoundly: “– Adjö, far, viskade Mariah och lade försiktigt ner rosen på den nygrävda graven. Jag är ledsen att jag inte kunde vara här” (*Mariah*, 14). At first, this might not make much difference, and unless reading both books at the same time, the reader will probably not notice the mistake. But since Mariah is giving voice to her strong feeling of guilt associated with her own and her father’s loss, this shift does have significance to the overall presentation of Mariah’s character. Even if we might feel sorry for her if the word is here, and sympathize with her not being able to make it to the funeral services, the word her is much more critical to the text, as it in part supplies the key to Mariah’s character and her troubled relationship to her father, a fact that the writer expands on through the whole book.

Later on, when the hero Ford watches Mariah work, he thinks to himself: “Actually Mariah was in rare form, Ford admitted, his eyes taking in the sight of her” (*Mariah*, 99), a reflection that reads like this in the Swedish translation: “Mariah var sig inte riktigt lik i dag” (*Mariah*, 94) [Mariah was not quite herself today]. In the original book, Sandra Canfield has devoted several passages before this particular one noting how especially beautiful Mariah looks, and the intention with the expression “rare form” is that it should be understood as “particularly pretty,” “outstanding,” and not as the Swedish translators have interpreted it; as meaning “seldom seen” or “not true to herself.”

After such a litany of mistakes, it might appear ironic as well as disturbing, that they are made by the same translators the editor “trusts one hundred percent.” However, there is a perfectly logical explanation to this, and it has nothing to do with what they do to the source language, but all to do with their treatment of the target language, that is, Swedish. Discussing another translator, Ewa Högberg formulates the crux of the matter:

Finns grunden, det så kallade flytet, tonen, då bär det upp en stor del av översättningen och vi har ju exempel på översättare, exempelvis [...], som har den här grunden tycker jag, det här flytet. Men sen så är hon ju helt galen ibland när det gäller våra regler, eller, jag menar, det finns massor med småttplöck som man tar, men du har en bra utgångspunkt. Hon har förmåga att författa, att skriva. Det värsta som finns det är egentligen den här direktöversättningen och alla anglicismer som smyger in. För det innebär att ska du granska en sån text då måste du i stort sett skriva om den. Du plockar fram nya satsdelar i början, byter ut dom, ställer

om, kortar, lägger till – det blir ett jättejobb alltså, ett hästjobb. Och det är inte säkert att det blir bra för det.<sup>23</sup>

In *Little Luke, Big Luke*, another mistake illustrates just how easy it is to change a character by shifting emphasis in a sentence. In it, the heroine Caitlin has a small child, Luke, named after his dead father's friend. The adult namesake, driving all the way from Florida to Arizona, has just met the baby and his mother. As the adults get to know each other, the boy starts craving his mother's attention and Caitlin says: "He's just wondering what happened to his afternoon nap." To which Luke answers: "It's okay. Fussing babies don't bother me" (*Little*, 28). Luke's reply tells Caitlin that he is the stuff that fathers are made of, liking kids even if they wail their hearts out. The Swedish translator nonetheless makes the end result come out very differently from the original: "– Han undrar nog bara vart hans eftermiddagssömn tog vägen, sa Caitlin. – Oroa dig inte. Jag besväras inte av att du pysslar om den lille" (*Århundradets*, 23) [- He's just wondering what happened to his afternoon nap. – It's okay. I'm not bothered by your fussing over the baby]. Although the Swedish *pysslar om*, does not have the same underlying ambivalence as "fussing," the fact of the matter is that the translator constructs this sentence "backwards." In the original, Luke is portrayed as someone who is genuinely fond of children, keeping his wits about him even at a time when the boy is "fussing." However, the Swedish sentence can be read quite differently. In it, Luke assures Caitlin that he is not bothered by her "fussing with" the child, a misplaced comment suggestive of a self-centered person more interested in his own inconvenience than in the welfare of the child, hardly the thing to say if one wants to make a good first impression.

Even in the most extreme of cases, where the meaning of a word is discussed, even explained in the text itself, mistakes occur. In *Passionate Captivity*, April is being kept prisoner by the Greek shipowner Michalis Konstantine, all on the basis of a misunderstanding. After he has gone out for the day, locking her in his house while neglecting to turn the air-conditioning on, she desperately cries from the heat and confronts him on his return:

'You've kept me locked up and now you've tried to smother me!' She lifted tear-drenched eyes and found him close, looking down at her. His lips tited in a wry smile. 'I do not understand "smother",' he confessed in amusement. It was

alright for him to be amused. He hadn't been shamed and humiliated.

'It's suffocate, choke, stifle!' April glared at him and he nodded ruefully.

'I did not realize how hot it would be in here. I am accustomed to the heat. I forgot that your English skin would become uncomfortable.' He shrugged. 'In any case, I was too busy arguing with you to remember the air-conditioning' (*Passionate*, 70-71).

- Du har hållit mig instängd och nu försöker du blidka mig! April såg upp på honom med tårdränkta ögon, såg honom le.

- Jag förstod inte att du måste lida av en värme som du inte är van vid, förklarade han. Jag glömde det (*Kidnappad*, 64).

Although smother is at the basis of the whole discussion, since Michaelis does not understand what it means and has to have her explain it; instead of picking the obvious kväva, the translator instead uses blidka [appease], a choice that the editor is unable to uncover since it does not undermine the logic of the text in any dramatic way.

In the following passage from *Little Luke, Big Luke*, however, the editor does detect and correct the translator's mistake. After visiting her son at the hospital, Luke and Caitlin stop at a restaurant for dinner, delaying their arrival home. When they do reach the house, the local sheriff is waiting for them, and announces that he was just about to leave, since there was no one home. Neither Luke nor Caitlin are particularly interested in talking to a man that both dislike and who will eventually prove to be the villain of the story, and Caitlin hears Luke grumble: "Behind her, Luke muttered something that was obviously meant only for her. She wasn't certain she caught it right, but it sounded like, 'We should have stayed at Carlos Murphy's for dessert'" (181) indicating that if they had only stayed for dessert, they would have missed out on Rayland altogether and everything would have been fine. In the translator's manuscript, this becomes the illogical: "Luke muttrade något. Caitlin var inte säker på att hon hörde rätt, men det lät som 'vi skulle ha hoppat över desserten när vi åt'" (translator's manuscript, 181) [Behind her, Luke muttered something that was obviously meant only for her. She wasn't certain she caught it right, but it sounded like, "We should have skipped dessert when we ate"]. Thus the translation first claims that they had dessert, and then tells us that they should have gotten home all the sooner if they had not, which is far from Luke's intention. Noticing the mistake, the editor alters the sentence in the book to: "vi skulle ha stannat

och ätit dessert också” (*Århundradets*, 161) [We should have stayed at Carlos Murphy’s for dessert [too]].

But these are only random examples, compared to a book that goes beyond minor instances of exclusion or substitution. Sally Wentworth’s *Duel in the Sun* [*Månsken över Nilen*] demonstrates very clearly how transediting may also involve profound and radical changes to the text.

In it, the young Catriona comes to Egypt to work as a textile expert on her first archeological excavation. Embroidering her résumé in order to get the job, her professional experience is far from what she would like it to be. As soon as she sets her feet on Egyptian soil, she unwittingly becomes the victim of a mix-up. Expecting to be picked up at the airport and taken directly to the site, she is approached by a chauffeur who takes her to a beautiful house with lush gardens and sumptuous rooms:

Catriona caught her breath; the room was the complete opposite to what she had expected. Again it was luxuriously furnished, although much too opulently for her English taste, with a large gold-painted bed, big wardrobes, and a dressing-table wide enough to accommodate a chorus line. Everything seemed to be on a large scale, as if big was beautiful (*Duel*, 9).

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Catriona flämtade efter andan, så annorlunda var rummet mot vad hon hade väntat sig. Även detta var luxuöst inrett, med en väldig förgylld säng, generösa garderober och ett enormt toalettbord (*Månsken*, 9).

Although the style is too opulent for what is supposedly a refined “English taste” and “everything seemed to be on a large scale, as if big was beautiful,” she readily makes herself at home, and after overcoming a certain initial surprise at the standard of modern archeologists’ quarters, she meets the real master of the house; the Egyptian businessman Omar. He, too, is definitely too much, and she quickly makes a similar assessment of him:

he was wearing a well-cut and expensive-looking dark suit and a lot of jewelry: there was a thick gold watch on his wrist, and he wore several rings, one of them on his left hand with a stone that looked like a diamond but was too big to possibly

be real. He looked to be in his late thirties, had olive skin and rounded features with the small beard favored by Arabic men (*Duel*, 15).

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klädd som han var i en välskuren och säkert mycket dyrbar kostym och prydd med flera smycken. Han såg ut att vara i trettioårsåldern, hade olivfärgad hy, rundade drag och ett litet skägg av den typ arabiska män gärna bär (*Månsken*, 13).

She thinks he is the local liaison officer working with the archeologists and he takes her for the governess he has hired for his two young daughters. Although the whole mistake comes to light during their initial conversation, he does nothing to help her get to the excavation site, but instead tries to convince her to stay and work as a governess. She firmly declines, and after some time, Lucas Kane, chief archeologist and love-interest, turns up at the house looking for her. The animosity between the two men is palpable, and sets the tone for the rest of the book when they will be played out against each other as Catriona's rivals. Omar is dark, arrogant, and wealthy, Lucas fair-haired, democratic, poor in money but rich in culture, and Catriona, well, she is having problems adjusting to a new culture.

Finally settled in at the dig, she meets the rest of the team: two British archeologists and an Egyptian couple in charge of practical arrangements. Situated outside Luxor, the excavation site is nothing like Omar's house, and the atmosphere sometimes tense. There is however, an infallible cure for this:

Everyone was in a brighter mood tonight, after their trip to Luxor. Bryan and Mike had been to an ex-pats club they belonged to where they had swum, played billiards, and had a traditional English lunch of roast beef and Yorkshire pudding. It seemed to have done them good; they both looked relaxed and were quite talkative. Even Lamia and Mohammed chatted for ten minutes before Mohammed put the television set on.

The next couple of days were uneventful, following the usual working pattern, except that Lucas went into Luxor first thing on Saturday morning, and on the Sunday told Catriona that Omar's cheque had been cleared. So now there was no going back. Catriona didn't sleep very well at night; apart from the terrible bed she couldn't help but wonder what she was letting herself in for, and whether she really could keep Omar at arm's reach if she had to. She was used to Western men

who, however randy they might feel, still lived by a certain set of rules. Arab men might have very different ones (*Duel*, 90).

The expression “ex-pats club” invokes a better place and time, where whirling fans in the ceiling and cool swimming pools offer a peaceful refuge from a culture bustling with intensity and heat. Bryan and Mike become more at ease after playing billiards and eating “roast beef and Yorkshire pudding,” and Englishness is at least temporarily restored to the English. Catriona’s tone is slightly condescending and overbearing; she is comforted by their well-being and sympathizes with their need for relaxation. All the while, she is ambivalent about Omar, a man she allegedly wants nothing to do with, but nonetheless manages to come into contact with almost daily. “She was used to Western men who, however randy they might feel, still lived by a certain set of rules. Arab men might have very different ones,” is a naive reflection in both cases, and points to the fact that Catriona sees the culture she has arrived in through the eyes of a British schoolmarm, clearly finding it lacking, perhaps even dangerous. The treatment of the particular segment above is indicative of how the Swedish translator worked with the whole book:

Everyone was in a brighter mood tonight, after their trip to Luxor. ~~Bryan and Mike had been to an ex-pats club they belonged to where they had swum, played billiards, and had a traditional English lunch of roast beef and Yorkshire pudding. It seemed to have done them good; they both looked relaxed and were quite talkative.~~ Even Lamia and Mohammed chatted for ten minutes before Mohammed put the television on.

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Alla var på gott humör efter besöket i Luxor. Till och med Lamia och Mohammed samtalade i tio minuter innan Mohammed slog på tv:n. De följande dagarna var händelselösa och löpte i sina vanliga spår, bortsett från att Lucas åkte in till Luxor med detsamma på lördag morgon och löste in Omars check. Nu fanns det ingen återvändo för Catriona. Natten till måndagen sov hon inget vidare, dels på grund av den knöliga madrassen, men mest för att hon undrade över vad hon gett sig in i (*Mänken*, 75-76).

While it is important to maintain some of the “foreign” or the “exotic” in the text, there is no doubt that the translator consistently has taken out two different, but interlinked references: first, everything that elevates or underscores the supremacy of the British, and second, comments that touch upon the inferiority or the incomprehensibility of the Egyptian culture, omissions that distantly echo Mary Bonnycastle’s early editing comments on Sheila Ridley’s *Star of Love*: “Wrong approach to African natives – very poor and dependent on charity – not good in modern times.”<sup>24</sup>

In spite of the fact that the editor considered the translation of *Duel in the Sun* a good one, she modified the text even further. Particular words that the translator retains, but where the editor makes additional changes, are for instance servants, accurately translated to tjänarna in the manuscript (translator’s manuscript, 139) but replaced by the editor with killarna [the guys] in the final version (*Månsken*, 102). Or the equally problematic “The two natives sat and watched” (*Duel*, 47), in which case the translator has written “De två infödingarna satt bredvid och tittade på” (translator’s manuscript, 52), which the editor changes to the final: “De två hantlangarna [helpers] satt bredvid och tittade på” (*Månsken*, 40). In view of the already mentioned need to shorten the books, the translator is here in a position actually to edit the book while doing so, taking out images of lazy Egyptian servants, like this one:

Mike laughed. ‘Nice try.’ And he went away. The servants were next to come and stand in the doorway to watch. Catriona was afraid they might resent her doing the job instead of them, but the huge grins on their faces told her they were only too pleased not to have the bother. A command in Egyptian sent them scurrying away and Lamia appeared in the doorway (*Duel*, 121).

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Å, nej – tack. Men det var ett bra försök! skrattade Mike och försvann. Strax därefter dök Lamia upp i dörren (*Månsken*, 102).

In contrast to the servants in this example, Catriona is willing to work, but her actions are erratic and confused. Allowing herself to be picked up by someone who never presents himself properly, installing herself in luxurious

surroundings without really questioning if this is the domicile of an excavation party, considering (and eventually accepting) Omar's suggestion to tutor his children despite the fact that she is there to do something else entirely, and continuing to flirt with a man for whom she clearly has no feelings, Catriona is not an altogether sympathetic heroine. Add to this that her degree in art and design makes it difficult for her to live in quarters that are drab (*Duel*, 39), and "no matter how she tried, Catriona had never succeeded in looking anything less than classy" (*Duel*, 45), and you have a number of attributes that the translator feels compelled to leave out (*Månsken*, 34, 39). Romances may be about many things, but credibility is extremely important, and the young Catriona is potentially someone who does not come across as very credible. The worst of her character flaws are either deleted or modified by the translator, and this reflection on Lucas perhaps omitted because it might appear ludicrous rather than romantic, but conceivably also due to the inflammatory nature of the word "veil" in relation to Muslim culture:

He carefully lifted up the net and ducked under it, tucked it in again before going through the doorway. For a moment she looked at him through the gauzy material, his outline blurred by it. Is this how the world looks to a bride looking through her veil? Catriona wondered fancifully. Does the world have this misty look and the bridegroom his hard edges softened? Is everything out of focus for a while until the knot is tied and you're transferred from father to husband, from maiden to wife? Then you lift the veil and all is reality again. Lucas pushed open the door and went out (*Duel*, 69).

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Lucas lyfte försiktigt nätet, kröp ut och stoppade sedan in det ordentligt under madrassen innan han gick bort till dörren. Genom det tunna materialet såg hon de suddiga konturerna av hans silhuett. Han öppnade dörren och gick ut (*Månsken*, 59).

Obviously an attempt to neutralize the ideology of the text, this strategy also exemplifies another editorial interest that the translator may or may not be aware of: Catriona's character. When the translator fails to edit out unaccept-

able passages, the editor steps in and does so herself. This passage, for example, was kept by the translator, but completely left out of the Swedish book:

And her looks hadn't helped; often her qualifications had got her through to the interview stage, but museum curators and prospective employers had taken one glance at her delicate figure and fair beauty and refused to take her seriously, or else thought that she would soon marry and leave (*Duel*, 40-41).

Other examples that would be inconsistent with such a young and naive heroine, indicating that Catriona is both experienced as well as self-conscious, are retained by the translator but deleted by the editor: "men didn't lose their libido with middle age – far from it" (*Duel*, 64) [driften brukade inte avta hos äldre män, snarare tvärtom] (translator's manuscript, 71); "Catriona smiled a little. 'I've been fighting men off for several years now; I think I've become an expert.'" (*Duel*, 81) [Catriona log lite. Jag har i flera år praktiserat konsten att hålla män stången – man skulle kunna säga att jag blivit något av en expert] (translator's manuscript, 93), where the editor has modified to: "Catriona log lite. – Jag är något av en expert" (*Månsken*, 68) [Catriona smiled a little. ~~I've been fighting men off for several years now; I think~~ I've become [somewhat of] an expert], showing us that she knows more about men than her naiveté indicates. Nor is it desirable to have her say: "The job at the site would be a great help in my career; teaching your children wouldn't" (*Duel*, 25) [Arbetet vid utgrävningen är bra för min yrkeskarriär, vilket att undervisa era flickor inte skulle vara (translator's manuscript, 25)], not because it is unacceptable to be interested in your career, but rather because making such a detrimental comment about working with children does nothing for her character, and is subsequently omitted altogether in the Swedish book. "Arbetet vid utgrävningen är bra för min yrkeskarriär, ~~vilket att undervisa era flickor inte skulle vara.~~ (22) [The job at the site would benefit my career; ~~teaching your girls wouldn't~~].<sup>25</sup>

Concerned with Catriona's personality, the editor has also invested in the logic of the hero: "Lucas definitely looked the love 'em and leave 'em type. She could imagine him becoming cynically amused and hurtfully mocking if some poor female tried to get really close to him. A good enough reason for the last textile expert to have left so precipitately" (*Duel*, 45), a passage retained by the Swedish translator but removed from the final book. [Lukas var av ett flyktigare slag. Hon kunde riktigt se framför sig hur föraktfullt road och hånfull han skulle

bli, om någon stackars kvinna försökte komma för nära honom – ett skäl så gott som något för den förra textilexperten att ge sig av så skyndsamt... (translator's manuscript, 49)]. What the editor knows is that Lucas may have been the obvious love-object from the very beginning, but for her feelings to make any sense, he has to be sympathetic and not only scornful and reserved. There is something unpleasant and unattractive about Lucas in the previous quote, and for the reader to respect someone who treats a woman in the way Catriona implies may be suspending disbelief too much.

As André Lefevere has pointed out, “refractions – the adaptation of a work of literature to a different audience, with the intention of influencing the way in which that audience reads the work,” is something that has always been with us.<sup>26</sup> The extensive rewriting of Sally Wentworth's *Duel in the Sun* (1994), strikes me as an example of refraction without the explicit intentionality Lefevere is suggesting. It is not necessary to infer that the translator of this book has formulated an explicit strategy, such as: “This is a colonial text, therefore objectionable and I need to rewrite it,” in order to see that by consistently taking out references like the ones mentioned here, by deploying exclusions and strategies that are unwritten but still consistent, and by relying on her own perception of how she thinks the text should be read, she has *de facto* decolonized the text. Essentially without knowledge of each other, translator and editor have streamlined the book into a new version, ultimately perhaps deemed more acceptable to Swedish readers, confirming that the transediting decisions taking place on the local level are strategic and deliberate, although not necessarily formulated as such. Whatever patterns occur in this book are not the results of explicit intervention in the sense that they follow instructions put on paper by the publisher. Since there are no rules to be found anywhere concerning “objectionable” material, the determining factor will be the interaction of a network of personal and cultural values in the process of transediting. Subtle rather than explicit, the translator's consistent decisions in *Duel in the Sun* support Lawrence Venuti's claim that “the translator's interpretative choices answer to a domestic cultural situation and so always exceed the foreign text,” and considering the changes; a heroine who is now not only different herself, but whose world-view has fundamentally shifted, one can certainly ask: is this not a new book?<sup>27</sup> And where is the writer in all of this?

In addition to issues of race, colonialism, or character, the editor will also

be very sensitive when it comes to the specific kind of verbal violence that can be found in the *Special* series. In the following examples, Eva Susso has consistently made alterations to this effect in the translator's version of Patricia Wilson's *Passionate Captivity*/*Kidnappad i Grekland*. The original "You deceitful little bitch!" (*Passionate*, 123) is translated into "Din opålitliga lilla satan!" (translator's manuscript, 127) [You unreliable little bitch!], and altered by the editor to "Din opålitliga kvinna!" (104) [You unreliable woman!] and "You little fool!" (*Passionate*, 82), is reinforced by the translator into "Din förbannade lilla idiot!" (translator's manuscript, 87) [You damned little fool!] and finalized as "Din lilla toka!" (7) [You little fool!]. In this case, the translator has been more apt to keep the harsh language, but the editor has altered or deleted every trace of the erotically charged violence of the original.

Even if the company is striving for a good mix within the series, something, the editors tell me, that the number of books published each month allows for with substantial margins, the virginal heroine and the powerful hero are still the strongest sellers in any given month. Considering the difficulty in saying anything with certainty on how their transediting choices do or do not affect actual sales, I would not rule out the possibility that the often well-educated women who work as editors in this company have political agendas that they may be unaware of, but that potentially are powerful enough to counteract the best interests (i.e. profits) of the market. This is how Ewa Högberg sees it:

Det kan vara exempelvis någon scen där man reagerar, att det är mycket våld i, eller att han är för jävlig mot henne på ett sätt som man inte tycker är *comme il faut* i sådana här... Trots allt så är det ju ett kärlekspår det här, det är hjälte och hjältinna, och dom ska väl älska varandra, det ska inte vara så att han trycker ner henne genom hela boken, både fysiskt och psykiskt, för att sen slutligen på de fyra sista sidorna upptäcka att han faktiskt älskar henne. Det finns exempel på sådana böcker, och ska man nu nödvändigtvis välja att ge ut den här boken så tycker jag att man måste putsa lite grann.<sup>28</sup>

Interestingly enough, her quote does more than reveal how extremely conscious she is of objectionable elements in the romance, something that might have to do with the fact that she is talking to an academic and therefore feels that she needs to be on guard. As the prior examples show, the editors consistently take out violence and abuse from the books. Now, if these types

of stories sell more than others, then obviously editorial decisions are made with a contradictory notion of the market in mind. The editors are aware of the possible criticism of the publisher if violence, abuse, and racism are too prominent, but they are in all probability also acting from a much more subtle and ingrained set of social factors.

The same logic that treats outdated or outmoded references in a way that would be more acceptable in the target language, has prompted the translators of *Mariah* to edit and add to a passage where the priest and hero Ford, talks to the boy Jeff about sex. Ford has been trying to keep a watchful eye on Jeff and his girlfriend Megan, but Jeff one morning confesses to Ford that he thinks Megan is pregnant, and it becomes painfully obvious that they have had sex. The reverend, himself very attracted to the heroine *Mariah*, gives Jeff a talking to:

“Let’s don’t even talk about fault,” Ford said. “This kind of thing is no one’s fault. Not when two people care about each other. When you care about someone, you want to touch them...and be touched by them. That’s natural. That’s the way God intended it.

[...]

“God also intended for sex to work best within the framework of marriage, within the framework of commitment, within the framework of adulthood, for the reason that it does lead to children” (*Mariah*, 185).

While the translators leave the first passage almost intact, God’s second intention, where sex is connected to marriage which in turn is connected with children, is deleted. By adding a sentence that is not in the original text, they instead emphasize that children might be the result of sex and because of this, assuming responsibility for one’s actions is crucial: “Men det kan leda till barn, fortsatte Robert. Och barn behöver föräldrar som kan ta hand om dom” (*Mariah*, 167) [- But it can lead to children, Robert continued. And children need parents who can take care of them].

Sex is a problematic issue though, exemplified in the most heavily edited of all the five books I read: Janice Kaiser’s *Monday’s Child* (*Passion i djungeln*). As it turned out, both the translation, and in the end the book itself, caused the editors a lot of irritation and work. When the print-out of the translator’s manuscript and the edited version came to me, a pink sticker was attached to the package, informing me that the editor had made so many revisions to

the text that she deemed it necessary to give her version to a second editor to be looked over. She feared that her extensive rewriting might have destroyed the logic of the story. Consequently, this is the only one of the three titles in this series that was edited twice before being sent off to the printers. After an initial hesitation, then, the book was given to a male translator who works sporadically for Harlequin and who has a background translating action-adventure books for the publisher B. Wahlströms, something that the editor thought would be suitable in light of this particular book.

The translated manuscript follows Kaiser's book closely and has the same, staccato language as the original. Because of the dialogue and action, not many descriptive passages were taken out. The editor was, however, clearly dissatisfied with the result, and the manuscript is filled with red pen marks and changes, mostly making the sentences longer and changing words like the English baby, used all the time by the hero when addressing the heroine, but where the translator's use of ungen [kid], a detrimental, rather than loving word, is consistently replaced by the editor with raring [darling] or söttnos [sweetie].

Kelly Ronan may be a conservative lawyer, but she has no qualms about going to bed with Bart Monday fairly immediately, and Kaiser's way of writing sex is direct, using no metaphors, but words like orgasm (161) swollen sex (45) penis; (45, 46, 161), indicating a level of explicitness that stands out in contrast to the two other books that month. One particular passage illustrates how difficult sex and romance can be:

Kelly took his head in her hands, sinking her fingers into his hair, pulling his face against hers. His penis was pressed against her, and when she opened her legs he slipped inside her, entering slowly at first, then inching deeper and deeper.

He withdrew, holding himself just clear of her opening. Kelly wanted him – she wanted him deep inside. She arched against him. That set him off and he began plunging into her, then withdrawing and plunging deep into her again.

His orgasm came quickly, but she was ready, meeting each thrust, matching each desperate clench. And when he exploded, she came as well, her body shuddering under him (*Monday's*, 161).

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THE TRANSLATOR'S TEXT

Kelly borrade in fingrarna i hans hår och tryckte hans ansikte emot sig. Hon särade på låren och han trängde sakta in i henne, allt djupare och djupare. Sedan ökade han takten. Hennes orgasm kom fort och när även han exploderade skälvde hon till i hela kroppen där hon låg under honom (translator's manuscript, 176).

The problem here, is not that the passage is unusually explicit, because during any given month, sex in *Exklusiv* will range from a few sentences to being almost the focus of the story. No, although the translator has shortened the scene considerably, taking out the word penis; if he had not, an editor would have replaced it with a more metaphorical reference immediately, much in the same way as she takes out orgasm – a word the translator happens to have kept – or replaced his låg med [slept with] with älskade [made love], this was not enough. Despite his efforts, the scene is apparently still too hard, too mechanical, too physical, and the expression särade på låren [spread her thighs] made by the translator for “opened her legs,” has a clinical ring to it altered by the editor to “received him”:

FIRST EDITOR:

Kelly borrade in fingrarna i hans hår och tryckte hans ansikte emot sig. Hon tog emot honom och han kom sakta in i henne, allt djupare och djupare. Det var som en berusning. Hon kunde inte stå emot och när han exploderade skälvde hon i hela kroppen där hon låg under honom (revision made on translator's manuscript, 176).

