The Tycoon’s Secret Werewolf Bride
Copyediting for Romance Novels
Handout Available

- Document with authors and resources mentioned can be downloaded:
- https://tinyurl.com/werewolftcoon
A Huge Segment of the Market

Source: Nielsen BookScan, PubTrack Digital, Books & Consumers
About Me

- Editing romance novels since 2007
- Clients include Harlequin, Entangled, Montlake, Rosetta, and individual authors
Growing Every Year

ROMANCE SHARE OF FICTION 2015 (ALL FORMATS)

29% Romance

GROWING ROMANCE SUB-GENRES

Source: Nielsen BookScan, PubTrack Digital, Books & Consumers
A Brief History of Romance

**CIRCA 1175**
Chrétien de Troyes’s poems about King Arthur and his knights—and their love triangles—are considered the beginning of narrative romance in European storytelling.

**1813**
We’re skipping *Pamela* because I hate it. Seventy years later, Jane Austen publishes *Pride and Prejudice*, which, like *Jane Eyre*, is a love story about a woman, by a woman.

**1928**
Mills & Boon, founded in 1908, soon shifts focus to publishing romance fiction, popularizing many early tropes, including wealthy heroes, medical romances and far-flung settings.
History, Part 2

1972
Kathleen Woodiwiss’s *The Flame and the Flower* breaks new ground: originally published in paperback and sold in grocery and drugstores, it sells 2.35 million copies.

1981
Nora Roberts begins writing category romances for Harlequin. She’s part of a wave of authors writing heroines whose careers are as important to them as their love lives.

1992
This guy, right?
History, Part 3

1994
Beverly Jenkins publishes her first book. Her historical romances focus on the stories that have often been left out of not just romance, but history classes.

1996
The chick lit invasion begins with Bridget, followed by the shopaholic, Jennifer Weiner, Jane Green, and Meg Cabot. Suddenly mainstream publishing remembers that women buy a lot of books.

2005
Stephenie Meyer's blending of the paranormal and young adult genres became the sparkle heard round the world.
To the Present Day

2011
And then E L James took what Meyer did and Frankensteined BDSM onto it...

2013
Romance readers were early adopters when it came to ereaders and other technology; likewise, romance authors enthusiastically embraced self-publishing.

2016
Romance novels are a global force, powered in part by fan-fiction platforms like Wattpad. The Philippines, Nigeria, and Argentina all have thriving romance industries.
Breaking It Down
Contemporary
Editing Sex Scenes

Sensuality varies, from characters remaining chaste until marriage in inspirationals to multipartner scenes in erotica.
Historical
Querying in the Editorial Memo

Frequent historical inaccuracies:

- *Book X* is what fantasy readers usually call low fantasy—*it takes place in a real, historical world* that has elements of magic that most of the population does not know about.
- In order for the reader to accept the magical elements, *it’s important that the real-world aspects be correct and consistent.*
- When a reader stops to think, “*Wait, did photography exist in 1786?*” she’s pulled out of the fictional world and might find it very disruptive.
Young Adult/New Adult

- Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe by Benjamin Alire Saenz
- When Dimple Met Rishi by Sandhya Menon
- Before Jamaica Lane by Samantha Young
- Winging It by Cate Cameron
- Such a Rush by Jennifer Echols
Paranormal
Inspirational
## Case Study: Banned Words

**Steeple Hill Love Inspired Guidelines**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taboo Terms:</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>arousal</td>
<td>for Pete’s sake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bastard</td>
<td>for the love of Mike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bet</td>
<td>gee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bitch</td>
<td>geez/jeez (can use “sheesh” instead)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blast</td>
<td>Halloween</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bra</td>
<td>harlot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>breast (except for breast cancer if necessary)</td>
<td>heck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>butt</td>
<td>hell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buttocks</td>
<td>holy cow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>curse</td>
<td>(or holy used in any nonreligious sense)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dagnabbit</td>
<td>panties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>damn</td>
<td>passion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dang</td>
<td>shoot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dam</td>
<td>St. [name of saint]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dern/durn</td>
<td>swear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>devil</td>
<td>swore</td>
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<tr>
<td>(except in religious sense, but this would be rare)</td>
<td>undergarments—of any kind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for heaven’s sake</td>
<td>whore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(can use “for goodness’ sake” instead)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
More No-Nos

Also, Christian characters should not smoke, drink, gamble or play cards, and terms associated with these activities should be used only in connection with bad guys or in disapproval.

It is acceptable to say “He cursed” or to mention cursing, but this should be used sparingly, for realism.

The following should all be flagged, whether they seem acceptable or not:

- angel—allowed only when used in a biblical context (“My late aunt Edna is my guardian angel” is not allowed)
- heavenly—allowed only when used in a biblical context (food, clothes, shoes, etc. are not heavenly)
- miracle—allowed only when used in a biblical context (“Finding that Diet Coke was a miracle” is not allowed)
- oh, my God/oh, God—allowed only when it’s part of a prayer, not as an exclamation

Situations to be avoided:

- kissing below the neck
- visible signs or discussions of arousal
- nudity—people changing clothes “on-screen,” or any character clad only in a towel
- double entendre
- hero and heroine sleeping in the same house without a third party, even if they’re not sleeping together or in the same room
- direct dialogue with God “on-screen,” in the sense that He has actual lines of dialogue; characters can talk to Him, but they can’t get actual lines of dialogue in response
Finding Self-Publishing Clients

“Do everything. One thing may turn out to be right.”

— Humphrey Bogart
Finding Clients Through a Professional Website

Blake and Jennifer booked their tickets just in time to visit the Georgia O’Keeffe museum in Santa Fe.

Editing for Fiction
I’ve been editing fiction and nonfiction for various publishers (whose names you can find on the CV page) and individual clients for more than a decade.

Services include:
• Developmental editing: reading for plot, pacing, voice, characterization, timeline issues, historical anachronisms, etc. An edit letter discussing style and suggestions is included.
• Copyediting: reading for grammar, usage, repetition, and punctuation. An edit letter discussing style is included.
• Proofreading: a final look at your manuscript, ensuring no errors have been introduced in prior rounds of editing and punctuation, chapter heads, and other technical details are cleaned up.

Please inquire via the Contact page for rates and deadline availability.

If you’d like to hire me, discuss my work, or ask what meeting George Clooney was like (I recommend it), please send me a message and I'll get back to you as soon as I can.

Name *

First Name Last Name

Email Address *

Subject *

Message *

Submit
Fun With Homophones

Lathe (noun)  Lave (verb)
Getting Paid

- With new clients, decide if you want to get part of your fee up front.
- Big companies will not pay you up front.
- Individual clients (especially repeat clients) tend to pay their bills faster.
- When in doubt, be a pain in the ass.
Questions?
Thank You!