

DATELINE:DOWNTOWN



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From the editor's desk

by Quintin Coleman

Love, at least in its current interpretations, is dead in my opinion.

Love, as it's presented in its modern and typical interpretations, is a very beautiful thing...in theory. Thoughts of being wrapped up into your partner, burning with so much desire to be with them every single day, and wanting them in as many ways as possible is a fantastic feeling.

Until it fades away that is.

Really strong and passionate love can sometimes be equated to a fire, which is an accurate yet troubling (maybe even frightening) position when examined at a cognitive level. Yet, we all know that if fire is left unchecked and uncontrolled, it achieves its goal of consumption until there's nothing left. The same result can happen a person who is fraught with uncontrollable love; it can consume them until there's nothing left of that person.

However, this is not a cynical take on love that would be more apropos on an episode of "Rick and Morty"; love is not just a chemical reaction nor is there a cycle that has to be broken as it relates to love. Love makes the world go around after all. That said, I feel that passionate love, while good (in small doses), can be more of a detriment to true love than a more, let's say, basic or familiar kind of romantic love.

I completely understand why the desire to have that super passionate love exists. It's been reinforced into the collective consciousness of society time and time again through the use of terrible

romantic comedies involving Hugh Grant, terrible movie adaptations of equally terrible Nicholas Sparks books, and the worst offenders of all, terrible memes that discuss what real love should consist of. Despite that, something we have to remember is that a lot of representations of passionate love in media (or memes) aren't real, or, if not real, then certainly unsustainable.

That unsustainability aspect of overly passionate love is where problems occur.

Because the concept of that passionate, all-consuming love is so prevalent in society when it comes to media representations of it, many people expect it to be the case in reality. As a result of that, these expectations trickle down and permeate themselves in all levels of love and relationships. If you're not feeling that spark the instant you meet someone for that first date, the person in question is a dud. If you and your significant other have gotten into a routine and not doing fun and exciting things all the time, that means things are terrible. If that spark isn't there anymore, that means the relationship isn't working. In an ironic twist, all of these expectations discount a key idea of what one of the (admittedly many) definitions of love consist of: comfort.

Love is (and should be) a comforting feeling no matter who it's coming from. We expect comforting feelings of love when it comes to our parents, siblings, extended family, friends, and (if you're lucky enough to have this) even your coworkers. So why then is it a problem to be comfortable in a romantic relationship? This question is mostly rhetorical; I would guess that many of

the people reading this editorial are fairly even-keeled people who don't see comfort as a negative. However, we live in a society where it's far too easy to see (or substitute) flash as substance.

It's far too easy to become enamored with someone and then fall into despair when things fall to a more normal or typical (I would say sustainable) level of romance. I think that instead of worrying about a relationship getting to that normal level of romance, we should strive for that sort of love. I've had my fair share of dating situations that burned out because I wanted (and thought) that passionate love was love. As time went on, I discovered that love is a place of comfort, not fire and desire. Sure, seeing a couple on television or a movie being genuinely comfortable with each other doesn't exactly move the needle, but isn't that what we're ultimately looking for? Granted, there's nothing "sexy" about wanting to be comfortable, but it's a heck of a lot better than always trying to chase that shiny and new feeling of passion that inevitably goes away.

Quintin Coleman is a graduate student at UHD in the Master's of Rhetoric and Composition (MARC) program. His ultimate goal is to teach writing at the college level. When he's not tutoring at a community college part-time or doing homework, he's either deciding on whether or not he should make lunch for work, watching the Food Network for recipes he'll never make, or hating the idea of pre-fixe Valentine's Day menus at restaurants.

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Valentine's Day has mysterious origins

By Janet Salas

It is undeniable that every February 14 is a special day not only to the people in the United States, but also other individuals all over the globe. On this day, loved ones get to exchange gifts, flowers, and sweets all in the

Since time immemorial February has been celebrated as the month of romance

remembrance of St. Valentine. However, questions regarding the real identity of St. Valentine and the beginning of these traditions still linger.

Mystery shrouds Valentine's Day's history. Today, almost everyone knows that since time immemorial February has been celebrated as the month of romance. Also, everybody knows that St. Valentine's Day has vestiges of both Ancient Roman and Christian tradition. But who was St. Valentine?

The Catholic Church believes that there were at least three martyrs named Valentinus or Valentine. Stories have it that Emperor Claudius II killed Valentine for having defied the emperor. Claudius had outlawed marriage for young men as he believed that compared to married men or those with families, single men made better soldiers. It is understood that Valentine defied the de-

cree having considered it full of injustice and so in secret, he continued to perform marriages for young lovers.

A second story believes that



Photo courtesy of Catholic Online

St. Valentine got killed because he had helped Christians in escaping harsh Roman prisons where they went through hell. The stories have it that Valentine himself sent the first valentine greeting.

The "Valentine" greeting was meant for a young lady he had fallen in love with while he was still in prison. It is said that he wrote a "From your Valentine" when he signed a letter to the lady before his death. The expression "from your Valentine" is still in use to date.

