



Graphic  
Comic  
by Sadixt



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Conscious and  
Tested for STD's

STD's and You

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# Dateline: Downtown

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S T U D E N T - R U N S I N C E V O L U M E O N E

## Cupid's Chemical Imbalance

By Kristopher Overholt  
Staff Writer



Many books, magazines, movies, and television shows have portrayed romance in only one way over the years: sappy. What makes one fall in love in the first place? Growing up in today's world, we are all exposed to countless images of diamond rings, flowers, picnics under the stars, and the sickly happy ending to each love

story. But is love something that we learn, something that we grow into, or is romantic sensibility built into our genetic structure? We must have some natural insight into romance; after all, it is what leads to the continuation of our species. At the end of the day, these plush and romantic ideas leave those of us who exist in the normal working world feeling guilty or out of place, distant from the one we choose to spend our days with. Should we buy into the

romantic scene with all that we have got? Will it ultimately lead to a more happy life? Perhaps we should look into the way that happiness works and the way that we, as humans, operate, in order to understand the gap between romance in popular myth and lore, and the practical romance. Maybe true romance really is something we can all get into. Let's check out the

way that your brain works during the different stages of love. Somewhere in your subconscious, your mind is what is telling you that you are in love with that one special person. First, you are attracted to someone because of appearance, personality, and even smell! The "dippy" feeling you get after meeting that special someone occurs

once the brain starts firing off chemicals: increased dopamine, norepinephrine, and phenylethylamine, as well as a reduced serotonin level. Dopamine is a joyful chemical that gives you a feeling of euphoria, craving, and addiction. Norepinephrine is responsible for accelerated heart rate and sweaty palms, the nervousness of asking your new interest out, and getting to know them. Reduction in serotonin serves to drive your focus in on your new love, as you neglect homework and friends, and obsess over your newly found love interest.

The next time you wonder why you are sitting in that chemistry class for hours on end, remember that this is not some obscure science. Each time you fall in love or lust, you have something related going on in your own head! But there are no formulas or equations to

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## Read Between Lines

Rep. Hochberg tackles textbook reform

By Don Pieper  
Editor

As we see the oversized displays of hearts, balloons, and flowers, every man in America is reminded that Valentine's Day is approaching. This week, florists will double to cost of roses and making a killing. If you try, as I have, to apply logic and reasoning, to indicate that this is simply an artificial holiday created by corporations to take advantage of our naturally blatant consumerism, you are likely to face not sympathy and understanding, but rolling eyes and a cold shoulder.

So we must each, in our

own way manage to buy or create something for our significant others. I suppose it wouldn't be quite so hard if the "holiday" was just a bit later in the semester. Right now, students are still reeling from recent payments to the university and the bookstore. If you're taking a full load, you probably spent over \$500 on books this semester. If we could save some text book money, maybe we'd have enough left over for a romantic night of dinner and dancing.

How can we, as students, take the sting out of our trips to the book store? While some are sticklers for the crisp, clean feel of brand new books, others are open

to buying used books, particularly for subjects not in one's major. There are also websites that cater to students' text book needs, such as www.half.com and www.alilbris.com which offer new and used books at a fraction of the book store rates.

But now our state government is taking action to ease the burden of students. State Representative Scott Hochberg (D), serving southwest Houston's District 137, has introduced a bill in Austin that would reduce the cost of textbooks.

Said Hochberg, "College textbook costs are rising much faster than inflation and students have no choice but to pay those prices. Meanwhile, publishers are frequently changing editions and forcing students to buy extra materials like CDs and workbooks that they don't need.

Those practices must stop." Some students, particularly at community colleges, end up paying more in text books each semester than on tuition. While tuition increases have been addressed in the past year, book prices have not.

Rep. Hochberg, who serves on the House Public Education Committee, has suggested that increased competition could provide immediate relief, by forcing companies to compete for lucrative university contracts. This is the practice used by public school systems across the state, since it is state funds that pay for those books. When students must pay, however, we have been left to fend for ourselves until now.

Hochberg would require faculty to consider costs in the decision for a particular text. He would also require a minimum

three year life of texts, whenever possible, to ensure students had maximum opportunity to purchase used books. Students would not be required to purchase texts and additional materials that professors did not intend on using. In addition, the state would use collective bargaining on behalf of the Texas' entire student population in order to obtain the best prices on texts. Also, schools would be barred from accepting any gifts or payments from publication companies that could be influential in the decision process. Universities would be required to publish required book lists further in advance so that students would have more time to shop around for the best bargains.

