

# Searching for Birth Parents or Adopted Children

## *Finding without Seeking in Romance Novels*

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Using concepts from Catherine Sheldrick Ross's "Finding without Seeking: The Information Encounter in the Context of Reading for Pleasure," a convenience sample of 129 romance novels about secret babies is examined to determine what information is imparted about the processes by which adoptees and birth parents search for each other.

Efforts by adoptees to locate their birth parents and other natal relatives form a central theme in both fiction and nonfiction adoption narratives. These efforts have a long history in the United States, where the difficulties involved in such searches were, and often still are, compounded by legally mandated confidentiality and sealed records; causing even adoptees themselves to be denied access to records such as original birth certificates after World War II. Over the same time period, search and reunion have been prominent features of adoption reform and activism, and they appear as central themes in many true adoption narratives.

One of the most familiar tropes in romance fiction is the story of the "secret baby," whose existence, when discovered, becomes the dominant barrier to be overcome in the relationship and potential commitment of

the unmarried, or formerly married, parents, regardless of the manner in which the secret of the child is kept or revealed. The popularity of the stories seems to stem from the readers' love of second chances, and the opportunity to present a ready-made family as a "package deal" for the story's protagonists.<sup>1</sup>

An unknown percentage of the secret baby romance stories involves adoption. A memorable example is Emilie Richards's *All Those Years Ago*, in which a night school teacher falls in love with an exemplary student who he later learns dropped out of Vassar when she got pregnant. Their romance is unable to proceed until she finds the whereabouts of her adopted baby, which he helps her do.

The presence of adoption themes and issues in romance fiction inspired a study to discover if the information included was similar to or different from factual information on adoption.

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### REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

#### Information-Seeking and Fiction

Fiction has usually not been considered a source of information in

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library-and-information information-seeking studies but more a use of casual leisure time or a source of entertainment.<sup>3</sup> Whereas information-seeking studies have usually assumed some work- or student-related purposeful searching, studies on fiction have mostly looked at how people select the fiction they read. Their fiction selections are seen as the end result of either an information behavior process using available outside resources, a successful database search retrieval using specific indexing terms, book and genre appeal characteristics intrinsic to individual fiction works themselves sometimes converted into indexing terms, or reader-driven appeal characteristics associated with readers' social milieus.<sup>4</sup> In other words, locating and retrieving fiction, or fulfilling readers' reading desires, is seen as more important than the factual information content found in fiction, except for Ross's work on finding without seeking.<sup>5</sup>

## Adoption in Literature

Secret babies and adoption have been used as plot and character devices in literature for years, *Oliver Twist* being a notable example. Yet specific attention to adoption in literary texts as it intersects with culture had been sparse until the Alliance for the Study of Adoption and Culture, established in 1998, founded its journal, *Adoption and Culture*. The resulting literary studies emerging from members of the Alliance, such as Marianne Novy and Margaret Homans, use adoption as a lens through which to examine cultural myths and views on family and kinship.<sup>6</sup>

While these studies offer insights into how adoption is treated topically and thematically in literature, they usually ignore most popular culture texts such as romance fiction. In this genre, the unplanned pregnancy, and the secrecy surrounding it, is primarily used as a plot device to create a barrier that must be surmounted to bring the hero and heroine together, not as an examination of the deeper meanings of biological versus socially constructed kinship, or the role of adoption in society. Romance fiction does somewhat mirror the deeper cultural conflicts over adoption treated in more literary works, but through a popular culture lens constrained by genre conventions.

## Romance Fiction

With the establishment of the interdisciplinary *Journal of Popular Romance Studies* in 2001, scholarship on romance fiction has expanded. Scholarship published in this journal includes a special section on "Romancing the Library" in 2010 and an article on romance collection development in academic libraries in 2012; however, no studies in this journal have covered adoption or secret babies.

