



Deirdre and Desire

Marion Chesney

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Red-haired, jade-eyed Deirdre Armitage is determined to marry for love, rejecting the choice of their hunt-happy vicar father. Lord Harry Desire is well-bred, good-looking - and rich. Deirdre contrives to elope with dashing neighbor Guy Wentwater, a slaver who first courted her elder sister. Can Harry, clever tricks up his tailored sleeve, save her from herself?

Deirdre and Desire Details

Date : Published June 12th 1985 by Fawcett (first published 1983)

ISBN : 9780449205822

Author : Marion Chesney

Format : Paperback 208 pages

Genre : Romance, Historical, Regency, Historical Fiction, Historical Romance, Fiction, Regency
Romance

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From Reader Review Deirdre and Desire for online ebook

Mary Crotty says

fun series

Amy says

Enjoyed this one more than the previous two books in the series.

Deirdre's main character flaw of anxiety and naivety was more relatable than her sisters' problems.

"Ah, you're young," smiled Betty, tucking the bedclothes about her, "and there ain't a body in the whole wide world that don't do stupid things when they're young. You'll feel clever again in the morning."

There was still the insta-love on the part of the paragon-ish Lord Desire to put up with, but overall it was a good story that moved along fairly quickly.

Violence, some sexual references, swearing

Mela says

'I find it very hard to lie,' he said. 'The truth is, I was holding your daughter in my arms and kissing her and I regret to say I forgot myself.'

'Where did this take place, sirrah? In the carriage?'

Clear as

Marianne says

Third in a series of six amusing Regency romances, this one was a little harder to follow. I always enjoy Marion Cheney's work.

Angela says

Dear reader by the end of this book you may end up mispronouncing words like the lovable Lady Goldolphin. Join the Armitage family as they go back and forth with the wedding of Deidre and Lord Desire.

An Odd1 says

[Desire fell for Dierdre before he left for the Napoleon wars, but knew she was too young

inbetween says

Another book I hadn't meant to talk about, but I think it is important to bear in mind what someone reads before and after the other books; everything is connected *small smile*

sigh so, I finally got a Chesney romance, another one lauded as the best thing since sliced bread, I mean Heyer. And I'm glad that at least one person once said it's insane to compare these two writers ... even though most of Chesney's fans find Heyer boring ... did I mention I'm never going to understand the world?

See, I came to loathe this writer through her two later series, the "comedy" crime novels by M.C. Beaton *belatedly realises the MC initials* I had bought those series also in bulk, since it's a fact books go OOP quickly, but she makes me sick.

All her books have nothing but unpleasant characters, and I'm saying this as a person deeply opposed to sugary sweetness and idealistic families and unrealistic portrayals of humanity. But never was there a writer who so relentlessly delights in showing nothing but despicable characters being mean to each other - again, I'm not demanding Dickensian morality lessons, nor do I believe that everyone gets their due in life, and am all for showing how complex, contradictory and usually shocking all our thoughts are, but her books are actually amusing, nay, delighting thousands, and they are just so - nasty? *looks unhappily at weak word*

In that later series, the mature woman Agatha Raisin is repeatedly reviled and humiliated, yet we are supposed to see her as brash and rude and deserving of her constant suffering. I loathe her "lover", whatshisname and was glad when she got that pretty young Lord, only she is of course being used and abused by him as well. So - I know MC's current "anti-romances" and I wish I could meet her before she dies and gets lauded as the only one daring to write them, because they are all quickly thrown out descriptions of her own life with some humiliation added.

They also all have the cyclical nature of ending and beginning the same way over and over again - they are like those toys on office desks, the silver balls hanging from chains, and if you bump them they keep whacking at each other until they run out of momentum. I like that comparison - it is so apt. All romances have many of those flaws, but MC is the most relentless in just aimlessly letting her characters hit each other until she reaches the required page count. And then resets the non-perpetuum mobile.

Erm, back to this book. I nearly gave it three stars because of having read Kleypas right before it, as I had gleaned from summaries, it had a hero like I rarely find these days, a man pretending to be dumb and shallow and being smart and sarcastic underneath, and of course worthy and hot and all that.

But the heroine has to suffer the same humiliations as all of MC's women (serious issues? it's more than simply anti-romance) and realise she's not (even) intelligent (basically, they never have anything going for them, so we're back to looks, even though her sister Daphne will then get disabused of that in her own book) so it's really the same as with Agatha. The difference is that in those older/romance novels, girl does get her man, AND the man is the only likable character in the book! He's interesting and intriguing (attractive etc. too) so that's the big difference to her later anti-romances ... ? (here Chesney is melding Heyer's Freddy and Ajax etc.)