SECOND EDITOR AND FINAL VERSION:

Kelly borrade in fingrarna i hans hår och tryckte hans ansikte emot sig. Hon öppnade sig för honom och han kom sakta in i henne, allt djupare och djupare. Det var som en berusning, det var som en dröm. Hon kunde inte stå emot och när han exploderade skälvde hon till i hela kroppen av en känsla så underbar att den inte kunde beskrivas (*Passion*, 138).<sup>29</sup>

What the second editor has done is to further take out all references to the physical act, and to replace them with a more reflective and flowery language. The writer does not have Kelly think “it was like an intoxication, like a dream,” but the rewriting that takes place adheres closely to the editors' own rules of thumb: “Vi försöker säga så här [...] det får vara sensuellt – inte sexuellt, utan

sensuellt – och för att man ska kunna omvandla någonting detaljerat sexuellt till någonting sensuellt, så krävs det strykning av det ena och tillägg av det andra.”<sup>30</sup>

And this is the reason for *derriere* (*Monday's*, 45) when being translated into *stjärt* [bottom] is changed by the editors to *bak* [behind] (*Passion*, 39), or even more illustrative, how “His fingers were toying with the curls between her legs” (*Monday's*, 159) which the translator has not taken out but given an almost word-for-word translation of: “Hans fingrar lekte med hårtofsen mellan låren” (translator’s manuscript, 174) is simply deleted by the editor (*Passion*, 137-138), in all probability because they consider this sentence far from measuring up to their previously formulated standards.

Even the experienced translators of *Mariah* fall victim to this failure to transform sex into romance in the following sentence: “he maneuvered himself between her legs, positioning himself for entry” (*Mariah*, 293) [Utan att säga något gjorde han sig beredd att tränga in i henne” (translator’s manuscript, 324)] where the editor changes the more explicitly “tränga in” [penetrate] to “möta henne” [meet her] (*Mariah*, 263). Similar alterations are made in the scene where Mariah loses her virginity: “She cried out as he tore through the tender membrane” (*Mariah*, 294), where the translators have expressed themselves even more explicitly than the writer: “När han trängde igenom *mödomshinnan* skrek hon till” [when he came through the hymen she cried out] (translator’s manuscript, 324-325) which the editors have changed to: “När han kom igenom skrek hon till” [When he came through she cried out] (*Mariah*, 263). Ordet *utlösningen* [orgasm] (translator’s manuscript, 325) is also changed by the editor to the metaphorical *förlossningen* [delivery] (*Mariah*, 264).

In reality, the translator of Janice Kaiser’s book has followed the text closely, something that the editor recognizes but does not condone:

han har ju översatt då hennes, författarens ord, mer eller mindre ordagrant, och då har hon inte uttryckt sig, eller skrivit en sexscen, riktigt på det sättet som vi önskar. Hon skulle ha blivit censurerad, och hade vi fått som vi hade velat, så hade översättaren gjort det här redan i översättningsskedet.<sup>31</sup>

In contrast to the books in *Special*, the American books in *Exklusiv* appear to have no objectionable or negative attributes like racism, colonialism, or violence in them, all elements that the translator or editor, alone or in collaboration,

will attempt to address and modify. Instead, predicaments concerning colloquial expressions, humor, cultural allusions, and, as we have seen, sex and romance, present themselves. As the problem with Janice Kaiser's *Monday's Child* so emphatically showed, it is of far greater importance to the editor that the translator has an essential understanding, *not of the text, but of the context in which the text is read*. Since Ewa Högberg did not read the book herself but took it based on the tip-sheet, she had to rely on the translator to "make the book," something that did not happen. The translator did not do what the editor hoped he would; he "killed" the book because he did *not see or understand* how it failed in its purpose – to fit the Harlequin mold – and because of this, he was ultimately unable to give it the identity that would have "saved" it.

Allowed to speculate, one could delve further into what has all the markings of a gendered and multifaceted conflict. First, I am sure there are those who find this chain of events strange and amusing, in view of the diehard and widespread prejudice that Sweden is the final outpost of sexual emancipation. One of the pivotal issues here was that this male translator was unable to turn the "sexual into the sensuous." Of equal importance was the fact that the writer Janice Kaiser (a pseudonym; the copyright goes to "Belles-Lettres," possibly a team of writers, gender unknown to me) had written a book that the editor disliked. So, if this had been a matter of acquiring the book initially, that is, if the editor in Stockholm had been in the same position as the editors in Toronto, she would have rejected it.

At this point, some might say that the dramatic changes shown here in the process of transediting are only to be expected from a publisher such as Harlequin, but it is important to remember that it is becoming increasingly problematic to claim that the most universally acclaimed, sanctioned, or canonized texts are blank pages, put at our disposal without having been to some extent maneuvered to suit a particular context, and to maintain that only the most commercial and popular texts are open to such manipulation in the first place. The pictures we carry inside us of a specific culture, mediated to us through literature and other cultural expressions, are not randomly formed on the basis of the strength or weakness of the original, but rather repositories of numerous calculations on part of individuals capable of a multitude of sometimes unexpected, often irrational, and occasionally very conscious actions.

Thus, the image of “India” as it came to be introduced and sustained in Britain, was associated with “primitive innocence, of simplicity and naturalness, and above all mysticism or spirituality,” not because these are qualities apparent in the entity “India,” but rather because these particular characteristics served the purpose of harnessing the “foreign” into a titillatingly, yet reassuringly familiar frame.<sup>32</sup> There lies a danger, not so much in juxtapositioning “high” and “low,” but rather in allowing only one of them the surface appearance of being without the influences and restraints so often associated with the other. André Lefevere has exemplified how different socioeconomic conditions influence texts such as *Catullus* 32, a poem often considered a sacrosanct and indelible part of Western Culture. The translation of this poem found in the Loeb Classical Library series, a text “used by generations of students and scholars as a ‘faithful’ translation” can be shown to have avoided the explicit eroticism of the work and to have rewritten it to conform to 1913 (first publication) standards of acceptability.<sup>33</sup>

Acknowledging that translation is *not* intended to be, nor ever executed as, something transparent and nonideological, I would concur with Lawrence Venuti when he says that translation should rather be seen as a process, where “every step [...] – from the selection of foreign texts to the implementation of translation strategies to the editing, reviewing, and reading of translations – is mediated by the diverse cultural values that circulate in the target language, always in some hierarchical order.”<sup>34</sup>

What Venuti fails to recognize in his own implementation of the argument above – and in this he is not alone – is the way in which the *editor*, together with or in opposition to the translator, but ultimately in this particular case always superseding her or him, exerts a powerful influence over this process. Considering that Harlequin romances are published in twenty-six different languages, global infatuation is a contradiction in terms without transediting. The previous pages have shown how it offers a site for local “supremacy,” where transediting may be said to prove the sophisticated and powerful mechanisms at work, and disprove excessively casual conclusions about how and why meaning does travel in a “global” mediascape.



## CHAPTER SIX

# The Relentless Pursuit of Happiness: Reading *Special* and *Exklusiv*

I turn now to a reading of a cross-section of texts from two Harlequin series, *Harlequin Special* and *Harlequin Exklusiv*. In doing so, I hope to bring into focus several interrelated issues. On the most basic level, this chapter looks at the subject matter, the plots, of a set of Harlequin romances. While it seems that “everybody knows what these books are about,” many of those who profess such knowledge have never read any of them, and certainly not in any kind of quantity. But my centering on the plots of some of the books in these two lines also aims to show how they are molded, localized, through various strategies associated with what I have called transediting, and, equally importantly, how both the plots and Swedish editorial responses to them change over time.<sup>1</sup>

I decided to concentrate on the two lines *Special* and *Exklusiv* for two reasons. First, they were among the first series to be introduced by Harlequin in Sweden; and second, *Special* was based on books published by Mills & Boon and *Exklusiv* only publishes books from the *Superromance* line. Thus, this choice addresses both the British as well as the more recent North American romance tradition.

*Special* was launched in Sweden in 1980, when the editors felt that certain books warranted a longer format than the one provided by *Romantik*, where

books were shortened in translation from 192 to 160 pages. Issuing two titles a month, *Special* at first had 192 pages in translation, although this was later shortened to 180. Distinguished by a different colored background on the cover, *Special* books were also more expensive and I have heard the editors mention many times, that just by placing the word *Special* on the cover, they signaled that these titles were something to look out for and that this strategy sold more of them. The original books in this series have either been taken from Mills & Boon directly, or from the titles sold in North America as *Harlequin Romance* and *Presents*.<sup>2</sup>

*Harlequin Romance* epitomizes the so-called “traditional” romance and these texts are the shortest of Harlequin’s romances, with a word length between 50,000 and 55,000 words. Guidelines underline some key elements. The heroine is often younger than the hero, who in turn is a dynamic, successful personality. These books are “sweet” in regard to sexual content; editorial parameters stress “no gratuitous sex.” Plots mainly focus on the romantic relationship and “innovative stories that still maintain traditional values.” Harlequin promises the reader of this line: “Emotionally fulfilling love stories that feature heroes and heroines whose strengths complement each other. Romances that appeal to the tender side of a woman’s nature.”<sup>3</sup>

*Harlequin Presents* is the best-selling romance series in the world, and much more outspoken and sensual. The heroine may be involved in a career and the hero must have a strong character and real “presence.” The romantic relationship should be described as “a once-in-a-lifetime experience” and strong emphasis is placed on emotion and drama. Here, the promise to the reader is: “Dramatic love stories in which the hero and heroine are equally matched on strength of character, independence and modern outlook.”<sup>4</sup>

My reading for this study comprised fifty-six books, twenty-eight from each series. I thus considered every tenth book from *Special*, beginning with the first book in March 1980 and ending in May 1992; this added up to approximately ten percent of the total output of titles in that series during the period in question. In *Exklusiv* (this series had fewer books in total available), each fifth title between March 1982 and May 1992 made for approximately twenty percent of the books published in that line during those years.

Depending on your perspective, fifty-six books is either a very large or a very small material. It certainly seems large from the tradition of close readings

of individual canonical texts. Whatever the aesthetic arguments for or against such a treatment of a Harlequin romance, however, it seems clear that centering on one single text would not allow us to come to grips with most of the questions at stake in this study. On the other hand, in relation to the total number of titles published by Harlequin during this time, fifty-six books actually *is* a drop in the ocean. Even more importantly still, taking every tenth or fifth book in a line, is hardly the way a “normal” Harlequin reader reads romance. And furthermore, while this quantitative way of selecting books offers convenience and a certain statistical respectability, reflecting the overall output of the publishing house, this method does not distinguish among authors, and would, if not accompanied by other ways of reading, grossly misrepresent the genre. What it does is to provide enough familiarity with a certain line over time to uncover continuity as well as rupture and change in a large mass of texts, something that would not be possible within a smaller, more select material.

Therefore, to provide a more complete picture of the Harlequin text, I have also undertaken two other types of readings. One involves the methodological challenges inherent in “transediting reading,” which I discussed in the previous chapter. The other focuses on authorship. Although I early on decided against a separate chapter dedicated to any specific author, pragmatic reasons led me to interview two *Superromance* authors, Phyllis Stobler and Karen Stone, with whom I had succeeded in scheduling meetings at the rwa National Conference in St. Louis in 1993, interviews in preparation for which I read all their books until that time. Reading their books made me very much aware of the way in which romance authors construct their own voices and styles, and I am convinced that the arguments given in previous chapters on the romance in North America have benefited by adding this perspective to the overall analysis.<sup>5</sup>

Throughout my readings of these fifty-six books, I have mainly been interested in looking at changes in and differences between these two lines in relation to three particular aspects of the Harlequin romance. First, although aimed at prospective *Superromance* writers, Harlequin’s description of the *conflict* as “vital to the plot,” is applicable to all the publisher’s romances, regardless of line.<sup>6</sup> Keeping hero and heroine apart, the conflict needs to be successfully negotiated and resolved before the book can end happily. Often there is a combination of internal and external conflicts. External conflicts tend to happen beyond the control of the characters. *She* might wish to protect the wildlife

at a site where *he* wishes to build houses. An internal conflict has more to do with characterization, based on protagonists that clash over strong personal convictions and whose *motivation* provides the key to understanding subsequent events.

However, *Special* and *Exklusiv* are based on dissimilar types of conflicts and one of the goals of this chapter is to try and describe their different characteristics. Furthermore, this ambition becomes even more specific when linked to some key concepts: relationships, professional careers, children, and sexuality – topics that are treated by these fictitious individuals in various ways. And finally, the conflicts that emerge around these issues are tied to *characterization*. In St. Louis 1993, Marsha Zinberg told me about what she called character-driven versus plot-driven books, and when she places emphasis on the former, she makes an observation with relevance for popular fiction in whatever form:

If you have great characters, sympathetic characters, you may forgive the author if the plot doesn't clip along, if it's not terribly exciting. But if you are involved in these characters, you just want to see how they are going to work it out, and that's ok. But I don't think it works the other way. If the book is all plot, if it's all twist and turns but you don't have characters you really care about, then you are just not going to care about that story. That's the difference to me. And I've seen it. It seems, when you do that, you feel as if the author is going through the motions. It's very surface [...] there's no heart in it, there's no soul in it, that's the difference.<sup>7</sup>

The heroine in *Special* can be described as a young woman alone in emotional and social limbo: Anna in Lindsay Armstrong's *Sagoön Yandilla* (1985) lost her mother and father in a car accident; Suki in Charlotte Lamb's *Flickan från ingenstans* (1983) never even knew her parents, for only a few hours old, she was found on the street, wrapped in a blanket, and like Stacy in *Sanningen om Jake* (1982) by Carole Mortimer, was raised in an orphanage.<sup>8</sup> In Lynsey Steven's *Börja om på nytt* (1985), Joelle has recently been widowed and lost her son, and Lyn in Emma Darcy's *Leva livet* (1988) is treated like the ugly duckling by her parents, who favors her frivolous sister Delvene.<sup>9</sup> "A likable, interesting and sympathetic character – one with whom readers will want to identify," the heroine is generally far more innocent in the ways of the world than the hero, but must never be conceived of as silly.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, being without family ties, perhaps even an orphan, and therefore detached

from the complications of previous relationships, she stands ready to be born anew, this time into the waiting twosome.<sup>11</sup>

When the heroine is not completely alone in the world, her father, rather than her mother is alive, and in the only instance where a single mother is present, she is an unsympathetic character, competing both sexually and professionally with her daughter Clare in Carole Mortimer's *Heta pulsar* (1984).<sup>12</sup> Finding herself transported from the safe haven of home (in most cases England) to new and unknown surroundings further underscores the heroine's vulnerability.<sup>13</sup> Already insecure and uncertain of herself, she will become even more so on meeting the hero, an encounter spanning the whole emotional gamut from apparent aggression to more subdued disagreements.

Anna's hitchhiking in *Sagoön Yandilla*, comes to an abrupt end when she is dumped on a dusty road in the middle of nowhere after refusing to grant the driver's request for sexual services. Almost run over by a passing car, the man who steps out of this vehicle shows himself to be blond, overpowering and contemptuous. Angrily, he insinuates that she has only herself to blame for what just happened. Anna slaps his face, and he retaliates by kissing her, firing off an emotional frontal attack without warning. This premature, forced kiss is also found in *Börja om på nytt*, where Jake suspects the woman he meets at the beach to be a reporter digging up dirt on him for a tabloid newspaper. Confronted with considerable anger and strength, Jo finds herself drawn closer into his arms. After kissing her brutally, Jake lets her go with equal fervor.<sup>14</sup>

If the aggressive kiss, prompted by the hero's "love at first sight" is one recurring feature of the "traditional" romance in this series, another is the fact that hero and heroine have had a mutual past, the case in as many as seven of the twenty-eight titles, or twenty-five percent of the assortment.<sup>15</sup> At the beginning of *Heta pulsar*, Clare is a world-famous actress, arriving in Los Angeles to make a movie where the original director (without her knowledge) has been replaced by her first (and only) lover, Rourke. When they first met five years ago, she was eighteen, he thirty-four. After they became lovers, Clare had been given the impression that he was having an affair with, and was about to marry, her own mother. She fled without explaining her sudden departure and has had no contact with Rourke until she arrives at the set. Zoe in Amanda Browning's *Minns vår kärlek* (1989) is on a mission to win back the man she loves, entrepreneur cum millionaire Ross Lyneham. Amnesiac

after an accident, he is oblivious to the fact that they once were to be married. Wanting nothing to do with what they consider a cheap nightclub singer, his parents have persuaded Ross that Zoe only wanted him for his money and left him callously after the accident. Filled with hatred for his ex-fiancée, Ross now considers all women (and night-club vocalists in particular) to be conniving sharks. When they meet, he has no memory of their previous relationship and treats Zoe as he would any woman – with utter scorn.

As for Caitlin Loring, a young accountant living in Sydney, who talks to her friend and roommate Deb in the first pages of Robyn Donald's *Enkel biljett till lyckan* (1984), she has just received a letter from New Zealand, which turns out to be from her husband Conal. Illustrating what Jan Cohn calls "the early marriage plot," Caitlin explains to Deb that her marriage was arranged for financial reasons only, that she was seventeen at the time and that she left Conal after finding him in bed with another woman.<sup>16</sup> Failing miserably to hide her true, passionate feelings, Caitlin feigns contempt for a man she clearly idolizes:

Han är lång, ungefär en och nittio, men han verkar inte lång förrän man har någon att jämföra med, för han är inte klumpig eller otymplig. Han är ingen jätte – smidig och vältränad och mycket, mycket stark. Mörkt hår, nästan svart, mörka ögonbryn och ett djävulskt sätt att lyfta det ena i förvånat förakt. Och ögonfransar som de flesta kvinnor imponeras av.

Hon tystnade och log brett.

– Sluta inte, för guds skull! bad Deb andlöst. Jag tror dig inte, men berätta mer.

– Du bad om det, och tro mig, jag överdriver inte för jag hatar den mannen.

Han ser ut som en spansk adelsman, eller något liknande romantiskt, med höknäsa och allt. Han är utan tvekan den snyggaste man jag har sett, men det är inte hans utseende som gör starkast intryck. Han har en sensuell utstrålning som gör att det går runt i huvudet på en och som får alla kvinnor att rodna när han ler mot dem.<sup>17</sup>

Conal was almost ten years Caitlin's senior when they married, and to the same extent that she admired and looked up to him, she was also petrified of, and dependent on him financially. His letter is a reply to one of hers, a request to collect on her inheritance (given to her by her father and entrusted to Conal) that would enable her to buy a small bookshop in Sydney. Refusing to give it to her unless she claims it in person, when they meet again after their long separation, he tells her to her face: "Du var fullständigt omogen, hade utseende och känslor som en utvecklingsstörd skolflicka och barnungens dumma upp-

käftighet.”<sup>18</sup> After staying in Auckland for some time, she learns from her mother-in-law that the only thing her father left her were debts, and that she has been living off Conal all these years of marital exile.

By virtue of his age if nothing else, the hero comes to this new relationship armed with a previous life. When Conal married Caitlin he was a widower with a two-year-old daughter and Jake in *Sanningen om Jake* and Richard in *Sagoön Yandilla* were both previously married to adulterous as well as treacherous women, the only good thing coming out of their life together their children. In Flora Kidd’s *Hela natten är vår* (1981), Burt’s wife even turned out to be insane, suffocating their child and making him extremely suspicious of women in general. Children represent empathy, the capacity to understand the needs of another human being, but the child in question is always the hero’s.<sup>19</sup> Only in *Börja om på nytt* has the heroine given birth, and then the child is dead. Therefore, if an ongoing relationship between the heroine and a child exists, then it is limited to younger relatives or friends, and thus suggests the kind of nurturing inherent in the care of an infant. Lisa in Charlotte Lamb’s *Som en stormvind* (1981), is a twenty-four-year-old girl who has been in charge of her family since she was a teenager herself, a rare combination of mother-surrogate, housekeeper, and secretary to her father, the local doctor.<sup>20</sup>

In view of the age difference between the protagonists, the heroine can virtually be a child herself. When Stacy the aspiring actress, goes sailing with Jake Weston the best-selling writer in *Sanningen om Jake*, she is nineteen, he thirty-eight. As her guardian, Julian is fifteen years Fleur’s senior in Margaret Way’s *Kyssar av eld* (1982).<sup>21</sup> A father-daughter relationship has all the potential for a passionate love affair, in which the hero is not only dormant lover, but also the man to teach her the ways of the world. As a consequence, he is as experienced as she is inexperienced. Jayne Ann Krentz bluntly phrases it like this: “There is no denying that the most popular romances, both contemporary and historical, frequently feature heroines who are virgins. This fact is readily acknowledged by writers such as myself, who have compared royalty statements with other writers. It is also substantiated by an examination of the best-seller lists.”<sup>22</sup>

A prerequisite for the relationship to develop is that hero and heroine spend time together. Joelle, ex-successful model and actress in *Börja om på nytt*, tries to find peace and quiet by the sea, but is befriended by Samantha,

a tiny, inconspicuous girl, as lonely as Joelle, who recently lost her husband and son. Jake, the hero to be, is Samantha's uncle, as well as a world-famous writer and after seeing how much his niece likes Joelle, asks her over to his house to be Samantha's companion. For similar reasons, Belinda's anthropological project cannot be completed without the assistance of Barron, scholar turned hermit in Sandra Clarke's *Det kalla hjärtat* (1984), and Josie needs Aaron in *Räddaren i nöden* (1991) by Bethany Campbell, to help her find a kidnapped panda.

Because the relationship between hero and heroine is tantamount to the plot, aggression as a tool in upholding erotic suspense, the early marriage and ensuing separation; contrasts having to do with age and class, virginity and experience are, as we have seen, frequently occurring themes. Misunderstandings that could be cleared up by a single conversation support the tension; one such example is the belief that there is a romantic rival where no one exists. Fleur is being courted by Jon, which makes Julian jealous in *Kyssar av eld*; Claire has been with Harvey for eighteen months, only exchanging kisses, something Rourke finds hard to believe in *Heta pulsar*; Megan thinks that Ford is in love with Krista in Kathleen O'Brien's *Som en eld* (1991), and so on. What the heroine understands as her involvement with the hero deepens, is that love begins with a fight and continues that way. Lisa in *Som en stormvind*, is initially engaged to Peter. Their relationship can hardly be deemed passionate, and kissing him, she asks herself if love really should be as cozy as a pair of old slippers? Later in the book she suddenly notices how Peter behaves differently when her sister Fran is in the room, and realizes that his irritation is due to his love for her, not, as she suspected from the beginning, because of any brotherly protective feelings. Aggression can in some instances actually entail physical violence, something Fleur herself will experience in her encounters with the hero Matt: "Fleur trodde att han tänkte slå henne och det var därför hon skrek" or on the next page: "i nästa sekund hade han vänt henne runt så att hon låg på magen tvärsöver hans knä. Och sen daskade han till henne, hårt."<sup>23</sup>

Jake has every intention of making Stacy his by putting his "bomärke" [brand] on her in *Sanningen om Jake*. If she fails to comply violent retribution will follow: "Om du inte håller tyst ger jag dig ett rejält kok stryk."<sup>24</sup> But violence can also come in more subtle and devious forms. After what starts out

a marriage of convenience in *Sagoön Yandilla*, Anna and Richard spend their honeymoon in Sydney. One evening calls for a night at the opera, and as Anna puts on an elegant red dress and golden shoes, she looks at her reflection in the mirror. Suddenly, she sees Richard standing in the doorway, examining her. Asking him if she will do, he retorts by saying that he finds her too beautiful to take out, and instead starts to undress her, a scene emphasizing the pleasures of submission to a powerful man:

Och medan hon gjorde fåfångt motstånd fortsatte han att klä av henne, försiktigt och på något sätt neutralt, tills hon grät tårar av besvikelse och förödmjukelse.

När han var färdig och hennes kläder låg i en hög på golvet, reste han sig upp och började klä av sig själv, och hans blick lämnade inte hennes.

Det dröjde inte länge förrän hon märkte att hennes ilska och sårade känslor inte kunde stå emot det han gjorde med henne, sakta och obönhörligt. Hon kunde låta bli att röra vid honom, men hon kunde inte låta bli att darra när hans händer rörde sig från hennes bröst till midjan och höfterna, smekande, utforskande. Hennes ynkliga försvarsmekanismer brast, en efter en.<sup>25</sup>

Despite such treatment, or perhaps precisely because of it, the heroine has to admit to herself her undying love for the hero. Since he still remains incomprehensible, distant, and above all silent, she believes that her feelings are not answered. The hero in *Special* is moody, aloof, distant, sometimes aggressive, and definitely an ancestor of Rochester's. Quite often wealthy, usually glamorous and sometimes suave, this type of hero is more known to romance aficionados as an "alpha-male" or "Byronic," a man, as Laura Kinsale puts it: "writhing inside with all the residual anguish of his shadowed past, world-weary and cynical."<sup>26</sup>

Anne Hampson's *En ros från min älskade* (1983) is a good example of the fact that despite that this is what is usually referred to as "she-story," written in the third person single viewpoint, it is not the heroine, who is more of the "girl next door," but the hero who is in the spotlight, a man Harlequin claim "women dream about."<sup>27</sup>

Living with her malevolent stepfather, adoring mother, and horrid step-sister Elisabeth, who constantly degrades her by taking sadistic pleasure in commenting on the large and ugly birthmark covering one cheek, Colette is seventeen when the book opens. While she is home by the hearth like Cinderella, Elisabeth instead socializes in the highest circles and meets Luke Marlis, a Greek millionaire. Falling hopelessly in love with Luke from the

moment she sees him, Colette one evening inadvertently overhears Elisabeth tell Luke that she suspects Colette is infatuated with him, and he replies:

– Förälskad... i mig! Han skrattade och var uppenbarligen mycket road vid tanken.  
– Gode Gud! Bortsett från att hon är så ung och oerfaren, har hon det där gräsliga födelsemärket! Tror du att jag – eller någon annan för den delen – skulle kunna vara intresserad av henne?<sup>28</sup>

Instead of realizing that Luke is a cold, insensitive, arrogant man, unworthy of the kind of attention she lavishes on him, Colette blames herself for eavesdropping.

By coincidence, they meet at a wedding reception. Unable to stop devouring him with her eyes, Colette compares his face to that of a Greek god, so superior that she can feel herself shrink to insignificance in his presence. Condescending to a dance, Luke makes her oblivious to time, so much so that she by the stroke of midnight realizes that she should have been home by ten. Lacking a pumpkin for transportation home, Colette bursts into tears, knowing that her step-father is quite capable of turning both her and her mother out on the street, and begs of Luke to take her home and explain the delay. Having done so, Luke announces his imminent return to Greece, causing Colette's stepfather to blame her for the fact that he did not ask Elisabeth to join him, and he is quite vehement in not wanting her around any more. Fortunately, Colette is not without suitors. She is courted by Davy, a sympathetic man who genuinely loves her and who could care less about her disfiguration. In fact, Davy is everything Luke is not: kind, considerate, loving, willing to take responsibility for both Colette and her victimized mother. As much as she longs to be with Luke, Colette sees no other option than to accept Davy's proposal, resigning to the inevitable by marrying a man she does not love.