As Regis points out, "Romance novels end happily. Readers insist on it. The happy ending is the one formal feature of the romance novel that virtually everyone can identify" and the one that elicits the fiercest criticism.<sup>7</sup> Because of the mandated happy ending, romances are viewed as unrealistic

and formulaic because in a literal sense, marriage does not necessarily mean happiness for women in real life. There is an additional issue: the question of the legitimacy of the romance novel as "literature." The sense of cultural hierarchical distinctions has plagued romance fiction to its detriment for years.<sup>8</sup>

One of the earliest studies of the appeal of romance fiction by Snitow analyzes Harlequin romances not as "art" but as "leisure activities that take the place of art" that "fill a place left empty for most people." While hardly complimentary, unlike many feminist analyses of the genre, Snitow makes several points germane to adoption as a topic for romance fiction, namely that "the books . . . reflect—sometimes more, sometimes less consciously, sometimes amazingly naively—commonly experienced psychological and social elements in the daily lives of women."<sup>9</sup> Fear of and actual unplanned pregnancies are among these elements. Snitow's categorization of reading romances as "leisure activities" also presages current studies of information seeking and casual leisure.<sup>10</sup>

*Reading the Romance* is a classic study of the genre using reader response, feminist theory, and textual analysis. Through a key informant in a bookstore, Radway gains access to a cluster of romance readers and, through an analysis of their favored and unfavored titles, concludes that "the romance genre is precisely that: a genre, . . . that, for a little while, assures its readers of their own self-worth and ability to affect a patriarchic world, so by the end of the novel the female readers, often mothers, feel invigorated and ready to take on the day-to-day tasks of managing the home and family." She further asserts that "it is the individual woman's choice to read romance novels, and that this selection not only fabricates a predictable, happy ending but depicts a heroine who discovers her own individuality through her ability to care for others, as opposed to unique personal qualities."<sup>11</sup>

*Dangerous Men and Adventurous Women: Romance Writers on the Appeal of Romance* is a collection of essays by romance writers on the genre and was compiled to refute many of the negative feminist analyses of the genre prevalent at its time of publication. It coalesces around several themes that attempt to explain the encoded information in romance texts.

The fifth and sixth themes identified in the essays are most germane to adoption. The fifth theme is that romance novels celebrate life with a deep-rooted optimism in happy endings. Of particular note is the comment that "the celebration of life is expressed also in the frequency with which happy endings include the birth of a child. Babies are always treated as a cause for joy in romance, whether a writer has chosen to have children or not, whether she is in favor of abortion rights or not." The sixth theme is reader identification with both the hero and heroine as the romance progresses, sometimes identifying with both simultaneously, sometimes alternately. Editor and compiler Jayne Anne Krentz concludes, "For those who understand the encoded information in the stories, the books preserve elements of ancient myths and legends that are particularly important to women. They celebrate female

power, intuition, and a female worldview that affirms life and expresses hope for the future.”<sup>12</sup>

### Similarities and Differences between Fictional and Factual Narratives

There are similar themes and issues in all adoption narratives, whether fictional or factual, such as secret babies, identity, kinship, loss, search, reunion, and reconciliation. Romance fiction usually privileges conventional heterosexual marriage; true adoption narratives privilege the importance of blood relationships. Besides this difference and the fact that one type of narrative is fiction and the other nonfiction, the other main difference is that while romance fiction is construed within conventional and predictable reader expectations of a fairy-tale happy ending, real-life adoption reunions can be very unpredictable.<sup>13</sup> Adoptees who search want truth, not fairy-tale endings, because their fantasies may be worse than what they may find, regardless of what that is.<sup>14</sup> As one author puts it, “few adoption reunions are simply happy endings; they are often fraught beginnings.”<sup>15</sup> Since romance readers demand a happy ending, anything they learn about real-life adoption searching in the reading process can definitely be presumed to be “accidental.”