ETA: if every single hero is like that, I'll hate them from book 2 onwards, because it's patronising and just putting down women of course. But I'd love a good book to have men like this explored and loved on in more detail, without the need to define them as "beta-males" and similar ready-made categories *gag* or turn them into identical every-bodies after a while.

I lowered the opinion to 2 stars when she even ended this book verbatim like Heyer ended one of hers, but

then decided to stop doing the star system because everything lately is just crap. I still wish to read her other Six Sisters (and Poor Relation) books to see if she really has all her couples identical as well (as most romance authors do) or if she at least has some different traits and dynamics - from the view of the older two sisters, they had to have been very different, but then they are also painted so unflatteringly that it's hard to imagine.

Oh, and the sex - I think she could actually write it? But she doesn't. Genre-convention, but perhaps also the inability to show closer intimacy and emotion? Leaves me personally USTy, because Harry Desire and his devious biting of Deirdre seemed like a beginning.

Hope this helped someone - and remember - don't believe the amazon reviews.

ETA: it is NOT true that she has lots of great period detail - MC inserts blobs of copy-pasted description at some points, but her staccato style makes the placement random and the listing of clothing, food or toys just that - randomly inserted lists *gets angrier whenever reading reviews :)*

ETA-THREE:

- there is absolutely no reason for Desire to play the fool, no motivation :/ and the summary of the Daphne book makes it sound like all MCs romance heroes get to lecture/straighten out the heroine
+ there are two instances in this nearly cracky novel that were startlingly true, when Deirdre was characterised as liking to sit on stairs, between rooms, and how she punishes herself by eloping with a man she dislikes. MC should have tried to write like Highsmith, but since she couldn't she moved to crime novels.
Hm.

NOTE TO SELF:

-> I caught myself wanting to get some more books from her! ie. "Quadrille", since it's supposedly "racier"
-> has actual sex, I think - but then so does Agatha Raisin, and that Hugh in "Quadrille" sounds dangerously like Agatha's men, or MCs men: starting out like interesting appealing characters to be bodysnatched by the author and replaced by brutal boors/bores that hurt their women. Must not forget her delight in mean and callous people after only one day!

Grace says

Some books look like a romance, read like a romance, sell like a romance, but can be so much more.

This book was my very first foray into the works of Marion Chesney, the beginning of a long and devoted readership, and one of my very first Regency romances. At the time, I was maybe in the fifth grade, and the old-fashioned hardback cover and its curlique scripted title drew me in. I read it. I didn't understand it. In fact, I didn't think much of the author.

Years later, Marion Chesney is my go-to author when I'm in a bad mood. Her writing is succinct, evocative, and, best of all, prolific. Naturally, as is the case with all prolific writers, their average rating isn't as high as a writer that is a one-shot wonder.

This book, to be honest, doesn't work that well as a romance. The character of the hero, Harry, is kind of a

puzzle, and the heroine also isn't much of a heroine. But as is the case with many of Chesney's later historicals, this book reads more like a satire of the romance genre.

Deirdre is considered the "brains" of the family, but from her actions, she does one stupid, headstrong thing after another. Her "wit," such as it is, comprises mainly of impertinent comebacks, much in the way of the rebellious teenager. Actually, she yearns for romance, and finds it in the form of the first single man she meets that pays attention to her, who also is a scoundrel of the highest order (which you know from previous books in the series, but is also alluded to in this book). Very soon, she starts thinking that their relationship was a true "meeting of the mind," because he was able to converse with her on such weighty, intelligent subjects as she had always desired and which were forbidden to young girls. One such subject is the Battle of Waterloo, on which the scoundrel (Guy Wentwater) is able to speak at great length.

When Deirdre meets Harry, because of his fashionable appearance and his purposefully vacant look, she condemns him as a dummy. She looks down on him because he is unable to talk about "intelligent" topics, to which he replies languidly that the only people who want to talk about war are people who have never had to fight in war. She thinks he's not only a dummy but also a coward as well.

Herein lies Marion Chesney's genius. A lot of reviewers criticize her writing as lacking that deep characterization that flesh out people. However, I think her portrayal of human nature is exceptionally accurate. And in fact, she has stated in an interview once that love "in real life is not the way it's portrayed in novels." So, in some of her books, I feel she cleverly masks her satirical outlook by glossing the book in a veneer of "romance."

