

Volume 21 Issue 1

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Love



A CONSORTIUM OF NEW VOICES

Kalliope



From the Editor Shavawn M. Berry

When I first started to contemplate this issue's theme—love—I wanted to see us examine love of all kinds: divine love, agape, personal love, romantic love, love that transcends death. **To me, love is the juice of life. Everything good comes from love.**

And right now, the world doesn't have enough love. It doesn't have enough of the sort of messy, all encompassing love that allows new ideas to be born. We need that kind of love. We need that ability to transcend our differences and see our similarities. We need to be able to map out a road out of the dark wilderness of war and austerity and selfishness and blind hatred. We must do this. We must become living and breathing examples of divine love—of



agape, altruism, kindness.

Kalliope is just a little magazine, but we have big dreams. We want to give voice to young writers and fresh ideas. We want to leave our readers feeling that they just experienced something special by reading something in our pages. This issue broadly explores the tender, flawed, imperfect aspect of this thing called love.

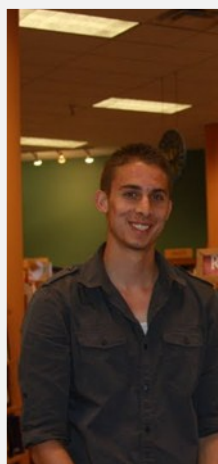
It is our love letter to each other, and to you. We hope that you feel that gentle care, humor and kindness on these pages. As this world goes through a painful but amazing transformation and rebirth, love is the only thing we can hold on to. Wishing you blessings on your most sacred journey.

Interns' Bios



Ken Showers is a senior at Arizona State University, majoring in English Literature. Last semester as part of his course work he wrote and edited articles for *Kalliope*. This semester he joins us as an intern. In his spare time he researches and writes speculative fiction.

His interests range from science, to fantasy, horror, and more. He currently lives at the Arizona State Polytechnic Campus in Mesa, AZ. Very rarely he can be seen doing work.



Fernando Zapata Garcia is a Communication major at Arizona State University, working on a writing certificate. He is a huge sports fan and strives to reach his personal and professional goals. One day he hopes to become a sports writer. Since he has sports in his blood he says he will keep working on his skills until he reaches the pinnacle of the profession in which he wants to work. He feels interning is a great way to do that.

Reliquary for a Beautiful Boy

Lisa Pollman

For centuries, reliquaries were fashioned to hold small amounts of a loved one's ashes or hair. They provided a sacred space in which to worship or remember someone who'd died. Seattle designer and architectural artist, Collette Collins, has created a personal reliquary as a very private offering to a client and her family.

I sat down recently to talk with her about this particular reliquary and the creative process surrounding its design.

In 2012, Collette was approached by a client, Terri Reinmiller, shortly after the death of her 33-year-old nephew. Reinmiller was looking for a woodcarver. Collins knew immediately that she wanted to work on the project. According to Collins she felt, "this [reliquary] is the ultimate act of love. His aunt knew his mother loves books and wanted to do [a reliquary] as a gift of absolutely pure love for her."

For the artist, who had previously met the young man's mother and has an ongoing relationship with his aunt, the project held special significance. Collins designed a book-shaped reliquary, bound in soft leather, with pages carved out of pine. She consistently works with great attention to detail and this piece is



Collette Collins and Terri Reinmiller, 'Reliquary for a Beautiful Boy' 2013, pine and lamb skin, 4-1/2" x 3-1/2" x 2". Photographs by Red Pants Studio.



no exception. During my interview with Collins, she pointed out one of the many minute details of the piece, "If you notice, there is a split page in the middle, representing a torn page, a life cut short. There is a huge spiritual aspect to this piece.

He was taken in the middle of his life. The spine of the book swivels out, revealing a small metal box, created by his aunt, Reinmiller. The private space for

the metal container appeals to Collins. "I came up with this hidden spine in the book. It's very secret. It's not something that everyone would know how to open. This is for his mother - for her to be able to protect him in this way."

Reinmiller, fashioned the interior box, inlaid with a silver lock and bronze fittings. Stamped upon the coin-shaped lock is an image of the tree of life. "Terri is a jeweler. This is a beautiful bronze box. When it's closed, it creates a full circle or the circle of time," Collins says.

Looking at the reliquary, I am struck by its beauty. It very much looks like a book, one that has been loved and begs one to touch it. There's something else, but I can't put my finger on it. Collins sums it up, revealing a bit of the mystery. "This

represents the dignity of someone's life. This object will last longer than he was alive. It's the book of life. It tells a story." And so it does.

For more photos of the reliquary, see *Kalliope's* website. To contact the artist, call her at (206) 818-9875 or email her at collettecollinsdesigner@gmail.com. Her website is collettecollinsdesigns.com.

Death is no more than passing from one room into another. But there's a difference for me, you know. Because in that other room I shall be able to see. ~ Helen Keller

The Good, the Bad, and The Ugly: Love in Literature

Donald Tripp

Isn't it strange that the most famous couple in the literary world ended with a suicide, but people still want to *be them*? Everyone wants to find their Romeo and Juliet story, but let's be real here: Romeo was robbing the cradle when he fell for Juliet. And his actions caused both of them to commit suicide!

Maybe it's the forbidden love that pulls readers in and sticks in their minds, two star-crossed lovers whose family won't let them see each other. He literally is in love with someone else, sees this young girl, and drops everything for Juliet. Don't even get me started on the "love at first sight" thing.

Maybe it's a Shakespeare thing. Maybe the man just didn't like a good, happy romance. What about Petruchio and Kate in *Taming of the Shrew*? He is there to "tame" her, to make her "suitable" for wifedom. This isn't an easy task, as Kate screams a lot and attacks anyone who even looks at her wrong. Through a series of borderline torture sessions, he takes control of her and breaks her until she is nothing but a woman at the mercy of an insane Italian. He even goes so far as to bet his brother-in-law that Kate would obey his every word, and she does! It's this sudden change in her character that makes the couple so problematic, and begs the question "should you have to change for someone to love you?"

Let's be real here – The

Bard can't honestly hate romance and love that much, right? There has to be a happy medium somewhere in his writing. Romeo and Juliet is sickeningly romantic, filled with classy lines and lovely scenes. *The Taming of the Shrew* doesn't allow Kate and Petruchio to exactly take it easy; Kate is essentially insane and Petruchio is only interested in her dowry. But old Bill Shakespeare didn't always



write such tragic couples. Beatrice and Benedick in *Much Ado About Nothing* are a dynamic couple, unafraid of humor and more than willing to laugh at themselves. The entire play is filled with sass and flirty one-liners that make you love the two of them together for all the right reasons. They have to work through their personal issues to end up together. That hard work, that struggle, makes the story magnetic. The fact that they don't both end up dead is a plus too.

What about other types of literature? Shakespeare was the master of drama, but what about the new concept of the novel?

Three words: *Pride and Prejudice*. The epitome of the British novel, the story follows Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth Bennet who are two people, not two lovers. They have flaws, and those flaws must be worked through in order for them to get together. Family is the driving force behind both their motives, and it shows in the end when they are both happy with each other. Granted, not everything

in *Pride and Prejudice* is all that romantic. Look at Charlotte and Mr. Collins; that relationship is dysfunctional and not ideal in any sense of the word. And George Wickham is a detestable man who is motivated by revenge, throwing the Bennet sisters into a myriad

of hardships and issues. Well, Austen couldn't get everything perfect, right? That's exactly why *Pride and Prejudice* is a fantastic novel – there are real people, not just characters.

On the other, not so attractive end of the love spectrum we have Heathcliff and Catherine in *Wuthering Heights*. Heathcliff's infatuation with Catherine is destroyed when he begins his plot of revenge. He steals an estate, marries a woman just to treat her horribly, and then goes so far as to demand Catherine's spirit stay on Earth when she dies. He then goes about forcing his son to fall in love

with Catherine's daughter. He actually goes so far as to hold her prisoner until she marries him, only to force her into servitude afterward. People seem to look past all that and focus on his infatuation with Catherine the Elder, and his descent into madness later in live in her memory. It's a sick game of revenge Heathcliff plays, but people still love him for it.