The gendered nature of romances as a subcategory of “women’s fiction” should be noted, since it also overlaps with adoption. Romances are written and read primarily by women, and adoption search and reunion activities are also dominated by women. Similarities between romance narratives and adoption in real life break down though, since a real-life unplanned pregnancy might suggest anything but a happy ending for the pregnant woman. One need only to read a memoir like Roessle’s *Second-Chance Mother*, which is about a very difficult birth mother–birth son reunion, or the overwhelming disappointment of Steve Pemberton’s search, to appreciate the difference between real-life adoption search and reunion and its counterparts in romance fiction. The optimistic romance notion of a happy ending, even with the arrival of an unplanned pregnancy, is a notable contrast.<sup>16</sup>

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### METHODS

Using Ross’s finding-without-seeking analytical framework, this study attempts to describe through topical textual analysis how true adoption search and reunion issues are presented in a sampling of romance fiction stories about secret babies, by answering the following questions:

1. How have the adoption reunion storylines been used within the context of the overall romance narrative?
2. How do the fictional stories compare to true adoption reunion narratives?
3. Has the development of adoption reunion themes in romance novels paralleled the development of the adoption rights movement in the United States?

A convenience sample of 129 romance fiction titles was generated through the investigator’s own reading, ongoing perusal of *Romance \$ells* (a quarterly catalog of upcoming romance releases for booksellers and librarians), a monthly search of reviews in *Romantic Times*, queries on several romance online lists, a search on Goodreads, and the assistance of a secondhand romance fiction bookseller and several romance authors with knowledge of the project. To be included, the book had to (1) involve an actual adoption reunion search, regardless of which person in the adoption triad initiated it; (2) include a reunion, or at least an identification of someone deceased as the person sought; and (3) be published as a romance, or be written by a notable author associated with the romance fiction genre.

The titles were then organized into various categories, both bibliographic and plot-driven: author, title, publisher, date, who was searching, who was searched for, the gender of the searcher, the gender of the protagonist, and the love interest of the protagonist. From these categories, an overall statistical portrait of the sample was compiled, followed by an analysis of individual texts to gather exemplars of how adoption reunions were depicted by various authors. Lists of the sample and subsample titles are appended.

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### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The 129 romances studied, published between 1978 and 2013, are cumulatively described in table 1.

The final sample was pared down to 129 titles from the original 160 collected using a strict definition for inclusion, suggesting that adoption stories, whether they involve a reunion or not, are not necessarily rare within the romance genre. This is not surprising, given the almost classic status of the secret baby trope within romance fiction, but also it must be noted that the predominance of female searchers in the stories lends itself well to a genre that emphasizes female protagonists with a strong appeal for female readers. This female predominance also mirrors real-life adoption search narratives, as Herman points out: “One thing that has changed very little in adoption narratives is the female voice. Stories by male adoptees and adoptive fathers are rare, and birth fathers’ stories are even rarer. Adoption memoirs are still overwhelming[ly] authored by women.”<sup>17</sup>

While most of the stories are single titles published by Harlequin, some authors do write multiple books on adoption reunion themes—Anna Adams, Georgia Bockoven, Annette Broadrick, Sandra Brown, Marie Ferrarella, Lisa Jackson, Arlene James, Janice Kay Johnson, Susan Mallery, Jule McBride, Tara Taylor Quinn, Dani Sinclair, and Ruth Wind. In some cases the books are deliberately produced as a series, like Annette Broadrick’s, for example, in which each book is about one of three triplets separated at birth, or Gina Ferris’s *Family Found* series (also published under the name Gina Wilkins) about the separately recounted reunions of seven siblings separated at birth. But most others are

**Table 1.** Description of Sample and Findings ( $N = 129$  titles)

Publisher		Searcher		Person Found		Love Interest	
Harlequin <sup>1</sup>	110	Birth mother	48	Birth daughter	39	Birth father	19
Other	19	Birth daughter	25	Birth mother	25	Adopted father	19
		Birth father	18	Birth son	25	Birth relative	12
		Birth sister	11	Birth siblings	13	Adopted mother	9
		Birth son	8	Birth parents/family	13	Spouse <sup>2</sup>	8
		Birth parents (together)	3	Birth father	5	Birth mother	5
		Birth brother	1	Birth granddaughter	1	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>72</b>
		Adopted parent/relative	12	Other	8	Other <sup>3</sup>	52
		Private Investigator	3				
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>129</b>		<b>129</b>		<b>129</b>		<b>129</b>

1. Includes all Harlequin imprints: Harlequin Silhouette, Mira, and Steeple Hill.

2. Some stories involve husbands and wives experiencing a reunion or a reunion-induced disclosure of an adoption for the first time, which strains their marriages. In these books, the romance is the recommitment of the affected spouses after they have dealt with the reunion occurrence.