House Bill 956, sponsored by Rep. Hochberg, has additional

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S T U D E N T - R U N S I N C E V O L U M E O N E

# Dr. K Sees the World

## Series II Part 3: Chilly nights, strange bedfellow, and Marvelous Melbourne.

The only downside to my initial Australia experience was the cool night air and Australians' hardy British spirit. This translates into no central heating. But I didn't know this, so when I was asked if I wanted a hot water bottle, like a chump I said no.

With all the British mysteries I had read where the detective is sleeping in a stately Victorian manor house or a beautifully proportioned Georgian mansion and all the guests receive a hot water bottle at night, you'd think I would have clicked with this idea. But all those books are set in the 1930s-1970s, so I guess I figured that more than thirty years later, they would have gotten with the program.

No such luck, mate. Fortunately there were two beds in my room and each had a plush down-filled duvet. By using both and keeping on all my clothes for the first portion of the night, I was actually quite comfortable. However, worried that the low temperatures might crack the wood in my flute, it slept beside me under a pillow for its own protection.

Lovely meals at charming inns with breathtaking views were the order of every day. Although Jenny and Tim had had the house in the area for a few years, they had never really explored the many wineries and restaurants. We went to Orange and Bathurst, all of us seeing wonders for the first time, hiking into the hills to see Aboriginal drawings and natural wonders. We returned each night to a welcoming fireplace where I tried to get good and toasted in order to be my own hot water bottle.

Once we returned to Sydney, Jenny and I left almost immediately for Melbourne. The morning we departed I was awakened by the loud raucous calls of sulfur-crested cockatoos in the wild. These large birds were snowy white with yellow edging. The sulfur crest was like the "disguise" the criminal penguin used in that Wallace & Gromit flick "The Wrong Trousers," except yellow. They looked like humongous soiled snowflakes all over the trees and yard. This was fun since I had only seen smaller cockatoos in cages, but I still hadn't seen what I came for.

Because Australia is so large, it is quite common to fly most places. Melbourne, in the State of Victoria, is the second largest city in the nation, although its state is the smallest of the six on the continent. The city is known as the cultural capital of the country with a large immigrant population, creative cuisine, concerts, and museums galore. Because of the excellent public transportation, a car-less visitor can see most of the sites with no inconvenience. Melbourne is, in short, a charming well-organized modern city - my favorite kind.

Since we would be in Melbourne nearly a week, Jenny had found a two bedroom condo for a reasonable price. The first night, we went grocery shopping to make sure we had all the staples (cereal, bread, milk, coffee, tea, fruit, and soup) in the refrigerator. After a nice Italian meal we turned in.

The next day, our conference began. Held at Monash University, it was one of the most enjoyable conferences of my varied experience. Part of this was purely due to location.

The International Musicological Society normally meets in the Northern Hemisphere, typically in Europe. It meets once every five years. Scholars from Europe complained that American universities paid so much more for conference travel, we should always go to Europe. They were quite resentful when just one meeting was in Toronto. Then came a bigger threat. One year, some time back, Melbourne had put forth a well-prepared, logical proposal to get the meeting "down under." That would have been the first such conference held in the Southern Hemisphere. North Americans approved, but Europeans howled, pushing Belgium into presenting a half-baked proposal that won. Many Americans stayed away from that meeting. ■

Next Time - Part IV. Kangaroo does not taste like chicken

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## Student Health Services

By Peter Lovie  
Staff Writer

Discretely tucked away in the halls of the third floor of the One Main Building is the Student Health Center. Dedicated to preserving student health, the clinic is open to all students for disease prevention and health maintenance. The health center offers many services, including sexual health services. "Well Man" and "Well Woman" exams are readily available, and are suggested annually.

Sexual health information and examinations can be obtained from the clinic staff. The friendly staff, including physicians, nurses, and administrators, can assist with just about any health problem. Birth control is available following a required exam that can be obtained at the clinic. Women may also submit their lab results directly from their Ob/Gyn to the clinic. Regular examinations are an important part of feminine health care.

The SHC offers a variety of resources online for sexual needs. To check out the most recent additions to "Health Alerts and Updates," check out the Student Health Center's website at [http://www.uhd.edu/campus/help/SHS/health\\_news.htm](http://www.uhd.edu/campus/help/SHS/health_news.htm). There, you will find a plethora of health information.

