Vetsch, Barratt, Davis, Gywn, McDonough, Meyer, and Seilstads' "Seven brides for seven Texans romance collection" (Book Review)

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*Seven Brides for Seven Texans* is a collection of seven historical fiction novellas detailing the ways in which seven fictional brothers find wives, after their dying father demands it as a pre-requisite to their inheritances. The prologue, as every other novella in the collection, is very stilted and hard to follow. As a reader, the basic information and the basic story lineage are clear, but the entire collection is hard to read simply because it is uninteresting and very foreseeable.

Each novella is focused on one son and his journey to find a wife, each written by a different author. The first story, *First Come Love*, by Gabrielle Meyer, focuses on the youngest and boldest son and his blatant, although predictably ultimately successful, attempts to woo a bride. The story does not follow logically. Her harsh judgements do not ring true for someone who has just met someone else. Harsh judgments do not tend to come immediately. The characters are not developed. The reader is given too much unnecessary information and just given little snippets relating to situations that may be important to the story. Many aspects are unbelievable. The first female main character is written to dislike the brother, but then all of a sudden “his charming grin threatened to make her knees weak.” Out of the blue with no explanation she is described as liking him.

Each novella also jumps from one thought to the next with no explanation making the stories hard to follow. For example, in the first story the author use names of types of horses – something only a horse enthusiast would know. This information is not necessary and does not advance the story, but works to confuse the reader. The level of the writing in the story seems more geared towards young adults or younger. I would put it at a fifth-grade level with the occasional extra word that is not commonly used. Using these words out of the blue does not fit with the level of the stories. The plots of the stories are all very predictable. Word choices are unwise. The use of words not everyone would know in otherwise simplistic writing comes off as pretentious.
The following novellas seem to be written in the same format. The first woman introduced falls in love with the first brother introduced and vice versa. If you are looking for predictable romance stories, this collection is for you. If you are looking for in-depth reading, keep looking. The stories included after the first are *The Heart of Texas*, by Lorna Seilstad, *The Truest Heart*, by Amanda Barrett, *A Love Returned*, by Keli Gwyn, *For Love or Money*, by Susan Page Davis, *Mail-order Mayhem*, by Vickie McDonough, and *Love at Last*, by Erica Vetsch. Each novella is written in the same format except for *The Truest Heart*, which seems to have a prologue. The sequence of each novella is very unsurprising. If you are looking for simple predictable love stories, these are the ones. If you looking for stimulating reading pass this up.

Something positive about the book – it does follow a cohesive story line linking the stories together, and seems to be grammatically correct.

**Reviewer**
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