3. These love interests fall outside the adoption triad. Examples include private investigators, law enforcement officers, teachers, social workers, doctors, high school sweethearts, neighbors, and strangers encountered, such as a motel owner in one case.

stand-alone titles, even if the stories within the book involve siblings, such as *Sisters Found* by Joan Johnston.<sup>18</sup> Whether any of the sample authors is herself a member of the adoption triad (birth parent, adoptive parent, or adoptee) is unknown without further investigation.

Since adoption is fraught with kinship issues and implications for the definition of family, the love interests in these books are revealing. The protagonist is expected to fall in love in a romance, and given the fact that many of these books are “category” romances with strict length limitations, that is, “published in clearly delineated categories, with a certain number of books being published in each category every month,” the availability of a potential love interest is limited to a reduced number of characters to be selected from among those found or those who help with the search.<sup>19</sup>

While reunion with the other birth parent is common, the number of widowed (and therefore available) adoptive parents can seem like a convenient contrivance, and the frequency with which private investigators and law enforcement officers fall for searchers possibly exceeds credulity outside the confines of any individual story. Of particular interest are the spouses who have to overcome the family and relationship disruption of a reunion. For example, in Jennifer Greene’s *Born in My Heart*, Ann, the menopausal adoptive mother suffering from empty nest syndrome, has to grit her teeth to appear happy for her daughter’s reunion, when she actually feels frumpy, threatened, and rejected, an outsider in her daughter’s life—a state not lost on her husband Jay, who is feeling that he’s lost his wife emotionally while suffering for her vicariously. Their finding each other again after the reunion makes an exquisitely told love story.<sup>20</sup> The reconciled spouse story has a more difficult, and possibly more realistic, telling in Robin Lee Hatcher’s *First*

*Born*, where it takes a long time for the husband to forgive his wife’s deception.<sup>21</sup>

The happy ending mandated by the conventions of romance fiction creates a general level of implausibility and optimism in this genre, both greatly desired by its fan readers, if unrealistic in the real-life adoption reunion context. Tara Taylor Quinn’s *Sara’s Son* is especially noteworthy in this regard. Her adult birth son finds Sara, who surrendered him after getting pregnant through being raped at a party in high school by three boys. The son is a cop and helps her solve a mystery about the rape. Over the course of their investigation, she falls in love with one of the men accused and convicted of raping her, who turns out to have been drugged at the time, but is also proven to be her son’s birth father. He is exonerated as a sex offender before they marry. The book is unusual not only for the love interest, but also because of the noted objection of romance readers to rape in the genre.<sup>22</sup>

One aspect of these stories that is totally congruent with real-life adoption narratives is the overwhelming presence of secrets and deception, whether keeping knowledge of the conception and birth of a child from the birth father, as in Margaret Daley’s *A Daughter for Christmas*; telling the birth mother that the child died when she was actually placed for adoption, as in Leandra Logan’s *Happy Birthday, Baby* and Terese Ramin’s *Her Guardian Agent*; the actual placement of the surrendered child with people different than those told to the birth mother, as in Kathleen Creighton’s *One More Knight* or Christine Flynn’s *A Father’s Wish*; the deceptive relationship of the birth mother as “aunt” to the birth child, as in Rebecca Daniels’s *Father Figure* and Susan Wiggs’s *Home Before Dark*; or that the adoptee was actually kidnapped as a baby, as in Nora Roberts’s *Birthright*.<sup>23</sup>