The staff can refer students to specialists for assistance with sexual

issues, such as Planned Parenthood and the National Woman's Health Center. Sexual health is as much a man's responsibility as it is a woman's. Therefore, information is also available for such topics as STD prevention and condom use. Many sites go into detail about how one illness may affect another. For example, gonorrhea has been linked to male bladder cancer. Numerous physical resources are available for men as well as woman.

The clinic offers all forms of medical services, not only those related to sexual health. The center's hours are Monday through Thursday 8:30 to 5:30, and Friday 8:30 to 12:30. The services offered are comparable to a general practitioner's office. This is accomplished by offering ambulatory care for acute and chronic illnesses, first aid for minor injuries, preventive medical services, hypertension screening and family planning as well as health counseling and education.

The costs of services are reasonable. When compared with the local Planned Parenthood, which offers care on a sliding scale based on income, the UHD Student Health Center's rates were equitable or less expense. Birth control pills are \$13.00 per month. NuevoRings are \$20.00. Condoms are available for \$2.00 per dozen. Testing for HIV is only \$15. Other STD testing is also available for a variety of prices. These services are available from 9am until 2:30 pm. ■



### UH-Downtown Student Health Services

**The focus of Student Health Services is health promotion and disease prevention on campus**

- Ambulatory care for acute/chronic illnesses
- First Aid for Minor Injuries
- Women's Health/Men's Health (Including Annual Exams)
- Preventive Medical Services
- Comprehensive Referral Service
- Hypertension Screening
- Laboratory Testing: (Including Pregnancy, STD's/HIV, and assorted diagnostic tests)
- Family Planning Counseling
- Low-Cost Pharmacy Services (Including Contraceptives, Morning After Pill, commonly prescribed antibiotics, etc.)
- Health Counseling & Education
- Low-cost Over-the-Counter Medications/Supplies
  - 12 PK Condoms - \$2.00
  - Feminine Hygiene Supplies
  - Assorted Medications

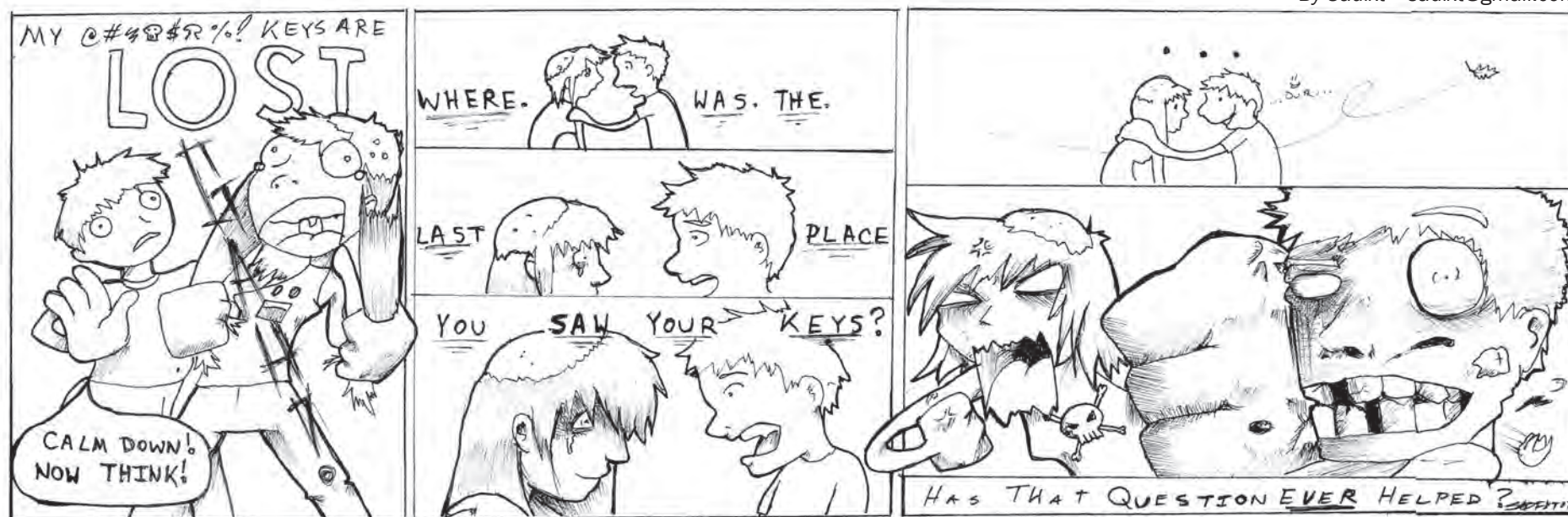
**Clinician visits, testing, some services, medications, and supplies may require a low-cost fee**

**Appointments required for Clinician Services**

**Limited Services are available to Faculty/Staff**

**Additional information is available on the Student Health Services' webpage at [www.uhd.edu](http://www.uhd.edu)**

By Sadixt sadixt@gmail.com



## Love Crazy Shopping

Love can be simple, just ask Curtis Mayfield

By Lindsay Hagood  
Staff Writer

“Scientists are discovering at this very moment that to live as if to live and love were one is the only way of life for human beings, because, indeed, this is the way of life which the innate nature of man demands.”