Back to the book. There is a vein of arrogance and idealistic stupidity that flows in young girls, but particularly in intelligent girls. By intelligent, I mean the girls who think too much and, moreover, take *pride* in the fact that they think too much, not realizing that truly intelligent people are not debating the banality of everyday things. It's worse when this self-awareness is paired with idealism and romanticism. Deirdre is one such example, and I think this book runs parallel with *Pride and Prejudice* with Lizzy's character. Both pride themselves on being good judges of character and having a higher mind than common, materialistic, mercenary goals. Ergo, the man who is in good standing and accepted by society must be a jackass. The man, on the other hand, who was a villain and loudly proclaims to all of his repentance -- that man is a true hero.

This is a folly that actually many intelligent girls fall victim to, in thinking that a reformed man is better than the man who is just there, boring, staid, respectable. But in real life, it seldom works like this. The man who's there chatting up a storm of pretty words and flattering conversation is usually not the saint that he presents himself to be. Alas for girls who always fall prey to verbal assurances and can't see beneath silent actions.

Does this book rank that highly as a romance? No, I don't think so. But I never thought *Pride and Prejudice* was particularly effective as a romance either. But on character, and youthful idealism, and a lot on growing up and learning that actions speak louder than words, this book is quite effective.

June Taylor says

FUNNY, ROMANTIC, AND WRITTEN WITH FASTPACED CHARM! CAN'T WAIT FOR MY TURN!!!! TO READ IT. MARION CHESNEY IS THE ABSOLUTE QUEEN OF ROMANCE WRITERS. JUNE TAYLOR

D.D. Chant says

Okay so THIS one I really liked!!!

Mostly I liked it because Harry is AWESOME!!! And at the end of the book I STILL loved him (unlike Sylvester who had a terrible fall from grace at the end of 'Minerva').

Harry is indescribably beautiful, bordering on angelic. Black hair, blue eyes (my favourite combination in a man!!!) and tall. There is just one teeny tiny problem... he doesn't seem to have all his wits about him.

I loved how he made everyone think he was dull as ditch water and then sat back and derived huge amusement from shocking them with his stupidity!!! The conversation he has with Deirdre the first time he meets her had me in stitches. And the way he manages to get her to jump into his arms was positively evil!!!

All of the books have an underlying humour, and again Lady Goldolphin and mixing up her words... priceless!!!

Rebekah says

I actually listened to the audible version of this book, and very much enjoy the reader, Charlotte Anne Dore, who has done all of this series. As all of her books, this one barrels along at a breakneck pace with lots of expected and unexpected twists and turns and developments. The 3 that I have reread so far have a lot in common and several times I was struck with Déjà vue to the point that I almost quit reading thinking I picked up a recently read one by mistake. But no, I was just remembering another one. I was frustrated several times about how blind and foolish Deirdre was, especially since she was supposed to be the "intelligent one". It was a relief when she finally was struck by self-realization and I realized that this was the whole idea and one of the themes of her story from the beginning. Harry Desire was a treat and my favorite hero so far. As always, The Vicar's machinations and Lady Godolphin's absurdities are fodder for many laughs along the way. After a few hints regarding the 4th sister, Daphne, I will be picking that one up very soon.

QNPoohBear says

With his two eldest daughters married and off to Paris to join the peace celebrations, Rev. Armitage has become excessively vain and is in need of funds again to buy more hounds for his famous kennel. What better way to raise money than to marry off a beautiful daughter? This time, the vicar decides on an arranged marriage for his middle daughter Deirdre to Lord Harry Desire (yes, Chesney actually called her hero Desire) who needs to marry in order to inherit his uncle's fortune. Unfortunately for her papa, Deidre is a hopeless romantic who refuses to marry without love! Deirdre is known as the clever one in the family and she is certain she will know when she's in love and that her infatuation with her father's enemy Guy Wentwater is love and what she feels for Lord Harry is not. Deiredre thinks Lord Harry is lazy and not very bright though he has a knack of knowing exactly what she has been planning and a way of rescuing her that produces wanton feelings! Deirdre must learn to grow up as she falls in love, gets her heart broken and falls in love again while old enemies threaten to ruin her family.

I didn't like Deirdre much better than Annabelle. Though she believed she was clever and had a reputation

for being a bluestocking, she was just a silly, naive teenager like her sister and her adventures didn't really interest me much. Lord Harry was far more interesting and there was a story that should have been developed more. I did like knowing what happened to Minerva and Annabelle though and they and their husbands make cameo appearances. There are a few funny moments involving secondary characters but overall, this book was fairly boring. The next sister Daphne is mentioned quite a lot in this story as being vain and there are hints at her story to come.

Mary K. says

A delightful series. So far this has been my favorite of the six sisters. Three read, three to go.

Anneceleste says

Second reading September 2013. I like it more than any other book that I have read from this author. Harry Desire pretends to be an idiot but he proves to be the best hero ever. Very funny.

Small Review says

3.5