In addition to deception and secrets, however, an amazing

array of plot devices are employed. These range from the mundane to the preposterous, extending well beyond the most common situation of starting to search after discovering one is adopted after the adoptive parents die, as in Rebecca Stratton's *Lost Heritage* or Gina Ferris's *Full of Grace*. These include, for example, a birth father tracking down the woman inseminated with his sperm in Pamela Toth's *The Baby Legacy*; finding or protecting various family members from Mob connections in Patricia Potter's *Twisted Shadows* and Catherine Anderson's *Without a Trace*; discovering that one is the long-lost child of an affluent family in Phyllis A. Whitney's *Woman without a Past*, or the descendant of a famous jazz singer in Ruth Wind's *In the Midnight Rain*; birth parents disguising themselves and their motives to be near their adopted birth children in Margaret Daley's *A Daughter for Christmas* or Lynn Erickson's *Laurel and the Lawman*; health crises involving a need for bone marrow transplants in Bonnie K. Winn's *Family Found* and Andrea Edwards's *On Mother's Day*; and adoptive parents threatened (at first) by impending or real reunions such as Jennifer Taylor's *The Consultant's Adopted Son*.<sup>24</sup> About the only adoption reunion issues not included among the stories are synchronicity, genetic sexual attraction, and any mention of adoption reunion registries such as Soundex.<sup>25</sup>

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## CONCLUSION

The actual number of published romances that deal with adoption in some way, not just reunions, is unknown, although obviously larger than the definition-restricted sample studied here. Thus it is difficult to claim with any certainty that this topic has overwhelming popularity and demand among romance readers, although it is clear that secret babies do, given the persistence of the trope in the genre. The thirty-five-year span of publication dates in the sample leads to an average of four books a year specifically on adoption reunion themes during that time. Further inquiry gleaned from editors' records reveals that Harlequin published 909 secret baby books, variously called by editors "plots with secret baby," "secret child," "secret baby/child," and "secret pregnancy" from 1981 to 2013, which averages twenty-eight per year. While this seems a very small percentage of overall Harlequin publishing production, since publishing output totaled 1,320 titles in 2013 alone, the consistent production of these types of stories over that time period is noteworthy not only to demonstrate the enduring popularity of the trope but also of adoption reunion themes.<sup>26</sup>

Without comparable records before 1978, it is impossible to claim that adoption reunion romance stories have grown in tandem with the adoptee rights movement and the growth of publicity about adoptee search and reunions on shows such as Pamela Slayton's on the Oprah Winfrey network. If anything, the current study just shows the persistence of the secret baby trope and the consistent percentage of secret

baby books on adoption reunion themes over the specific time period studied. Histories of Mills and Boon, the UK publisher acquired by the more recently established Harlequin in 1971, are unfortunately not specific enough on this topic to determine the status of secret baby books prior to the period sampled.<sup>27</sup> If records exist, possibly somewhere in the paper archives of Mills and Boon at Reading University in the United Kingdom, this comparison would be warranted in future studies to answer the question of the growth of and changes within the trope over time, even if the specific question of the growth of adoption-themed secret baby books may still not be answerable.

What these books seem to demonstrate is what Snitow recognized, despite her otherwise scorn for the genre and its readers, which is that romance novels "reflect . . . commonly experienced psychological and social elements in the daily lives of women . . . [and] may well be closer to describing women's hopes for love than the work of fine women novelists."<sup>28</sup> Beyond Snitow's observations, though, many of the books on this theme echo what romance author Jennifer Greene, one of whose stories is included in the sample, says: "I have always believed that the romance field has a choice to be less about romance and more about love/what real love means/what real love takes to survive and thrive. In an ideal world, adoption and reunion stories would use that 'power' to reach readers in a positive constructive way."<sup>29</sup> Moreover, in the context of adoption searches, which like love and romance in real life, can be fraught with confusion, uncertainty, and disappointment, the searchers in romance books win. Even if they cannot find the person they are looking for, they find love and acceptance. Readers of the romance genre in general, and these books in particular, can hardly be faulted for enjoying such stories, even as they themselves recognize that many of them are pure fantasy.<sup>30</sup>

Through their strong emotional appeal, adoption reunion stories mirror many real-life adoption reunion stories in fact, albeit with the imposition of a requisite happy ending. In doing so, they also provide yet another topical touchstone for what the romance genre has always done well: provide a momentary escape from real life, while offering reassurance and wish fulfillment to women readers on a serious topic of great resonance in their lives.