-Ashley Montagu

Single, married, or somewhere in between, Valentine’s Day is sure to arouse some form of emotion. Put simply, Valentine’s Day is regarded as a time to celebrate romantic love, or a lack thereof. Stories of chivalry have stood the test of time, and romantic ideals have yet to fade. As human beings, we possess the need to love and be loved. Perhaps this is why Valentine’s Day remains so popular.

Despite the holiday’s good intentions, it has created some opposition. Although it may sound like overt cynicism, Valentine’s Day has become a celebration of mass consumerism...in other words, Hallmark’s cash cow in a clever disguise. As a result of aggressive marketing techniques, people are immersed in a sea of commercial enthusiasm, therefore cheapening the whole purpose of V-Day. For a society that advocates conspicuous consumption for an occasion celebrating romance and love, we have an alarmingly high divorce rate. Ideally, everyday is an appropriate time to express affection and gratitude. A special day relying on the use of heart-shaped boxes of chocolate to instigate a moment of romance is hardly original. Whatever happened to old-fashioned love letters drafted by hand, with meaning?

You may send flowers to your sweetheart for Valentine’s Day, for this is a classic way of saying “I love you.” But flowers die and no one wants that death

to be a foreshadowing of the relationship. Teddy bears are adorable and are a tender display of affection. However, in a few weeks teddy bears simply get in the way, and are eventually thrown aside. Not an enduring pleasure either. Boxes of chocolate are a method of giving sweets to your sweet; though after devouring the entire box in one sitting, you begin to grow nauseous. Hallmark greeting cards may be humorous or touching, but when you think of how many others will be receiving that exact same card on the exact same day, the special meaning dwindles. Another option, as one commercial so eloquently suggests, is diamonds because “Diamonds are forever.” What they really meant to say is “Diamonds... forever broke.”

As all of the craziness of Valentine’s Day reaches a fever pitch, it is easy for singletons to grow smug. With men dashing to Kroger after work and snatching up the first bouquet of presentable roses, and women pacing the aisles of Best Buy looking for the latest X-Box game, the spectacle can be interpreted as somewhat humorous. It is true that material gifts are tangible, yet true love is a gift greater than store-bought objects. The act of buying extraneous stuff is far less daunting than the challenges that come with a relationship. Romance is satisfying, but is not always wine and roses. Perhaps it is a rose with thorns, beautiful, but periodically sticking you; the pain is difficult to cope with. You may shed some blood in the process. Regardless, the quest for genuine love is worth the unpredictable journey. The unknown is frightening, and the giving of oneself to another produces high levels of vulnerability.

The act of giving does not have to involve utilizing your purchasing power. Hence the reason Valentine’s Day may be considered a lame attempt to sell more materialistic possessions. So Valentine’s Day is not really necessary. We can love everyday

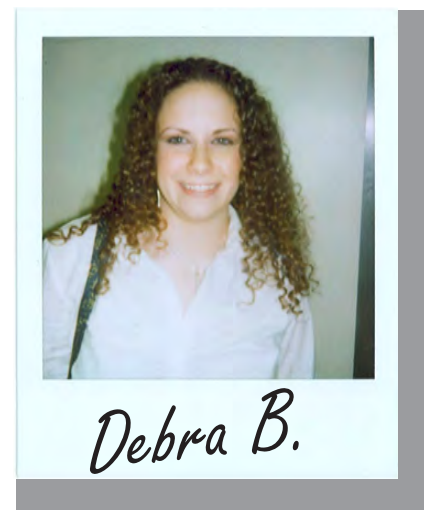
See **MAKE LOVE** pg 8

# Campus Voice

Q: What is the worst break-up you have experienced?



I broke with my girlfriend on Valentine’s Day at Landry’s. She was sobbing so loud, that the manager came over and paid for our meal. Basically kicking us out of the restaurant so other couple wouldn’t start breaking up.