What about modern literature? What about today's young readers, who look to literature for examples of love? Bella Swan and Edward Cullen come to

mind, and somehow I don't think this relationship is the best example for young girls. She sees him once, where he's awkwardly trying to avoid her for no apparent reason. Then he does a 180 and says he loves her, queue romantic montage of ditching class, driving, and creepy bedside sleep watching. In the subsequent novels, Bella's infatuation grows and grows, despite some pretty rough times. She essentially goes into a walking coma when he leaves her, runs away to Italy to save him from his attempted suicide (which happens because she jumped off a cliff, don't ask), and then he rips her uterus open to remove their child as it rips her insides to shreds. And through all this, Bella still loves Edward, and magically gets rid of



Three words: *Pride and Prejudice*

her other love interest, one Jacob Black, when Jacob falls in love with her daughter. Her *infant* daughter. Talk about a dysfunctional family.

Now, I think you get my gist with *Twilight*. Romance is a driving theme, but isn't exactly realistic. What about the other major literary phenomenon of this generation: *Harry Potter*? Harry and Ginny grow up together, become friends, and their relationship flourishes into a loving marriage. **Same goes with Ron and Hermione; long-time friendship buds into romance that culminates in a kiss in the Chamber of Secrets that literally had me**

putting my book down, fists in the air, shouting in excitement.

So, my fair readers, I set you a task. If you haven't read the novels I mentioned, give them a try. Go out and make your own ideas of these couples. Read through the sickeningly sweet romance of Romeo and Juliet with

their somewhat inappropriate age difference. Make your way through the disjointed family life of Heathcliff and Catherine. Marvel at the broken, one-sided relationship of

Petruchio and Kate. Take a bite, if you dare, of the creepy version of love shared by Edward and Bella. Form your own opinions about these relationships, but then turn around and read the others. Fall in love with Mr. Darcy. Laugh with Beatrice and Benedick as they maneuver through a party filled with dramatics. Grow up with Harry, Ron, Hermione, and Ginny, and feel the satisfaction as each of these relationships come to fruition in their own time. Look at literature that uses love to support a bigger plot, one that revolves around the characters as people instead of just lovers. There are some amazing couples in literature, and just like real life, you simply need to search for the right one for you.

The Decision to Love

Sarah Anand Anma, Intuitive Relationship Coach

Falling in love is wonderful. Hormones, things in common, hours and hours of talking are often the beginning of something bigger. The problem is, that after we fall quickly and deeply, when the hormones go back into balance and the things in common are less precious, we have the reality that love isn't only romance and play and giddiness. It is a good thing, too, since nothing would ever get done! In the media, we see scenarios of two people falling into bed and then love and then...the rest of the story is seldom portrayed. When the euphoria fades then we get to decide, "Am I in or am I out?"

When we approach a relationship with the **common**

and deal breakers that warn us to take heed. Later, we struggle trying to reconcile who the real person is with the image of them that we had. That struggle is miserable.

In those times when we have allowed our partner to be who



without **commitment** there is no **happiness**.

Making a decision cuts away all other options. The option to run is off the table. When you and your partner decide to commit to one another, it is sacred. You are calling on a force higher than ego, to your highest selves. Love relationships are very confronting. They are magical and are humbling, too. When we decide that we are *in*, even more magic can happen. You are safe knowing that whatever happens, your relationship will last. In our disposable/consumer culture, this is not easily adhered to. It is difficult to humble oneself to the larger purpose of the common good. And, ultimately, you will get something much more rewarding

With authentic relationships, love is a *decision* rather than an emotion. This idea is quite radical and also very helpful. When we are less concerned with the emotions of falling in love, we are less prone to acting selfishly because we are not feeding the impulse for immediate gratification.

good in mind, we are allowing the other person to be who they are rather than who we want them to be. All too often, we fall in love with the *idea* of a person. What that means is, we are in love with love or the projection of who we *want* that person to *be*. This, of course is a recipe for disaster. When we are in love with love, we jump with both feet into the deep end of the pool before ever knowing who the person is or if we are compatible. When we are stuck on an idea, we are blind to red flags

they are and loved them where they are, we have an authentic relationship. With authentic relationships, love is a **decision rather than an emotion**. This idea is quite radical and also very helpful. When we are less concerned with the **emotions** of falling in love, we are less prone to acting selfishly because we are not feeding the impulse for immediate gratification. If we decide to go forth for the highest good, then all sorts of problems can be transcended. Yogi Bhanjan said that

than immediate gratification. You will get peace and a depth of experience beyond measure.

Sarah Anma's **relationship coaching practice** is located in San Francisco, but she also works with clients online and over the phone. You can contact her through her website, <http://artofrelationship.net/home/>

Unearthing the History of Valentine's Day

Rebecca Tappendorf

Most of us enjoy celebrating Valentine's Day and showing our appreciation for those we love in some way or another—perhaps flowers, chocolates, hugs, kisses, or...valentines. However, few of us know the history behind Valentine's Day.

In the face of our culture's commercialization of Valentine's Day, it's easy to lose sight of its underlying message. Contrary to what retailers want you to think, showing love doesn't have to be fancy or expensive; it can be plain and simple, or practical and down-to-earth. Maybe it's time to go back in history and look at the life of a man in the third century AD whose name was (you guessed it) St. Valentine. It remains unclear how many St. Valentines there actually were—there may have been two or even three. Archaeologists found a Roman catacomb and ancient church dedicated to Valentine, so we do know that at least one Valentine existed.

According to tradition, Valentine of Rome was imprisoned sometime around 269 or 270 AD for aiding Christians during the persecution of Emperor Claudius II. Other versions of the story say that he performed marriages for couples, in defiance of the emperor, or that he refused to worship Roman idols. One legend reports that Claudius actually found favor with the prisoner—that is, until he tried to convert him to Christianity. At that

point, the emperor sentenced Valentine to death by beating and stoning, but when these methods failed to kill him, he was beheaded on the Flaminian Way.

The most popular account records that, while in prison, Valentine shared his beliefs about his one true God with the guards. He prayed for the adopted blind daughter of one of his captors and restored her sight, and the man's whole family (46 people in all) converted to Christianity. When the enraged emperor found out that Valentine was still making converts in prison, he promptly

ordered that he be beheaded. However, before he died, Valentine sent a farewell message to the young girl he had healed, signed, simply, "From your Valentine." February 14th has been a celebration of St. Valentine's life since the year 496 AD. He is the patron saint of young people, engaged couples, happy marriages, and love. Although it is difficult to separate fact and fiction in Valentine's life, it is clear that he exemplified love, for both God and others. **It seems fitting that we celebrate love on his special day.**



A Modern Romance: *This is 40* Shane Chergosky

Within the pop culture and art we surround ourselves with, none seems more prevalent in its ideas of love and romance than the movies. But the formula that many romantic films follow and the simple (or overwhelming extravagant) conflicts in the relationships between characters, while charming in their own way, seem unrealistic to us. It is almost an immediate response to question the validity of these stories because of their seemingly perfect endings and populations of characters who simply ignore each others' flaws. Times have changed; these stories, too, must adapt. So can romantic love be depicted within film in a way that is sincere and modern but does not rely on clichés? I believe that Judd Apatow's, *This is 40* achieves this.

Paul Rudd and Leslie Mann play a married upper-middle-class couple living in Los Angeles with their two daughters. As Pete (Rudd) and Debbie (Mann) near turning forty, the characters are met with both internal and external conflicts, that lead up to Pete's 40th birthday celebration. *This is 40* moves away from some of the conventions that have prevailed throughout writer/director Judd Apatow's films. *Los Angeles Times* critic Steven Zeitchik deemed the film as an "attempt to marry sweetness with raunchy," and while the rest of that review is less than positive, this film does quite well in fusing those two things.