In terms of information-seeking, adoption reunion romances do provide in the aggregate mostly the same information on adoption searching as that recounted in true memoirs and adoption search manuals, even if the information is not the primary reason for reading the books, and even if the accurate factual information is framed by romance conventions. What is missing from this textual study and might be the topic of future studies is the reader response to the information incidentally provided. Possibilities might be validation of feelings, help with accepting a situation unable to be changed, getting the courage to make a change, or just increasing empathy for women who have surrendered children, or for their children. Regardless,

adoption reunion romances provide a rich trove for future research in this area.

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## FEATURE

### APPENDIX A. TITLES IN THE SAMPLE EXAMINED

Abbot, Laura	<i>This Christmas</i>	Harlequin	1996
Adams, Anna	<i>Her Daughter's Father</i>	Harlequin	2000
Adams, Anna	<i>The Prodigal Cousin</i>	Harlequin	2004
Adams, Kat	<i>Thursday's Child</i>	Silhouette	1993
Alexander, Carrie	<i>A Family Christmas</i>	Harlequin	2004
Alsbrook, Rosalyn	<i>Questing Heart</i>	Harlequin	1991
Anderson, Catherine	<i>Without a Trace</i>	Harlequin	1989
Anzelon, Robyn	<i>Searching</i>	Harlequin	1986
August, Elizabeth	<i>The Rancher and the Baby</i>	Silhouette	1996
Baxter, Mary Lynn	<i>Sweet Justice</i>	Warner	1994
Benjamin, Nicki	<i>My Baby, Your Child</i>	Silhouette	1994
Blackstock, Terri	<i>Never Again Goodbye</i>	Zondervan	1996
Bockoven, Georgia	<i>An Unspoken Promise</i>	Harper	1997
Bockoven, Georgia	<i>A Marriage of Convenience</i>	Harper	1991
Boswell, Barbara	<i>Sensuous Perception</i>	Bantam	1984
Bowen, Judith	<i>Like Father, Like Daughter</i>	Harlequin	1998
Broadrick, Annette	<i>Too Tough to Tame</i>	Silhouette	2003
Broadrick, Annette	<i>MacGowan Meets His Match</i>	Silhouette	2003
Brown, Sandra	<i>A Treasure Worth Seeking</i>	Warner	1982
Brown, Sandra	<i>A Secret Splendor</i>	Silhouette	1983
Cameron, Stella	<i>Finding Ian</i>	Zebra	2001
Carroll, Marisa	<i>Gathering Place</i>	Harlequin	1988
Collins, Mary Smith	<i>Baby Makes Three</i>	Silhouette	1996
Creighton, Kathleen	<i>One More Knight</i>	Silhouette	1998
Daley, Margaret	<i>A Daughter for Christmas</i>	Harlequin	2010
Dalton, Margot	<i>A Family Likeness</i>	Harlequin	1996
Daniels, Kayla	<i>Her First Mother</i>	Silhouette	1998
Daniels, Rebecca	<i>Father Figure</i>	Silhouette	1996
Darcy, Emma	<i>Merry Christmas</i>	Harlequin	1997
David, Kay	<i>Desperate</i>	Silhouette	1995
De Vita, Sharon	<i>The Marriage Promise</i>	Silhouette	2000
Duncan, Judith	<i>Better than Before</i>	Silhouette	1992
Edwards, Andrea	<i>On Mother's Day</i>	Silhouette	1996