At the opening of the fourth chapter, Colette and Davy have been married for three years. They have a good life. Davy's uncle has been generous as well as kind to them, and when he dies, Davy inherits a beautiful mansion and Colette and her mother some money. Everyone is happy in a quiet sort of way, and Colette loves Davy like a brother. Fate however lurks around the corner, and as they are out driving one day, they collide with a meeting truck. Colette's mother and husband are killed while she survives to go on

to a new life. Having undergone facial surgery after the accident, Colette finds herself, her birthmark now miraculously gone, a beautiful, wealthy widow. The only thing that remains constant is the dream of Luke.

Following an appropriate time in mourning, Colette takes to traveling and eventually lands on a cruise in the Mediterranean. As they approach the Greek archipelago a fire starts, and she is shipwrecked on Luke's island. When they inevitably meet, he has no way of recognizing her after the accident, and she introduces herself under a different name. Almost immediately, he invites her to stay with him as his mistress. Colette declines this offer and decides to leave (taking nothing less than a proposal), remembering a comment she heard from before that Greeks never marry their mistresses. Luke follows her, convincing her to come back with "no strings attached." She accepts, clearly intent on making him so dependent on her, that he will ask her to marry him. But no such proposal comes.

Now Elisabeth suddenly surfaces on the island and like Luke, does not recognize Colette, only a potential rival. Colette decides to punish Elisabeth and invites her to dinner at Luke's house, during which she takes every opportunity to annoy both Luke and her step-sister. When Elisabeth reminds Luke of how he laughed at the thought of Colette loving him, he discloses that he has known Colette's real identity for some time and proposes to her. Elisabeth is thrown out of the house, and Luke and Colette confess their love for each other, with Luke telling her that despite what he might have said previously, he would have married her, mistress or not.

In 182 pages that cover a period of eight years, Colette has gone from being ugly to being beautiful, from being terrorized to being in control, from being alone to being loved. Her undying obsession with Luke while insisting on staying a "virgin" while in reality a widow, is perhaps extreme, but sexuality can be very complicated for the heroine in *Special*, especially if the hero is the larger-than-life type. In view of the lack of explicit sex in this line, certain stylistic features have instead been developed to underline sexual tension, such as the tendency to lick lips nervously. What the hero interprets as a cool facade, is in reality an emotional armor of distance, the only defense against a man the heroine perceives as threatening and contemptuous.

In contrast, a completely different relationship is explored in Sandra Kleinschmit's book *Kärlek som täckmantel* (1987); the sixteenth and first

American book in my selection of *Special* titles – originally published by Silhouette Books.

When Brittany Daniels meets Gabe Spencer, she is a young and ambitious reporter working undercover as a prostitute to reveal illegal gambling activities. A police officer masquerading as a customer, Gabe arrests her under the assumption that she is what she pretends to be. As opposed to earlier heroines, Brittany is older (twenty-six), has a rewarding professional career, and comes from a loving family. Gabe is described as someone actually capable of emotion, apparent by the way in which the story is also written from his point of view.

After the misunderstanding has been cleared up at the police station, Gabe takes her home, falling asleep on the couch where Brittany lets him stay the night. Leaving her apartment after breakfast, Gabe ponders whether or not he should ask her out for dinner, somewhat anxiously wondering if she will accept. This display of insecurity makes him different from the previous fifteen heroes in my selection, who would never have questioned their sexual attraction in any way, least of all because of the inaccessibility of their psyches to the reader. Brittany however, is more interested in continuing to work on her story in order to get transferred to the more prestigious newsroom. Knowing that he has withheld important information from her, Brittany takes the initiative of asking Gabe to dinner to sort it out. He accepts. Their relationship matures as they continue to work on the assignment together, and neither one can deny the growing attraction between them.

In what has the potential for a first seduction scene, Gabe botches everything by drinking too much and falling asleep completely knocked out on her bed. Waking up with a hangover, Gabe remembers nothing, whereas Brittany, pretending that they made love, leaves him speculating about what actually did take place. Through his partner Mike, Brittany learns that his hatred for reporters comes from the time when he once shot and killed a seventeen-year-old boy. A reporter named Helen Francis made it look as if the shooting was deliberate, when in fact it was in self-defense. Gabe's career was destroyed. Finally, after having made love for real, Brittany tells him that she knows all about the incident. He immediately becomes defensive, even accusing her of being just another Helen Francis and although they have admitted that they are in love at least to themselves, their positions are gridlocked. However, Brittany is adamant in her intention of not letting him slip away, at least not without a fight.

After she has been instrumental in catching the bad guys, Gabe storms out of Brittany's life, convinced that she will make the whole thing turn out wrong in the paper. But the morning after, every credit is given to him and Mike in what is not only a well-written, but also accurate article. Deeply ashamed, Gabe refuses to get in touch with her, convinced that she wants nothing to do with him now. As he sits at home feeling sorry for himself, Brittany calls at the door, once again taking the emotional lead, eventually even asking him to marry her. After making love, she breaks the news of her impending promotion:

– Du fick mig totalt att glömma bort en viktig sak, sa hon och lät så berömmande att Gabe med låtsad blygsel slog ner ögonen. Jag har blivit förflyttad till nyhetsredaktionen!

– Och nu vill du att jag ska ge dig förstahandsinformation om allt som händer i distriktet, sa han retsamt och drog upp täcket över hennes axlar.

– Jag klarar mig nog utan det, så länge som jag har ensamrätten på dig, viskade hon och lade sig åter bredvid honom.

– Den har du, sa Gabe med ett ömt leende, den har du för all framtid.<sup>29</sup>

All through this book Brittany has taken the initiative, both sexually and morally. She is determined to get the man she wants while climbing the career-ladder, and with her strong professional identity, she stands out from her predecessors, some of whom place very little importance on their work, supporting Ann Rosalind Jones's observation that: "At its most recuperative, Mills & Boon uses women's work merely cosmetically."<sup>30</sup> Even so, times are a changing, and in a 1988 audiotope aimed at potential *Romance* and *Presents* writers, Harlequin notes:

In recent years, we have noticed some changes in the kind of heroine that our readers enjoy meeting. For example, although a heroine need not be a career woman, she is likely to have a job she likes a lot. Sometimes quite a high-powered traditionally masculine one. *Harlequin Romance* and *Presents* stories have featured the commercial airline pilot, the doctor in a busy hospital, the college professor and the garage mechanic. She will almost certainly not be waiting around for Mr. Right to enter her life. Marriage may be the last thing on her mind, and her relationship with the hero will represent an exciting challenge for them both.<sup>31</sup>

As opposed to Colette in *En ros från min älskade*, who pursues Mr. Right with a vengeance, thinking of very little *but* marriage through the entire book, Brittany and Gabe, Jocelyn and Nial in Sandra Field's *Den rätte mannen* (1990), Charlie and Graham in Quinn Wilder's *Höga höjder* (1991), and Felicity and

Seth in Anne Marie Duquette's *Silvertons hjälte* (1992), all have relationships indicative of something new. Even though the basic requirement of negativity remains throughout my selection, heroes like Graham, who might express distrust of Charlie's capacity as helicopter pilot, will never take his reserve or distrust of the woman he has just met into aggressive action. And the man who lets these heroines get what they want is different, more vulnerable, willing to make sacrifices, sometimes not even knowing what to do at all, but being neither particularly wealthy nor aggressively demonic. Alongside this "new" man, the Byronic hero continues to prosper as does the young, virginal heroine.

In neither case however, does the resolution of the built-up tension between hero and heroine take place until the final pages. Sexual commitment may have occurred earlier in the book, but whatever hindrance that kept the hero from committing verbally to the heroine, must be cleared away in the final pages. If he has treated her aggressively she now has to be made to understand that the reason for this was frustrated love, pure and simple. To atone for his previous sins, the hero now has to be as open-hearted and frank as possible. As Jayne Ann Krentz has pointed out, verbal commitment is essential to the story: "Don't just show me, tell me, is one of the prime messages that every romance hero must learn," a lesson of love always tied to some sort of marriage vow.<sup>32</sup>

Learning from her father in *Leva livet* that Peter has asked for her hand in marriage, Lyn continues to believe that he is making a fool out of her. In *Minns vår kärlek*, Zoe is kidnapped and taken to her own wedding, understanding nothing until she sees Ross beside the minister, and when Rourke proposes to Leigh in Sara Craven's *Med kvinnlig list...* (1991), she is dumbfounded, even asking him if he is sure this is what he really wants. Turning the tables on what has been a truly aggressive relationship, the final victory is given to Suki in *Flickan från ingenstans*, when Joe places his future fate in her hands, basically telling her he would die if she left him.

To conclude, then, before Sandra Kleinschmits book *Kärlek som täckmantel*, the "traditional" romance dominates my selection in this line completely, but after it, the remaining titles can be said to fall into two different groups of stories, one "traditional," and one "new." It is important to note that even if the shift actually occurs with this book, what is seen after it is not a radical transformation of all titles, but a mix of the "traditional" romance and a new, "Americanized" version.<sup>33</sup>

This new type of romance is clearly visible in *Harlequin Exklusiv*, where all books are taken from the *Superromance* line, the longest of Harlequin's lines with its 85,000 words, and where editorial acquisitions are made at the Harlequin office in Toronto. Over the years, *Superromance* guidelines have become less and less strict, mirroring the continuously broadening scope of the line. Turning into Harlequin's most "mainstream-like" line, the opening sentence in one version of the editorial guidelines stresses this fact: "The only requirements for today's *Superromance* novels are page-turning stories of 85,000 words strongly focused on believable heroines and heroes."<sup>34</sup> As opposed to *Special*, where the story may revolve around the almost tangible eroticism of contempt, power, and misunderstandings, such elements are never used in *Exklusiv*; here, hero and heroine are people who believe that they are morally correct and who act accordingly.

The near chaos at the beginning of the traditional romance in *Special* is replaced by another type of disorder in *Exklusiv*. Tara in Christine Hella Cott's *Magiska nätter* (1983) feels insecure about her impending wedding and breaks off her engagement. Andrea in Lynn Erickson's *Ett störtlopp av känslor* (1985) learns that a friend of hers from the Soviet Union wants to defect (and needs her help in doing so) and Lacey in *Nu börjar livet* by Janice Kaiser (1988) is just about to kidnap her daughter back from her ex-husband who has taken custody of the child by virtue of his connections and financial power. Problematic as the situation is, the heroine in *Exklusiv* has social stability, a network of friends and family – and most importantly, she is actively engaged in the world around her, able to take charge of the challenges that lay ahead.<sup>35</sup>

In contrast to *Special*, *Exklusiv* has increasingly become a battleground for fights over moral and professional ethics, and when heroine and hero meet, they do so as a result of their professional capacities.<sup>36</sup> In none of the twenty-eight books I read, do hero and heroine have some kind of mutual past. The heroine can be any number of things; astronaut, small business entrepreneur, writer, tv-producer, or psychiatrist, all professions implying a degree of freedom and flexibility. Careers must not be too glamorous however, and what Harlequin refers to as "high-profile occupations" are omitted.<sup>37</sup> Actresses, corporate executives, Wall Street brokers or Parisian fashion designers are nowhere to be found. As for the setting, after *Smaragden glimmar farligt* (1984) by Christine Hella Cott, no book in my selection take place outside North America.

In Marsha Alexander's *Viskningar i månsken* (1987), Autumn works as a private detective, hired by an important client to investigate newspaper mogul Justin's alleged dubious business. The book opens with her being interviewed for the position of housekeeper in Justin's combined home/office. In addition to mere professional ambition, Autumn carries a personal grudge that motivates her even further in trying to find the evidence: her uncle was once falsely accused of fraud by a paper similar to the one Justin owns, and he never recovered from the experience.

Although a more formalized relationship as employer-employee is only the case in four titles, quite often, the protagonists immediately take opposing sides in reference to a professional matter.<sup>38</sup> When Liza and Christian meet in Shannon Clare's *Himlens alla stjärnor* (1984), he questions her ability to date an invaluable art object correctly; confronted with Angie for the first time in Sandra James' *Hjärtats hemligheter* (1988), Matt is extremely irritated because he knows that as mayor she wanted another man for the job as chief-of-police; and when Justin is forced on Kelly in Natalie Grant's *Sånt är livet* (1992) it is to change the direction of her talk show.

Plot structure in *Exklusiv* inevitably comprises two features: a strong conflict and one or more subplots. Karen Stone explains how the conflict needs to be elaborated in order for it to keep readers turning the pages:

I think that conflict is the single most important element in making a good romance good. It is the glue that holds it together and makes the reader want to keep on going. If you have a weak conflict, your readers are going to say: – Ho, hum, who cares! We have to have a very compelling reason that the hero and heroine cannot get together on chapter one. And that's it. We have to have a *compelling* reason. [...] And that's hard work to come up with that. I think that the best conflict is an emotional, a really emotional conflict. Something that tears at the heart of the heroine and something that taps into everything that is male in the hero. And if it has that intensity, it will sustain a whole book.<sup>39</sup>

According to Harlequin's so-called positioning statement, an in-house document used as yet another way of identifying a specific line, the promise to the reader is: "Harlequin Superromance always delivers involving stories, page-turning excitement and compelling characters in a big satisfying read."<sup>40</sup>

Lying is at least part of the problem in Lorna Michaels's *Frestelse i förklädnad* (1991), in which reporter Greg is sent on an undercover assignment to Houston in order to investigate a series of strange disappearances within the city's

Spanish-speaking population. Posing as a Catholic priest he meets Julie, a socialworker for the church. While they are attracted to each other, Julie cannot interpret Father Gregory as anything but a hopeless romantic endeavor and as much as he would like, Greg is in no position to reveal his true identity. When he discovers the reason behind the disappearances, his cover is blown and Julie finds out through an interview on television. A serious offense, lying can never be deliberate and has to be softened by circumstances. The hero or heroine might be unable to reveal their correct identity due to their work, or because they need to cover for a friend or out of concern for a relative. The latter prompts Steve to lie to Marianne in *Farliga drömmar* by Irma Walker (1990), in which he suspects the young woman included in his uncle's will to be a simple golddigger. When learning that it was thanks to Marianne's psychic powers that his uncle Arnold's granddaughter could be found after a kidnapping several years before and that this was the reason for his generosity, Steve is filled with disbelief. When history repeats itself, and Marianne yet again is instrumental in locating the child's whereabouts, Steve becomes convinced of her involvement. Arnold offers Marianne a vacation at his cabin on Lake Tahoe and Steve goes after her, lying about his identity in order to expose her deceit.

Georgia Bockhoven's *IDag, IMorgon, Alltid* (1986) revolves almost completely around the connection between the professional and the private. Kevin Anderson is a senator and he and Lisa Malorey meet at a party given by mutual friends in Washington. While they enjoy each other's company right away, it is not until Lisa is given the dangerous and highly visible task of rescuing some colleagues in a space shuttle gone berserk that Kevin learns she is an astronaut, a profession she passionately embraces:

Lisa älskade sitt arbete och skulle inte vilja byta det mot något annat. Hon gjorde precis vad hon ville med sitt liv, något som väldigt få kunde säga, hade hon upptäckt. För att nå dit hade hon fått göra vissa uppoffringar, en del smärtsammare än andra, särskilt när det gällde personliga förhållanden. Av någon anledning, som hon inte kunde begripa, hade hon inte lyckats hitta en man som var tillräckligt säker på sig själv för att kunna klara av henne och det hon sysslade med. Men hon visste att det fanns män som klarade av att leva med kvinnor som var mer berömda eller mer aggressiva än de själva eller som kunde handskas med de problem som uppstod då man hade ett ytterst krävande jobb, för majoriteten av de kvinnliga astronauterna var gifta – och för det mesta lyckligt gifta.<sup>41</sup>

Kevin's wife and daughter had been killed several years before in a car accident, and ever since, his relationships have been superficial and brief. Lisa, equipped with a Ph.D. in biology, a physics professor for a father, and a computer whiz kid brother in Silicon Valley, finds in Kevin finally a man who measures up to her high standards, but in doing so, faces one major obstacle. While she is deeply dedicated and loyal to NASA's space program, he on the other hand advocates savings in the Senate, even suggesting cuts in funding. Kevin feels that NASA wastes money unnecessarily: "De behövde bara bli lite måttligare och sluta köpa hammare som kostade trehundra dollar styck när man kunde få tag i samma hammare för tolv dollar styck i en vanlig järnaffär."<sup>42</sup>

However, when offered an important seat on a committee that will put him in direct conflict with Lisa, Kevin nonetheless accepts. Increasingly worried about Lisa's reactions, Kevin is anxious not to lose her and he breaks the news of his new appointment during a mutual visit to his home in Kansas. Of course, as always when discussing NASA, they get into a heated argument:

Hon lutade huvudet i händerna.

– Bara tanken på att man skulle kunna avbryta något så väsentligt som utforskningen av rymden är för mig vansinne. Alla tjänar ju på det. Det är till nytta för alla. Tänk bara på de medicinska upptäckterna...

– De viktigaste och mest banbrytande medicinska upptäckterna har vi fått genom kriget, avbröt han henne. Tänk bara att ha tusentals skadade och sårade unga män att träna på och experimentera med för att kunna komma på nya, mirakulösa behandlingsmetoder. Ändamålen helgar inte alltid medlen, Lisa.<sup>43</sup>

Under the circumstances, Lisa decides that neither she nor NASA stands a chance, takes the consequences and leaves him. Later, during a conversation with his father, Kevin understands that he has to sacrifice his career in order to save his relationship with Lisa. Turning his back on the rat-race, Kevin leaves the Senate, sells his farm in Kansas, and resolves to become a ranch owner in Texas, close to Houston and Lisa.

The fact that Kevin's emotions are disclosed and given just as much importance as Lisa's makes this the first of the twenty-eight *Exklusiv* titles I read, in which the hero is given the main emotional impetus; a feature that would become something of an *Superromance* trademark later on. Coincidentally, in 1985, the year when *Today, Tomorrow, Always* was originally published, readers gave "mixed point of view" as the most wished for element in ro-

mances, underscoring an increased willingness to explore the male viewpoint, as opposed to 1982, when top priority instead was given to “detailed sexual description.”<sup>44</sup>

Kevin and Lisa’s final reconciliation symbolically occurs during a christening, where they are asked to stand godparents. During the ceremony, Lisa realizes that she wants a child, and that Kevin must be the father of that child. Having disposed of the final hindrance to their union (his work as a senator), Lisa receives the definitive proof of Kevin’s love through the fact that he adapts to her.<sup>45</sup> Their love can now be confirmed by marriage and maybe even more so, through Kevin’s assurance that he will not turn into an absent father: “– Jag har levt så länge utan kärlek, Lisa, att jag nästan höll på att förtvina som människa. Hem och familj är viktigt för mig. Viktigare än något annat.”<sup>46</sup>

The second narrative feature of *Exklusiv* that distinguishes it from *Special* is that its length allows for a *subplot*, supporting the original story and introduced early on in the text. Harlequin describes the subplot in this way:

In theory, the subplot can be removed from the main action and stand alone as a self-contained story, with a beginning, a middle and an end. The range of subject matter of the subplot can be as diverse as that of the main plot. The secondary action can revolve around a social issue such as child care, illiteracy or teenage pregnancy, or it can focus on environmental issues, such as factory emissions.<sup>47</sup>

In Margot Dalton’s *Fråga mig vad som helst* (1992), the main plot deals with Jennifer’s participation in a game show while the subplot revolves around one of her co-contestants, Amy. During the course of the show, Amy receives a totally unexpected note from her absentee husband Sam. After five years of marriage, he just disappeared one evening and never returned. Suspecting her gameshow winnings to be the reason behind his sudden resurfacing, Amy is unaware of Sam’s affluence (gained on the stock market) and the fact that he is only interested in gaining back his wife. Amy and Sam’s story unfolds at the same time as the romance between Jennifer and Charlie intensifies. This investment in the subplot and in people whose lives are played out alongside the main couple gives the *Superromance* line the necessary substance to carry it through 350 pages, and when Phyllis Stobler says: “I always kind of have the feeling that if the main plot is a romance, I can do what I want with the subplot, and that’s the part of the book that I really enjoy!,” she shreds some light on what some claim are the two kinds of romance writers

around: those who are interested in writing the romance or the relationship between hero and heroine, and then those who are more interested in all the other things – of which she herself then would be one.<sup>48</sup>

Getting to know each other, the protagonists become convinced of each other's good sides, and slowly but definitely initial aggravation turns into irresistible attraction. That he or she might be very different from what first impressions suggested, shows itself indirectly, through key scenes or even objects. Matt expects Angie's house in *Hjärtats hemligheter*, to be a mirror of her – perfect, elegant, impersonal. Instead he finds a home warmly furnished with old, inherited redwood antiques. No longer only the perfectionist mayor, Angie has a far from perfect home and from this moment on, Matt tries to become part of her and her two daughters' life. Similarly, Pete's apartment in Peg Sutherland's *Karneval i New Orleans* (1991), is copied down to the last inch from an exclusive interior decorating magazine. Cheryl, born with money as well as a sense of aesthetics, notes that despite Pete's success as a self-made man, he is as insecure as a teenage boy when it comes to matters of distinction, something that appeals to more in her than just her motherly instincts.

As hero and heroine become sufficiently sure of each other, sex follows. Both may well have had previous, even fulfilling relationships, but even a mainly positive one has to be portrayed as deficient in one way or the other, making this new alliance stand out as exceptional, unique.<sup>49</sup> In Jocelyn Haley's *Satsa på kärleken* (1987), Jessica lived in a sexually satisfying marriage, but her husband was a criminal and subconsciously a child in a man's body. David's previous marriage was like "a sunny spring day" but his passionate response to Jessica is like nothing he has ever felt before. In some of the earlier titles, traumatic sexual experiences unite Vicki, victim of sexual harassment by a fellow colleague in Rosalind Carson's *Långtans sång* (1983); Cam in Casey Douglas's *Bortom alla tvivel* (1985), who was raped many years ago by her future husband; Angie, both beaten and abused by her alcoholic husband in *Hjärtats hemligheter*; and Amber in Cara West's *Sanningen om Amber* (1988), who is threatened and stalked by her ex-fiancé Charles when she calls off their engagement.

Sexuality with the *right man* emotionally liberates the heroine at the same time as it paradoxically captures the hero. Her release lies in the fact that a part of her old life that did not function very well, now does. The heroine embraces sexuality, the hero commitment, and having met the right woman

affects him to the extent where he is unable to have casual sex. Hunt in *I festens yra...* (1989) by Eve Gladstone, keeps a beautiful blonde in New York but loses interest in her when he meets Jenna. In *Ett störtlopp av känslor*, Hyde is no longer able to seek temporary satisfaction with Myrna as he keeps thinking of Winny, and as David becomes seriously involved with Jessica in *Satsa på kärleken*, Lena becomes an unsatisfactory replacement. More than a physical act, a sexual encounter is often sought at a time in the book when the relationship is still frail, opening the door for a crisis that now serves the purpose of once again alienating hero and heroine (and setting the stage for a final reunion). Perceived as all the more definitive as it occurs after intercourse, Harlequin refers to the crisis as the “point in the book at which things look the worst.”<sup>50</sup>

In *Farliga drömmar*, Marianne by coincidence stumbles on a letter to Steve from his uncle and understands that he has lied to her. She confronts him in a scene triggered by what Vladimir Propp calls “le système d’informations” in the fairy tale, that is, through a letter being read by mistake, a conversation overheard, a book opened to uncover something hidden.<sup>51</sup> Admitting to being suspicious of her intentions, Steve also tells her that after getting to know her, he realized that a woman who cried over a dead kitten could not possibly be guilty of the crime in question. Steve remains convinced that for some reason or other Marianne has been party to the kidnapping, accusing her indirectly by offering her the best lawyer money can buy. She tells him to go to hell.

Steve’s inability to trust Marianne is hardly shared by the reader, who knows that she is above suspicion. Treated as a “witch” by her father, Marianne is in reality a virgin (both physically and mentally), totally devoid of false pretenses. Steve, accepting his physical attraction for her, now has to withstand a more important test, that of faith. So Marianne storms out of Steve’s life, Liza breaks up with Christian, Taggert deserts Dusty, and Erica leaves Hank in 1862 to travel back to 1989. Crisis leads to separation, by now an indisputable fact.

With the exception of the very first titles, to which I will have reason to return to presently, the hero in *Exklusiv* is a very different man from his counterpart in *Special*. Jake in Lynn Erickson’s *I gryningens första ljus* (1986) has decayed both physically and spiritually. Tired, overweight, and a single parent, he is a good example of the “new” man in romance, a type of man that Ann Rosalind Jones in 1986 predicted the genre would never see: “I doubt

that the romance format will ever allow writers to challenge the conventions through which the hero is constructed: he is still older, richer, wiser in the ways of the world, and more experienced sexually than the heroine.”<sup>52</sup>

Taggert in Anne Laurence’s *Skyddsängeln* (1991), is another character equally removed from the tall, domineering aristocrat in *Special*, thoroughly refuting Jones’s hypothesis. A St. Louis detective appointed to watch over Dusty, a young woman who witnessed her father’s murder and might recognize the assailant, he is forced undercover with her, posing as newlyweds. After they move into a small, run-down apartment that Dusty immediately starts painting and furnishing, she slowly shows herself to be an amiable young woman, making Taggert increasingly talkative and accessible. Later on, we learn that he once shot and killed a child and that he ever since then harbors doubts about his choice of profession. However, under Dusty’s motherly supervision, he starts writing a book and even learns to bake cookies! Domesticated and tamed, this former womanizer, who had caused his victims severe cases of “Taggertitis,” turns from the most masculine of worlds to the most feminine. Finally, as Dusty comes face to face with her father’s killer, Taggert is unable to fire his gun. Both are saved through the intervention of another police officer, but Taggert disappears, leaving Dusty and the force behind. Returning a published writer, to offer Dusty a ready-made family (he has adopted the murderer’s abused son), he intends to confine his work to the home: “Jag ska se till att allt fungerar i hemmet, vaggja barn, laga mat och allt det där.”<sup>53</sup>

Examples of more conventional work distribution and heroes are found in earlier titles. In Christine Hella Cott’s *Magiska nätter*, Tara practically cleans her way into Jorge’s life. His old Portuguese castle is half shut down, and Tara, together with some servant girls, takes on the opening and cleaning of the closed rooms, which gives her the perfect opportunity to prove her potential as mistress of the house by adding “finishing touches” as well as being a stern but fair overseer. A young English heiress, Tara is virginal, well-educated, and writes books for children as a hobby. As she and Jorge announce their engagement at the end of the book, her future career seems focused on running the household and bringing up the children. In *Längtans sång*, interior decorator Vicki marries Jason and becomes scenographer at his new theater. In Maura Mackenzie’s *Exotiska drömmar* (1982), Denise dreams about becoming assistant

to Jake at a major research project in Sri Lanka, which she also does – as his wife. When Liza and Christian finally fall into each others arms in *Himlens alla stjärnor*, she leaves her position as art curator to be able to travel with Christian around the world buying art, and in *Viskningar i månsken*, Autumn ends up as both secretary and housekeeper (a role she has pretended to play through a major part of the book) to Justin at the same time as they decide to marry.