The way the relationships develop between characters and the obstacles they overcome are what become the selling point of the

film's depiction of love. Pete and Debbie are both going through financial difficulties. Pete's failing indie record label and a large sum of missing money from Debbie's fashion boutique, paired with their ongoing battle to keep their children safe from the undesirable



aspects of the technological revolution, ultimately puts a strain on their marriage. In the hopes of keeping both their family and marriage afloat, they begin to wonder if it is more than they can handle. Seeing Pete and Debbie actively struggle with their marriage makes us see what many romantic comedies tend to ignore and while it is depressing to see it happen, it makes it all the better when they press on together.

The inclusion of the couple's parents also adds an interesting element of tension to the film, giving the story a realistic quality. Pete's deadbeat dad (Albert Brooks) and Debbie's distant father (John Lithgow) are seen as possible sources of solace for their children in this moment of distress. In hopes that they will have the answers, the couple reaches out. Unfortunately, these flawed characters cannot help the couple. To me, this spoke to the realness of the story. Not everyone has people

they can go to for answers in life or to help them solve their problems. Even if they do, there are no guarantees. Paul and Debbie must find the answers for themselves and grow as individuals and a couple, which is far more realistic than having the answers simply fall into their laps, as many romantic movies tend to do.

Here we see a couple in the throes of relational distress. Unlike many Hollywood depictions, we don't see the two meet or fall in love; we simply don't need to see it. Apatow skips the chase and catch while avoiding the numerous opportunities for stock love imagery and puts us in the middle of Pete and Debbie's marriage giving their relationship a sense of longevity, while still being vulnerable to the flaws in their characters.

Although the film doesn't follow Apatow's now classic approach to a romantic comedy, there is still much to be said about *This is 40*. The conflicts, while only loosely related, all work together in creating a more realistic idea of a marriage under siege in the 21st century. Whether it is placing the characters in situations of emotional distress, or simply forcing them to deal with how much time their children spend on the Internet, the story connects with its viewers in a way that is deeper than, though not above, the explicit material of earlier Apatow movies. He does not entirely abandon going for the joke and often does, but by simply toning it down, I find that *This is 40*'s depiction of romantic love is not only more real, but more meaningful in the face of the digital culture we live in today.

I Love You, Man

Fernando Zapata

Love.

Historically we associate love with romantic love and recognize it as an intimate and (usually) sexual relationship between a man and a woman. What about the love between a woman and another woman? A man and another man?

Yes, traditional heterosexual love is the only one that is advertised and well accepted as the 'norm,' but there's more than just mainstream, lovey-love. I am here to tell you there are other kinds of love.

I am talking about bromance.

When asked, what do you think about when the topic of love comes up? I thought of bromance. I am amused at the fact that certain things make women uncomfortable or mad, things that they simply do not understand. A bromance is a type of love that is as close to unconditional as any I can think of. It is a form of love that is not only pure but also as real as love gets.

Bromance is defined by urbandictionary.com as, "A close relationship between two bros to such a point where they start to seem like a couple."

Now I am not going to lie; I am in a clear-cut bromance.

My bromancer and I have our ups and downs, fight, make up, and go on man dates when my girlfriend lets me. For my male readers, are you in a bromance? For my female readers, do you know anyone in a bromance? How does this make you feel?

For me, when I think of a bromance, I think of Chandler and Joey (*Friends* TV series), *Dumb and Dumber*, and a prime example: Pauly D. and Vinnie from *Jersey Shore*.



Instead of celebrating traditional Valentine's Day love, I think it's time to pay tribute to bromance love and I will tell you why.

I think it's time to pay tribute to bromance love...

You shouldn't be ashamed to admit that hangin' with your bestie is the place you long to be. Bromance love is legit; it's real. Think about it, who is there when your girl leaves you? Your Broski. Who is there for you when you need to just get away? Your bro.

I am going to end this piece with a sample conversation from my own personal bromance. Tell me. Is this bromance a real form of

love or not?

Hey man how have you been?

I'm good man, just hanging out.

Dude it's cool. I heard about you and your girl; you can tell me.

I just thought we were closer than that you know? But then she goes and leaves out of nowhere....Dammit, is it me or what? This always happens.

It's ok man. (Goes in for a hug.) Don't let it get to you. If it helps, I still love you bro. (Long pause.) So, ya wanna grab a beer and talk about it?

How can you miss the clear signs of love here?

Your bromantic partner is the one who's there for you. He plays beer pong and answers your call in the middle of the night. You can't put a price on that. **It's priceless. It's real. It's love.**

Let's Talk About Sex

Brittany Eckler

Sex – it's everywhere you look these days, from those outrageous condom commercials to perfume ads with scantily clad models. Sex is so common that you just turn on your television and nearly every channel you flip to will advertise it in one way or another. The plot of television shows may change allowing the creators to find new ways to keep their audience coming back for more, but one thing remains constant: romance and sex. Depictions of romance have changed over the course of television's history. Early TV featured married couples not even sharing a bed. Today, teenage couples have sex because it's considered a normal activity. Television relationships have transformed over the decades to keep up with how real relationships have evolved. If young teens were to watch episodes of *I Love Lucy* they wouldn't understand why Lucy and Ricky weren't sharing a bed, and if our great-grandparents were to watch *Modern Family* they would find it strange for two men to be in a relationship and some might even be outraged by it.

The 1950's comedy, *I Love Lucy*, starred Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz as husband and wife. Lucy (usually with her BFF, Ethel, by her side) got herself into trouble in one way or another every single episode. After a long day of ridiculous antics, we'd watch as she and her husband Ricky got into different beds in the same room. This all sounds pretty tame to us now, but that's how television worked in those days: separate beds, no revealing clothing, no steamy make-out scenes, and definitely no sex – though it was pretty evident that Ricky and Lucy did the deed when they conceived

little Ricky. It all seems so G-Rated, but standards for television were different then. Lucy and Ricky had a cookie cutter marriage: the man worked and the woman cooked,



cleaned, and raised the children.

As society changed, so did the television. In the 1990s, the teenage comedy *Boy Meets World* captured many adolescent hearts. Two of the main characters, Cory and Topanga, were the stereotypical childhood sweethearts. They end up married in the final seasons of the show. Everything was just oh so perfect with absolutely no troubles, no temptations...*yeah, right*. After all, *Boy Meets World* came out when television sitcoms were starting to get *real*. Okay, so there were never any pregnancy scandals and no one was running around having random one night stands (at least, not on-screen), but *Boy Meets World* did talk about sex occasionally, just not as heavily until *after* Cory and Topanga tied the knot. In contrast, Shawn Hunter, (Cory's best friend) was a notorious ladies man who knew how to perfectly flip his hair to get a girl's attention – Justin Bieber has *nothing* on him. There was Cory's older brother Eric who too, knew how to get a girl's attention and many of the earliest episodes

consisted of Eric getting himself into hilarious situations with girls. Unlike the shows currently airing today, *Boy Meets World* was relatively innocent and rated PG.

In an episode about their college years during the time that Cory and Topanga were engaged, Cory plays the standard horny male, begging Topanga for sex. She, of course, denies him and they wait until marriage to seal the deal. Even when they did, the audience didn't see any action. Scenes of volcanoes erupted on screen, alluding to their sexual exploits rather than actually portraying them.

This brings us to today's very modern family. Appropriately titled, *Modern Family*, this show creates buzz due to its hilarious characters and its portrayal of a *new* type of family. You are introduced to one big family, which diverges into three smaller families: Jay and Gloria with Gloria's son Manny; Phil and Claire with their three kids Haley, Alex, and Luke; and Mitchell and Cam with their adopted daughter Lily. Going from a show like *Lucy* to *Modern Family*, you go from the traditional man and wife with no sex until marriage relationship to two men being married with a daughter. Sex is also talked about pretty openly in *Modern Family*.

Television has completely changed in the past few decades; now if a show doesn't have some hot and steamy scenes, then it faces losing its time slot. Shows need a hook like sex, or activities leading to sex to keep their audience interested.

And let's face it, if this piece hadn't started with the word sex, how many of you would have continued reading?