Erickson, Lynn	<i>Laurel and the Lawman</i>	Harlequin	1994
Evans, Ann	<i>Home to Stay</i>	Harlequin	1998
Faith, Barbara	<i>Echoes of Summer</i>	Silhouette	1991
Ferrarella, Marie	<i>Heroes Great and Small</i>	Silhouette	1993
Ferrarella, Marie	<i>Desperately Seeking Twin . . .</i>	Silhouette	1997
Ferrarella, Marie	<i>Baby Came C.O.D.</i>	Silhouette	1997
Ferrarella, Marie	<i>Holding Out for a Hero</i>	Silhouette	1993
Ferris, Gina	<i>Full of Grace</i>	Silhouette	1993
Field, Sandra	<i>The Mother of His Child</i>	Harlequin	1999
Flynn, Christine	<i>A Father's Wish</i>	Silhouette	1995
Fossen, Delores	<i>Undercover Daddy</i>	Harlequin	2007
Frazier, Amy	<i>Celebrate the Child</i>	Silhouette	1999
Frazier, Amy	<i>The Secret Baby</i>	Silhouette	1995
Garrett, Sally	<i>Desert Star</i>	Harlequin	1989
Glenn, Victoria	<i>One of the Family</i>	Silhouette	1987
Gordon, Lucy	<i>This Is My Child</i>	Silhouette	1996
Greene, Jennifer	<i>Born in My Heart</i>	Harlequin	2007
Halldurson, Phyllis	<i>Father in the Middle</i>	Silhouette	1995
Hannay, Barbara	<i>Adopted: Outback Baby</i>	Harlequin	2008
Hatcher, Robin Lee	<i>Firstborn</i>	Tyndale	2002
Jackson, Brenda	<i>Slow Burn</i>	St. Martin's	2007
Jackson, Lisa	<i>D is for Dani's Baby</i>	Silhouette	1995
Jackson, Lisa	<i>Wishes</i>	Zebra	1995
James, Arlene	<i>Child of Her Heart</i>	Silhouette	1995
James, Arlene	<i>Baby Boy Blessed</i>	Silhouette	1994
Jensen, Muriel	<i>Bridge to Yesterday</i>	Harlequin	1991
Johnson, Janice Kay	<i>Lost Cause</i>	Harlequin	2006
Johnson, Janice Kay	<i>Open Secret</i>	Mills and Boon	2007
Johnston, Joan	<i>Sisters Found</i>	Mira	2002
Kaiser, Janice	<i>Lotus Moon</i>	Harlequin	1986
Kaiser, Janice	<i>The Big Secret</i>	Harlequin	1992
Kay, Patricia	<i>Family Album</i>	Berkley	2002
Laurence, Anne	<i>Remember When</i>	Harlequin	1993
Leigh, Allison	<i>Hard Choices</i>	Silhouette	2003
Logan, Leandra	<i>Happy Birthday, Baby</i>	Harlequin	1994
Lohmann, Jennifer	<i>First Move</i>	Harlequin	2013
Major, Ann	<i>A Knight in Tarnished Armor</i>	Silhouette	1992
Mallery, Susan	<i>Already Home</i>	Mira	2011