For the *Exklusiv* heroine, a career does not mean climbing in a clearly defined corporate hierarchy, but rather having a life in which work, family, and love are integrated, an equation that Kelly Ferris, a successful tv-producer in Boston, attempts in Natalie Grants's *Sånt är livet*. Her aim is to tackle serious subjects in a serious way, but she heads straight into trouble when she meets her new boss, Justin Benedict, a man with “infotainment” on his mind. However, differences of opinion regarding the future direction of the show are not the only hindrance to Justin's and Kelly's growing relationship. Justin is divorced with a small boy, while Kelly and her younger sister Sylvie are orphaned and have lived on their own for many years.<sup>54</sup> Feeling guilty about the separation from his son, Justin wants him to spend as much time as possible with him and Kelly. Kelly, used to taking care of Sylvie, feels that Justin places too much responsibility on her shoulders, even taking it for granted. Different priorities eventually cause the breakup of their relationship. A short time thereafter, a riot erupts between local gangs and vigilante groups. Kelly's television station decides to broadcast a live discussion between the different parties involved, in what is potentially a very explosive situation. Thanks to Justin's wounded pride, the whole thing gets out of hand and turns into a minor catastrophe. Using her intelligence, professional experience, and clear judgment, Kelly has to save the day. Justin sees the light. He made the wrong decisions and Kelly was right all along:

– I hela mitt liv har jag manipulerat med allting för att det skulle passa mina behov, viskade han. Det kan jag inte längre göra. Nu ser jag klart vem som hade rätt. Kanske kan jag lära mig någonting av dig men jag har inte den blekaste aning om vad du skulle kunna tänkas lära av mig. Ansiktet var förvridet av sorg och ånger.  
– Du behöver inte mig.<sup>55</sup>

Few men have groveled like Justin. He has to eat his mistakes and Kelly needs to cajole and rebuild his male confidence, not however, until he has admitted to being wrong. Unless he is willing to take on the heaviest responsibility of

all, the daily one, they are doomed to failure. Not until Justin proves himself as a parent by sharing custody of Tommy with his ex-wife, and promising Kelly to take equal responsibility for Tommy, Sylvie, and all other children they might have in the future, does their relationship start afresh and with better odds.

Parenting and children are important in *Exklusiv*, but serve a somewhat different purpose than in *Special*. In Christine Hella Cott's *Magiska nätter* and *Smaragder glimmar farligt*, both heroines take on the role of the child themselves, much as several of their counterparts in *Special*. Tara and Eleni travel from their secure homes to live in another country under different circumstances, where they are taken care of by Jorge and Lucio, strong, dark and handsome aristocrats. Well-meaning patriarchs, they know what is best for heroine and employees alike, both of whom are treated like children. Jorge explains with emphasis his responsibilities: "Innan jag äter själv måste de ha mat. Innan jag kan sova måste de ha sängar. Jag måste vara deras advokat, domare, polis, präst och handelsman, och dessutom föregå med gott exempel i allt."<sup>56</sup>

In Jessica Logan's *Lång resa mot kärleken* (1983), it is the empathy of a woman who looks just like the wife David despises that leads him to finally understand that she is not (a complicated chain of events precedes the mix-up). Both children and animals warm to her immediately, in contrast to the former Mrs. Rossi, who alienated everything alive. The description of David's first wife is so demonic, that it tilts toward the unreal. A nymphomaniac, she seduced his father, brother, numerous employees, and even his closest friend, until she eventually staged the kidnapping of her own children.

Janna, Tate's first love, tells Cam coldly in *Bortom alla tvivel* that she aborted his child without asking him. Thus, a former wife who wished to terminate a pregnancy when he wanted to pursue it (*Exotiska drömmar* and *Lång resa mot kärleken*), or who refused him a dog (children and animals have a similar status) because they leave hair all over (*I gryningens första ljus*) – these details give the reader sufficient information to understand the major difference between the other woman and the heroine. Showing the hero's frustration and genuine longing for children, the right man does not see his responsibility as a burden. In fact, he welcomes it, and rather than the heroine having to prove her qualities as a mother, the hero is the one to put up the evidence. The wrong man wants to wield power over the heroine, both sexually and professionally

and it is a sure sign that a man is wrong for the heroine if he does not want her to work. Economic power is not valued as a positive thing and several of the men assigned to the role of “the other man” are driven by greed and profit. In *I gryningens första ljus*, Alexandra realizes that Tom is a mental weakling when it turns out that he is involved in land speculation and there is no doubt about what kind of man Dennis is when he says to Tara in *Magiska nätter*: “Du får stanna hemma. Kvinnor och affärer går inte ihop.”<sup>57</sup> Like a reminder from the Gothic novel, the man who initially seems like a safe bet instead turns out to be the real villain.

As the average *Exklusiv* approaches its final pages, it is time to finally conquer and to admit to any wrongdoing. This second movement in the text, away from crisis and conflict and towards a happy end, is almost identical to the way in which hero and heroine previously made a temporary commitment, and is the same form that Vladimir Propp sees in the fairy tale: “la composition en deux mouvements est canonique. C’est un conte en deux mouvements, type fondamental de tous les contes.”<sup>58</sup> Through the project of linking and putting things right, both hero and heroine grow. Admitting his need for Marianne, Steve also has to understand that there are things that he, an investigative reporter, knows nothing about. To get her back, he has to beg for forgiveness – something she of course grants. And in a final act of poetic justice Steve is “punished” in the epilogue when his and Marianne’s son inherits her “gift.” Charlie in *Fråga mig vad som helst* breaks up with Jennifer and falsely accuses her of cheating, but when Jennifer proves him wrong, Charlie has to beg for forgiveness. Needless to say, the heroine reaps the moral rewards of being right in whatever conflict the protagonists have been engaged in, at the same time as she marries the hero.<sup>59</sup>

In *Exklusiv*, the development of the male protagonist into a more multi-dimensional character who can be trusted to embrace values put forward by the heroine, and who will offer to take care of and give priority to family and children also necessitate a new heroine. Lisa is not the only woman allowed to stay in an extremely competitive career, because Kevin fights for access to a traditionally female domain. So, while *Exklusiv* heroines pursue rewarding professions, they can do so in large part because the man in their life understands the necessity of *integration* of love and work, time and money.

The “traditional romance” as represented by the early titles in *Special*, is a

story based on the emotional and sexual power-struggle between hero and heroine. To maintain a high level of sexual tension without recourse to graphic sex, it becomes crucial to distance the heroine from the hero on the basis of age, career, or financial differences. When a new heroine and hero surfaces in Sandra Kleinschmit's *Kärlek som täckmantel*, Brittany is not only older, but in control of her life and dedicated to her career. Gabe, the hero, is more emotional and complex, no longer arrogant, angry, or contemptuous. However, if the reader wants a "traditional" romance, then I imagine that this change can only be seen as a deterioration. If you seek out characters such as Caitlin and Conal in Robyn Donald's *Enkel biljett till lyckan*, then meeting Felicity and Seth in Anne Marie Duquette's *Silvertons hjälte* will be a disappointment. In stark contrast to the first couple, Felicity and Seth display all the virtues that the American romance reader supposedly likes, independence, determination, a strong sense of equality. The classical romance story between a virginal, translucent yet insecure beauty and a forceful, dark, and very masculine hero, is built on class relations, power, and subordination, characteristics that some look on as very European. Catherine Kirkland notes in her discussion with writers, that this type of "traditional romance" is viewed by "Many readers [...] as reflecting a peculiarly European conception of romantic fantasy, one which focuses on issues of social class and virginity."<sup>60</sup>

Georgia Bockhoven's *IDag, IMorgon, Alltid* represents a turning point in the *Exklusiv* line. The series had begun with Christine Hella Cott's double-length versions of the "traditional" romance, in which young English heiresses meet dark, moody aristocrats and end up marrying them. After *IDag, IMorgon, Alltid*, however, *Exklusiv* turns increasingly to plots in which conflicts between professional and private values play a prominent role. Both heroine and hero strive for integration and independence. Heroes willingly give up their careers and take responsibility for home and children, and heroines are encouraged to strive for and maintain a professional, even competitive career. In reference to *Exklusiv*, I find Leslie Rabine's argument very convincing, that "the world of work and business is romanticized and eroticized, and that in it love flourishes suggests that the Harlequin heroines seek an end to the division between the domestic world of love and sentiment and the public world of work and business."<sup>61</sup>

Arguably, this preoccupation with conflicts between professional identities

and private life as it is played out in the *Exklusiv* series, is perhaps not only the result of altered reader preferences, but a reflection of how romances writers and editors have simultaneously become more professionalized in their own careers; as they negotiate the ups and downs of a highly competitive professional environment with family life, they take the very issues they themselves are confronted with to the text, and transform them accordingly. In either case, the change suggests the difficulty of trying to determine the initiating source in the production and consumption of popular culture, while suggesting yet again the close ties among romances editors, readers and writers.



## CONCLUSION

### Tying Up Loose Ends

*There is something decentering about being a woman home alone  
and spending the day at a computer rather than a washing machine.*

BETH KOLKO

“Writing the Romance: Cultural Studies, Community,  
and the Teaching of Writing” (1994)

*Like it or not, interpretation is the only game in town.*

STANLEY FISH

*Is There a Text in This Class?* (1980)

It must be remembered, when now reiterating some of the more salient points argued in the previous pages, that the global market where Harlequin Enterprises today operates, is, to a large extent, the result of forces and events not limited to national boundaries nor to the field of cultural production *per se*. Rather, its mechanisms reside in the field of power or a more vaguely superseding “social space,” that through migration, technology, and travel appears to have become increasingly global since World War II. Publishing has, like any other business, been affected by these factors. Transnational media conglomerates have come to ignore minor obstacles like national borders and languages, relying instead on a world-wide market that seems to have been planned with the English language in mind.

A major premise of this study is that any inquiry into the global and the local is highly context-bound, multifarious, and contradictory. Its empirical realization and outcome varies with time and space; defying the usage of one single approach or one unifying theory. Consequently, I have deployed the two concepts of global/local on *one* distinct process, specific to the transnational publishing of Harlequin Enterprises. Here, the global is represented by a product that is *still* emanating from an Anglo-American horizon, *still* written in English, *still* sold and marketed all over the world. And yet, the

Harlequin romance is also the site for the “localized globalization” I discussed in the introduction. The emphasis on locality and language, independence and autonomy surely lies at the heart of the success of the prospering international markets of the last twenty years. Granted, as a Western country, Sweden is perhaps not that different from either the United States, Britain, or Canada. Nonetheless, I believe that the examples of Förlaget Harlequin and Sweden say something generally about the relationship between Harlequin Enterprises and its various non-English markets.

As my interviews have shown, the relationship to books and reading is never emotionally neutral. Even if professional readings of category romances may differ from the reading of elite or mainstream literary texts because they take place within a brand-name publisher where readings “must be” monotonous and standardized, they also involve passion, vitality, and interest. Despite the rapidity with which these books are published, the editors still describe their experiences of the text they work with in enthusiastic and articulate terms. Their accounts certainly make for one convincing argument against the label of “non-books” that Coser, Kadushin & Powell once so dismissively gave the Harlequin romance, and for the recognition of the commitment, time, and labor that lies behind the entire publishing process of the category romance, regardless of its location.<sup>1</sup>

Although the editors in Stockholm see themselves, in the words of Agneta Knutsson, as working more “assembly-line-like,” they are in fact performing a task very close to what characterizes the traditionally editorial role carried out by their colleagues in Toronto. Their sense of displacement is, I believe, the result of two things I have touched on previously: first, the geographical dislocation from the initial place of acquisitions; and second, the identity that mass market romances and translations have been assigned in Sweden, and the almost logical devaluation of what editors actually do as they are involved in transediting.

The very fact that these editors read so much in so little time, indicates perhaps the loss of all distinction capabilities, but in fact the opposite holds true. As they have said, the book that stands out, that they perceive as unique and satisfying, is still a reality, and the editors look to promote it. Based on the evaluation and distinction of a new book – the Swedish translation – reactions and subsequent actions mirror that of the Toronto/New York/London editors,

with one major difference: where once there was a writer, there is now a translator. Yet *precisely because* this reading is removed, the editors find themselves in a unique position to begin the editorial process anew, and even if they would never say so explicitly, they are involved in acquisitions, line-editing, copy-editing, and translation, a series of procedures that not only resemble those in Toronto, New York, or London, but are also far more powerful than we might previously have recognized. Hinting at this, Ewa Högberg says:

för trots allt så är det ju en författare som en gång har skrivit den med sina ord och med sitt huvud, och så kommer den till oss och så passerar den först port nummer ett, översättaren, och sen port nummer två, granskaren, och ve och fasa om dom vill ha över en bok och sen tillbakaöversätta den, för att.... det skulle nog bli ett ramaskri om man tar de här mest extrema fallen, för då är det ju långt... då står dom ju ganska långt från varandra.<sup>2</sup>

What she is *not* saying, however, is that the editor wants the translator to *think like the editor*. Rather, I mean to suggest that the editor wishes the translator not only to grasp the sentences on the page, but rather to function as an “editorial extension,” to be the one that transforms the book into that something making it a quintessential “Harlequin Romance” in the specific cultural configuration known as Sweden. Subsequently, this context is incessantly produced and reproduced by the coming together of cultural images equally confirming and questioning our view of ourselves and others.

One of the more pressing questions emerging at this time is how to account for the possible *repercussions of transediting*? Does transediting have any kind of impact on the construction of new texts? Here, I believe the answer to be both yes *and* no. As the international markets have grown in importance, Agneta Knutsson acknowledges that Harlequin now listens to their foreign offices and what their readers want to an increasing degree. She puts it this way:

Nordamerika har tagit fram hemska många böcker med rancher för att man upptäcker att det säljer bra. Man börjar ju lyssna nu att hela världen tycker inte att rancher är... ja, en ranch på fyra [böcker], men inte fyra på fyra. Sânt där börjar dom lyssna på mycket mer än tidigare. Vi har haft klagomål också att böckerna har varit för amerikanska [...] för mycket politik eller som handlar om senat och kongresser och sådana där saker som man inte är road av, kanske, för mycket baseball och...<sup>3</sup>

Now, asking writers to reconsider the setting of a book or asking them to

delete its most blatantly “American” features is one thing, but being aware of the way in which the book becomes localized through transediting quite another. As I have listened to writers at conferences contemplating the fate of their books in the global marketplace, I have also been struck by how little Harlequin in Toronto and its representatives have been able to tell them. I see this, not as one, but several problems, above all stemming from the pragmatic fact that editors are far too busy with their own work here and now to have any idea of what happens on the far side of the moon, as it were. The most insidious problem in understanding global and local processes as they are played out in Harlequin romances is the necessity of at least bilinguality or a bilingual/bicultural methodology. North American academia and mass market publishing meet here on unexpected common ground: the English language allegedly promotes the global exchange of romance, as well as highbrow knowledge, but also efficiently impedes contributions and participation from other languages in a variety of venues. Thus, knowledge of transediting at Harlequin Enterprises internally has certainly been hampered by its dependence on bilinguality.

So, Lawrence Venuti’s initial point is well taken; the English *language* has probably aided and abetted in creating a tradition of cultural insularity in North America and Britain, into which minor languages are increasingly finding it difficult to “travel.” The world is looking to English, but is English looking to the world? Digressing slightly, there is a kind of inverted economic and ideological logic lying behind these issues coming to the fore of academic discourse. In a nice twist of fate, ethnicity has become a bankable asset in a global intellectual economics that differentiates itself only marginally from global capitalism and it is at least in part thanks to the astonishing financial resources at the elite research universities in the United States, that the means, the money, and the visibility to launch the criticism against the hegemony of the English language, have been provided in the first place.<sup>4</sup>

A repository of numerous calculations and deliberations on part of producer and consumer, transediting is part of the ongoing “joint-venture” of historical textual intervention so lucidly described by Barbara Herrnstein-Smith:

The endurance of a classical canonical author such as Homer, then, owes not to the alleged transcultural or universal value of his works, but, on the contrary, to the continuity of their circulation in a particular culture. Repeatedly cited and

recited, translated, taught and imitated, and thoroughly enmeshed in the network of intertextuality that continuously *constitutes* the high culture of the orthodoxly educated population of the West (and the Western-educated population of the rest of the world), that highly variable entity we refer to as “Homer” recurrently enters our experience in relation to a large number and variety of our interests and thus can perform a large number of various functions for us and obviously has performed them for many of us over a good bit of the history of our culture.<sup>5</sup>

While I would agree with anyone who says that the bottom-line is what this company is primarily interested in, I would also say that the flexibility displayed in these texts as they become localized is an issue that reverberates with a number of incisive questions for Harlequin writers, as well as their publisher, questions that in view of the changing face of category publishing are all the more insistent.

In retrospect, an awareness of what actually does take place in transediting, is also the basis for understanding the relationship between writer and text/market. The discussion in Chapter Two of the “moral rights clause” and whether or not wine could be served in a Muslim country provides only one specific example. However, Janice Kaiser’s and Sally Wentworth’s books suggest that turning wine to water seems to be the least of any linguistic or cultural worries these authors might have.

At both national and local RWA conferences that I have attended, writers have expressed great interest in the international market for romances, and precisely for the reasons given in the introductory chapter. If “abroad” outranks a “home market” in importance, what does this mean for writers? Both economic and creative concerns come into play here. Writers worry about whether they are selling less or more because of translations, but also whether the text is still “their own.” The fact that “abroad” is becoming more significant by the day makes the question of what happens to a book in translation not only important, but crucial.

To the Harlequin writers, who have seen category romance publishing go from the sole marketing of lines and series to a situation where they are increasingly becoming recognized as brands themselves, the global marketplace highlights profound questions of individuality and self-determination in mass culture. Putting it bluntly: is the Harlequin romance “sacred” to the author, or is it after all only a commodity to be used or abused in order for it to achieve the maximum of sales? How does the Harlequin writer construct

her identity in a global configuration that operates along the lines I have delineated in this book? What impact does transediting really have on the writer and on the publisher? It strikes me as ironic to finish my work by throwing out such momentous questions, but there it is, and the answer for now is that these things remain to be seen.

In Chapter One I argued that in order to grasp the significance of transediting in its various forms, one must consider the vital presence of Anglo-American romance writers. Collectively and individually, published or not, but solely by existing as physical beings in one place and not in another, writers aid in differentiating literary fields spatially. While this should not be taken to mean that there are not others who may assume equally important roles locally, it also sets a fundamental law of inequality in play when it comes to understanding how romances function where they are written and acquired originally, in contrast to where they are transedited.

For many scholars today, Bourdieu's notion of the field has become the logical tool for bringing to light the relationships among those invested in the game, and as powerful and convincing this approach is when it comes to investigating the mechanisms of the specific entity called the literary field, where literature is evaluated, it seems far less effective when we attempt to account for books originating in one place to be reproduced by translation and finally consumed in another. Pierre Bourdieu accounts beautifully for the *national literary field*, like in his own analysis of Gustave Flaubert in *Lès règles de l'art* (1992) where, as in Gisèle Sapiro's essay "La raison littéraire. Le champ littéraire français sous l'Occupation 1940-1944" (1996), focus lies solely on texts created within the nation-state of France.<sup>6</sup>

Bourdieu gives us excellent, detailed studies, sometimes verging on methodological and empirical "overkill," that are almost entirely based on the fact that literature is national, that it is produced, distributed, marketed, and read by someone in a language still predominantly defined within borders of the nation-state. But how are we then to make sense of translations? Surely, in some sense, however small, the French literary field relates to translations? And how are we in particular to make sense of a country like Sweden, where, as we have seen, there is a strong tradition of translations and cultural imports? This limitation of the field has also been noted by Donald Broady: "Mot Bourdieus fältstudier skulle man kunna rikta kritiken att han negligerat de

utländska positionernas betydelse för de franska fälten. Saken kan också uttryckas så att han försummat frågan om huruvida det existerar mer omfattande fält som sträcker sig över nationsgränserna.”<sup>7</sup>

The logical explanation may just lie in terminology: we can argue that translations are part of the market rather than the field. On the other hand, that would exclude translators and/or editors who work with translations and who in effect are present in the field to the same extent as editors working with domestic writers or those writers themselves. Unless the writer *is* the field of course, but even that would be complicated to argue. What about the author who lives and writes in New Zealand, publishes with Mills & Boon (owned by the Canadian Harlequin, but where editorial decisions are still made in Britain), and who primarily sells in the United States, but also in Britain, as well as in local markets around the globe? At first glance, she would seem to be a part of the *sous-champ de grande production* in New Zealand, but because of the geo-politics of transnational publishing, it holds equally and perhaps even more true that this writer, who might well be an active member of RWA through the Internet, occupies a far more critical presence in the North American romance field and subsequently, that she is also positioned in the literary field of the United States and Britain.

Maybe language indeed is the key here, and that the distinction between the United States, Canada, Britain, and New Zealand collapses on the issue of the English language, and not on the demarcation of fields. In fact, Bourdieu rests significantly on an “old” notion of the writer as somehow linked to territoriality and language in a way that is still very viable, yet increasingly problematic in the transnational and global publishing landscape of today.

This is not at all to say that one cannot take Bourdieu from France to Sweden or from France to the United States. With the proper adaptations, considerations, and empirical research, the passage between countries appears like a minor nuisance. No, the dilemma is located elsewhere. As far as I can see, it is more difficult from a Bourdieuan perspective to account for the specificity of the global cultural economy, or the ways that distribution, production, and consumption of cultural artifacts are becoming increasingly transnational. The arrival of the Internet with its enticing cyberspace adds yet another dimension to the business of publishing, one whose results are yet to be witnessed, but where one of the more pressing questions must be its capacity to deterritorialize.

torialize the publishing process even further. Because of its inherent characteristics, the literary field may arguably still be more “national” in its design, but if we broaden the perspective and look at the larger field of cultural production today, of which the Internet is but one part, we face a more acute problem of coming to terms with the precise or “unprecise” locus of cultural production and consumption.

Undoubtedly, the concept of the field has provided this study with an excellent tool for looking at North American romances. It has done so by confirming the paramount importance given to the writer in Bourdieuan thinking, but also because it so convincingly lets us see how the values of originality and individuality, even in parts of a field that at first glance do not seem to have anything to do with the negative economics of *l'art pour l'art*, are being so powerfully reproduced.

The writer, regardless of whether he or she writes thrillers, romances, or Nobel Prize novels, still retains the possibility of being consecrated, admired, even dethroned, whereas editors and translators occupy hidden roles, positioned as faceless “middlewomen,” as copiers or just keepers of a text conceived and written elsewhere. The authoritative power of ingrained symbolic capital, equally present in a popular writer as it is in an avant-garde poet, can be an effective weapon against criticism, and as I discussed in Chapter One, even develop a logic of its own. Because of it, the “global law of inequality” that I mentioned previously rests on the specific way in which North American romance writers are able to construct themselves collectively through ongoing affirmation. There are enough forums, magazines, conferences, professional organizations, and contests to create a field by itself, where approval as well as continuous critique are constantly available, but where both are based on the fundamental belief in *illusio*.

The RWA critique groups constitute one arena where women enter into different roles of reader and writer, as receiver and giver of critique. Operating both as professional workshops and social networks, their transformative potential should not be belittled. The impressive “woman-hours” put into romances by those aspiring writers who more likely than not work full-time, have a husband who does the same, and three children in school; but who still find time to attend meetings, discussions and presentations to further their writing skills and who spend hundreds of dollars on travels and conferences;

are easily neglected as only skimming the surface of change. So is the fact that many of those who aspire to a career as romance writers come from backgrounds where entering into the identity of “writer” constitutes a quantum mental leap, and where pleasure in some cases is taken straight from invisible private reading to visible public writing by a complex negotiation of personal alliances and loyalties.

What I am arguing for, then, is that writing or reading romances does not automatically lead to social passivity. Feminism should in this context be seen as multialigned, allowing for shifting positions that do not necessarily need to be synchronically coherent or logical. Instead, they make for an intricate network of personal and political affiliations, and one should recognize that individual and collective notions of gender, work, and the production and consumption of texts can be, and often are, contradictory. Nor should one assume that if the reader or writer did not read or write romances, she would be out on the barricades forcefully changing the patriarchy, something that implies an either/or relationship that might as well be both/and.

Gender hierarchies are constructed as well as undone in a multitude of ways, and the fact that many aspiring romance writers are striving to write, neither for purely commercial reasons nor through divine inspiration, but rather *in the face of everyday life*, seeking out different positions and trying on alternative roles, is as much evidence in favor of agency and self-determination as it deflates any unreflected presupposition of passivity. We know very little of course, of the impact on labor division in the “traditional” family when a woman goes from having contributed marginally to the family economy to representing perhaps the bulk of her family’s living through romance writing. While I am not saying that romance writers fundamentally alter the gender bias and economy of the publishing business, I am nonetheless arguing that the contradictory aspects of their work should make us question any attempt from cultural authorities to define either literature or feminism as the implicit or explicit prerogative of a specific group of people, equipped with a specific set of capabilities or executing a specific set of actions.

In Sweden, where there are no Harlequin romance writers, either as a strong collective, nor as visible and verbal role models, editors and translators find it difficult to draw on the professional recognition and importance of a highly limited field. The absence of the writer has created a gap between

initial and ensuing place of production, where the lack of a larger context of the production of popular culture assigns the Swedish editors to a more diffuse and uncertain position. Nonetheless, any lingering impression of their work as non-authoritative, powerless, and static, has, I hope, been invalidated by this very study.

From a European-North American perspective, the development of the category romance coincides with a shift in emphasis from male genres to female in the mass market, a shift that took place in the late 1960s and early 1970s, both in the United States and in Sweden. As we have seen, popular movements have been instrumental in shaping the relationship to popular culture in Sweden, which underscores yet again the importance of a discussion on the national specificity of literary fields. To this end, I believe that Harlequin's position in Sweden is linked with circumstances inextricably related to my previous comment on the way in which these books are removed from initial place of production and by this transferal assigned an identity of secondary representation.