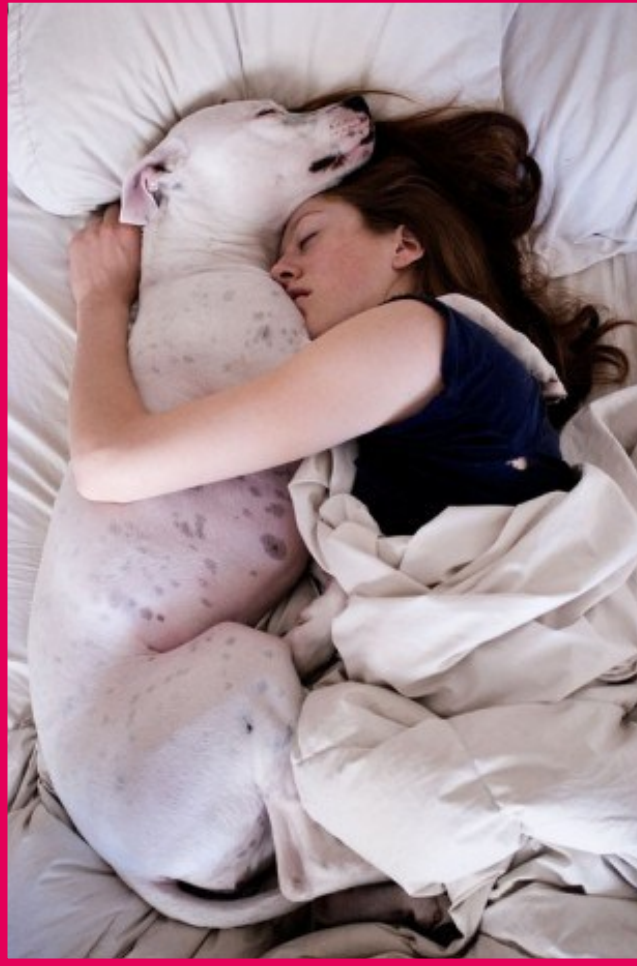
Puppy Love

Emily Anderson

I never really considered the power of carefully placed paw until Blitz came along. As I repeatedly came home frustrated and tired from my day at work or school, I noticed how intelligent my dog was from the way he handled the tumult of my emotions. At times when all I wanted to do was scream and crawl into bed for a week, he somehow reassured me. My problems seemed smaller when I looked down to see his paw resting on the top of my foot.

Dog love is exceptional in our everyday lives because it takes on a unique form compared to the other relationships we encounter. It is an incredible feeling to have such profound love for something, and that love to be reciprocated, with an even with a non-lingual being. We love our dogs for

obvious reasons like their astounding cuteness or the way they turn their head to the side when we address them, but there are much deeper connections that drive our love further. When my boyfriend and I got our first puppy, we named him Blitz because we were told he is a German Shepherd -Chow mix. I was completely smitten. I suddenly couldn't live without him. Although he was a



thought: dogs don't speak English. As much as I tirelessly explained the logic in not eating one's poo, Blitz marched to the beat of his own drum. I learned that raising a puppy is like raising a child in some regards because you are not able to teach them with just words, you must demonstrate good behavior to them. If there was an accident in the house, it was cleaned up immediately to show that eating those items was strictly prohibited.

Over time, I observed that Blitz playfully reacted to my high-pitch "baby voice" more than my stern, yelling voice. This was slightly humorous because it actually educated me in the way that I talk to other people. Life is not always about what you say, but *how* you say it.

Dog love is different.

Dogs love you no matter what.

They are loyal in a way that few people are. We love our canines because they never hold a grudge, they follow us silently, and they love without hesitation. So, if you don't have a dog, maybe consider enriching your love life by getting one. And if you do, take a moment to wrap your arms around your dog and feel the warm tongue of love in one of its purest forms.

My little dog - a heartbeat at my feet.

~ Edith Wharton

And They Lived Happily Ever After...for 90 Minutes

Angelica Varnju

Boy meets girl. Boy is smitten with girl. Boy and girl fall for each other, but their journey is far from smooth. They bicker and bluster. Still, they realize they can't live without one another and declare their love. They share a big, passionate kiss and then walk off into the sunset, rainstorm, or moonlit night where we are left to assume that they will live happily ever after. This is a 90-minute, perfectly predictable love story that we've seen over and over again. We never tire of it.

Most of the population is familiar with romantic comedies and dramas. I bet that a majority of women can name at least three rom-coms at the drop of a hat. The question is how influential are these films in terms of how we approach (or perceive) our own relationships? How much of how love is depicted in these films is realistic? I can't help but wonder if these fantasies leave us disappointed in our real romantic relationships, and if we actually believe what we see on screen is possible.

I admit, I am a sucker for romantic comedies. As a woman in my early twenties it's basically programmed into my biological makeup. And as I've gotten older and wiser (I like to think wiser) I've began to notice that I do just what every other woman that watches these movies does; I compare my own relationships to that which is portrayed in the movie. "Why doesn't he give me flowers for no reason?" "Why doesn't he chase me down street in the pouring rain after an argument, scoop me up into his arms and tell me how much he loves me and the argument is resolved?" "Why can't I just walk into a room and in the

blink of an eye find my Prince Charming?" Why, why, why? I'll tell you why, and it's simple really—because real life love stories don't only last for 90 minutes.

Film romance only shows us the beginning stages, the bloom



is still 'on the rose' then. Couples in these movies go from courtship bliss to dropping the coveted "L" word in the matter of what in real time would be a month at maximum. They skip the middle. This is pretty unfair, particularly in terms of the high standards for guys. Have you ever met a guy like that? We have put the men in romance movies on a pedestal that our boyfriends, as amazing as they are, couldn't possibly reach. I can't tell you how many times my guy friends have said something along the lines of, "We can't all guys be like Ryan Gosling!" I can't tell you how many of my girlfriends ended relationships due to immense pressure to achieve a movie perfect relationship quickly.

I can remember my first real relationship and the

tremendously high standards that I had for it (poor guy). The L-bomb was dropped within a few months and wedding bells rang in my ears. Needless to say it didn't last. Our fights never helped us realize how much we cared about each other and our problems weren't ever solved in a matter of minutes. Still, at the time, I had expectations that our love would mirror movie love, which essentially lead to the relationship's demise.

Getting back to Ryan Gosling, one of the best examples of unrealistic love stories is that of Nicholas Sparks' "masterpiece" *The Notebook*. His character Noah's relationship with Allie is the model that many women would love to follow—but I can't understand why. A majority of their relationship consisted of fights the summer they met. Then, they broke up. Years after their breakup, Allie is engaged to another man. Only then does she realize she is still in love with Noah. They reunite and all is right with the world. To me, things don't quite add up. I know that the whole idea behind their story is that true love conquers all and that is very true. But when did Noah and Allie find the time to fall in love? Beginning, end—no middle.

I guess that is the main problem with these romantic films; they make us think our love stories need to pick up the pace to match what we watch on the screen. But isn't a marathon much more entertaining to watch than a sprint? What we experience in real life is better. Our relationships last.

We get that amazing middle in our love stories. And then some.

Love is a Verb

Annalisa Cruz

Love, in its simplest form, takes time and commitment. It starts as a feeling, a look. It touches the fiber of what it means to be human. Love binds and connects us to other human beings. I believe we learn the very foundation of what it means to love from our interactions with our parents. Still, additional examples of love exist all around us. We experience

love for our family members, love for our friends, our pets, or even our material possessions. Love encompasses everything.

Perhaps the greatest example of love comes in the form of a commitment. Committed love is the strongest form of love. Those who fail to commit to someone do so because they fear that they may be rejected, or worse yet, they may feel that they lack the deep feelings needed to make a commitment. Speaking from experience, love can be complicated if it is not felt by both parties.



We learn how to give love based on the love we received from our mothers and fathers early in life. **From this we learn that love is a verb. Love is more than four letters in a row; it is an action, not just something you say to another person.** Love means being selfless. You can't love someone else if your thoughts center on you and your issues. Where love works, it works through selfless action.