A girl I was dating left me because she was paranoid that I was going to leave her for a guy. A month later I saw her walking in the mall with her boyfriend



I had to dump my ex-girl when I found that she was married. Her husband was being released from penitentiary after a two year stint, aggravated assault.



Back in the day, I was dating this girl who dumped me after she found out that I was dating her brother. I only date men exclusively.

Interviews by Juan Ortiz



# SINGLE WITH V.D.

## ON VALENTINE'S DAY



Hey Ladies!  
Valentine's Day is right around the corner. Yeah, that's right. My favorite holiday and the favorite holiday of the thousands of men like me, committed bachelors that we are, who have one night of the year to truly and formally showcase our lady lovin' skills. A nice steak dinner, chocolate-covered strawberries and whipped cream, a bottle of bubbly, the lights turned low and the fireplace blazin', me on the shag carpet in a faux-leopard-print sarong. Can you see it? So, who's going to be the lucky lady come February 14<sup>th</sup>? Oh, and by the way, before you commit to what might be the single greatest night of your life, I have to inform you that I have a venereal disease (VD).

No one?...  
Hello?....

Well, I guess I'm just going to have to come to grips with the fact that my mid-February days of women and passion have come to an end. Or at least have come to be significantly different...

But what about the roses, the movies, the snuggling, the bubbly, the bubbly?...

Man, denial is a ###!.

Having a VD has really changed my perspective on life and love. When it came to girlfriends, it was all about sexual conquest for me. Done, done, and on to the next one. I liked them all: blacks, Latinas, Asians, thin or thick, and, for the most part, they all really liked me—or at least no one complained. There, of course, was no

maturity at all on my part which resulted in my not thinking of the consequences my sexual escapades can bring. I did not stop to think of all the hearts I broke, and as far as venereal diseases went, I espoused Eminem's attitude, "As far as being [clap] infested, I don't know because I'm too scared to go get tested." One day, however, I woke up, went to the toilet, and when I went to pee, it hurt really bad.

I had to really grow up the following day when the doctor told me that the pain upon urination was caused by gonorrhea. I was shocked and scared; I thought that it was all over for me. I had one of those venereal diseases that people talked about, and I didn't know a thing about it. The doctor reassured me by saying that it is treatable and that, as a matter of fact, I was not going to die. The bad news was that I had to grow up in my attitude toward sex and be more careful, which meant wearing a condom and maybe being more selective with my choice of partners. He gave me a script for antibiotics and sent me on my way.

I was still a little dazed as I went about my day. I felt stigmatized, as if I had a big sign up on my forehead that said "Dirrrrrty." I knew that a part of my uneasiness was due to a lack of awareness of what having a VD meant. What were these diseases? How are they spread? Do a lot of people have them? Are they treatable? I went on a 'knowledge crusade' to

find out more.

I learned that one in every five people, or 56 million Americans, are currently infected with a sexually transmitted viral disease like genital herpes, genital warts (HPV), Hepatitis B, or HIV disease. One in four Americans will suffer from one at least once in their lifetime; women under 25 are the most likely to be afflicted. I felt relieved to know that I was not the only one going through this.

I learned that gonorrhea is quite common. Also known as 'the clap,' 75% of people with the STD are between the ages of 15 to 29. I learned that some of the VDs carry no symptomology, meaning that those affected, or infected, have no way of knowing whether or not they have a disease at all. That is, unless they get tested. Genital herpes and Chlamydia are two such diseases. In fact, 1/2 of all men and 3/4 of all women who have these STDs show absolutely no symptoms. Genital herpes operates in outbreaks, and outbreaks are often followed by long periods of dormancy. HPV leads to warts on the genital region. Yuck! Having HPV is also linked to cervical cancer in women. There are currently 31 million people in the United States with genital herpes. Syphilis is a scary one, with a 100,000 new cases a year in the United States alone. If left untreated it can eat away the carrier's bones, and eventually lead to psychosis. HIV is probably scariest of them all, eventually leading to

AIDS, then a painful and tragic death.

The bottom line is that these diseases are out there and can strike indiscriminately, not matter how 'clean' you think your Valentine looks. Get yourself tested on a regular basis, for your sake and for the sake of those with whom you might come into sexual contact with. You don't want the weight of knowing that you got someone sick on your conscience. Gentlemen, wear a condom. Ladies, insist on your man wearing a condom. It has been found this is the easiest and most effective means STD prevention for the sexual active. The most effective means of prevention is abstinence, which sucks. But hey, you won't wake up with yellow puss or chancres on your genitals the next morning.