Arjun Appadurai, who has discussed the global cultural economy in terms of homogenization and heterogenization, makes a viable point, when he says that homogenization "subspeciates into either an argument about Americanization, or an argument about commoditization, and very often the two arguments are closely linked."<sup>8</sup> The notion of the mass market as "Americanized" in Sweden has two points of reference. Although I will refrain from making too much of his argument, I will all the same suggest that the irony in this categorization as it relates to Harlequin Enterprises is that its imagery has been vividly projected onto a Canadian corporation. Granted, the "Canadianness" of Harlequin hardly makes the company a different one on the global scene, and yet the obvious needs to be noted; it would be highly irregular to think of Canada as nothing more than a geographic and cultural extension of its southern neighbor. Canada, a welfare state with strong social safety nets, and where flows of "American" popular culture products are far more regulated than in Sweden, would at least on the surface appear to have more in common with Sweden than the United States. Neither of the two superstores Borders or Barnes & Noble have been able to establish locations in Canada, eighty percent of the stock of broadcasting stations must be held by Canadians, and foreigners cannot buy book publishing or distributing opera-

tions, unless the alternative is that the companies would disappear.<sup>9</sup>

While Harlequin does not operate as a Canadian publisher in the strictest sense of the word, if you were to ask the Toronto editors, I am sure that they would stress that the company was Canadian, and that they, as opposed to their colleagues working at the editorial offices in New York or Britain, are “another breed.” However minor these different actions and deliberations may seem, they stand as a constant reminder not to automatically assume “global” as a rhetorical stand-in for “American.”

Allowed to speculate, one wonders if France and Canada, countries where cultural identity very much is tied to language(s) and where attempts to ward off the influx of “Americanized” products exemplify specific “national” cultural strategies that are somehow connected to the French language. Perhaps one reason for Bourdieu’s appeal is his very “Frenchness,” and the way in which a strong “national” literary tradition, resting firmly on the role of language in relation to culture and literature, makes this perspective so convincing.

So, almost by definition then, Harlequin Enterprises is “American;” market-driven, a “non-book” company publishing hack writers, and because of this construction, danger comes in the shape of the foreign. Whether or not there has actually been an unconscious or conscious construction of an “Americanized” scapegoat, this image could well have resulted in diverting potential critique from internal parts of the Swedish literary field that certainly had as much to do with the shifting power balance of the field as any “foreign” influence. When attacked from the outside, the family, field, or nation close ranks. Gathering against the imperialist multinational becomes so much easier than questioning the power and resources of a company like Bonniers, which has extended its reach into countless areas of Swedish cultural life. No doubt inadvertently, Staffan Wennberg, Harlequin Enterprises first Scandinavian CEO, contributes to this confusion when in Paul Grescoes’s book *The Merchants of Venus* he says: “John Boon was always extremely supportive and positive. It added a nice touch to the pushy Canadian marketing people;” indicating a version of Eurocentrism that makes Mills & Boon and John Boon out to be “supportive” and “positive,” whereas the Canadians are defined as “pushy.”<sup>10</sup>

While the mass market initially carry with it both a promise and a threat, making what used to be the prerogative of the few accessible to all, it also opens the floodgates and lets everywoman in, illustrating Andreas Huyssen’s obser-

vation that: “the fear of masses is always a fear of woman.”<sup>11</sup> Provocative because it is so clearly related to women, the mass market no longer privileges the Eurocentric, highly educated man who once was the goal to which everything else aspired. Ever since E.D.E.N. Southworth, women have in fact straddled the mass market with a certain aptitude. As in the case of Sigge Stark and many others who have been profited from and exploited (not only by mass market publishers), they also benefitted from a new era.<sup>12</sup>

Although previous studies have clearly demonstrated that the literary field in Sweden has become increasingly feminized over the last forty years, I believe that when looking at the mass market, one cannot uncouple the notion of feminization from the notion of “Americanization.”<sup>13</sup> These two things come together, and because they do, Harlequin arrives in Sweden with a doubly negative baggage: first, as a representative of the “Americanized” mass market which then is distinctly related to the entry of women in publishing and bookselling; and second, by the fact that what the Swedish editors are working with are translations of books written by women in English, the language of global capitalism.

This in turn provides me with the opportunity to discuss the readings I conducted on the two series *Special* and *Exklusiv*. Among other things, they were chosen in order to reveal the differences between the British *Special* and the North American *Exklusiv*. I will not repeat my findings in that chapter here, but instead make some general observations.

What the category romance offers is a text that probes, over and over again, the question of being in relationship with others. By using characters who are perceived of as “ordinary” and sympathetic, who are not the high-powered executives, nor the movie stars of “Glitz” novels, these texts elicit identification and empathy. This is not to say that readers see themselves in the place of fictitious characters, who live out their lives for them; but that in showing that characters the reader likes and respects can overcome the most complicated and problematic of obstacles in order to arrive at a fulfilling life, the Harlequin romance never ceases to affirm that *relationships with others are possible*. The conclusion of the category romance brings about a double resolution: on the one hand, sexual tension dissolves into married bliss, and on the other, family and work life, which clash for most of the plot, are ultimately reconciled. Kay Mussell’s contention that: “Heroines rarely encounter significant moral

questions; instead, they face problems that have solutions in love and commitment,” is a statement that misses the point altogether.<sup>14</sup> This argument would only be true if we believed that there *are* no moral battles to be fought and won within relationships with others, or that there exists an invisible border separating our professional lives from our private, thus dissociating what Mussell terms moral questions from “love and commitment.” That the category romance is successful inasmuch as it deals with problems and issues that are important to women seems such a naive thing to say, but holds no less true because of it.

What started out as a British tradition has partly changed into an Anglo-American one, and this change is certainly the result of several contributing factors. The gradual expansion of Harlequin Enterprises at the expense of Mills & Boon is one, the fact that romances after *The Flame and the Flower* increasingly became a North American phenomenon another. North American readers are sometimes credited with changing the romance genre by their demand for a more “contemporary” story. It should be noted here that to a much greater degree than those originating in Britain, have North American series promoted an “egalitarian” world-view and a recognition of more “feminist” values, challenging any attempt to locate “Americanized” popular culture as the ultimate preserver of old values and hierarchies. Violence, abuse, humiliation, and the perspective of the colonizer are attributes found in the traditional, British romance, and the devious construction of the primacy of the “European” versus the “American” is therefore an issue that does not only operate on the level of the publisher, but also inscribes the text with certain values that might be far from the actual ones.

One thing is certain. Since the time of “The Romance Wars” in the beginning of the 1980s, Harlequin’s brand of category publishing has changed, and continues to change. A more mature market has led to an ongoing diversification into different subgenres, and the category romance has readily incorporated elements from other genres, such as the mystery or the science fiction novel. Any proposed need for “realism” has been refuted by the apparent popularity of “time-travel” romances, where characters mysteriously find themselves removed in space and time. However, the most manifest change that has taken place, is that the name of the author has become more important. All this adds up to a situation where the category publishing of old

– Lawrence W. Heisey’s concept of buying on the basis of the publisher’s name rather than the author’s – is changing.

In conclusion, category romances are not fixed in any way; there is a continuous movement in the text, attributable to a market-driven company’s logical “tap on the market,” as well as to the shifting reading and writing preferences of readers, writers, and editors alike.

Although these different examples show that the romance has proven its potential for change, it is also true that the durability of what now stands as the one, common denominator – heterosexual love – in what otherwise is an extremely diverse genre, is neither overturned, nor questioned in any of the books I have discussed. The global attraction of these books then, lies perhaps in the heterosexual hegemony that they promote, and we need to address this fact to question if its upheaval is the *one mandatory thing* to be achieved in order for us to once and for all prove the power of the “local” as opposed to the “global.” It seems however to be very little chance of that happening, and it is certainly not something explored in this study. Yet something is at work here *beyond* the “boy meets girl” plot. Provided that the romance in its different forms to an equal extent concerns itself with the negotiation of cultural and economic power structures, work-life issues, and the challenges of modern family life, then we might be able to say with increased confidence that what we see in transediting is a local intervention that substantially should make us rethink how global flows of popular culture actually do take place.

Finally, I would like to end with a conjecture about the future, saying something about what possible areas of research my study points to. First, further study of transediting over a longer period of time and from the perspective of, say Russian, Arabic, or Chinese languages and literatures, should cast important light on what *different* cultural values are projected onto the “global” book in other contexts. Such a focus will undoubtedly uncover choices and deliberations unlike those discussed here, thus adding to our overall knowledge of transnational publishing. Second, we need to know more about translation *between* “minor” languages and not only from English into for instance, Swedish. Third, the continued analysis of transnational publishing should look further into the relationships among cultural politics, languages, and the nation-state. To what extent does the nation-state delimit and regulate the production and consumption of cultural artifacts in the conglomeratized

media market of today? In what sense does it not? And last but not least, all of these undertakings *must* be executed by historicizing from the particular cultural context and language at hand, meaning the continued and intensified cooperation across languages and disciplines in that specific arena known as “global academia.”



# Notes



NOTES TO INTRODUCTION  
MAKING THE CASE

1. Harlequin Enterprises, "Success in Any Language: Harlequin Around the World," n.d., n. pg.
2. Harlequin Enterprises, "Foreign Sales Boost Profits for Harlequin Enterprises," n.d., n. pg. Paul Grescoe offers only slightly different numbers: "176.5 million books a year in 23 languages in more than a 100 international markets." Paul Grescoe, *The Merchants of Venus. Inside Harlequin and the Empire of Romance* (VANCOUVER: RAINCOAST BOOKS, 1996), 3.
3. Torstar Corporation, *Torstar Corporation Annual Report 1992* (TORONTO: TORSTAR CORPORATION, [1993?]), 16.
4. Margaret Ann Jensen, *Love's Sweet Return. The Harlequin Story* (TORONTO: THE WOMEN'S PRESS, 1984), 31-32. The Can\$484.8 million sales figure comes from News, *Publishers Weekly*, 18 March 1996, 14.
5. Harlequin Enterprises, "Business Fact Sheet," n.d., n. pg.
6. Gage Averill, "Global Imaginings," in *Making and Selling Culture*, ed. Richard Ohmann (HANOVER, NH: WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1996), 208-209.
7. Lawrence Venuti, *The Translators Invisibility. A History of Translation* (LONDON: ROUTLEDGE, 1995), 17.
8. *Ibid.*, 12-14.
9. Stuart Hall, "The Local and the Global: Globalization and Ethnicity," in *Culture, Globalization and the World-System: Contemporary Conditions for the Representation of Identity*, ed. Anthony D. King (LONDON: MACMILLAN, 1991), 30.
10. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., "Planet Rap. Notes on the Globalization of Culture," in *Fieldwork. Sites in Literary and Cultural Studies*, eds. Marjorie Garber, Paul B. Franklin and Rebecca L. Walkowitz (LONDON: ROUTLEDGE, 1996), 58.
11. Johan Svedjedal, *Bokens Samhälle. Svenska Bokförläggareföreningen och svensk bokmarknad 1887-1943* (STOCKHOLM: SVENSKA BOKFÖRLÄGGAREFÖRENINGEN, 1993), 1:190.
12. Based on statistics used in Johan Svedjedal, "Den svenska bokmarknaden," in Lars Lönnroth and Hans-Erik Johannesson, eds. *Den Svenska Litteraturen. Bokmarknad, bibliografier, samlingsregister* (STOCKHOLM: BONNIERS, 1990), 7:32.
13. Yngve Lindung, "Den angloamerikanska litteraturens dominans," *Kulturrådet. Statens Kulturråd informerar*, 5 (1993): 18. At this point, I should also say something of the way in which I have chosen to treat Swedish words, sentences, and quotes in this book. First, single words in Swedish (like "populärpocketromaner"), are immediately followed

by a translation in English, put in square brackets. Whole sentences and longer quotes are translated into English in the note pertaining to the original quote.

14. Morris Eaves, "Why Don't They Leave It Alone? Speculations on the Authority of the Audience in Editorial Theory," in *Cultural Artifacts and the Production of Meaning. The Page, The Image and the Body*, eds. Margaret J. M. Ezell and Katherine O'Brien O'Keefe (ANN ARBOR: THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN PRESS, 1996), 91.
15. On the uneven power balance of the Internet and "global" cyberspace, see for instance Lars Ilshammar and Ola Larsmo, *Net.Wars. Kampen om nätet* (STOCKHOLM: ATLAS FÖRLAG, 1997).
16. Harper's Index, *Harper's Magazine*, May 1997, 15. Source: Federal Communications Commission. *Ibid.*, 69.
17. Although the terms "globalization" and "internationalization" would seem to denote much the same thing, Rowland Lorimer and Eleanor O'Donnell argues that globalization means "that the market for already produced media products [...] are being extended from certain centers in developed countries to other developed and developing countries," whereas internationalization can be defined as "trade in media products made for national or interest-community audiences between media producers located in different nations." See Rowland Lorimer and Eleanor O'Donnell, "Globalization and internationalization in publishing," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 17, 4 (1992): n. pg., online, Internet, 28 February 1997. On global corporations and their strategies more generally, see Richard J. Barnet and John Cavanagh, *Global Dreams. Imperial Corporations and the New World Order* (NEW YORK: SIMON & SCHUSTER, 1994) and Richard Ohmann, ed., *Making and Selling Culture*, (HANOVER, NH: WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1996). The last volume is especially interesting because it takes the unusual approach of letting both scholars and those who work within transnational and global organizations and corporations contribute on equal footing with their different experiences.
18. More on Celebration in Russ Rymer, "Back to the Future. Disney Reinvents the Company Town," *Harper's Magazine*, October 1996, 65-71, 75-78.
19. John Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture* (LONDON: ROUTLEDGE, 1989), 31.
20. This is of course a much simplified attempt to capture a very sophisticated argument in this highly influential book. See Barbara Herrnstein Smith, *Contingencies of Value. Alternative Perspectives for Critical Theory* (CAMBRIDGE: HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1988), 30-31.
21. One hardly needs to go looking for descriptions such as this one, referring to Victor Weybright, the man behind the commercial and critical success of NAL (New American Library). Kenneth C. Davis, *Two-Bit Culture. The Paperbacking of America* (BOSTON: HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY, 1984), 277.
22. Lewis A. Coser, Charles Kadushin and Walter W. Powell, *Books. The Culture and Commerce of Publishing* (NEW YORK: BASIC BOOKS INC., 1982), 148, 151 and Grescoe, *Merchants of Venus*, 275.
23. For the most substantial account yet of women in Swedish publishing, see Johan Svedjedal "Kvinnorna i den svenska bokbranschen. Om feminisering, integrering och segregering," in *Författare och förläggare och andra litteratursociologiska studier* (HEDEMORA: GIDLUNDS 1994), 70-113.

24. Saskia Sassen, *Losing Control? Sovereignty in an Age of Globalization* (NEW YORK: COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1996), 12, 9. According to Sassen, this concentration tend to be located to a few powerful “global cities,” London, Paris, New York. For an extended discussion on this aspect, see Saskia Sassen, “Whose City Is It? Globalization and the Formation of New Claims?,” *Public Culture* 8, 2 (1996): 205-223. Since publishing is a highly centralized business (think only of Paris, where a few blocks on the left bank basically encompass the entire French publishing scene), one could certainly envision an interesting study of publishing from the geo-political perspective of the city.
25. 1995 revenues (\$) in parenthesis; Hearst (2.3 billion), Rupert Murdoch’s News Corporation (9 billion [8.67 billion according to *Publishers Weekly* – with books representing 8 percent, together with magazines and newspapers 46 percent]), Pearson PLC (2.8 billion), Viacom (11.3 billion [11.69 billion according to *Publishers Weekly* – publishing making up for 18.6 percent]), Advance Publications (5.3 billion), Bertelsman AG (14 billion), Time Warner (8.1 billion), and Holtzbrink (2 billion). All data taken from Mark Crispin Miller, “The Crushing Power of Big Publishing,” *The Nation*, 17 March 1997, 23-26 and from Jim Milliot, “It’s All About Content,” *Publishers Weekly*, 24 June 1996, 28-30.
26. Depending on the make-up of the conglomerate/corporation, alternative names could be listed here. I have chosen to emphasize those discussed in the special issue of *The Nation* mentioned in the previous note, where publishing takes precedence over other media. For a more complete and up-to-date overview from a different angle, I would suggest that the interested reader turn to Edward S. Herman and Robert W. McChesney’s *The Global Media. The New Missionaries of Global Capitalism* (LONDON: CASSELL, 1997). However, one should keep in mind that mergers and buy-outs occur with astounding speed in the media world, and that information tends to become obsolete almost from one day to the next.
27. On Borders and Barnes & Noble, see Karen Angel, “Superstore War,” *Publishers Weekly*, 11 March 1996, 34-37 and Miller, “Crushing Power,” 14-15. Thomas Whiteside, *The Blockbuster Complex. Conglomerates, Show Business, and Book Publishing* (MIDDLETOWN, CONN: WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1980) is still a useful introduction to the changing face of American publishing and bookselling.
28. The names of these French publishers are not disclosed, nor is the percentage dated. Resa L. Dudovitz, *The Myth of Superwoman* (LONDON: ROUTLEDGE, 1990), 49. Until the fall of 1997, Norstedts was owned by Liber AB, in turn held by the Dutch company Wolters Kluwer. According to Liber’s Resident Director Birgitta Johansson-Hedberg, Norstedts represented only fourteen percent of the conglomerate’s combined revenues in 1996. Fredrik Lindberg, “Bantat Liber omgrupperar för att vända vinstfall,” *Svensk Bokhandel* 46, 15 (1997): 23. On 7 October 1997, KF Media acquired Norstedts. The sale included all fiction, non-fiction and multimedia operations. Shares in two bookclubs (Liber’s thirty-five percent share of Böckernas Klubb and Norstedts’ thirty percent share of Månadens Bok) were also included. Fredrik Lindberg, “Liber behåller godbitar när Norstedts blir blåvitt,” *Svensk Bokhandel* 46, 19 (1997): 30-31.
29. For further data on these strategies, see Staffan Sundin, *Från bokförlag till mediekoncern. Huset Bonnier 1909-1929* (MEDDELANDEN FRÅN EKONOMISK-HISTORISKA INSTITUTIONEN VID GÖTEBORGS UNIVERSITET 70, GÖTEBORG, 1996).

30. Fredrik Lindberg and Lasse Winkler, "Bonniers grupperar för framtiden," *Svensk Bokhandel* 46, 13 (1997): 21-23. This extensive article, published in the Swedish book industry's trade paper, *Svensk Bokhandel*, is highly informative on the Bonnier empire.
31. Milliot, "It's All About Content," 28.
32. News, *Publishers Weekly*, 14 October 1996, 10.
33. Harlequin Enterprises, "Foreign Sales," n. pg.
34. Barnet and Cavanagh, *Global Dreams*, 15.
35. I believe that it would be futile at any point to give the reader a condensed version of exactly how this "mix" comes about, especially by exemplifying through a set of "indispensable texts." I prefer to argue that what informs this study in its entirety is a perspective, a way of looking at things. Although very much in the line of Johan Svedjedal's 1996 manifesto for the Sociology of Literature, another text in particular comes to mind. Be it of recognition, sympathy or understanding (or all of the above), Stuart Hall's "The emergence of cultural studies and the crisis of the humanities," may sound humdrum, but should be read by anyone trying to figure out what it means to "do" academic work. See Johan Svedjedal, "Det litteratursociologiska perspektivet. Om en forskningstradition och dess grundantaganden," *Tidskrift för litteraturvetenskap* 25, 3-4 (1996): 3-20 and Stuart Hall, "The emergence of cultural studies and the crisis of the humanities," *October* 53 (1990): 11-23.
36. Tania Modleski, *Loving With a Vengeance. Mass-Produced Fantasies for Women* (NEW YORK, LONDON: ROUTLEDGE, 1990) 58, 57.
37. In her new introduction to the 1991 edition of *Reading the Romance*, Radway mentions the trend within her academic department at the time (American Civilization Department at The University of Pennsylvania) from a sociological approach to literature to a more anthropological one as coinciding with studies being made at the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies; both of which were to influence her own work. Janice Radway, *Reading the Romance. Women, Patriarchy and Popular Literature* (CHAPEL HILL: THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA PRESS, 1991), 3-4. *Reading the Romance* has been extremely influential, both in Sweden and abroad. See for instance Lisbeth Larsson, *En annan historia. Om kvinnors läsning och svensk veckopress* (LUND: SYMPOSION, 1989), 237 ff; Ulf Boëthius, "Populärlitteraturen – finns den?," *Tidskrift för litteraturvetenskap* 20, 2 (1991): 11-12; Hillevi Ganetz, "Han, hon, den, det-om feministisk populärkulturforskning," *Tidskrift för Litteraturvetenskap* 20, 2 (1991): 49; Carol Thurston, *The Romance Revolution. Erotic Novels for Women and the Quest for a New Sexual Identity* (URBANA: UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS PRESS, 1987), 126-127; Leslie W. Rabine, *Reading the Romantic Heroine. Text, History, Ideology* (ANN ARBOR, UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN PRESS, 1985), 250; Catherine Kirkland, "For the Love of It: Women Writers and the Popular Romance" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1984), 12; Deborah K. Chappel, "American Romances. Narratives of Culture and Identity" (Ph.D. diss., Duke University, 1991), 67-68, and of course, this present study.
38. Radway, *Reading the Romance*, 4.
39. *Ibid.*, 91. This reminds me of what I heard from the participants in the "Readers Panel" at the RWA National Conference in St. Louis 1993, all of whom were avid romance

- readers. None of them seemed to equate television with reading, and when they watched television they did so very selectively.
40. Eva Hemmungs Wirtén, "Om Konsten att läsa läsaren – och sig själv. Ett samtal med Janice Radway," *Tidskrift för Litteraturvetenskap* 24, 1 (1995): 80.
  41. Janice Radway, "Romance and the Work of Fantasy: Struggles over Feminine Sexuality and Subjectivity at Century's End," in Jon Cruz ed. *Viewing, Reading, Listening: Audiences and Cultural Reception* (BOULDER: WESTVIEW PRESS, 1994).
  42. Following this line of thought, Jan Cohn focuses especially on sexuality and power relationships in romances and although she too is aware of the changes that have taken place, she attributes these to "presentation," whereas the "surface story," (presumably meaning heterosexual love) remains intact. Jan Cohn, *Romance and the Erotics of Property* (DURHAM: DUKE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1988), 115. Lesbian and gay romances are nothing new to the genre, and while their presence hardly rewrites the hegemony of heterosexual love, one is wise to remember that there is a critical and textual discourse taking place that elaborates on some of the genre's parameters, while discarding and questioning the most fundamental one.
  43. Bridget Fowler, *The Alienated Reader. Women and Romantic Literature in the Twentieth-Century* (LONDON: HARVESTER WHEATSHEAF, 1991), 137.
  44. Chappel, "American Romances," 18.
  45. Edwin Gentzler, *Contemporary Translation Theories* (LONDON: ROUTLEDGE, 1993), 185.
  46. Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan, introduction to *Scattered Hegemonies. Postmodernity and Transnational Feminist Practices*, eds. Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan (MINNEAPOLIS: UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA PRESS, 1994), 3-4.
  47. All interviews in this study were made with a tape-recorder. They have then been transcribed and I have quoted all participants basically without editing their language.
  48. See Pierre Bourdieu, "Understanding," *Theory, Culture and Society* 13, 2 (1996): 17-37. See also Bridget Fowlers commentary in the same issue, where she discusses the possible consequences this new approach might have in relation to *La Distinction* and whether or not Bourdieu's revision now disqualifies his previous research. Bridget Fowler, "An Introduction to Pierre Bourdieu's 'Understanding,'" *Ibid.*: 1-16.



NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE  
“UN JEU À QUI GAGNE, GAGNE”

1. See for instance Daphne Clair, “Sweet Subversions,” in *Dangerous Men and Adventurous Women. Romance Writers on the Appeal of the Romance*, ed. Jayne Ann Krentz (PHILADELPHIA: UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA PRESS, 1992), 61-72. For a condensed but relevant description of the romance in its various historic shapes, before and after Austen and Brontë, see the entry “Romance Fiction,” in Claire Buck, ed. *The Bloomsbury Guide to Women’s Literature* (NEW YORK: PRENTICE HALL, 1992), 967-969.
2. Linda Barlow, “The Androgynous Writer,” in Krentz, *Dangerous Men*, 46.
3. According to *A Dictionary of Modern Critical Terms*, [romance is] “a term that can encompass the medieval narrative poem, Spenser’s *Faerie Queen*, gothic horrors and sentimental pap for the mass market.” Roger Fowler, ed., *A Dictionary of Modern Critical Terms* (LONDON: ROUTLEDGE, 1987), 208. In order to find a common denominator, Gillian Beer distinguishes a “cluster of properties” common to all romances: “the themes of love and adventure, [...] profuse sensuous detail, simplified characters [...] a happy ending, amplitude of proportions, a strongly enforced code of conduct to which all the characters must comply.” A strong emphasis on quality as opposed to non-quality is apparent in her book, and Beer does not hesitate to write “any history of the romance will in one sense be a record of decadence.” Gillian Beer, *The Romance* (LONDON: METHUEN, 1970), 10, 1. In view of the fact that the term is widely used in reference to the particular contemporary romance phenomenon, Jan Cohn offers instead the alternative “popular romance” – designating it as “the story of how a modern, young woman succeeds in marrying a handsome, desirable and wealthy man.” See Cohn, *Romance and the Erotics*, 3. While all definitions in some sense or other are inadequate, I will keep the term as it stands – taking “romance” in this book to mean the modern mass market romance and, if not stated otherwise, nothing else.
4. Jayne Ann Krentz, “Trying to Tame the Romance: Critics and Correctness,” in Krentz, *Dangerous Men*, 108.
5. John Tebbel, *Between Covers. The Rise and Transformation of Book Publishing in America* (NEW YORK: OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1987), 67. The paperback is often referred to as either being “mass market” or “trade.” This study concerns itself with the former. “Trade” paperbacks is a more recent phenomenon, primarily introduced to be sold through booksellers rather than mass market outlets. Many began as college and university editions, but have since then more generally come to describe a “quality” paperback line. More on the “trade” paperback in Kenneth C. Davis, *Two-Bit Culture*, 207 ff. See also Coser, Kadushin and Powell, *Books*, esp. chapter one, “Commerce and Culture:

- A Historical Survey of Book Publishing in America," 13-35. My abridged version of *Brother Jonathan* and the history of the paperback in the United States and its relationship to romances, owe a great deal to these books and to Radway, *Reading the Romance*, esp. chapter one, "The Institutional Matrix," 19-45.
6. Radway, *Reading the Romance*, 24.
  7. For reasons of brevity, this is a highly schematic description. For an extended discussion, see Per Gedin, *Literature in the Marketplace* (LONDON: FABER & FABER, 1977) esp. chapter one, "The Reading Public and the Book Market," 13-43 and chapter two, "The Disintegration of the Reading Public," 44-58.
  8. Dudovitz, *Myth of Superwoman*, 59.
  9. Gedin, *Literature in the Marketplace*, 50.
  10. Davis, *Two-Bit Culture*, 19.
  11. Tebbel, *Between Covers*, 161. For an interesting discussion on the relationship between copyright law and the notion of "author," as it has come to be firmly established in Western thought and literature, see Peter Jaszi and Martha Woodmansee, "The Ethical Reaches of Authorship," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 95, 4 (Fall 1996): 947-977.
  12. Additional information on Albatross and other, similar European publishing houses can be found in Davis, *Two-Bit Culture*, esp. chapter two: "Complete and Unabridged," 12-30.
  13. Janice Radway, "The Scandal of the Middlebrow: The Book-Of-The-Month Club, Class Fracture, and Cultural Authority," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 89, 4 (Fall 1990): 705-706.
  14. Davis, *Two-Bit Culture*, 16. For further insight in Orion Howard Cheyney and the importance of his study, see Janice Radway, *Books and Reading in the Age of Mass Production. The Book-of-the-Month Club, Middlebrow Culture and the Transformation of the Literary Field in the United States 1926-1940*. The Adam Helms Lecture 1996 (STOCKHOLM: SVENSKA BOKFÖRLÄGGAREFÖRENINGEN, 1996). At the time of his book *La Sociologie de la Littérature* in 1958, Robert Escarpit noted that the number of full- and medium-sized bookshops in the United States were three or four times fewer (per capita) than in France. Robert Escarpit, *La Sociologie de la Littérature* (PARIS: PUF, 1958), 85-86. Coser, Kadushin and Powell also reached the conclusion that there were fewer bookstores per capita in the United States than in Japan and many European countries. They relied on data from the United States census to show that the number of bookshops increased from 2,845 establishments in 1963 to 12,718 in 1977. Coser, Kadushin and Powell, *Books*, 336. It is important to remember though, that the expansion of the superstores occurred *after* their study ended.
  15. Radway, *Reading the Romance*, 31.
  16. Anyone searching for detailed biographical information on these writers and others mentioned here, is well advised to consult Aruna Vasudevan, ed., *Twentieth-Century Romance and Historical Writers*, third edition (NEW YORK: ST. JAMES PRESS, 1994).
  17. The gothic heroine was a young and naive girl who, as Tania Modleski writes: "comes to a mysterious house, perhaps as a bride, perhaps in another capacity, and either starts to mistrust her husband or else finds herself in love with a mysterious man who appears to be some kind of criminal." Modleski, *Loving with a Vengeance*, 59. Only

figures of her imagination, the husband is generally innocent, while the real villain is the man who on the surface has behaved courteously, attentively and kindly to her during the course of the book.