Yes, love takes time, work and a significant amount of commitment and action in order to

work. From my failed relationships, I've learned what love should not be: selfish, unkind, or restricted. Love needs to be free, unforced, and natural. Real love begins with a foundation of a friendship and mutual understanding. You enter the relationship as a whole person. Love means knowing what you want for yourself while working together

to achieve a common goal. Love means compromising instead of conceding and feeling a sense of mature responsibility to another person. Love means feeling secure by yourself before you expect anyone to feel secure next to you. A love like that works. As human beings we must express ourselves in a deeper more selfless manner. Love nourishes us at that fundamental level. I now know what love can do. I certainly know what it has done for my life.

What does love mean to you?

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. ~ 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

For Love or Money Kenneth Showers

I celebrated my 28th birthday the other day. I marked it the way most people my age would: I drank a bottle of champagne alone in my room.

And cried.

Wait. OK. Maybe *not* the way most people celebrate. I'm willing to bet they weren't alone. When you get to be my age, however, it seems like the marketplace of available women has decreased. Considerably. Everyone with the most desirable of personal traits has been plucked up and carried off, making the rest of us look and feel like fallen, bruised fruit. After all, you've had 30 years to clean up your act, and still, here you are. Drinking bubbly with a box of Kleenex at your side.

Well, OK. What about getting out there, you say. What about dating? Sure. Let's look at my last two dates:

Disinterested (mutual).

CRAZY.

OK. Not the end of the world. What about some of those fine women you grew up with?

CRAZY.

Married to my best friend.

As you can see, it's starting to look pretty grim.

A friend of mine often says that if you're our age and single, it's either due to a recent break up, or the fact that you are limping through life with some kind of real damage. It's hard to argue with that logic just basing it on my personal experiences. That said, while I do really want love, as anyone would, I think what I'm most angry/disappointed/torqued about, is the fact that I'm not married.

Everyone reading this probably already realizes this, but living, it turns out, is hard. It all seems hunky dory right up until you get dumped into adult responsibilities. Odds that you'll score that perfect dream job right



out of college? Pretty much zero. I told one of my professors the other day that I am a fiction writer. Five minutes later when he stopped laughing, he quoted old Catullus the poet: "Nam tui Catulli plenus sacculus est aranearum." *For your Catullus's little purse if full of Cobwebs.* He also said, "Don't quit your day job."

Stability. That is ultimately the best bargain you can get out of a marriage in my opinion. I am looking for someone who can help me get my act together (spiritually and financially). Someone who compliments and enhances who I am to help me lead a productive life. So what's love got to do with it? Well, nothing maybe. Love is not a prerequisite for marriage. The meaning doesn't even imply it. Marriage, has always been, a sort of business contract. The terms have

changed over the years, but it remains a merger, with gains expected for both parties, and most of the middle management fired or retired. Perhaps it is sexist to say so, but it's not hard to envy the days when your bride came with a dowry. Cow's were a big deal back then. Is that modern equivalent a car? An Xbox? Your in-laws Olympic size swimming pool? Come to think of it, maybe nothing much has changed.

So would I marry for money? I was going to say yes emphatically. I stopped myself though. For everything else that I am, I am a writer first, and as you likely know, we are hopeless romantics. It's true, I am willing to see love in all things, it is the cornerstone of good fiction. If there isn't a wedding or a funeral at the end, it wasn't a very good party.

What do you truly gain anyway? If you're stuck in a business contract with a person you don't love, it won't last. Divorce is outrageously high because people see benefits and dollar signs before they actually see the other person. By the time they do it's too late (and divorce, humorously enough, is much more expensive than marriage).

I wonder if there will ever be a consensus on this. One *can* have love without marriage. That said, I still dream of that fancy wedding where everyone I know is invited. All my friends and family proud of me; all my enemies filled with envy. I will walk down the aisle, lift that veil, say my vows, and then kiss that beautiful, blushing bride.

Who is rich.

Hey, this is my fantasy. A man can dream can't he?

Wedding Fever Allie Desrochers

I have wedding fever. Right now, wedding season is in full force. It's all about the dress, the ring, the venue, the food, the decor. Oh, and love, don't forget that little gem. In today's world, we tend to forget that. Weddings should be about the love and passion between two people, but now the focus turns towards price tags and having the best of the best.

it, but I can't help myself.

Every girl daydreams about her wedding. It doesn't matter whether a couple elopes, has a backyard wedding, or goes full glitz, the thoughts are there. The wedding industry rakes in approximately 60 billion a year, not including honeymoon expenses which add another 5 billion. Couples spend as much money on

inspirational quotes and do-it-yourself ideas. One word in the search bar is all it takes to fire off a storm of ideas for any girl's dream wedding. Gaudy dresses and rings, self-made signs and decorations, perfect flower combinations — it is like a sweet sensory-overload drug for my wedding-addled brain, and I love it. My best friend, Jessica, is getting married in April, and I am

starting to believe I am more excited than she is. We spend hours and hours scrolling through different wedding pins without ever getting bored. Over half of her wedding has been formulated from ideas gathered from the *best site ever*, Pinterest.

Still, the question remains: Why do I want to indulge in a big wedding and all of the elements involved? Because that's the way it is. I want what I want.

That said, despite my big fat wedding dream, I



The funny thing is — although I don't consider myself a material girl — I am completely tangled up in the material aspect of my dream wedding. I want Vera Wang and a rock that'll make my hand drag the ground. I want white doves and a seven tier wedding cake, and I want it now! I am ashamed of how vain I act regarding my future wedding. My boyfriend of three and a half years thinks I have completely lost

their weddings as they would on a down payment for a house. Instead of investing in their marriage, they dream of a fairytale wedding. I know it's silly. Yet, I can't shake the idea of a big, beautiful, perfect wedding.

The number one culprit for my newfound obsession is a particular website: that whimsical "P" surrounded in red, Pinterest. I love the tiny boxes with

have vowed not to lose the true meaning behind a wedding: love between two people. I love my future husband with every bit of my being, and I will not get lost in vanity in spite of just how vain this event typically proves to be. I promise to keep my head on straight and remember that love is what matters. **Love and the ribbons on my bridal bouquet...**

Happily Ever After? Mo Reilly

Once upon a time, within the mind of a young and quite naïve girl was the ever so cheesy yet clear vision of Prince Charming. This image of a stunning, chiseled, handsome man taking her away to live happily ever after is enough to make her weak at the knees. **Yes, it's true that I am guilty of picturing my own life turning out to be much like Snow White's or any other Disney Princess, but come on, I can't be the only one!**

Truth is, there are plenty of girls that grow up believing in this fantasy. Sadly, just like any love story must end, the dreaming and hoping for Prince Charming ends; people grow up.

As we mature, imagining that our lives will turn out to be anything like a Disney princess's becomes inappropriate. The idea of rescue by a charming prince is seen as a total cliché. But I wonder, is it **that** bad to let yourself be a little bit pathetic and romantic once in a while?

Though they are not in the form of a prince rescuing a damsel in distress, we do have plenty of modern examples of "Prince Charming" that instill hope in our hearts that maybe such a perfect



partner does, in fact, exist.

One show that I love to watch is *How I Met Your Mother*. The main character, Ted, is a prime example of a modern prince charming. Ted is a romantic and true believer in love. He is constantly looking for his soul mate by doing outrageous things for the women in his life. I admit, some of the things he does are slightly crazy, but still, he sure can make a girl smile. He's not afraid to show his feelings, which is something you don't see every day. Ted, along with many other leading males on television shows bring the idea of destiny to life by making love realistic, rather than just a fantasy.

Aside from television and movies, one last place we can find this possible modern Prince Charming is in novels, specifically those written by Nicholas Sparks. I always try to read his books or watch the movies based on those books after a break-up because they make me forget about the heartbreak. Yes, these stories are highly unlikely and a little bit on the pathetically mushy side, but what these stories do for the reader is make them vulnerable, even if only for the duration of a couple hundred pages. Sparks has the ability to pull his reader in by creating these magnificent love stories with characters closely related to our beloved Prince Charming.

As the realities of life and love push us to become cynical, we must realize that there is no harm in embracing the fantasy and heart-warming idea of "Prince Charming." It not only sparks hope, but it ignites a flame of hope in you, even if it is only for a moment. Just as if you were back in your childhood imagining what life would be like a princess, these modern tales remind us that, even though it is extremely embarrassing to believe in happily ever after, there is the chance that a noble, flawed, charming man will take your breath away and sweep you right off your feet. And that's enough.

