

**Abstract****CONFIGURATIONS OF ROMANCE AND SEXUAL POWER IN WEST  
INDIAN FICTION 1827-1917****Rhonda Kareen Harrison**

The purpose of this study is twofold: on the one hand, this study examines the relationship between reconfigurations of the romance genre from the Age of Exploration through to the modern colonial period. It explores, first, the impact of the New World Space, particularly the West Indies, on the evolutions and reformulations of the romance genre, the synergies which result from this contact and the impact of these on the shaping of English and British identities in the domestic and imperial spaces.

It also critically analyzes the variations of romance used by West Indian writers and examines inextricable links to changes in West Indian identity at the individual and communal levels. This analysis establishes links between the romance genre and the development and metamorphoses of regional and national identities during the colonial era. The postcolonial feminist approach applied provides ways of re-reading the representations of gender, sex and language engendered within romances. Critical examinations of concepts of gender, sex, and race in the West Indies allow ways of re-reading developments towards the evolution of a brand of romance that is distinctly West Indian.

**Key Words:** Popular literature; love stories; Caribbean romances.