18. Hardly any book dealing with the romance phenomenon fails to recount this story. See for instance Radway, *Reading the Romance*, 33-34, Grescoe, *Merchants of Venus*, 93, and Davis, *Two-Bit Culture*, 361.
19. Davis, *Two-Bit Culture*, 359.
20. Jayne Ann Krenz, interview by author, tape recording, St. Louis, MI., 30 July 1993.
21. Guinzburg quoted in Whiteside, *Blockbuster Complex*, 145. For a longer account of these events, see Whiteside, *Blockbuster Complex*, esp. chapter one, "Drastic Changes," 1-16.
22. Romance Writers of America, "Romantically Speaking. A Glossary of Romance Terms" (Houston: Romance Writers of America, n.d [1995?]), n. pg. Although no precise source is given to these numbers, I believe that rwa have consulted The Book Industry Study Group's (BISG) 1993 *Consumer Research Study on Book Purchasing*. Romances also dominate (but not to the same extent) the Euromonitor survey referred to by Peter Mann in "Romantic Fiction and its Readership," *Poetics* 14 (1985): 96. The cost of these market reports is prohibitively high and I have never been able to rely on anything but secondary sources when it comes to these statistics. To give some kind of idea of the money involved, one could mention that the cost for one of the recent Euromonitor surveys is \$7,900. As this quote from *Romance Writers' Report* show, statistics can be deceiving: "According to figures published in *Publishers Weekly* (Feb. 5, 1996) mass market paperbacks accounted for only 7.9% of gross book sales in 1993 and 5.7% in 1994. Of that, romance earned less than 3% for the entire publishing industry (assuming that the 46.8% figure remained stable). Book club sales accounted for 20.8% of sales in 1994 and medical texts accounted for 19.7% of sales in 1993. Trade books and school textbooks are the big money makers for publishers. When you examine the figures, romance is small potatoes." Mary Ellen Donahue, "A Dose of Reality," *Romance Writers' Report*, May 1996, 24. On the other hand, in their Book Industry Trends 1996, BISG predicts that the category "Pleasure" (where mass market paperbacks are included) as opposed to "Professional and Reference" and "Educational," in the year 2000 will represent domestic consumer spending of 17.9, 6.8 and 5.9 billion dollars respectively. Login [www.bisg.com](http://www.bisg.com), 26 February 1997. See also Gary Ink, "Output Bounced Back in '94," *Publishers Weekly*, 29 April 1996, where the total number of mass market paperbacks in the United States 1994 are listed as 2,658 – as opposed to 3,564 the year before. Of these 2,658, 1,944 were categorized as fiction (seventy-three percent) and although *Publishers Weekly* fails to mention how many of these were romances, SOLA (South Louisiana Romance Writers of America), instead claim that 1,631 were. This would add up to an amazing eighty-four percent of the entire fiction category. Compared to the whole output of mass market paperbacks in both fiction and non-fiction, sixty-one percent would be romances. Login [home.gnof.org/~sola/solahome.html](http://home.gnof.org/~sola/solahome.html), 28 February 1997. Without getting lost in the trenches of statistics, it seems safe to say that romances play a major role in mass market publishing of the United States today.
23. Dana Wechsler Linden and Matt Ross, "I'm Hungry, But Not For Food," *Forbes*, 6 July 1992, 71.

24. There is a vacillating tendency in Bourdieu's terminology and the distinction between on the one hand *le champ littéraire* and on the other hand *le champ de production culturelle* are somewhat vague. My own understanding is that *champ de production culturelle* stands for a larger body of cultural production, where books (*champ littéraire*) comprise but one part. Primarily, what has interested me in this chapter, is the logic of the field and its subdivisions. I have taken these to be identical in the literary field *and* in the field of cultural production. Considering that Harlequin Enterprises is a publisher, albeit perhaps one oriented towards the fringes of the literary field, and in view of the fact that publishing houses increasingly branch out into other forms of media; Harlequin Enterprises exemplifies the transgressive quality of these two fields. Those who read Swedish and would like a further insight into the Bourdieuan context are well advised to read Donald Broady's majestic *Sociologi och epistemologi. Om Pierre Bourdieus författarskap och den historiska epistemologin* (STOCKHOLM: HLS FÖRLAG, 1990). Another helpful book in trying to come to grips with Bourdieuan terminology is Alain Accardo and Philippe Corcuff, eds., *La Sociologie de Bourdieu* (BOURDEUX: LE MASCARET, 1985).
25. The term "interpretative communities" is Stanley Fish's.
26. Pierre Bourdieu and Loïc J. D. Wacquant, preface to *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* (CHICAGO: THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS, 1992), xiv. A similar invitation comes in a review essay of this book and three more on Bourdieu by Ghassan Hage, "Pierre Bourdieu in the nineties: Between the church and the atelier," *Theory and Society. Renewal and Critique in Social Theory* 23, 3 (1994): 419-440. Toril Moi's important contribution "Appropriating Bourdieu: Feminist Theory and Pierre Bourdieu's Sociology of Culture," *New Literary History* 22, 4 (1991): 1017-1049, can also be read in this light – as a suggestion on how to elaborate on Bourdieu's theory and research.
27. Pierre Bourdieu, *Les Règles de l'art. Genèse et structure du champ littéraire* (PARIS: SEUIL, 1992), 251.
28. Pierre Bourdieu, "Questions of Method," in *Empirical Studies of Literature: Proceedings of the Second IGEL-Conference, Amsterdam 1989*, eds. Elrud Ibsch, Dick Schram, Gerard Steen (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1991), 23.
29. *Ibid.*, 28.
30. Richard Jenkins, *Pierre Bourdieu* (LONDON: ROUTLEDGE, 1992), 175.
31. Ned Ackerman, "Why I Write Romances" and Vince Brach, "Men With Romantic Hearts – and Pens," (where also Rodgers comment is found) *Romance Writers' Report*, May 1996, 30, 22-23. A comment from the editor following Brach's article is worth quoting: "Since so many rwa members ignore the demographics profile on the membership renewal form – or write something 'cute' when we ask about 'sex', we aren't sure exactly how many male members we have." *Ibid.*, 23. Janice Radway notes that her bookseller informant Dot claimed that her customers were able to tell whether or not a man could be found behind the pseudonym. See Radway, *Reading the Romance*, 179.
32. I am here subscribing to Toril Moi's notion of gender and field, where gender and class are seen as parts of the overarching social field, but do not in themselves constitute a specific field. Moi, "Appropriating Bourdieu," 1034. For a Bourdieuan study revolving around a field that may possibly be seen as both a field of gender and a gendered field, see Sandrine Garcia, "Project for a Symbolic Revolution: the Rise and Fall of the

- Women's Movement in France," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 93, 4 (Fall 1994): 825-869.
33. Jim Collins, *Uncommon Culture. Popular Culture and Post-Modernism* (LONDON: ROUTLEDGE, 1989), 43. More on this particular analogy in Bourdieu and Wacquant, *Invitation to Reflexive*, 19, 98-100. Although Bourdieu recognizes the importance of genre as one of the determining factors in the production and reception of literature, when discussing "la hiérarchie des genres," I suspect that he is not addressing the supremacy of the crime story over the romance, but rather thinking of the something akin to poetry versus drama. See Pierre Bourdieu, "Le champ littéraire," *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 89, 9 (1991): 20. Although "genre" is as complicated a term as "romance" I will here take it to mean a "recurring type of literature, or as we now often call it, a 'literary form.'" M. H. Abrams, ed., *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (FORTH WORTH: HARCOURT BRACE JOVANOVIĆ, 1993), 75. See also Wendell V. Harris, ed., *Dictionary of Concepts in Literary Criticism and Theory* (NEW YORK: GREENWOOD PRESS, 1992), 120-127. The general point I am trying to make here, is that a genre is not written in stone, but rather a flexible and historically contingent entity.
  34. Romance Writers of America, "Romantically Speaking," n. pg. See also Phyllis Taylor Pianka, *How to Write Romances* (CINCINNATI: WRITERS' DIGEST BOOKS, 1988), 5-6. Y.A, or Young Adult, does not really exist as a separate subgenre in Sweden. For an extended discussion on Y.A, see Linda K. Christian-Smith, *Becoming a Woman through Romance* (NEW YORK: ROUTLEDGE, 1990). Swedish readers are often assumed to be younger than their North American counterparts. See Karin Lövgren "Farlig lockelse – om tonårsflickors läsning av romantikböcker," in *Om Unga Kvinnor*, eds. Karin Lövgren and Hillevi Ganetz (LUND: STUDENTLITTERATUR, 1991).
  35. Lucinda Dyer, "Love, Thy Magic Spell is Everywhere," *Publishers Weekly*, 13 May 1996, 46. For more on "ethnic" romances, see "Meet Monica Harris," editorial, *Romance Writers' Report*, January-February 1995, 20 and Shirley Hailstock, "Writing Multicultural Romance," *I'll Take Romance*, Summer 1995, 64-67.
  36. Several women in Carol Thurston's 1985 reader survey considered Shirley Conran's *Lace* (1982) as "trash," apparently rating language and sexual descriptions as both vulgar and too graphic for it to qualify as a romance. Thurston, *Romance Revolution*, 194. Classifying Erich Segal's bestseller *Love Story* (1970) a romance would be an equally misleading designation. See John Cawelti, *Adventure, Mystery and Romance. Formula Stories as Art and Popular Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), 42. Not only does the book end unhappily, but more significantly, it is written by a male writer who kills off the heroine, something romance readers quite possibly could consider the ultimate turn-off. Robert James Waller's *The Bridges of Madison County* (1992) also stirred up feelings among romance writers. Not only did this book too have a sad ending (thus almost automatically making it "better"), but many female romance writers deemed the substantial financial backing of a book that in many ways conformed to romance convention, as a result of Waller being a man and not a woman.
  37. Stanley Fish, *Is There a text in this Class? The Authority of Interpretative Communities* (CAMBRIDGE, HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1980), 11. This is very similar to Bourdieu's view of genres as "ensembles des conventions et de présuppositions pour la plupart tacites et tacitement admises par l'ensemble des agents admis dans le champ." Bourdieu, "champ littéraire," 37.

38. Cawelti, *Adventure, Mystery and Romance*, 10.
39. Thurston, *Romance Revolution*, 186.
40. Harlequin Enterprises, *A Harlequin Guide to Writing Romance Fiction. Superromance*, 1988, audiotape.
41. Thurston, *Romance Revolution*, 186-187. To complicate things even further, she also adds mainstream fiction to the equation: "Though there is considerable confusion about the difference between mainstream fiction and mainstream romance, some editors subscribe to the belief that "if men also read it, it's mainstream fiction." Thurston, *Romance Revolution*, 187. An article in *Romance Writers' Report*, defines mainstream as: "general fiction; books with male and female crossover audience; books that transcends genres." Rachele Nelson, "What's My Line? On Professional Literacy," *Romance Writers' Report*, July-August 1994, 39. I believe that it is more accurate to maintain Thurston's division, and reserve this latter definition for mainstream *fiction*.
42. *Romance Writers' Report* has a recurring "market update," where all romance publishers are listed together with what they are currently looking for.
43. She did this at a seminar entitled "Category and Mainstream – What's the Difference?" at the 1993 RWA National Conference, St. Louis 1993.
44. Phyllis Stobler, interview by author, tape recording, St. Louis, MI., 31 July 1993.
45. She discussed this at her seminar "Projecting Professionalism" at the 1993 RWA National Conference, St. Louis 1993.
46. Bourdieu, "champ littéraire," 7. It is striking how much Bourdieu has in common with Robert Escarpit and some of the ideas he outlined in *Sociologie de la Littérature* (1958). Mostly known perhaps for having coined the terms "le circuit lettré" and "les circuits populaires" (the genealogy to the division of the field is apparent), Escarpit also discusses three aspects that have come to be part and parcel of Bourdieu's analysis of the writer in the literary field; Génération et équipes, origines géographiques and origines socio-professionnelles. See esp. chapter three, "L'Écrivain dans le temps" and chapter four, "L'Écrivain dans la société," 29-40, 41-56. Note also Coser, Kadushin and Powell's notion of "producer-oriented" (Off-Off Broadway) and "distributor-oriented" (Broadway) companies, roughly corresponding to Bourdieu's and Escarpit's categories. See Coser, Kadushin and Powell, *Books*, 42.
47. The "map" of *le champ de production culturelle* can be found in Bourdieu, "champ littéraire," 11 and in Bourdieu, *Règles de l'art*, 178.
48. Bourdieu, *Règles de l'art*, 335. A similarly morbid but very apt expression is "meurtes symboliques," which perhaps can be viewed as a analogous type of exclusion, but in this case more directed toward the writer himself/herself. Bourdieu, "champ littéraire," 13. This has also been noted by Escarpit, who talks about the "interaction négative" of "le circuit lettré," seemingly touching on the same delimitation practices as Bourdieu. Escarpit, *Sociologie de la Littérature*, 84.
49. Bourdieu and Wacquant, *Invitation to Reflexive*, 97.
50. When Janis Reams Hudson took over as president in 1994, RWA counted 7,635 members (as of 31 October 1994 – up 11.3 percent from the past fiscal year) – only a few months

later, thirty-one new ones made the total 7,666 (28 February 1995), and as of the latest numbers in 1997 there were more than 7,900 members – this in comparison with the 2,500 when Hudson joined herself ten years earlier. See Janis Reams Hudson, “Presidents Message,” *Romance Writers’ Report*, January-February 1995, 12-13 and *Romance Writers’ Report*, May-June 1995, 14-15. Latest numbers from login [www.rwanational.com](http://www.rwanational.com), 28 February 1997. For a breakdown on what membership dues actually are being used for, see Amelia Austin, “Ju\$t WheRe Doe\$ the MoneY Go?,” *Romance Writers’ Report*, May-June 1995, 33. There is a similar writers organization in Britain: Romantic Novelist’s Association. More on RNA in Kristin Hughes, “The Business of Romance – British Style,” *Romance Writers’ Report*, April 1996, 20-21.

51. I recommend that the interested reader turn to the two dissertations about rwa that I have discussed previously: Catherine Kirkland’s “For the Love of It: Women Writers and the Popular Romance” (1984) and Beth Kolko, “Writing the Romance: Cultural Studies, Community, and the Teaching of Writing” (Ph.D. diss., The University of Texas at Austin, 1994).
52. More on rwa and the Internet, see Carol Howey, “You Light Up My Screen,” *Romance Writers’ Report*, March-April 1995, 44 and esp. the special issue “Getting on the ‘Net,” *Romance Writers’ Report*, April 1996. See also Lorraine Heath and Shay Flynn, “E-mail: How We and Others Use it for Critiques,” *Romance Writers’ Report*, May-June 1995, 36-37, where they tell of their three-year critique partnership – one living in Texas and the other in Alabama.
53. Sharon Ihle, “Writers on Writers. Spotlighting – Diana Gabaldon,” *Romance Writers’ Report*, March-April 1995, 48-49
54. John Fiske, “The Cultural Economy of Fandom” in *The Adoring Audience. Fan Culture and Popular Media*, ed. Lisa A. Lewis (LONDON: ROUTLEDGE, 1991), 37-39. See also Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, 142-151.
55. For other examples of the kind of “auxiliary” products and services I am referring to, see Taylor Pianka, *How to Write Romances*, 12 and Wechsler Linden and Ross, “I’m Hungry,” 71. This kind of reinforcing strategies have also been noted by John Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, 174.
56. Login [www.home.gnof.org/~sola/solahome.html](http://www.home.gnof.org/~sola/solahome.html), 28 February 1997.
57. Data on members from login [www.rwanational.com](http://www.rwanational.com), 28 February 1997.
58. Karen Stone, interview by author, tape recording, St. Louis, MI., 31 July 1993.
59. Jayne Ann Krentz, introduction to Krentz, *Dangerous Men*, 3.
60. Romance Writers of America, “Industry Statistics” (Houston: Romance Writers of America, n.d. [1995?]), n. pg.
61. Debbie Macomber, “What Writing For Category Taught Me,” *Romance Writers’ Report*, January-February 1995, 43.
62. See Kirkland, “For the Love,” esp. the section “Images of Romance Writing Professionalism,” 154-176. For more on *illusio*, see Bourdieu “champ littéraire,” 22-24 and Bourdieu and Wacquant, *Invitation to Reflexive*, 98, 117.
63. Grescoe, *Merchants of Venus*, 120-122.

64. For more information on Janet Dailey, see her entries in Linda Metzger and Deborah A. Straub, eds., *Contemporary Authors*, New Revision Series, Volume 17, 1986 and Vasudevan, ed., *Twentieth-Century Romance and Historical Writers*. In 1996, after Dailey once again switched publisher, this time to Harper-Collins, the publisher added \$5,000 more to the Janet Dailey Award – of which \$1,000 goes to RWA’s continuing fight for literacy in the United States.
65. Bourdieu, “champ littéraire,” 24.
66. Kolko, “Writing the Romance,” 174.
67. Deb Stover, “First Sale Syndrome: An Alternate Universe,” *Romance Writers’ Report*, January-February 1995, 44.
68. Linda Barlow and Jayne Ann Krentz, “Beneath the Surface. The Hidden Codes of Romance,” in Krentz, *Dangerous Men*, 28.
69. The original expression is of course; “un jeu à qui perd, gagne.” Bourdieu, “champ littéraire,” 7.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO  
PROFESSIONAL READINGS, PROFESSIONAL WRITINGS

1. The history of Harlequin Enterprises has been covered extensively before me. For my own account I owe much to Grescoe, *Merchants of Venus*, esp. chapter two, "The Bonnycastles. Born Out of Love," 17-40 and chapter three, "The Splendid Legacy. Mills & Boon," 41-61. See also John Markert, "Romance Publishing and the Production of Culture," *Poetics* 14 (1985): 70 ff., Jensen, *Love's Sweet Return*, 32 ff, Radway, *Reading the Romance*, 39 ff, Thurston, *Romance Revolution*, 46 ff, and Harlequin Enterprises, "Building a Legend: The Harlequin Story," n.d., n. pg.
2. Grescoe, *Merchants of Venus*, 35.
3. Gedin, *Literature in the Marketplace*, 15. On early lending libraries in Sweden, where the first opened in 1757, see Margareta Björkman, *Läsarnas nöje. Kommersiella lånbibliotek i Stockholm 1783-1809* (SKRIFTER UTGIVNA AV AVDELNINGEN FÖR LITTERATURSOCIologi VID LITTERATURVETENSKAPLIGA INSTITUTIONEN 29, UPPSALA, 1992).
4. Grescoe, *Merchants of Venus*, 52.
5. *Ibid.*, 53.
6. *Ibid.*, 57.
7. Jensen, *Love's Sweet Return*, 33.
8. Radway, *Reading the Romance*, 40.
9. *Ibid.*, 32.
10. Jensen, *Love's Sweet Return*, 40.
11. Tebbel, *Between Covers*, 164.
12. Grescoe, *Merchants of Venus*, 83-84.
13. Modleski, *Loving With a Vengeance*, 36.
14. Kay Mussell, *Fantasy and Reconciliation. Contemporary Formulas of Women's Romance Fiction* (WESTPORT: GREENWOOD PRESS, 1984), 32.
15. Grescoe, *Merchants of Venus*, 95.
16. Markert, "Romance Publishing," 74-75.
17. See Grescoe, *Merchants of Venus*, for an extended description of the Simon & Schuster/Harlequin relationship, esp. chapter nine, "War and Love. Harlequin versus Silhouette," 153-170. The Harlequin-Silhouette "war" and the events following it, are also discussed at length in Markert, "Romance Publishing," 85 ff.

18. Grescoe, *Merchants of Venus*, 159.
19. The expression "long Presents" is Marsha Zinberg's. Marsha Zinberg, interview by author, tape recording, St. Louis, MI., 29 July 1993.
20. Harlequin representative quoted in Mussell, *Fantasy and Reconciliation*, 32.
21. "Between 1980 and 1983 Harlequin's share of the North American market dropped 40%; Harlequin book returns, which throughout the 1970s remained at 30%, doubled to 60% in the first three years of the decade (Berkowitz 1983)." Markert, "Romance Publishing," 84.
22. *Ibid.*, 89. According to Markert, the fact that fewer mistakes were made by publishers after 1983 was due to more elaborate communication taking place between publishers and readers, both informally and formally, through conferences, letters, and increasingly sophisticated market research.
23. Wechsler Linden and Ross, "I'm Hungry," 74.
24. Paul Grescoe discusses the differences in corporate culture between Harlequin and Zebra in his *Merchants of Venus*, 13, 265-272. The fact that the American Justice Department may have had opinions on the deal is briefly mentioned as one possible reason in Wechsler Linden and Ross "I'm Hungry," 74.
25. Harlequin Enterprises, "Around the World in 26 Languages: Harlequin Romances the Globe," 11 June 1992. All facts and figures pertaining to the East European market are from Grescoe, *Merchants of Venus*, 253-264, 293-297.
26. See News, *Publishers Weekly*, 18 March 1996, 14 and News, *Publishers Weekly*, 27 May 1996, 16.
27. Hickey's quote from Harlequin Enterprises, "Foreign Sales."
28. Grescoe, *Merchants of Venus*, 107-108.
29. The following overview of the major romance lines within the Harlequin and Silhouette imprints show where the editorial decisions are made. Mills & Boon, London: *Harlequin Romance, Harlequin Presents*. Silhouette Books, New York: *Harlequin Historicals, Silhouette Romance, Silhouette Desire, Silhouette Special Edition, Silhouette Intimate Moments, Silhouette Yours Truly*. Harlequin Enterprises Ltd., Toronto: *Harlequin Superromance, Harlequin Temptation*. Harlequin Enterprises, New York: *Harlequin American Romance, Harlequin Intrigue*. I have compiled this list from the latest information on Harlequin's homepage on the Internet: [www.romance.net](http://www.romance.net), login [www.romance.net](http://www.romance.net), 11 March 1997, as well as from the most recent guidelines. The editorial departments of *Easy Read Romance, Mystery* and *Gold Eagle* have, as far as I have been able to find out, no guidelines. (*Best of the Best* are audio books). I am assuming that most likely the editorial departments of these lines are located in Toronto. *Mystery* and *Gold Eagle* are Harlequin's only two non-romance lines. It should be noted that the editorial offices of Silhouette and Harlequin in New York are at the same address and that the separation above reflect the very important brand-name distinction between Harlequin and Silhouette. Although some of these lines constitute the backbone of the company, the total publishing program is under continual revision, meaning that series close down and are introduced continually. For instance, in a Harlequin Enterprises Ltd. publicity flyer from 1993, "Series Publishing Program," Silhouette is still listed as publishing *Silhouette Shadows*, a line that is now

- taken off the program. See Harlequin Enterprises, "Series Publishing Program," December 1993, 6. Mira is considered a separate imprint, editorial decisions are made in Toronto.
30. Libby Hall, "1995 Romance Market Statistics," *Romance Writers' Report*, April 1996, 30-31.
  31. Harlequin Enterprises, "Editorial Guidelines," n.d. [1994?], 4.
  32. Taylor Pianka, *How to Write Romances*, 9. Most respondents in Catherine Kirkland's study did not even mention guidelines as having any real importance on the writing process. See Kirkland, "For the Love," 194.
  33. Stroblor, interview.
  34. Harlequin Enterprises, "Supernews. An occasional publication by the members of the Superromance staff," June 1993, n. pg.
  35. Zinberg, interview.
  36. Margit Sandemo's *Sagan om Isfolket* is of course a Swedish "continuity" of sorts, albeit written by only one person. Harlequin's association with television has also been more direct. In 1994, and as the result of a joint venture with Alliance Entertainment, six TV-movies based on different Harlequin romances were broadcast in the United States. Scheduled to air on Sunday afternoon, they competed blatantly for the female TV-audience at a time when networks generally show American football or other sports. TV 4 has bought the rights for Sweden, showing the first in 1996.
  37. Editorial Director Randall Toye, letter to romance authors, n.d. [1994?], included with "Editorial Guidelines." Cf. Editorial Director Karin Stoecker, letter to romance authors, n.d. [1993?], included with "Editorial Guidelines."
  38. Grescoe, *Merchants of Venus*, 227. In 1992, Cathie Lintz quotes somewhat different numbers: "Approximately 70 per cent of the readers are women under 49 years of age. 45 per cent of them have attended college. The number of readers currently involved in a relationship with a man is 79 per cent. Two-thirds own their own home. Over half, 51 per cent of them, work outside the home. 68 per cent of romance readers reads a newspaper every or nearly every day, a figure that is higher than the national average. 71 per cent purchase romance novels at least once a month." Cathie Lintz, "Setting the Stage: Facts and Figures," in Krentz, *Dangerous Men*, 12-13. Also in 1992, *Forbes* magazine, not focusing on Harlequin readers in particular, gives the average age as 39 years, forty-five percent as college-educated, fifty percent as working outside the home and an average household income of \$40,000. Wechsler Linden and Ross, "I'm Hungry," 71. See also Thurston, *Romance Revolution*, esp. chapter six, "Romancing Women Readers," 113-138 and Peter Mann, "Romantic Fiction and its Readership," *Poetics* 14 (1985): 102-105, for more data on British romance readers.
  39. Interview Zinberg. For an extended discussion on the acquisition process generally in publishing see Coser, Kadushin and Powell, *Books*, 128-135.
  40. Grescoe, *Merchants of Venus*, 275.
  41. *Ibid.*, 275. In Torstar's 1989 Annual Report, the number was "more than 600." *Torstar Corporation Annual Report 1989* (TORONTO: TORSTAR CORPORATION [1990?]), 19. The same number is mentioned in the 1992 Annual Report. See *Torstar Corporation Annual*