Let yourself be silently drawn by the
strange pull of what you really love. It
will not lead you astray. ~ Rumi



True Love in the Cheap Seats

Jenelle Peters

Each year when Valentine's Day approaches I realize I think of true love differently. How much money my fiancé spends on me for Valentine's Day is not important. Because we are soon to be married, saving money is a big priority. So, instead of spending a lot, we are frugal while still making each



other feel loved and fabulous. It is possible. Homemade gifts can not only be less expensive, but in my opinion, they are much more meaningful.

My perfect Valentine's Day starts early in the morning getting ready for the day. I have no plans other than hanging out with Sakeri, my hunky fiancé. We will both look our best. He has planned our daytime activities which include a light hike to one of our favorite scenic spots and a lunch that he prepared for us. This is where we went on our first date after we had officially declared ourselves a couple over two years ago. This is also the spot where we got engaged. As we sit staring out at the Phoenix skyline we talk about our lives. Our wedding day is swiftly approaching. He will move into our beautiful apartment in just two days. We make plans for the future and talk about furnishing our home and starting a family. The skyline glitters as we sit taking in everything. I am reminded of the ring I wear on my left hand.

Later, we will go see a movie at the dollar theatre because

it is a perfect affordable alternative and there is always something good showing. We cram those king-sized Butterfingers, Snickers bars and bottles of pomegranate goodness into a movie purse big enough to pass for a diaper bag. We smile coyly as we pass the concession counter, our fingers intertwined. In that moment we are pirates who just smuggled our booty through security.

When the movie ends we go to my house for the dinner I planned. I recently subscribed to a website that feeds my obsession with collecting recipes by sending me daily emails. In these emails are copycat recipes from our favorite restaurants, so tonight we cook one together: lobster and asparagus penne pasta, a perfect blend of The Olive Garden and Red Lobster!

We make a great team. He cleans and chops, I season and cook. The conversation is easy and enjoyable, and the time passes quickly. When the food is done, we dish it onto two white plates. The sizzle of the hot lobster sends a siren call to our appetites. The meal

is both delicious and full of flavor. We follow the meal with a dessert of strawberries dipped in chocolate. We produce lovely meals when we work together and we always have a lot of fun doing it. Sakeri is light hearted, which makes our evening even better. I realize I have butterflies

because I know that we will be cooking every night in our own kitchen very soon.

Our night ends in a gift exchange. This is the part of the night that I've been nervously waiting for because we agreed on a very small budget, and I'm not sure if Sakeri obeyed my orders. He enjoys spoiling me. I don't mind being doted upon, but I like the gifts to be homemade because he has to think about what to make me. To me they are sweeter, not to mention the fact that he is an amazing artist. Tonight he gives me an original art piece he created. It is a sophisticated painting of The Little Mermaid, my favorite princess. I give him a book containing pictures of our best memories together.

This day was just what I wanted. The entire day cost less than \$20, and we didn't have a care in the world. I feel lucky and blessed by my true love.

Love Saves Lives Amanda Stoneman

February is the month of love. However, many people feel bereft and alone, desperately seeking love they feel lost without. For them, this month can leave them hopeless.

With so much love floating in the air, we need to realize the importance of sharing it with those among us who struggle with depression, addiction, self-harm, and suicide—people who need to know that their lives matter. They deserve to be loved. They need to know hope is real and possible.

According to the World Health Organization, on average almost 3,000 people commit suicide each day. Right now, we only have one day out of the entire year to raise awareness for suicide prevention: September 10. But why shouldn't we share our love for humanity every day of the year?

You might ask how do we show these individuals that we care? Expressing love towards the wounded is as easy as writing "LOVE" on your arm. To Write Love on Her Arms (TWLOHA) is a non-profit organization that seeks to provide hope to individuals who most need it. These people need to know that life is worth it, and that changes in their circumstances will happen.

TWLOHA believes being a part of a community is essential for creating hope; people need other people. We are meant to battle pain, tragedy, and loss together. Belonging to a community will change the feelings of isolation and sadness that many people experience when life becomes too hard to handle.

As a society, we can reduce the number



of suicides and suicide attempts with love and intervention. It's true. Our love can save lives.

Even though suicide is still a taboo in our society, we must change that and embrace any individual who struggles with darkness. People often perceive depression as shameful, but instead we should view it as destructive and corrosive. According to TWLOHA, "two out of three people who struggle with depression never seek help, and that untreated depression is the leading cause of suicide." Symptoms of depression are sometimes invisible, but don't let that stop you from reaching out if

you think someone is in trouble. Help those in need realize that hope, rescue, survival, and treatment are available.

TWLOHA's vision is for people to find life, freedom, and love. Instead of buying expensive flowers and chocolates this year, express your love for those among you who are in pain by writing, painting, coloring, or drawing the word "LOVE" on your arm or wrist. Your love tattoo may truly help someone who sees it hold on for another day. By giving them a dose of hope, you show that their lives are worth saving. We live in a trauma-filled world, but pain is only temporary. Hope is real.

Take a moment and scribble four letters on your arm. See how many lives you change with only one word, one feeling, one movement—Love.

When The Going Gets Tough, The Tough Go Shopping

Sara Calton

With Valentine's Day approaching, single women across America head out in droves to stock up on Dove chocolates and cheap romance novels. The holiday—affectionately referred to as Single's Awareness Day—has been driving women to desperation and despair for decades. But is it true that women still feel compelled to be in a relationship for this one day each year? It seems as though the popular view is shifting—it is no longer the *worst* thing in the world if you're single on Valentine's Day.

Of course, there are still plenty of heart-shaped chocolates, over-sized teddy bears, and diamond encrusted jewelry made readily available for those of us with adoring (and financially solvent) boyfriends, but stores are slowly making room for a new market—singles.

Cards designed for friends to give to one another, or for us to give ourselves, proclaim: "Love is like a box of chocolates. It's sweet at first, and then you wanna puke!" Or, if that one isn't satisfying, here's one of my favorites: "At least your pets love you." Finally, the



popular and uplifting website Some Ecards provides this gem: "Just remember that being alone on Valentine's Day is no different than any other day of your life." Though the sentiment may not fill us with joy, the card does make a very good point.

Yes, V-Day is designed to allow happy couples to exchange gifts and gaze longingly at one another over romantic dinners; however, there are still plenty of things you can do on Valentine's Day even if you're single. Hallmark, the brand most trusted for words of comfort and love, is now providing singles with some ideas for how to spend a solitary Valentine's Day. One idea is to throw a big party. It might be an Anti-Valentine's Day party, where you and all your single

girlfriends smash a heart-shaped piñata to pieces, or it might just be a night of drinks and mingling. While all this is a good idea, there is another way of lifting spirits on a Valentine's Day as a soloist: **Shopping.**

Yes, my dears. We need a full-on shopping spree where we don't think about how much it costs or if we *really* need that particular cherry-red purse. A shopping spree to visit every store in the mall, try on every dress we like, and buy without shame. Let's treat ourselves to those ridiculously high heels we know we will never wear. That's what we need on Valentine's Day; allow ourselves a full day to think about and pamper ourselves. So, buy the Rolex you've been slobbering over for months. Charge that pair of kicky boots. Use this day as a chance to treat yourself to whatever you might want. There will be no wallowing in self-pity this Valentine's Day. **And look on the bright side—at least you don't have to find room for a creepy, giant teddy bear.**



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Agape: A Revolutionary Love

Austin Emily Edwards

The current worldview on love, according to urban dictionary, is that it is “nature’s way of tricking people into reproducing.” The reason why agape love stands out above typical romantic love (eros) is because it is a sacrificial love where you put the other person before yourself in all circumstances. That’s why agape love is rare. It is selfless, passionate, sacrificial, unconditional love. Agape is not just a feeling. Feelings are fickle and change on a day-to-day basis.

