

Teens, BookTok, and The Rise of Romance Media

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Have you ever asked someone for book recommendations and ended up reading romance? Well, according to several sources, romance novels seem to have a never ending demand. Along with that, adolescents and adults alike are the targeted consumers of romance novels.

“Every teenager loves romance,” Mrs. Taylor, AP Psychology teacher, said when asked why she thinks there’s such a rise in romance novels. This is also seen within the student body.

Several students in Westhill say that their favorite genre to read is romance. Many of the students believe the reason why people read so many romance novels is due to BookTok.

In short, BookTok is a sub-community within TikTok that focuses on books and literature. This sub-community can especially give way to why romance novels are so popular; every teenager seems to have TikTok, so it makes sense.

“I think it’s largely due to social media and the dramatic growth of the community encouraging more people to read,” Lilah Studebaker (‘26) said.

Clearly, social media also plays into what genres we see become more popular. This is also very applicable to what books get the most movie adaptations, it’s typically romance novels.

Most Hallmark specials start as a paperback book; most world renowned movies start

off with novels. Even the Twilight saga, a staple within most young adults’ lives, started with being a book series. The media we produce into movies play a drastic role in what books typically become popular. So, is the media the key to the rise of romance or is it the teenagers who read it?

Many students believe that the reason behind their peers enjoying romance novels is due to the world’s current state.

The dreamland-like worlds which these romance novels create, a perfect world in which the main character’s love gets reciprocated, contrasts our world’s current state of chaos and confusion. This era is truly a struggle for the teenager’s frontal lobe to develop, turning towards worlds of unrealistic happiness and enjoyment.

“Usually teenagers enjoy romance novels because it gives them a fake world to run from their problems in,” Kiara Zurita (‘26) said.

This clearly supports the former argument of teenagers using the romance genre as escapism. Many booksellers find ways to profit off of teenagers on a daily basis. Currently, 13 percent of the US population is comprised of teenagers. This makes them an ideal audience to profit from.

With the world as tumultuous as it is right now, it’s no wonder that teenagers want to find a place to escape. With that, where do you believe the rise of romance novels is truly from?



THE ROMANCE SECTION At the Barnes and Nobles in the Stamford Town Center.
Photo by Aries Thomas (‘26)

What’s the Word with Westhill Fashion?

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When it comes to trends, fashion is beyond generous. It is not only about the way we look; there is more to it than that, especially in high school, where the biggest avenue of self-expression is through clothing and other forms of style.

We all know that styles change every year. Westhill High School picks up these trends as soon as they become popular — one person starts, and spreads them all over.

According to Global Sources, some of the biggest trends around teenagers in 2024 are bright colors, animal prints, and athletic wear. This certainly relates to all students

in Westhill; however, it is noticeable that more female rather than male students follow fashion trends such as animal print or bright colors, while athletic clothing is worn by everyone.

“I have never seen a guy in school wear animal print clothes, and most of them don’t wear bright colors, but the athletic way to dress is one of the most popular throughout everyone,” Jackson Kern (‘27) said. However, the bright color trend on the Global Sources list was also recognized by Westhill students in different grades.

“The biggest fashion trend currently picked up in Westhill is definitely

bright colors,” Gwen Doughney (‘27) said.

It is one of those trends that can be easily seen in everyday fashion. It is a way to be out there, unique, and in the center of attention. It is all about the expression, which helps us shape our personality, and high school is definitely the place where this is being fulfilled.

Fashion is a huge marker in individualization. It not only impacts the person, but also the community around them. Our school is one big community where fashion is clearly being amplified.

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