- Report 1992*, 16. In an undated, but more recent folder, Harlequin formulates it somewhat differently: "Over a 1,000 authors from around the world are currently published by Harlequin." See Harlequin Enterprises, "Business Fact Sheet."
42. Unfortunately, I have never managed to sit in on any such session.
  43. Natasha Kern, "Agent Appointments," *Romance Writers' Report*, January-February 1995, 22-23. At the 1995 RWA National Conference in Honolulu, the procedure for editor/agent appointments had been somewhat altered. Here, group appointments were reserved for those registered with a polished synopsis and first three chapters whereas individual appointments were open only to registered RITA and Golden Heart finalists. Vickie Conan, "Editor/Agent Appointments," *Romance Writers' Report*, March-April 1995, 50.
  44. Coser, Kadushin and Powell, *Books*, 287. For further information on the importance of publishing agents, see Whiteside, *The Blockbuster Complex*, esp. chapter five, "Agents," 55-63.
  45. Stroblor, interview.
  46. It is very possible that this male editor was Brian Henry, briefly described by Paul Grescoe as a University of Toronto Arts graduate, who began copy-editing the *Executioner* series as a freelancer, and who ended up as associate editor with around twenty writers of his own. See Grescoe, *Merchants of Venus*, 193-194.
  47. Writer # 50 quoted in Kirkland, "For the Love," 87.
  48. Stone, interview.
  49. Ibid.
  50. Ibid.
  51. Graham quoted in Grescoe, *Merchants of Venus*, 190.
  52. Ibid., 190.
  53. According to *Forbes* in 1992, Harlequin had 400,000 members in its bookclub. Wechsler and Linden, "I'm Hungry," 73.
  54. Grescoe, *Merchants of Venus*, 195. Förlaget Harlequin pays six percent in royalties on sales in Sweden. Calculated on the price of the book minus Swedish sales tax. In Sweden, royalties tend to be based on the price that the bookseller gets when buying the book from the publisher or wholesaler (f-priset).
  55. Jayne Ann Krentz, letter to author, 1 September 1994.
  56. For an extended discussion on these events, see LaRee Bryant, "1995 Publishers Summit Wrap-up," *Romance Writers' Report*, July-August 1995, 40-41, "Harlequin/Silhouette Controversy," *Romance Writers' Report*, September-October 1995, 16-17, and Paul Grescoe, *Merchants of Venus*, 213-216. For an overview of publishing contracts, see Craig Mytelka, "What to Know About Publishing Contracts," *Romance Writers' Report*, July-August 1994, 30-32.
  57. Marsha Zinberg, "*Superromance* Top Author Report," 30 April 1991, 5, 4.
  58. See Glenda Sanders, "The Complicated Relationship Between Editors and Authors – What Do Editors and Authors Really Want From Each Other?," *Romance Writers' Report*, January-February 1995, 36-38. On the editor-author relationship in publishing

- generally, see Coser, Kadushin and Powell, *Books*, 249-259 and Johan Svedjedal, "Författare och förläggare. Om litteraturvetenskap och förlagshistoria," in *Författare och förläggare och andra litteratursociologiska studier* (HEDEMORA: GIDLUNDS 1994), 9-34.
59. Coser, Kadushin and Powell, *Books*, 249.
  60. Zinberg, "Superromance Top Author Report," 8.
  61. Information compiled from: Harlequin Enterprises, "Mira Books, The Brightest Star in Women's Fiction, Will Offer Outstanding Novels from Outstanding Authors," 28 March 1994 and "Harlequin to Launch Mainstream Paperback Imprint," *Publishers Weekly*, 28 March 1994.
  62. Walter Zacharius, "Romance Mid-list - An Endangered Species?," *Romance Writers' Report*, March-April 1995, 36-37.



NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE  
REARING THEIR UGLY HEADS

1. More on “kolportageromanen” in Svedjedal, *Bokens Samhälle*, 1:86-88. On early lending libraries in Stockholm, see Björkman, *Läsarnas nöje*, 1992. For an outline of nineteenth-century series and lending libraries see Staffan Björck, “Den första svenska bokfloden. Om 1800-talets romanserier och lånebibliotek,” in *Studiekamraten* 54, 4-5 (1972): 61-66. To get a feeling for the extent of these series, particularly in crime fiction, see Dag Hedman, *Prosaberättelser om brott på den svenska bokmarknaden 1885-1920* (SKRIFTER UTGIVNA AV AVDELNINGEN FÖR LITTERATURSOCILOGI VID LITTERATURVETENSKAPLIGA INSTITUTIONEN I UPPSALA 34, UPPSALA, 1997).
2. Statistical data from Svedjedal, *Bokens Samhälle*, 1:187-189.
3. More on Koppel and Ljus förlag in Johan Svedjedal, “Imitation och innovation. Henrik Koppel, Ljus förlag och enkronasböckerna,” in *Författare och förläggare och andra litteratursociologiska studier* (SMEDJEBACKEN: GIDLUNDS, 1994), 114-177. See also Svedjedal, *Bokens samhälle*, 1:273-279.
4. “Urtypen för den ‘skapande förläggaren.’” Svedjedal, *Bokens samhälle*, 1:279.
5. A comprehensive history of Åhlén & Åkerlunds Förlag can be found in Svedjedal, *Bokens samhälle*, 1:315-321. Readers interested in this company as well as in others making up the history of the Swedish weekly press, should also consult Larsson, *En Annan Historia*.
6. Sundin, *Från bokförlag till mediekoncern*, 68-71.
7. Svedjedal, *Bokens samhälle*, 2:760-761.
8. “The mission of mass market literature must be to lay the foundations of good taste.” Landquist quoted in Svedjedal, *Bokens samhälle*, 1:408.
9. See Svedjedal, *Bokens samhälle*, 2:738-774, for a general overview of the most important Swedish mass market publishers mentioned here and their publishing profiles.
10. A number of books and studies have been devoted to the literary aspects of these social spheres. I will here only mention a few. For a general overview, see Johan Svedjedal, *Bokens samhälle*, 1:292-315, 2:699-738. On the popular movements in general and their literary institutions, see Lars Furuland, “Folkrorelser och arbetardikt ca 1880-1920,” in Lars Lönnroth and Sven Delblanc, eds. *Den Svenska Litteraturen. Den storsvenska generationen* (STOCKHOLM: BONNIER ALBA, 1989), 4:229-254. On the temperance movement, see Kerstin Rydbeck, *Nykter läsning. Den svenska godtemplarrörelsen och litteraturen 1806-1925* (SKRIFTER UTGIVNA AV AVDELNINGEN FÖR LITTERATURSOCILOGI VID LITTERATURVETENSKAPLIGA INSTITUTIONEN I UPPSALA 32, UPPSALA, 1995). On the non-conformist religious movement; see Åke Kussak, *Författaren som predikant. Ett frikyrko-*

*samfunds litterära verksamhet 1910-1939* (SKRIFTER UTGIVNA AV ÄVDELNINGEN FÖR LITTERATURSOCIOLOGI VID LITTERATURVETENSKAPLIGA INSTITUTIONEN I UPPSALA 16, STOCKHOLM, 1982).

11. "the masses could learn how to become rational and modern consumers." Billy Ehn, Jonas Frykman and Orvar Löfgren, *Försvenskningen av Sverige. Det nationellas förvandlingar* (STOCKHOLM: NATUR OCH KULTUR, 1993), 58.
12. Svedjedal, *Bokens samhälle*, 1:311. For the most substantial account of this campaign yet, see Ulf Boëthius, *När Nick Carter drevs på flykten* (STOCKHOLM: GIDLUNDS, 1989).
13. For an extended discussion on this aspect, see Jonas Frykman, *Dansbaneländet. Ungdomen, populärkulturen och opinionen* (STOCKHOLM: NATUR OCH KULTUR, 1988).
14. Svedjedal, *Bokens samhälle*, 1:37.
15. The labelling of booksellers and the regulations surrounding their profession has shifted over the years. For the most substantial account on this and all aspects of the Swedish book trade from the turn-of-the-century until the mid-1940s, see Svedjedal, *Bokens samhälle*, 1:73-180, 2:433-542. A hundred years of bookseller assistants' work in Swedish bookshops is covered in Eva Hemmungs Wirtén, *Bokhandels Bok. Om BMF och arbetet i bokhandeln under 100 år* (STOCKHOLM: NORSTEDTS, 1988). A related discussion referring to more recent (from 1970) structural changes in regard to bookshops in particular can be found in my paper "Att läsa är ett sätt att leva. En uppsats om bokmarknaden i Sverige 1965-1987, med tonvikt på bokhandels utveckling, situation och framtid" (Department of Literature: Stockholm University, 1987).
16. Svedjedal, *Bokens samhälle*, 1:158-163, 2:483
17. See for instance the contributions in Yngve Lindung, ed., *Kiosklitteraturen. 6 analyser* (STOCKHOLM: TIDEN, 1977) and Yngve Lindung, *Äventyr och kärlek. Om kiosklitteraturen* (STOCKHOLM: ESSELTE STUDIUM, 1980). When asked about my own work, I often end up explaining it by using the expression myself – it usually works and indicates perhaps how colloquial the term has become.
18. On Bonniers' expansion at this time, see Svedjedal, *Bokens samhälle*, 2:611-629.
19. Information on *Alibi. Veckans kriminalroman from Svensk Bok-katalog för åren 1931-1935* (STOCKHOLM: SVENSKA BOKFÖRLÄGGAREFÖRENINGEN, 1942), 1:15. On the series mentioned here, see *En Bok om Böcker. Litteraturutredningens branschstudier* (STOCKHOLM: SOU 1972:80), 289.
20. *Ibid.*, 290.
21. *Ibid.*, 283-284.
22. See Hans Olof Johansson, "Utgivningen av populärpocketböcker 1965-1974," *Litteratur och samhälle. Meddelande från avdelningen för litteratursociologi vid Litteraturvetenskapliga Institutionen i Uppsala* 3 (1977): 7-23.
23. Yngve Lindung, "Den angloamerikanska," 19.
24. Johansson, "Utgivningen av," 12.
25. *Ibid.*, 14.
26. *En Bok om Böcker*, 309. Different numbers are given in Yngve Lindung, "En Programmerad

- Succé eller En önskedröm på begäran” in Lindung, *Kiosklitteraturen*, 102. According to Lindung, the normal print run for *Succéromanen ur Allers* in 1976, was 50,000 copies, but based on the same sales figures of 25,000, returns would also be steeper – around fifty percent.
27. Åke Lundqvist, *Masslitteraturen. Förströelse – förförelse – fara?* (STOCKHOLM: ALDUS, 1977), 23.
  28. Johansson, “Utgivningen av,” 17-18.
  29. For historical aspects on this publisher, see Svedjedal, *Bokens samhälle*, 2:743-748, and for more recent events *En Bok om Böcker*, 296-297. See also Fredrik Lindberg, “Kittys och Biggles förlag kämpar i uppförsbacke,” *Svensk Bokhandel* 46, 10 (1997): 20-23.
  30. Lindberg, “Kitty och Biggles förlag,” 20.
  31. The publishing history of *Succéromanen ur Allers* is complicated. Between 1964 and 1972, B. Wahlström *only* published serials taken from *Allers*. However, in 1972 first-hand rights to these were sold to the Swedish publisher Askild & Kärnekull, by then owned by the Aller company. A few years later, this publisher was sold again, this time back to one of the original founders, Timo Kärnekull. In practice, this meant that between 1964 and 1972 (#1-131), B. Wahlström published under the name *Succéromanen ur Allers*. When the rights went to Askild & Kärnekull, B. Wahlströms changed numerical order and name to simply *Succéromanen* (with the addition of the name of the magazine from which the serial was taken), and continued this up until 1986 (#201-366, 1973-1986). *Succéromanen ur Allers* in Askild & Kärnekulls version was published 1973-1986. I have focused on *Succéromanen ur Allers* in its first version. All significant data in this chapter refers to the Aller product, and is primarily based on Lindung, “En Programmerad Succé,” 102-145. To this day it remains the most substantial source of information to be found on this particular series, and Lindung does provide interesting data on both writers and publisher. Also on *Succéromanen ur Allers* in Lindung, *Äventyr och kärlek*, 38-50 and Lundqvist, *Masslitteraturen*, 58-70. For more general information on characters and plot in the weekly magazines 1879-1985, see Larsson, *En Annan Historia*.
  32. More on *Illustrerad Familj-Journal* and the Aller tradition in Larsson, *En Annan Historia*, 106-111, 127-132, 153-186.
  33. For information on the personal and professional background of a few Swedish and Scandinavian mass market writers, see Lundqvist, *Masslitteraturen*, 157-167.
  34. For a complete list of these twenty-five “rules,” see Lindung, “En Programmerad Succé,” 112-113.
  35. *En Bok om Böcker*, 293. In turn referring to Karin Hagberg, “Succéromanen ur Allers. Synpunkter på tillverkningsprocessen och kvinnobilden,” *Litteratur och samhälle. Meddelande från avdelningen för litteratursociologi vid Litteraturvetenskapliga Institutionen i Uppsala* 101 (1972): 4698, 4702 f.
  36. “You can perfectly well write about children and animals, but combine the events surrounding them with the joys and sorrows of the adults.” Lindung, “En Programmerad Succé,” 112.
  37. “Never forget that a weekly serial is read in portions, and that plot and characters must remain alive to the reader from episode to episode, from tuesday to tuesday.” *Ibid.*, 112.

38. "Perhaps because it disturbs them [the female readers] that the woman (in the traditional portrayal of sex between man and woman) is reduced to a lower being, the object of "animal" male lust." *Ibid.*, 128.
39. "good, old-fashioned, Christian values." *Ibid.*, 110.
40. "safely be left in the hands of anyone in the family." Larsson, *En annan historia*, 107.
41. "Personally, I know of no literary product in the world that has been so thoroughly tested – in smallest detail. We know, to a degree without precedent, what will capture our readers and what they will disapprove of. And we know why, so that in the extent that we control creative force, we may achieve the same effects in new work. We know the sex, age, education, interests and social category of our readers to a decimal. When week after week, year after year, systematically and with versatility, you have explored reader reception, a large material crystallizes. Taken together with insights gained from sociological investigations (for instance regarding reader's worlds) och recent psychological research (for instance fiction and the subconscious) gives this material (and Erling Poulsens 25 advice are part of it) many opportunities to understand, what readers consider a good story – and why." Rehling quoted in Lindung, *Äventyr och Kärlek*, 38-39. Original Danish quote in Lindung, "En Programmerad Succé," 106-107.
42. "The Danish editors used their knowledge of the extremely positive reaction from readers in order to see to it that the writer prolonged the story with a few episodes. When it was published as a serial in the Swedish edition of *Allers* in 1955 it caused an increase in print run with 52.000 copies." Lindung, "En Programmerad Succé," 107.
43. If not otherwise indicated, all information on *Vita Serien* is based on an article by Inger Larsson, "Vita seriens läkarromaner – kärleken som pliktens belöning," in Lindung, *Kiosklitteraturen*, 191-205. See also Lindung, *Äventyr och kärlek*, 51-52.
44. Dag Hedman, "Kärleksromanen: från Sigge Stark till FLN-litteratur," in Lars Lönnroth and Sverker Göransson, eds. *Den Svenska Litteraturen. Medieålderns litteratur* (STOCKHOLM: BONNIER ALBA, 1990), 6:247.
45. *En Bok om Böcker*, 295.
46. My brief account of Sigge Stark's career has been compiled from a number of sources. See Anders Sjöbohm, "Den steniga vägen till lyckan. Ett försök till analys av Sigge Stark," in Lindung, *Kiosklitteraturen*, 145-190; Kerstin Strandberg, "Sigge Starks produktionsvillkor," in Lars Ardelius and Gunnar Rydström, eds. *Författarnas Litteraturhistoria* (STOCKHOLM: FÖRFATTARFÖRLAGET, 1978), 3:352-362, and Margareta Fahlgren, "Trollmakt/Trollbundet – några reflektioner kring läsningen av Sigge Stark och Margit Sandemo," in "Kjønn og makt: Teoretiske perspektiver" (Oslo: NAVF's sekretariat for kvinneforskning og kvinner i forskning), 1987. See also Lindung, *Äventyr och kärlek*, 55-59 and Hedman, "Kärleksromanen," 246-247.
47. A number of books may be used to explore these structural changes further. See for instance Hans-Olof Johansson, *Bokens väg. En översikt i litteraturutredningens spår* (STOCKHOLM: LIBER, 1974); *En Bok om Böcker*; Rolf Ylid, *Litteraturens villkor* (LUND: STUDENTLITTERATUR, 1990), and, adding an up-to-date perspective; *Boken i Tiden. Betänkande från Kulturutredningen om boken och kulturtidskriften* (STOCKHOLM: SOU 1997:141).

48. “[Hedengrens] was a nineteenth-century bookshop up until 1968. There were [...] long counters that customers could not enter behind, books to the ceiling and ladders. Half the stock was kept down in the basement. One copy of each book was placed at the counter for customers to look through. All of them were terribly fingered. The customer would point to a book and you would climb up to get it. [...] I started in 1964 and the service was completely manual. The customer sat on a chair – [...] like in an old-fashioned shoe shop – and then you’d run and get the book.” Bergh quoted in Hemmungs Wirtén, “Att läsa är ett sätt att leva,” 28.
49. Lindung, *Äventyr och kärlek*, 36-37.
50. For more information on “En Bok för alla,” see Yrlid, *Litteraturens villkor*, 117-121.
51. Heisey quoted in Grescoe, *Merchants of Venus*, 107. Most of this information is based on Grescoe’s book, esp. chapter six: “The Realms of Gold. Harlequin Heads Overseas,” 105-118. Because of the lack of any written information about these events in Sweden, I rely to a substantial degree on his account and an interview with Agneta Knutsson, Editor-in-chief at Förlaget Harlequin.
52. Kläsener quoted in Grescoe, *Merchants of Venus*, 110.
53. *Ibid.*, 113.
54. “Fabulously profitable” is Wennberg’s words. Wennberg quoted in Grescoe, *Merchants of Venus*, 113.
55. “they wanted us to print with Scand Book, which was their printer. And we didn’t want to as long as they continued to publish the same books as we did. [...] so then we said: ‘Okay, we’ll print with Scand Book and then you’ll stop publishing this type of books.’” Agneta Knutsson, interview by author, tape recording, Stockholm, 22 August 1996.
56. Dudovitz, *Myth of Superwoman*, 107.
57. Yrlid, *Litteraturens villkor*, 46.
58. More on Margit Sandemo in Fahlgren, “Trollmakt/Trollbundet.” On the corporate strategies of Egmont Fonden, see Fredrik Lindberg, “Sagofabrikören i Malmö satsar på bokhandeln,” *Svensk Bokhandel* 45, 18 (1996): 13-18.
59. Grescoe, *Merchants of Venus*, 108, 113.
60. Agneta Knutsson, telephone conversation with author, 27 August 1997.
61. Björkman, *Läsarnas nöje*, 503.



NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR  
HARDLY WORK ON THE ASSEMBLY-LINE OF LITERATURE

1. Knutsson, telephone conversation. On the question of the relationship between “budgeted” and “real” numbers, Agneta Knutsson explains that they “are usually very close to one another.” Harlequin Enterprises also have joint-venture operations in five countries and eight international licensees. Harlequin Enterprises, “Foreign Sales.”
2. “They get the impression that it is very lax. The working hours are free and... Everybody has their own room, down to the most minor [employee]..., one’s own room, they think that’s a luxury.” Knutsson, interview.
3. Silhouette; an imprint with a strong identity in North America, perceived of as separate from Harlequin (although owned by since 1984) and with its own loyal readers, is currently not used on the Scandinavian market. As we have seen, where romance publishing in North America is crucially dependent on distinctions between imprints, as readers rely on the editorial policies that they have come to equate with the name *Silhouette Intimate Moments* or *Harlequin American Romance* (regardless of who actually owns the company), this is probably less of a case in the international markets. In Scandinavia, Harlequin’s ambition is to make their own brand-name more familiar, rather than complicating things by introducing or maintaining one that makes all the difference in North America, but would only confuse Swedish or Scandinavian readers.
4. This table is compiled by a combination of corporate information and my own knowledge of these series and their monthly output, acquired during the years I have worked on the project. I have confirmed all data with Agneta Knutsson.
5. In the sense that it is strictly based on *Harlequin Romance, Julia* is a series unique to Finland.
6. More on the social background of editors generally in Coser, Kadushin and Powell, *Books*, 112-117. Even if their early 1980s survey into the inner workings of the publishing business surely comes across as fundamentally American, their portrayal of editors as college-educated WASPs, or WhiteAngloSaxonProtestants, sounds vaguely familiar. Even when allowing for the diverse strata of publishing companies around (small, big, conglomerates, independents) as well as the difference in national framework, the evidence points to the Swedish Harlequin editor as fitting the well-educated label fairly well. During one of my repeated visits to the office Eva Susso and I discovered that we shared the same undergraduate education and that we probably had attended courses together in Comparative Literature at Stockholm University – and like her, Agneta Knutsson also holds a university degree – in Journalism and Comparative Literature.
7. As with Table 2, I have compiled this table by a combination of lists from Harlequin Enterprises, and by going through *Svensk Bokförteckning*. It does *not* claim to be absolutely

complete – Förlaget Harlequin's publishing program has been extensive, sometimes erratic and is very difficult to overlook. Even when being complemented with information from the company itself, this problem remains.

8. Coser, Kadushin and Powell, *Books*, 99.
9. "Are there any brutal/raw scenes? Can they be softened in translation?."
10. "April is a good, positive heroine. Michalis comes out as most Greek men do in our books, a bit too arrogant but luckily not too chauvinistic or brutal. The readers will probably like him. The book will do." Sari Karulahti reader's report, "*Passionate Captivity* by Patricia Wilson," 15 November 1994.
11. Harlequin Enterprises, "Overseas Art Form *Monday's Child*," 17 February 1995.
12. Knutsson, interview.
13. "During one period there was a number of [writers] that we had to publish pretty quickly, because they were getting ready to leave [the publisher]." Ibid.
14. Escarpit, *Sociologie de la Littérature*, 64.
15. Ewa Högberg, interview by author, tape recording, Stockholm, 20 May 1996. A considerable amount of the information about the in-house operations regarding translations at Förlaget Harlequin is based on my interview with her.
16. "There are a few things you should consider while translating. The most important is that you should not translate directly from the original, but consider how the Swedish sounds. This means that it is allowed to distance yourself from the English text to a substantial degree. Avoid word-for-word translations, anglicisms, and repetition." Ewa Högberg, letter to translators, n.d., included with "Anvisningar vid översättning av Harlekinböcker."
17. "distinguish who thinks in Swedish and doesn't just translate the English word-for-word." Högberg, interview.
18. "– Well, I don't really like these trashy books, anyway." Högberg, interview.
19. "Sometimes I could get in my hand a translation of a book I had picked that I felt was a tenpointer – and then a translator had taken it and it comes out like nothing. Then you're so disappointed, because I had maybe laughed out loud when I read it, or shed a tear, or it had made an impact – not all books do that, but these are the ones you remember and then you expect so much of them. Then there's the opposite situation. Sometimes you have to take books that you don't believe in to a hundred percent, maybe because it's a particular translator, maybe because the book contains certain parts that are supposed to work in contrast to others that month, so you get a good variation in contents. And a book that you pick; sure, it's okay, but not that great according to my way of looking at things – and then it comes back, and it's just; YES! – the best story, dynamite language, and you just feel that... Sometimes I have gone back to my notes to check: – Is this the same book? Can this really be?"
20. "If you've read the book in English and think: 'wow, this is a book that we should have,' it's sharp, fun to read, perhaps humorous – and then you get the translation and edit: 'uhuh, it's so dense, where did all the humor go?' Then we say that the book 'died.' Or there might be a book given a review or you've read it yourself and felt that

'well, it wasn't that amazing, but we have to,' because this is a writer that we have to [publish]... or something, and when you edit, you think 'oh, a great book,' that feels good, and then you've 'lifted it.'" Knutsson, interview.



NOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE  
THE GLOBAL MADE LOCAL

1. These titles and the two others used in this chapter, have in the following been shortened by using the first word, according to the principle *Monday's/Passion*.
2. "The English names are retained, unless they sound very foreign to a Swedish ear (or are difficult to pronounce). In that case they may be replaced with more familiar [easier] English names." Förlaget Harlequin, "Anvisningar vid översättning av Harlequinböcker," n.d., n. pg.
3. Ewa Högberg, back blurb suggestion presented at editorial meeting 28 February 1996.
4. Dawn Stewardson, *Århundradets man* (Stockholm: *Harlequin Exklusiv* 267, 1996), back blurb.

SHE WAS HIS BEST FRIEND'S WIFE...

Caitlin Alexander had to be the most beautiful woman Luke Dakota had met. Everything from that dark cascade of hair until that special scent of moonlight and summerfields... Luke understood only too well why his best friend, Mike, had married her.

But now Mike was dead. Caitlin was in trouble so when Luke offered his help she did not turn him down. But what would he say when she told him about her suspicions of Mike's death? Would he doubt her, as everyone else? Or would he stay and help her find the truth?

5. Escarpit, *Sociologie de la Littérature*, 65.
6. Chalmin quoted in Grescoe, *Merchants of Venus*, 111. Around ten percent of the French books were originals, and with the aid of buyouts like the one in 1986, when the new fifty/fifty venture between Harlequin and Hachette bought the only serious competitor on the market; *Duo*, published by J'ai Lu, Harlequin came to have ninety percent of the French mass market.
7. Roman Jakobson, "On Linguistic Aspects of Translation," in *On Translation*, ed. Reuben A. Brower (CAMBRIDGE: HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS 1959), 232-239. Jakobson also distinguishes a third variant; *transmutation*, or intersemiotic translation.
8. Lawrence Venuti has argued for resistance and subversion to this dominant mode by a strategy of "foreignization" rather than "domestication," advocating a distinctly political way out of what is clearly a dysfunctional relationship. See Venuti, *Translator's Invisibility*, esp. chapter one, "Invisibility," 1-42.
9. "if you get a perfect manuscript - they're around 350 pages - well, then you can go through that in two, three days if you are left alone, because it runs smoothly."