C.S. Lewis describes agape as *charity* because when you have agape love for someone, you actively seek to help, without wanting anything in return. **Agape love is purest form of affection that we can show each other.**

Now how many of us can say that we know someone that has agape love for us? Would this person love you even if you didn’t love them? Would this person sacrifice their life for yours? I honestly cannot say that I have experienced this. Once you chose to love someone with agape love, you don’t go back on that decision. This is not like our concept of marriage that we have today. With marriage, you can take back the promise you made to love this person and simply divorce them, making your vows somewhat empty. But to feel agape love for someone, it becomes part of who you are.

Agape love is often described as the love that God has for mankind. When God created mankind he decided to love us despite how we feel towards him. The only example of true love that I

know of is the love that God has towards us. He proves his love by giving his life so that we do not have to suffer the consequences of our own actions. “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life,” (John 3:16). That



is probably the most quoted verse in the Bible and is a perfect demonstration of agape love. Jesus felt agape love for every human, even the ones that whipped him and crucified him. For he cried out “Father, forgive them; for they don’t know what they are doing,” (Luke 23:34). Jesus willingly accepted the consequences of our immoral actions so that we could have a relationship with God and be able to be at peace in heaven for eternity.

Whether or not God does exist does not change this story of love and sacrifice as an example of agape love. But to some people this is just a story and didn’t actually occur in real life. In that case is agape love realistically attainable for humans? Are we able to love someone without any gain for

ourselves? I think everyone of us is capable of loving another to such a degree.

I asked Ellyse Crow if she thought that agape love is attainable. She is a sophomore at Arizona State University and a business communications major. “I think that we can show agape love in little bits and pieces. In moments we can give it, but I don’t think it’s a characteristic of who we are.”

Part of understanding agape love and learning how to give it is learning how to receive it. Giving such a great gift that comes with such passion leaves the giver vulnerable and exposed. The receiver needs to realize the responsibility of such a love. To be loved unconditionally is a precious thing and requires a vast amount of maturity.

You may have heard of the story of Rick Van Beek (photo). His daughter Maddy has cerebral palsy so she cannot walk or talk, but one thing Maddy does enjoy is being outdoors. As a commitment to his unconditional love for her, he carries his daughter through triathlons so she can experience the outdoors. His real life example of generous love is proof that humans have the ability to put away their selfish needs, at least for a while.

To say that our world would be a better place if everyone loved each other a little bit more, is a cliché, but it’s also incredibly true. A bigger motivation to change is how loving someone else with agape love would change you.

I challenge you to love someone with agape love in your lifetime and see how giving that love changes you.

Contributors' Bios



Emily Anderson loves staying active with school, being outdoors, and spending time with her dog. As a senior at ASU, she has nearly completed her studies in English Literature while also working in the insurance business for several years. Even though she seems quiet, she actually enjoys some good rock music or an ATV ride through the desert with her boyfriend.



Sarah Anand Anna, Intuitive Relationship Coach and founder of Art of Relationship uses a proven process to optimize all relationships, especially in one's love life. Whether you are a Single

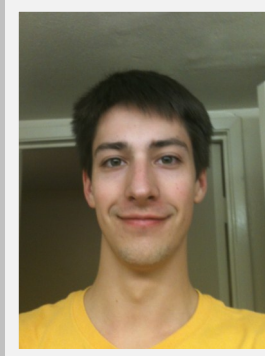
person, frustrated by your current results or in a loving relationship that yearns for deeper and more meaningful connection, Sarah's compassionate and effective step-by-step approach will get you the results you crave. To get your free CD, "How to Attract and Grow the Love of Your Life," and receive weekly tips and tools visit <http://www.artofrelationship.net>.

Sara Calton is a sophomore at Arizona State University, majoring in English Literature. Following graduation, she hopes to move to New York City to be a book editor. Sara spends her



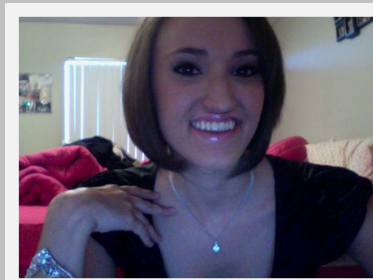
time reading, writing, hanging out with friends and family, and dreaming about graduating and moving to New York City.

Shane Chergosky originally from Edina, Minnesota, has lived in Arizona since 2010. A former opinion columnist for Arizona State's *State Press*, Shane is studying English literature with a minor in communication, while pursuing a certificate in professional writing. On the side, he is focusing on his talents as a poet and enjoys the works of Stuart



Dybek, Steven Hernandez, and Christopher Buckley. He spends his free time writing, playing drums, and attending concerts.

Annalisa Cruz is a student of Interdisciplinary Studies with an emphasis on Communications and writing at Arizona State University where she will graduate in the spring of 2013. Annalisa was born in Colorado Springs, Colorado in the spring of 1989. She enjoys traveling and has been to several countries including Japan, France, Germany, and Saudi Arabia. Post graduation Annalisa hopes to start a career in Marketing or Advertising and work towards

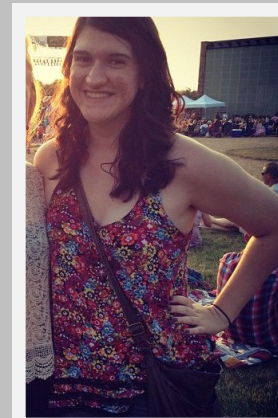


completing a Master's degree.



Allie Desrochers is a native of Arizona from Cave Creek. She is a senior at Arizona State University majoring in English Literature, and plans on using

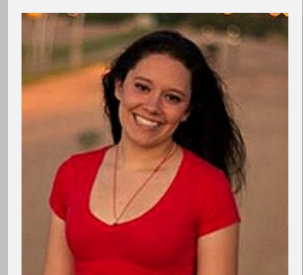
her degree in a publishing and editing career. Outside of her love for reading and writing, Allie especially enjoys cooking, traveling, and spending time with her large family.



Brittany Eckler is a sophomore at Arizona State University, majoring in English Literature with a minor in Film and Media Studies. Brittany hopes to

move to London after graduation and work in either the editing or publishing of novels, but she would also settle for a big city in the continental United States. Brittany spends her free time reading, writing, and watching her favorite television shows.

Austin Emily Edwards is a junior at Arizona State University where she is an English major. She was born and raised in Glendale, Arizona. Contrary to what she tells her dentist she does not floss every night, and she prides herself on hacking her friend's social media profiles.





Michelle Johnson will be graduating in the Spring of 2013 with a bachelor's degree in English Literature and a Writing Certificate. She is the

mother of five children with whom she loves to hike, read, cook, and hang out. Post graduation she is interested in pursuing a degree in law.

Jenelle Peters is an Arizona native who loves the heat. She is a senior and will graduate from ASU in May with a major in English Literature and a minor in Communications. Aside from reading, she enjoys creative writing, recovering furniture, and quilting. Jenelle loves spending time with her very large family, and will always put them first.



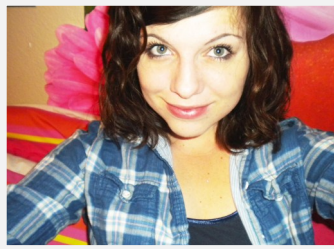
Lisa Pollman is an arts journalist, writing for both Art Radar Asia and The Seattle Vine Project. She has also written several ESL textbooks/articles published in Beijing, China. She is interested in supporting emerging artists from Asia and the Middle East with a residency program and exhibitions in the Pacific Northwest.

Pollman currently lives in Seattle with her husband, Tom, and their gluten-sensitive black cat Tyrone.



Maureen "Mo" Reilly is a junior at Arizona State

University majoring in English Literature and minoring in Media Analysis. A long way from home in Illinois, Mo has lived in Arizona for about a year now. Following graduation next spring, she plans to move back to Chicago, attend graduate school, and someday pursue a career in editing or teaching. Besides reading and schoolwork, Mo enjoys spending time with family and friends, golfing, and enjoying life.



Amanda Stoneman is currently pursuing a B.A. in English (Creative Writing) and a professional writing certificate at Arizona State University. Amanda's writing has been published in MASK (Mother's Awareness on School-Aged Kids) the magazine. During her free time, Amanda enjoys writing short stories and reading novels by her favorite author, Tana French.