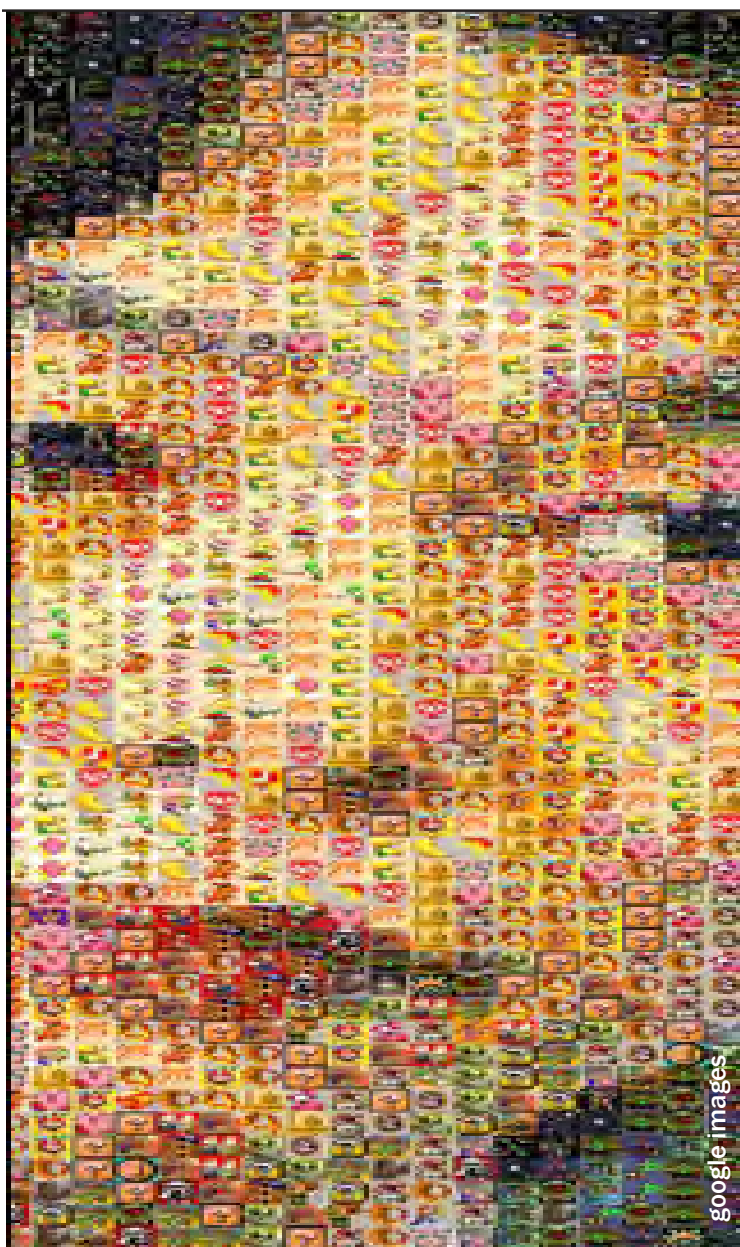
So maybe I have to put away the sarong and the bubbly this year. I feel like an old man as a result. But I guess it's just a part of growing up. I know that if I ever do meet Ms. Right, she will love me regardless of my sketchy past. She will be as well informed as I am about VD and we will be responsible, using condoms and being abstinent before marriage.

So I guess it all boils down to responsibility.

But I do have a condom in my dresser drawer just in case Ms. Right decides to show up tonight. She might just be Ms. Right Now, but I'm not complaining. Yeah that's right! ■

By Anonymous UHD Student





google images

Shigeru Miyamoto, CEO of Nintendo

## 8-Bit Lovers

### Why thumbs matter

By Wil Chinchilla  
Staff Writer

When the term “8-bit” is uttered in a conversation, the topic is likely an arcade game from the late seventies to the eighties. 8-bit is in reference to the style of graphics displayed in such games as Pac-Man and Pong, which some younger students may not remember. When video games made the move to household entertainment systems, there was a shift in game play. Although Pac-Man and Pong were excellent starting points for games, new console systems, such as the second generation Atari were short lived successes. The budding video game industry experienced a crash in 1983 because more users were discovering “modern” PC games.

