

Forming a partnership

A common thread binds together the heroes and heroines of [Jayne Ann Krentz's](#) novels. Krentz believes it's vital that characters share values and worldviews—with their authors and with each other.

A conversation with Jayne Ann Krentz

How do you create heroes and heroines?

Jayne Ann Krentz: My heroes and heroines don't change between my voices, they're too much—they're too locked in to the core values and the worldviews, they share my sense of humor, they've got my worldviews, they've got my world values. I'm not psychic but I would really like to be, I could certainly take the fantasy leap there. Most of my characters have a psychic edge.

I use the psychic edge a lot because I think it heightens the sense of intimacy and it heightens the sense of a bond building between the two characters. So in a sense it's a metaphor, it becomes a metaphor for this bond, which is not so far beyond most women's experience of intuition, it's just that one step beyond intuition. And almost everybody, male or female, thinks they have good intuition whether they do or not, and everybody you ever talked to in your whole life can tell you about that one moment, you know, when they turned around at just the right time, or when something happened at just the right moment, and we call it intuition. And what is that except kind of a psychic vibe, and so everybody gets the psychic thing and that's why I can use it.

I tried the vampire story, saw that sucker coming down the track, knew I should jump on board. It was the perfect alpha male, and I could not write it. I can read it, I can't write it, and that just goes to show that it's easy to say, "Well, it's time to do hardboiled detectives, or it's time to do vampires, or it's time to do werewolves." And it's not that easy to shift your fundamental idea of what a hero is [...]

[...] The heroine shares the same core values, and one of the reasons it works for me is because the bond that forms between them is because each recognizes the hero or the heroic elements in the other. The hero appreciates and understands and respects her heroism, and she understands and respects his. In my stories the characters tend to form a partnership, and it's a bond that is formed by going through danger, and learning to trust each other, sometimes in a dangerous situation first, and then in a romantic way, or vice versa, you know.

One way or the other those two elements—the danger and the romance—heighten the stakes for both parties and I find that, the thing that is significantly different is that the heroine has feminine values, feminine virtues which are not necessarily masculine, and I'm happy with that difference that the masculine virtues don't have to equal the feminine virtues and that they complement each other.

My fantasy world is two people that complement each other, and I think there's an old saying about opposites attract. I truly believe that, and a lot of my characters are written along that storyline.

What do you think of psychic powers and heightened intuition in romance novels?

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