Mallery, Susan	<i>Their Little Princess</i>	Silhouette	2000
Mallery, Susan	<i>Cowboy Daddy</i>	Silhouette	1994
Marton, Sandra	<i>Roarke's Kingdom</i>	Harlequin	1991
McBride, Jule	<i>Verdict: Parenthood</i>	Harlequin	1997
McBride, Jule	<i>Mission: Motherhood</i>	Harlequin	1997
McKenna, Lindsay	<i>Shadows from the Past</i>	Harlequin	2009
McLinn, Patricia	<i>A Stranger in the Family</i>	Silhouette	1995
Merritt, Jackie	<i>The Secret Daughter</i>	Silhouette	1998
Mignerey, Sharon	<i>Too Close for Comfort</i>	Silhouette	2001
Mikels, Jennifer	<i>Child of Mine</i>	Silhouette	1995
Molay, Mollie	<i>Like Father, Like Son</i>	Harlequin	1996
Monroe, Mary Alice	<i>The Four Seasons</i>	Mira	2001
Morse, Nancy	<i>A Child of His Own</i>	Silhouette	1997
Novak, Brenda	<i>Taking the Heat</i>	Harlequin	2003
O'Brien, Kathleen	<i>The Homecoming Baby</i>	Harlequin	2004
Paige, Laurie	<i>The One and Only</i>	Silhouette	2003
Palmer, Catherine	<i>For the Love of a Child</i>	Silhouette	1994
Perry, Marta	<i>Desperately Seeking Dad</i>	Steeple Hill	2000
Pickart, Joan Elliott	<i>Mac Allister's Return</i>	Silhouette	2005
Potter, Patricia	<i>Twisted Shadows</i>	Jove	2003
Quinn, Tara Taylor	<i>The Rancher's Bride</i>	Harlequin	2001
Quinn, Tara Taylor	<i>The Birth Mother</i>	Harlequin	1996
Quinn, Tara Taylor	<i>Sara's Son</i>	Harlequin	2007
Ramin, Terese	<i>Her Guardian Agent</i>	Silhouette	2001
Ray, Francis	<i>When Morning Comes</i>	St. Martin's	2012
Reavis, Cheryl	<i>A Crime of the Heart</i>	Silhouette	1988
Richards, Emilie	<i>All Those Years Ago</i>	Silhouette	1991
Richer, Lois	<i>Blessed Baby</i>	Steeple Hill	2001

Riggs, Paula Detmer	<i>Daddy by Choice</i>	Silhouette	2000
Riggs, Paula Detmer	<i>Taming the Night</i>	Fawcett	1999
Rinehold, Connie	<i>Silken Threads</i>	Harlequin	1989
Roberts, Kelsey	<i>Her Mother's Arms</i>	Harlequin	1998
Roberts, Nora	<i>Birthright</i>	Putnam	2003
Ross, JoAnn	<i>No Regrets</i>	Mira	1997
Sharpe, Isabel	<i>You Belong to Me</i>	Harlequin	2009
Shay, Kathryn	<i>Michael's Family</i>	Harlequin	1997
Sinclair, Dani	<i>The Sheriff Gets His Lady</i>	Harlequin	2002
Sinclair, Dani	<i>Word of Honor</i>	Harlequin	2003
Sinclair, Tracy	<i>Does Anybody Know Who Allison Is?</i>	Silhouette	1995
Spindler, Erica	<i>Baby Mine</i>	Silhouette	1992
Stevens, Amanda	<i>A Baby's Cry</i>	Harlequin	1996
Stewardson, Dawn	<i>His Child or Hers?</i>	Harlequin	2001
Stratton, Rebecca	<i>Lost Heritage</i>	Harlequin	1978
Taylor, Jennifer	<i>Consultant's Adopted Son</i>	Harlequin	2006
Toth, Pamela	<i>The Baby Legacy</i>	Silhouette	2000
Victor, Cindy	<i>Kindred Spirits</i>	Harlequin	1987
Warren, Linda	<i>Truth about Jane Doe</i>	Harlequin	2000
Warren, Pat	<i>Nobody's Child</i>	Silhouette	1995
Wells, Robin	<i>Still the One</i>	Hachette	2010
Wentworth, Sally	<i>Shadow Play</i>	Harlequin	1994
Whisenand, Val	<i>Giveaway Girl</i>	Silhouette	1990
Whitney, Phyllis	<i>Woman without a Past</i>	Fawcett	1991
Wiggs, Susan	<i>Home before Dark</i>	Mira	2003
Wilkins, Gina	<i>Hardworking Man</i>	Harlequin	1993
Wind, Ruth	<i>In the Midnight Rain</i>	Harpertorch	2000
Wind, Ruth	<i>Last Chance Ranch</i>	Silhouette	1995
Winn, Bonnie K.	<i>Family Found</i>	Harlequin	2001
York, Rebecca	<i>What Child Is This?</i>	Harlequin	1993