The third generation console released in Japan called “Famicom” was the success that revived the gaming industry. We know “Famicom” as the Nintendo Entertainment System, a system that could support higher resolutions, more colors, and a textured background. The shift in

game play included a love story in every NES game released (excluding sports games). Of these stories, the most noted, and first, was “Donkey Kong”. The creator, *Shigeru* Miyamoto, today’s CEO of the Nintendo Entertainment System Corp, stated that by combining themes from two of his favorite stories, King Kong and Beauty and the Beast, he created the red hat wearing plumber named Mario to save Princess Peach. This theme was love. A basic love story changed the way games were to be played, created, and thought of.

Following Donkey Kong’s success, Miyamoto created the newest storyline. Mario had a brother, a green hat wearing plumber named Luigi. Together, Mario and Luigi joined forces to save Princess Peach once again. Although both were to save the princess, Mario always got the girl and Luigi was left alone (until later years when he was given a princess girlfriend, Daisy).

Many consider The Legend of Zelda to be the greatest story

of the all. This game was also created by Miyamoto. The protagonist was a young warrior named Link who was assigned to protect Princess Zelda. The theme of saving the princess to restore world order was obviously present in many games. The success of Zelda even led to actor Robin Williams naming his son Zelda Ray. Other noted Nintendo games that had love stories are Dragon Quest, and Ghost ‘n Goblins.

In the last several years, Play Station and Xbox games have taken the lead in home gaming systems. Still, the themes of these games remain centered on romance. Even such violent games as Saints Row include sections in which the main player “courts” women.

The NES has been known for their romanticized story lines. These games have been recognized throughout gaming history. Shigeru Miyamoto has been giving great acclaim as the father of gaming consoles because of the success of the NES software and the Nintendo Entertainment System itself. Love stories continue in almost any fantasy storyline. Although there have been many love stories in video game history, none could ever compare to the legendary love story of a plumber, a princess, and an ape. ■

## DOPAMINE

continued from page 1

remember here. Just go with the flow through the initial stage of love, floating around on your chemical high as you figure out how to make sense of it all.

After some time has passed in the relationship, your body will start producing oxytocin, vasopressin, and endorphins. These chemicals serve to immerse you in a feeling of security and peace. An interesting effect of these hormones is that these chemicals actually interfere with the previously released “passion” hormones, which may explain why passionate love is long gone after a period of years, or even months!

When explored this way, it is interesting to consider the

body’s mysterious reasons for initiating this chain of events. In the modern age of unrelenting romance and vast consumerism, these feelings can leave a couple wondering if something unnatural is happening to them. In fact this is the body’s habitual, and normal, response to attraction and well being.

Once the “fire” is gone, chemically and romantically, our rational thought rebounds. It is only then that couples can begin to truly see each other without the blur of chemical filtered thought and emotion. Getting through this stage will determine whether or not a relationship will be successful in the long run.

Perhaps this ebbing and flowing of chemical releases in the brain can explain the reason we have such a high rate of divorce. When we suffer

withdrawal from the chemical euphoria of love, we are more inclined to see the faults in our lovers, and more likely to leave. In this same vein, many people are seemingly addicted to the feeling of being “in love,” never lasting in a single relationship for longer than the chemical high endures.

But who says rational thoughts can’t be influenced? This is where advertisers, book writers, and movie and music producers come in to provide a glimpse of “real” love for their own profit. Being constantly surrounded by an overly materialistic culture that gauges love according to flashy and expensive things rather than honor and commitment, we can feel left behind, without having the love of our significant others.

How do we escape the blinding messages of romance

that are all around us? Where do we turn to gain true happiness within our relationships? Some mindful people have suggested that synthetic happiness is practically and chemically the same as natural happiness. The former is created due to unchangeable circumstances; the latter is what we create by our own volition.

Researchers have shown that people involved in tragic accidents end up at the same level of happiness within only a year’s time. On the other hand, the same is true of people who have won millions of dollars in the lottery: their level of happiness peaks and returns to “normal” in about one year’s time. Remember this next time your dearest one goofs up and does something that irritates and annoys you. As you try to remember why

it is that you ever loved them in the first place, try to notice how synthetic happiness comes to the rescue, soothing and relaxing your mind. Natural happiness would have rejected this blunder on the first date.