- Högberg, interview.
10. Walter Benjamin, "The Task of the Translator. An Introduction to the Translations of Baudelaire's *Tableaux Parisiens*," in *Illuminations*, ed. Hanna Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 71, 76.
  11. *Ibid.*, 79.
  12. Robert Escarpit, "Creative Treason as a Key to Literature," in *Sociology of Literature and Drama*, eds. Elizabeth and Tom Burns (LONDON: PENGUIN BOOKS, 1973), 364.
  13. This is what Lawrence Venuti calls "simpatico." See Venuti, *Translator's Invisibility*, esp. chapter six, "Simpatico," 273-306.
  14. This gendered perspective of translation was brought to my attention by Lawrence Venuti, and is certainly worth further study.
  15. Lawrence Venuti, introduction to *Rethinking Translation. Discourse, Subjectivity, Ideology*, ed. Lawrence Venuti (LONDON: ROUTLEDGE, 1992), 10.
  16. Gentzler, *Contemporary Translation Theories*, 76.
  17. Sally Wentworth, *Duel in the Sun*|*Månsken över Nilen*, editor Eva Susso, translator Annika Darland; Patricia Wilson, *Passionate Captivity*|*Kidnappad i Grekland*, editor Eva Susso, translator Majken Cullborg; Sandra Canfield, *Mariah*|*Mariah*, editor Ewa Högberg, translators Kate och Sigge Kalmström; Janice Kaiser, *Monday's Child*|*Passion i djungeln*, editor Ewa Högberg, translator Ansis Grinbergs, and Dawn Stewardson, *Little Luke, Big Luke*|*Århundradets man*, editor Lena von Sydow, translator Ulla Henning. These books are more fully listed in the reference section.
  18. André Lefevere distinguishes four different types of allusions; Biblical, Classical, Cultural and Literary. André Lefevere, *Translating Literature. Practice and Theory in a Comparative Literature Context* (NEW YORK: MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION, 1992), 22-29.
  19. Mikael Schultz and Nils-Eric Fredin, "Bussen är död, leve flexin!," *Vi bilägare*, 4 July 1996, 8-17. It is worth noting, that a secondary translation given for "van" in *Stora Engelsk-Svenska Ordboken* (STOCKHOLM: ESSELTE STUDIUM, 1980), is "zigenarvagn" [gypsy's wagon], 998.
  20. *Svensk-Engelsk Ordbok* (STOCKHOLM: ESSELTE STUDIUM, 1968), 419, 689.
  21. *Stora Engelsk-Svenska Ordboken*, 473.
  22. *Ibid.*, 44.
  23. "If the basics are there, the so-called "flow," the tone, then that carries much of the translation and we have translators, for instance [...], who I feel has these basics, this tone. But then she is completely crazy sometimes when it comes to our rules, or, I mean, there are lots of little things that you pick, but you have a good base. She has the ability to create, to write. In reality, the worst you can come across are word-for-word translations and the anglicisms that creep into that. Because that means that when you are editing you basically have to rewrite. You will take pick out new components in the beginning, replace them, alter, shorten, add - it's huge work, enormous work. And it's not even sure it will turn out any good anyway." Högberg, interview.
  24. Bonnycastle quoted in Grescoe, *Merchants of Venus*, 55.

25. The only possible explanation I can think of for this is that although taking care of children professionally does not have either the economic or social status such work warrants, those employed in day-care centers or in any kind of public child-care in Sweden, are a group that has long struggled for public recognition. That fact that nearly eighty-five percent of all women in Sweden work outside the home also make their work crucial to Swedish families.
26. André Lefevere, "Mother Courages's Cucumbers: Text, System and Refraction in a Theory of Literature," *Modern Language Studies* 12, 4 (1982): 4.
27. Venuti, *Translator's Invisibility*, 37.
28. "There can be a scene where you react, because there's a lot of violence, or he treats her like dirt in a way that one doesn't think is *comme il faut* in these... Despite everything, this is a couple, it's hero and heroine and they are supposed to love one another, he's not supposed to hold her down through the whole book, both physically and mentally, to discover on the last four pages that he really does love her. There are books, there are such books, and if you must publish that particular book, I think you have to polish a bit." Högberg, interview.
29. "Kelly took his head in her hands, sinking her fingers into his hair, pulling his face against hers. She opened herself to him, and slowly he slipped inside her, inching deeper and deeper. It was like an intoxication, like a dream. She couldn't resist and when he exploded she shuddered in her whole body of an emotion so wonderful there was no words to describe it."
30. "We put it this way: [...] it can be sensuous - not sexual, but sensuous - and to make something explicitly sexual into something sensuous, takes the exclusion of the first and addition of the second." Högberg, interview.
31. "he has translated her, the writer's words, more or less word-for-word and then she hasn't expressed herself or written a sex scene, in the way that we would like. She would have been censored, and if we had gotten what we wanted, the translator would have done this to begin with." Ibid.
32. Mahasweta Sengupta, "Translation as Manipulation: the Power of Images and Images of Power" in *Between Languages and Culture. Translation and Cultural Texts*, eds. Anuradha Dingwaney and Carol Maier (PITTSBURGH: THE UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH PRESS, 1994), 162. Sengupta shows how the Nobel Prize winner (1913) Rabindranath Tagore through his own English translations very consciously adapted his poems to meet current English literary taste. Arguments made from the same perspective (also involving Nobel Prize winners) are found in Edward Said, "Embargoed Literature," 97-102, from the same book, and in Venuti, *Translator's Invisibility*, chapter six, "Simpatico, 273-306.
33. Lefevere, *Translating Literature*, 89-112. Lefevere has made a similar analysis on Brecht in "Mother Courage's Cucumbers," 3-20.
34. Venuti, *Translator's Invisibility*, 308.



NOTES TO CHAPTER SIX  
THE RELENTLESS PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

1. Saying this, I would like to add that it would be highly speculative to make any conclusions with absolute certainty on how changes in my Swedish selection relates to changes in the original series. The most accurate thing to say, is that my findings are based on the readings of Swedish books; however, the underlying argument also relies on my knowledge of changes in the originals. One should keep in mind, that this chapter only sheds limited light on the specificity of the Swedish market and the mechanisms that come into play at the local level of transediting, something that requires an analysis of the kind performed in the previous chapter.
2. As I have showed previously, *Special* closed as a separate line in May 1992, and became one with *Romantik*; for a brief period called *Romantik Special*, and then only *Romantik*. The sixteen titles a month published on the U.K market under the Mills & Boon imprint are sold in North America as *Harlequin Romance* and *Harlequin Presents*. The Scandinavian editors may acquire titles *either* from the Mills & Boon edition, *or* from the North American edition. Considering the names, it may appear self-explicatory that the books in *Romantik* were picked from *Romance* and that *Presents* titles automatically were inserted into *Special*; however, books have been placed in the *Special* line both from *Romance* and *Presents*, without always taking original line into account.
3. Harlequin Enterprises, "Positioning Statement *Harlequin Romance*," n.d. [1994?], n. pg.
4. Harlequin Enterprises, "Positioning Statement *Harlequin Presents*," n.d. [1994?], n. pg.
5. All books serving as the base for these three readings are listed alphabetically by author in a separate entry in the Reference section.
6. Harlequin Enterprises, *Harlequin Guide. Superromance*.
7. Zinberg, interview.
8. Based on those titles where the age of the heroine is clearly stated, or when it can be deduced indirectly (twenty-four titles), the average age is twenty-three. The heroine becomes older throughout my selection, but in no case is she older than thirty. The hero on the other hand averages thirty-three years. One is reminded here of Janice Radway's description of the first moment in the "the bodice ripper:" "the heroine's social identity is destroyed." Radway, *Reading the Romance*, 134-135.
9. Other mean, neglectful or just naive sisters that function as a contrast to the heroine's inherently good qualities, are found in Flora Kidd, *Hela natten är vår* (1981), Charlotte Lamb, *Som en stormvind* (1981), Anne Hampson, *En ros från min älskade* (1983), and Bethany Campbell, *Räddaren i nöden* (1991).

10. Harlequin Enterprises, "Editorial Guidelines *Harlequin Romance*," n.d. [1993?], 1.
11. That the heroine is, or becomes an orphan, is the case in eleven titles, making up approximately thirty-nine percent of my selection.
12. Single fathers in Ann Mather, *Höga berg – djupa dalar* (1980), Kidd, *Hela natten är vår*, Lamb, *Som en stormvind*, Kerry Allyne, *Projekt paradiset* (1986), Sara Craven, *Med kvinnlig list...* (1989), and Emma Richmond, *Lockande utmaning* (1990).
13. A certain preference is given to more "exotic" milieus, like the Bahamas in Flora Kidd's *Hela natten är vår* or Venice in Sally Wentworth's *Gondolfärd i månlyus* (1986). In Vanessa James's *Kärlekens svindlande värld* (1986), the heroine exchanges Cambridge for London, but she may also, like Charlie in Quinn Wilder's *Höga höjder* (1990), have taken on a new career. More on the importance of romance settings in Kathleen Gilles Seidel, "Judge Me By the Joy I Bring," in Krentz, *Dangerous Men*, 165-168.
14. Books with similar opening scenes are Carole Mortimer, *Heta pulsar* (1984) and Allyne, *Projekt paradiset*. Other first meetings which are, if not "sealed by a kiss," highly charged with sexual innuendo are for instance Lamb, *Som en stormvind*, Carole Mortimer, *Sanningen om Jake* (1982), Craven, *Med kvinnlig list...*, and Amanda Browning, *Minnis vår kärlek* (1989).
15. Margaret Way, *Kyssar av eld* (1982), Mortimer, *Heta pulsar*, Robyn Donald, *Enkel biljett till lyckan* (1984), James, *Kärlekens svindlande värld*, Claudia Jameson, *Hetare än Spaniens sol* (1988), Browning, *Minnis vår kärlek*, and Campbell, *Räddaren i nöden*.
16. Cohn, *Romance and the Erotics*, 31.
17. "He is tall, about one ninety [cm], but he doesn't seem tall until you have someone to compare him with, because he isn't awkward or clumsy. He's no giant – lean and slim, and very, very strong. Dark hair, almost black, dark eyebrows and a devilish way of raising one in surprised contempt. And eyelashes that most women are impressed by.  
 She fell silent and smiled broadly.  
 – For God's sake, don't stop! Deb was short of breath. I don't believe you, but tell me more.  
 – You asked for it, and believe me, I'm not exaggerating, because I hate that man. He looks like a Spanish nobleman, or something similarly romantic, with a hawk's nose and everything. He is without doubt the most handsome man I have ever seen, but it is not his looks that are his most prominent feature. He has this sensual aura that makes your head spin, making all women blush when he smiles at them." Robyn Donald, *Enkel biljett till lyckan* (Stockholm: *Harlequin Special* 91, 1984), 9.
18. "You were completely immature, had the looks and feelings of a retarded schoolgirl and the stupid insolence of a child." *Ibid.*, 19.
19. Heroes who have had children but who have died are found in Lamb, *Som en stormvind*, Mortimer, *Sanningen om Jake*, and Charlotte Lamb, *Flickan från ingenstans* (1983) (both wife and child at childbirth). Heroes who have children; Donald, *Enkel biljett till lyckan*, Lynsey Stevens, *Börja om på nytt* (1985) (his niece), Lindsay Armstrong, *Sagoön Yandilla* (1985), and Richmond, *Lockande utmaning* (all girls). Yngve Lindung has defined two important functions for the child in *Succéromanen ur Allers*: as proof of the consumma-

tion of a marriage and as an indication of suffering. See Lindung, "En programmerad succé," 128-131. Lisbeth Larsson show that both fiction as well as interviews/editorial material in her selection of weeklies present a consistent picture of women and children. See Larsson, *En annan historia*, 62 f. Britt-Louise Wersäll claim that children do not have a prominent place in her selection, but when they do, they keep the marriage together. Britt Louise Wersäll, *Veckotidningsnovellen 1950-1975. En sociologisk analys* (LUND: LUNDS UNIVERSITET, 1989), 66, 121.

20. Kay Mussell refers to "the domestic test" that the heroine has to take to prove her worth in the household. The hero on the other hand, has to prove his moral worth and integrity. See Mussell, *Fantasy and Reconciliation*, 89-90.
21. Similar age differences can be found in Mather, *Höga berg – djupa dalar* (18/33), Way, *Kysisar av eld* (19/34), Mortimer, *Heta pulsar* (23/39), and Donald, *Enkel biljett till lyckan* (24/32). This marked age difference becomes less frequent in later titles and the father/daughter relationship is most obvious in books using some of the characteristics of the "classical" romance story.
22. Krentz, "Trying to Tame," 111. The *Special* heroine does not necessarily have to be a virgin when the book begins, but she is in nineteen titles. In Stevens, *Börja om på nytt*, and Barbara McMahon, *Med rätt att älska* (1989) the heroine is a widow. In seven titles the text indicates that the heroine is more experienced, but if she has had other sexual relationships they are limited to at most one.
23. "Fleur thought that he was going to hit her and that's why she screamed." "The next second he had turned her over so that she was placed over his knee. And then he spanked her, hard." Lamb, *Som en stormvind* (STOCKHOLM: *Harlequin Special* 21, 1981) 108, 109.
24. "If you don't shut up, I'll give you a real beating." Carole Mortimer, *Sanningen om Jake* (STOCKHOLM: *Harlequin Special* 31, 1982), 32, 162
25. "And while she vainly resisted, he continued to undress her, carefully and somehow neutrally, until she cried from disappointment and humiliation.  
When he was ready and her clothes lay in a pile on the floor, he got up and started to undress himself, never letting her go with his eyes.  
It didn't take long for her to realize that her anger and hurt feelings couldn't resist what he did to her, slowly and relentlessly. She could refrain from touching him, but she could not keep herself from trembling when his hands moved all over her, from her breasts to her waist and hips, caressing, exploring. Her pitiful defense-mechanisms broke down, one by one." Lindsay Armstrong, *Sagoön Yandilla* (STOCKHOLM: *Harlequin Special* 111, 1985), 150-151.
26. Laura Kinsale, "The Androgynous Reader: Point of View in the Romance," in Krentz, *Dangerous Men*, 48.
27. Harlequin Enterprises, *A Harlequin Guide to Writing Romance Fiction. Romance and Presents*, 1988, audiotape.
28. "– In love... with me? He laughed and was obviously amused at the thought. – Good God! Apart from her being so young and inexperienced, she has that horrid birthmark! Do you really think that I – or anyone else for that matter – would be interested in her?" Anne

- Hampson, *En ros från min älskade* (STOCKHOLM: *Harlequin Special* 61, 1983), 20-21
29. “– You made me completely forget something important, she said, and sounded so impressed that Gabe had to lower his eyes in faked modesty. I have been transferred to the newsroom!
    - So now you want me to provide you with first-hand information about everything that goes on in the district, he said teasingly and pulled the cover over her shoulders.
    - I think I can manage without that, as long as I have an exclusive on you, she whispered, and once again lowered herself beside him.
    - You already have that. Gabe smiled tenderly. You have that forever.” Sandra Kleinschmit, *Kärlek under täckmantel* (STOCKHOLM: *Harlequin Special* 151, 1987), 175.
  30. Ann Rosalind Jones, “Mills & Boon Meets Feminism,” in *The Progress of Romance. The Politics of Popular Fiction*, ed. Jean Radford (LONDON: ROUTLEDGE, 1986), 206.
  31. Harlequin Enterprises, *Harlequin Guide. Romance and Presents*.
  32. Barlow and Krentz, “Beneath the Surface,” 23. All books in my selection end with marriage or proposal.
  33. If I am to count and make this distinction in numbers, I would say that the majority of books in my selection conforms to this “classical” type of story, or twenty-one titles. Seven titles I would rather classify as belonging to the “new” *Special*: Kleinschmit, *Kärlek under täckmantel*, Christine Flynn, *Kärlekens myt och magi* (1987), McMahon, *Med rätt att älska*, Sandra Field, *Den rätte mannen* (1990), Campbell, *Räddaren i nöden*, Wilder, *Höga höjder*, and Anne Marie Duquette, *Silvertons hjälte* (1992).
  34. Harlequin Enterprises, “Editorial Guidelines *Superromance*,” n.d. [1994?], 4. Cf. “Editorial Guidelines *Superromance*,” n.d. [1995?], 4.
  35. Based on titles where the age of the heroine is clearly stated, or where it can be deducted indirectly (twenty-four titles), the average age is twenty-seven. The heroine is over thirty in five books; Casey Douglas, *Bortom alla tvivel* (1985), Georgia Bockhoven, *I Dag, I Morgon, Alltid* (1986), Sandra James, *Hjärtats hemligheter* (1988), Eve Gladstone, *I festens yra...* (1989), and Dawn Stewardson, *Förlorad i kärlek* (1991).
  36. In the absolute majority of titles (twenty) or seventy-one percent, the profession of either heroine or hero leads to their meeting. This means anything from working on the same firm (Douglas, *Bortom alla tvivel*) to falling in love with the man who turns out to own your office building (Cara West, *Sanningen om Amber* [1988]). In the remaining eight titles, coincidence is the common denominator.
  37. Harlequin Enterprises, *A Harlequin Guide. Superromance*.
  38. A formalized employer/employee relationship is found in Maura McKenzie, *Exotiska drömmar* (1982), Marsha Alexander, *Viskningar i månsken* (1987), Jane Silverwood, *Den stora hemligheten* (1992), and Natalie Grant, *Sånt är livet* (1992). Leslie Rabine has pointed out that this relationship is quite common, but gives no real evidence in favor of her claim. Rabine, *Reading the Romantic*, 250-251. In a content analysis based on sixty-five “erotic series romances” between 1982-1985 (which include seven *Superromance* titles and partly cover the same time-span as my own), Carol Thurston notes that ninety-seven percent of the heroines had a profession and that thirty-one percent were “self-employed.” Thurston, *Romance Revolution*, 92 ff.

39. Stone, interview.
40. Harlequin Enterprises, "Positioning Statement *Superromance*," n.d. [1994?], n. pg.
41. "Lisa loved her work and would never exchange it for something else. She did exactly what she wanted with her life, something she had discovered that very few people were in a position to say. To get to this point, she had been forced to make sacrifices, some more painful than others, particularly when it came to personal relationships. For some reason that she had not figured out, she had never been able to find a man who was sufficiently sure of himself to manage her and what she did. But she knew that there were men who could live with women more famous or aggressive than themselves or who could deal with the problems that came with an extremely demanding job, because the majority of the female astronauts were married – and mostly happily so." Georgia Bockhoven, *I Dag, I Morgon, Alltid* (STOCKHOLM: *Harlequin Safir* 51, 1986), 79-80.
42. "All they had to do was to be a little more moderate in spending and stop buying hammers that cost three hundred dollars a piece when they could buy the same for twelve dollars in any hardware store." *Ibid.*, 77.
43. "She placed her head in her hands.  
 – The mere thought that you could stop something so important as the exploration of space is madness to me. Everybody benefits. It is useful for everyone. Just think of the medical discoveries...  
 – The most important and innovative discoveries in medicine have come because of wars, he interrupted. Just think about having thousands of young wounded and injured men to practice on to find new, miraculous treatments. The end does not always justify the means, Lisa." *Ibid.*, 190.
44. Thurston, *Romance Revolution*, 129.
45. The same thing takes place in Lorna Michaels, *Frestelse i förklädnad* (1991), where Greg decides to move to Houston to marry Julie, and in Margot Dalton's *Fråga mig vad som helst* (1992), where Charlie leaves his position at Forbes Motorcycles in Chicago, to become head of marketing at the Calgary branch, where Jennifer lives. For more on this "relocation" theme, where the hero, not the heroine, moves in order to accommodate the relationship, see Thurston, *Romance Revolution*, 95-96.
46. "I have lived so long without love, Lisa, that I was about to wither away as a human being. Home and family are important to me. More important than anything." Bockhoven, *I Dag*, 276.
47. Harlequin Enterprises, *Harlequin Guide. Superromance*.
48. Strobl, interview.
49. Carol Thurston concluded that ninety-seven percent of the heroines were sexually experienced and that nineteen percent of the heroines and twelve percent of the heroes were divorced, widowed, or married to someone else. See Thurston, *Romance Revolution*, 92 ff. Her statistics on sexual experience are not substantiated by my own selection, and despite that several heroines have had previous sexual experiences, the heroine is a virgin (either clearly or implicitly stated) in nine titles, Christine Hella Cott, *Magiska nätter* (1983), Jessica Logan, *Lång resa mot kärleken* (1983), Shannon Clare,

- Himlens alla stjärnor* (1984), Jocelyn Haley, *Midnattsolens land* (1985), Irma Walker, *Farliga drömmar* (1990), Sandra James, *Norr om Eden* (1990), Anne Laurence, *Skyddsängeln* (1991), Peg Sutherland, *Karneval i New Orleans* (1991), and Silverwood, *Den stora hemligheten*, making up thirty-two percent of my selection. Heroines can be as old as close to thirty (James, *Norr om Eden*), or appear as late in my selection as in August 1991 (Laurence, *Skyddsängeln*).
50. Harlequin Enterprises, *Harlequin Guide. Superromance*.
  51. Vladimir Propp, *Morphologie du conte* (PARIS: GALLIMARD, 1970), 116.
  52. Jones, "Mills & Boon Meets Feminism," 214.
  53. "I will see to it that everything works at home. Take care of the children, cook, and all that." Anne Laurence, *Skyddsängeln* (STOCKHOLM: *Harlequin Exklusiv* 116, 1991), 273.
  54. Children belonging to hero or heroine can be found in ten titles. The child is the hero's from an earlier marriage in six books and the heroine's from a previous marriage in four cases.
  55. "– I have spent my whole life manipulating everything so that it would fit my needs, he whispered. I can't do that any more. I can see clearly now who was right. Perhaps I can learn something from you, but I haven't the faintest idea what you could possibly learn from me. His face was twisted with sorrow and regret. – You don't need me." Natalie Grant, *Sänt är livet* (STOCKHOLM: *Harlequin Exklusiv* 136, 1992) 263.
  56. "Before I eat, they must be fed. Before I can sleep they need beds. I have to be their lawyer, judge, police, priest and merchant, and besides that, set a good example in everything." Christine Hella Cott, *Magiska nätter* (STOCKHOLM: *Harlequin Safir* 6, 1983), 116.
  57. "You will stay at home. Women and business don't mix." *Ibid.*, 14.
  58. Propp, *Morphologie du conte*, 172-173.
  59. Marriage or firm commitment dominates, with twenty-two out of twenty-eight titles ending this way. Three books can be said to end more uncertainly: in Jocelyn Haley's *Satsa på kärleken*, the heroine proposes and while not revealed, a positive reply seems likely. Only indirectly do we understand that hero and heroine have married in Janice Kaiser, *Nu börjar livet* (1988) and in James, *Norr om Eden*, there is talk about "livstidsstraff" [life sentence]. In three books, there is no mentioning of marriage whatsoever: Lynn Erickson, *I gryningens första ljus* (1986), Ruth Alana Smith, *Efter midnatt* (1989), and Dawn Stewardson, *Spännande spel* (1990), books that beside this feature seem to share no other common characteristic.
  60. Kirkland, "For the Love," 90.
  61. Rabine, *Reading the Romantic*, 250.

NOTES TO CONCLUSION  
TYING UP LOOSE ENDS

1. Coser, Kadushin and Powell, *Books*, 264.
2. "Despite everything, a writer once wrote it with her words and her head, and then it comes to us and passes first through gate number one, the translator, and then gate number two, the editor, and perish the thought if they would ask for a book back to retranslate, because... it would probably be an outcry if you take the most extreme cases, because then it's far... they are pretty far apart." Högberg, interview.
3. "North America has produced a great many books with ranches because they have discovered that it sells well. But they are now starting to listen to the fact that the whole world doesn't think that ranches... well, one ranch in four [books], but not four in four. These kinds of things they are beginning to listen more to than previously. We have had complaints that the books have been too American [...] too much politics, or about the Senate or the Congress, or things like that that you might not be amused by, perhaps, too much baseball and..." Knutsson, interview.
4. On a more personal note, while doing research for the translation aspects of this book at Duke University's Perkins Library, where I was used to finding everything I needed, I was suddenly faced with an area of research that was not represented to any large extent, perhaps an indication of the way in which Translation Studies has been analyzed and appropriated from the perspective of "minor" languages rather than "major."
5. Herrnstein Smith, *Contingencies of Value*, 52-53.
6. See Bourdieu, *Règles de l'art* and Gisèle Sapiro, "La raison littéraire. Le champ littéraire français sous l'Occupation (1940-1944)," *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 94, 111-112 (1996): 3-35.
7. "One could direct the critique against Bourdieu's studies of the field that he has neglected the importance of foreign positions to the French fields. It could be said that he has ignored the question on whether or not there are larger fields spanning across national borders." Broady, *Sociologi och epistemologi*, 303.
8. Arjun Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy," *Public Culture* 2, 2 (1991): 5. The notion of "Americanization" in Sweden is an interesting topic that I have only hinted at here. For an extended discussion on this phenomenon, see Rolf Lundén and Erik Åsard, eds. *Networks of Americanization. Aspects of the American Influence in Sweden* (STOCKHOLM: ALMQVIST & WIKSELL INTERNATIONAL, 1992) and Tom O'Dell, *Culture Unbound. Americanization and Everyday Life in Sweden* (LUND: NORDIC ACADEMIC PRESS, 1997).

9. Lorimer and O'Donnell, "Globalization and Internationalization," n. pg.
10. Wennberg quoted in Grescoe, *Merchants of Venus*, 114.
11. Andreas Huyssen, *After the Great Divide. Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (BLOOMINGTON: INDIANA UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1986), 52.
12. I am thinking here in particular of Johan Svedjedal's, "Kvinnorna i den svenska bokbranschen. Om feminisering, integrering och segregering," in *Författare och förläggare och andra litteratursociologiska studier* (HEDEMORA: GIDLUNDS 1994), 70-113.
13. Janice Radway has certainly made a very viable and convincing argument when she connects "mass" and "woman" in "On the Gender of the Middlebrow Consumer and the Threat of the Culturally Fraudulent Female," *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 93, 4 (Fall 1994): 871-893. See also Andreas Huyssen, "Mass Culture as Woman: Modernism's Other," in *After the Great Divide*, 44-64.
14. Mussell, *Fantasy and Reconciliation*, 90.





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*Global Infatuation* explores the international success story of the Canadian publishing house, Harlequin Enterprises. Publishing so-called category romances in twenty-odd languages and in a hundred markets all over the world, Harlequin Enterprises exemplifies the conditions of transnational publishing, presenting an excellent vehicle for a fuller understanding of how cultural products “travel” in an increasingly global market.

Examining the interdependency and conflicts that characterize the relationship between global and local aspects of Harlequin’s operations, this book focuses primarily on the local, exemplified by the Scandinavian subsidiary, Förlaget Harlequin in Stockholm. The staff of the Swedish office translate and transform North American category romances into complex local commodities that straddle many boundaries: linguistic, national, cultural, economic, and also literary. Central to this process, Eva Hemmungs Wirtén argues, is the work of the editors and translators, who engage in a multi-faceted and often creative process she calls *transediting*.

By following the Harlequin romance from the company’s headquarters in Toronto to its acquisition and transformation in Sweden, *Global Infatuation* maps out one circuit in contemporary global publishing. In uncovering the complexities involved in category romance publishing, *Global Infatuation* offers a framework for the continued study of publishing in an age of globalization.



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