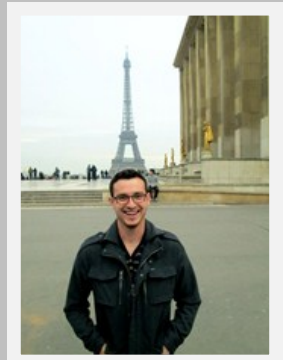


Rebecca Tappendorf is a junior at ASU, double-majoring in Music (Piano) and English (Linguistics), with a minor in Spanish and a certificate in

Writing. She loves to write and plans to go into editing. In her free time, she enjoys playing piano and flute, spending time with family and friends, visiting and hiking in our National Parks.

Donald Tripp is a Junior majoring in English Literature with a minor in European History. His favorite authors are J. K. Rowling and John Green, and

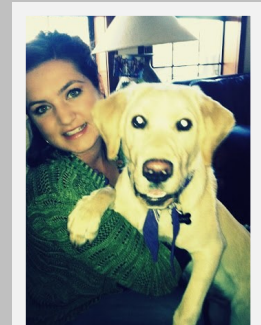
his favorite poem is "Digging" by Seamus Heaney. He recently returned from a study abroad semester in London. He enjoys reading and writing, and aspires to become a writer. In his spare time, Donald enjoys playing video games and travelling. He has a daily video blog that can be found on YouTube.



Angelica Varnju is an Arizona native. She is a student at Arizona State University, and will complete her BA in English Literature in

May of 2013. After graduation, Angelica is interested in pursuing a job either in editing or writing for a magazine. In her spare time, Angelica enjoys reading, hanging out with friends and playing her violin. Angelica is currently an intern for ASU's online literary magazine *Superstition Review*.

Victoria Winters is currently Pre-Law and an English Literature Major here at ASU as a Junior. She was born in New York and was raised with her five younger siblings in



Prescott, Arizona. The love of her life is her pup Bruno, her precious yellow Labrador. She enjoys camping, reading, gardening when she has spare time, and coffee time every morning.

Let's Kiss the Whole Damn World

Shavawn M. Berry

Though lovers be lost, love shall not; And death shall have no dominion. ~ Dylan Thomas

I woke up in the middle of the night last night and realized that in the end, everything — every experience, every choice, every mistake — is about love.

There is nothing else. There's just love. It's the only thing that's real.

It's the only thing that we can take with us when we die. We carry that love across the river of death. It seeds and blooms in our hearts as we are sent off into another life.

Those who risk it, reap the reward — even if it sometimes knocks us to our knees or mows us down — we are rewarded by exposing our most fragile and raw underbellies to the eyes of those we love. We grow if our hearts are open. We grow if our hearts break.

There's nothing to be gained by waiting, by stalling, by thinking we still have time.

We're all terrified of being seen. Terrified of every misstep or moment of gracelessness. We claim to believe in our inherent divinity — in the diamond chalice inside of our lives — but often feel unloved or unlovable. What might happen if we reached across the table and took that person's hand? What might happen if we believed we are worthy? What might happen if we treated love as our birthright instead of something we have to deserve or earn or find?

What if love just is? What if it's constant? What if it's always there? What if love **cannot be lost**, as Dylan Thomas writes?

What if all the souls we ever offered ourselves to carry us (and we them) in our DNA, marrow,

bones?

I believe we contain fragments of stars, of the cosmos itself (the macrocosm and microcosm) within us. If what I suspect is true, how could something as integral as love not be part of that?



Today, I ponder life and death. I just heard that one of my brother's dearest friends and mentors died this morning. In the face of such loss, it's easy to grow numb and psyche ourselves out of taking chances. But we can't do that. We must be metaphorical trapeze artists, learning to completely trust the process. Trust we're in good hands. Trust the net is there and will catch us.

I marvel at how deeply I have loved the beings who have blessed my life (and are now gone). Darling Clementine. Stanfield. Daddy. Shirley. Gina. Melissa. Mari. Thelma. Louise. Granddaddy. Nana. Mufti. Snowberry. I remember them. I

count their names when I pray for the dead. I remember the husk of their voices, the sound of their laughter, the feel of having them close — And I think about those who are no longer part of my life. Old lovers. Michael. Ted. Kirk. Bill. Robert. What I learned. How I changed because I knew them. How they shaped the woman I've become. I think about my mother. My twin nephews.

Love softens you as you get older. Makes you less afraid, less certain, more open.

I realize I am a late bloomer. I am pulling up a chair just as some folks have eaten their fill and are headed for the exits.

That's OK. I got here. And I am going to fill my plate.

I will be the loudest, most flamboyant, cobalt blue songbird you've ever seen. I will write my name on the board in yellow chalk and fill my purse and my pockets and my coat with everything I can carry. Love is on the table and I am taking it.

Let's hold hands and dance more often. Let's write more letters and worry less about whether the house is clean or the dishes are done. Let's drink wine and watch the moon rise. Let's walk the rim of the world and catch fireflies in jars—

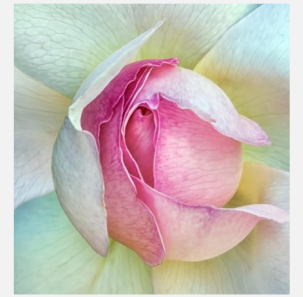
Here's the thing. None of us know how much time we have left at any given moment. None of us. Why not go balls to the wall, all out, with nothing held back?

Why not laugh until we ache, cry if we feel like it, and kiss the whole damn world?

This piece was first published in on my blog, <http://www.fallingintowonderland.wordpress.com>.

Kalliope: Beautiful Voiced

Love & Kindness: The Real Thing Michelle Johnson



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I have read that in India giving a basket of mangoes to a friend is a token of love. In Italy it is basil. Whatever the token, it got me to thinking: how can we show love to everyone? How can we actually express that?

If love is an action, what is the action we can take to show others we care? I'm not talking about romantic or familial love here; I'm talking about love for all citizens of the world. Love on a global scale.

I remember a Coke commercial from my childhood with a little song that said, "I'd like to buy the world a home and furnish it with love. Grow apple trees and honey bees and snow-white turtledoves... I'd like to buy the world a coke and keep it company – it's the real thing... What the world needs today is the real thing." I found the song on YouTube with its accompanying commercial. It was made in 1971 (before my time even!) I couldn't remember ever seeing the commercial before, but I remembered the little ditty because it was popular throughout the 80s.

The camera starts on a girl with blonde hair and blue eyes singing the first line and then pans out to show that she is surrounded by others singing in harmony with her. As the camera makes its way through the choir of singers, one can see that the singers were meant to represent many ethnicities.

This brings me back to my question again: how do we love our fellows around the world? Certainly not by buying them a Coke. Coke was attempting to market love or kindness. They were selling the idea of a world unified by their product. But I'm not convinced that Coke is the token we need to unify the world.

**The Dalai Lama says
"My religion is very simple.
My religion is kindness."**

Kindness seems a much more fitting offering of love for others. Unlike building the world a home where one might "grow apple trees and honey bees and snow-white turtledoves," a simple offering of kindness seems much more realistic. Who among us can't afford to spare a bit of kindness? Positive psychologists Christopher Peterson and Martin Seligman, in writing their book entitled *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classifications*, sought to find virtues that were valued cross culturally and globally. Interestingly, kindness is classified as a virtue which contributes to the character strength called Humanity. According to these psychologists who've spent their lives studying what is right about the human psyche, love is also a virtue of humanity. The authors are careful to qualify this type of love as altruistic love.

Here is the definition they apply to these twin virtues: "Kindness and altruistic love require the assertion of a common humanity in which others are worthy of attention and affirmation for no utilitarian reasons but for their own sake." They go on to explain that acts of kindness and altruistic love are not performed out of a sense of duty or any expectation of reciprocity or personal gain. Kindness and love, by their definition, are simply given for the sake of giving. So, forget the Coke. **If you want to give the world a token of love, start by being kind.**