You may feel happy because you take pleasure in the experience of loving someone. Or you may feel happy because you have the freedom to choose a mate among many friends. Either way, true happiness will come to you on its own. Choose a way to live because of the experience that you wish to have. Gain someone and something that you can honestly love every day, not in a materialistic or possessive way, and you will find happiness without even trying. And truly, *that* is a lovely thing. ■

# You Had Me At Wi-Fi

By Wil Chinchila  
Staff Writer

As Valentine's Day is coming up, there are a variety of gadgets for many different types of relationships. For many, buying gifts for your significant other is the biggest issue for Valentine's Day, as well as almost every holiday. Communication is a vital part of any relationship, but using a cell phone almost guarantees a big phone bill.

If you are on the internet all the time, or in a long distance relationship with a person half way around the world, you might want to look into Skype online phone services. With free long distance and international calls to anywhere in the world, all you really need is a headset & microphone combination. But if you don't want to look like an evil telemarketer when talking to your loved one, invest in a Skype account with the Sony VN-CX1 USB optical mouse-phone. It divides a USB connected mouse into a working Skype phone. Though there are alternative online phones, such as MSN, Skype is the only company that focuses on landline connections from an online phone. As an added bonus, this phone comes in many colors and the sound quality is great. For \$99 at [http://www.audiocubes.com/product\\_info.php?products\\_id=1637](http://www.audiocubes.com/product_info.php?products_id=1637) and a free Skype membership, you can guarantee hour long conversations without any hassle.

Another gadget for a long distance relationship is the webcam. There are now several laptops that come with built-in cameras. If yours is not one of them, a very easy and cost effective web-cam is the Logitech QuickCam® Pro 5000. If your partner is in Alaska for those 6 months of darkness, this camera will render the picture

quality with the brightest video capable.

For the musical couple, you can find great deals all throughout February for all music equipment on [www.guitarcenter.com](http://www.guitarcenter.com). For young ladies, a wonderful gift to get your musician boyfriend is extra cables and wires. If your special someone is already in a band, you can invest in a mixer or recording equipment from TASCAM. If your love interest wants to learn to play an instrument, Guitar Center constantly has sales on all instruments as well as bundles sets for beginners.

If you love to crawl up to see a good movie at home, Wal-Mart is practically giving away surround sound products. With the lowest prices since surround sound came out, now is the time to buy a system. Panasonic and Sony are the ideal brands for sound products, but Wal-Mart is offering a great bundle for college students. Starting at \$98.86 the Philips 2.1 Micro Theater Shelf System w/ DVD Player MCD139/37 is amazingly priced. The Micro does not take up a lot of space in your dorm room, apartment, or (cough) parent's house.

For young men, a good and appealing pink Sony 7.3 Mega pixel Cybershot Camera is an ideal gift for your girlfriend. You can find this at Wal-Mart for \$349.54. I also found the standard color camera (silver) for \$280 at [www.dbuys.com](http://www.dbuys.com). Although this may be the better deal, you are not guaranteed with the wow factor of the "camera matching the outfit".

For the gamer couples out there, if your significant other plays the video game "Guitar Hero" a great gift is the Flying V Wireless Guitar Controller. You can find this at <http://gameasylum.us/2redflvguguc1.html> for \$129.00. For handheld game players, the Nintendo DS has not shown much multimedia capability, but for \$99.99 - \$129.99 at [www.modchipman.com/dsx-all-in-one-device-for-ds-p-1156.html](http://www.modchipman.com/dsx-all-in-one-device-for-ds-p-1156.html) you can expand your DS with an all-in-one multimedia disk drive (via USB connection) to import music, video, etc. It has a sleek design and it includes little strobe lights displayed on top of your DS.

I hope these recommendation helps start a great new year to celebrate togetherness and maybe even start new relationships. Happy Valentine's Day. ■



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### **DOPAMINE**

continued from page 1

support in Austin. Abel Herrero (D), from Corpus Christi's District 34, said that "for some students, being able to buy used books and sell last semester's books can make the difference between having a book and having to borrow and share. When books are obsolete after just one year of use, every student has to pay the entire cost of the book and then just let it sit on a shelf when they finish using it."

While the bill has not yet passed, it has great support in the various Student Government Associations across the state. Here at Dateline:Downtown, we support and applaud any and all efforts to ease finances on the entire student population. ■

### **MAKE LOVE**

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of our lives, cook our partner a nice dinner and say "I love you," without a prompt from a calendar. What if we celebrated love everyday? Then the world would probably be a better place. There is war, poverty, crime and the like, so it tempting to become pessimistic. Imagine if all the money spent on Valentine's Day gifts was, instead, given to charities. However insignificant one person may feel, as a whole, progressive chang can be made. Like John Lennon said, "All you need is love." ■

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