Even though the stories behind Valentine are murky, one common feature is that emphasis has been put on the Valentine figure as being heroic, sympathetic and above all, romantic. More uncertainties surround why Valentine is celebrated on the 14th day of every February. One group claims that Valentine's burial or death occurred around this day in A.D. 270; the celebration is on this day to commemorate the legend's death anniversary. Others argue the Catholics placed the celebration on February 14, to Christianize "Lupercalia" a pagan celebration.

Pope Gelasius officially declared Valentine's Day to be February 14

The "Valentine" greeting was meant for a young lady he had fallen in love with while he was still in prison

at the end of the fifth century. Years later, the day became associated with love. During those early ages, people from England and France commonly believed that February 14 marked the beginning of mating season for birds. Based on this belief, they considered the fourteenth of February a day of romance.

Valentine greetings were in existence as early as the middle ages. However, the greetings were in verbal forms and the first written valentine greeting appeared after 1400. A 1415 poem by Charles, the Duke of Orleans, is the oldest written Valentine greeting. Charles wrote the letter to his wife while in prison. Other written valentine greetings came years later.

A 1415 poem by Charles, the Duke of Orleans, is the oldest written Valentine greeting

The celebration of Valentine's Day spread to all over the world, and by the seventeenth century, almost every country had made February 14 a lovers' day and a holiday. From then to now, people have celebrated Valentine's Day in various ways. On this day, friends and lovers from all social classes celebrate their valentine through exchanging handwritten love notes or small tokens of appreciation and affection. Others send their loved ones printed cards. A lot more individuals send their lovers ready-made or customized cards as an expression of their emotions. More importantly, lovers spend time together expressing their feelings towards others and making each other feel special.

Janet Salas is currently a senior working towards her Bachelor's of English. She is a first-generation college student as well as a Navy veteran. Once she graduates she plans to pursue a career as a paralegal. When she is not in school she enjoys working out, volunteering, hiking, and kayaking.

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Students discuss ideal Valentine's Day dates

By Lissette Perez

Now that it is February, the loveliest day of the month is arriving. Valentine's Day is not for everyone, but those who do take part know that every Valentine's Day calls for plans. Whether it be staying home or going out, being with a date, or with friends, there is always something to do.

JUST AS LONG AS YOU FEED MY SOUL, YOU FEED MY HEART

Several students around campus were asked what their ideal Valentine's Day would be like. Here are their responses:

Jackie L.: "My ideal Valentine's Day would be spent watching anime in a cozy blanket and going to sleep."

Frank O.: "Cuddled up and watching a scary movie while eating Cane's."

Jayda G.: "Movies and food with the most important people in my life."

Joshua A.: "I would surprise my wife over at the job, I'd buy her some flowers – sunflowers and roses, maybe some chocolates or just take her out on a lunch date. Something simple and classy. I mean we have been married for five years."

Sophia S.: "My ideal Valentine's Day would be spent with my date eating

tacos, quesadillas from Taqueria del Sur. It would be a night of watching movies, relaxing, eating, telling each other how we feel, and things of that nature. Just as long as you feed my soul, you feed my heart."

Diana P.: "Staying home and ordering some Chinese takeout, listening to Lo-fi Hip Hop, and watching movies and exchanging Valentine's Day gifts like cards or chocolates."

Karla S.: "My ideal Valentine's would be going to the park on a picnic and then just spending time with my boo."

hit the road to a
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worry in the world

Pedro P.: "My ideal Valentine's Day would be simple in all honesty. I would want it to be something that comes unexpected and that can allow [my girlfriend and I] to enjoy one another. I think it would start by us having taken the day off work, get a good breakfast and hit the road to a little town that we can go

explore – something off the beaten path where we won't have a worry in the world. Take our time sightseeing every oddball thing we lay our eyes on, taking photos, and buying little souvenirs to add to our collection. Then, enjoying lunch at a little homestyle restaurant that has the taste only family-run restaurants can provide. Before heading home, we'd sing along to our favorite songs and reminisce on the time we spent away. We'd laugh and sing and just be captivated by one another like we've always been. We'd get home and grab some sweets and popcorn and end the night by enjoying one of our favorite movies before heading off to bed."

Chris J.: "My ideal Valentine's Day would probably be a regular day where [my date and I] go to IHOP and get the endless pancakes. Then after breakfast, go back home and put on a rom-com film while cuddled up on the couch. Roughly around dinner-time, get all fancied up and go to a nice restaurant where we put down our phones and enjoy a rich dinner."

Vanessa R.: "Spending it with people I care about, it doesn't even have to be a significant other. Just like Valentine's Day in Spanish is known as 'el dia del amor y la amistad,' I'd like to spend it with amistades and family members. We would probably go to Pappasito's."

Although every student has different plans, it is easily discernible that what they all want at the end of the day is something simple – to be with someone they care about. Although there

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is a widely held idea that Valentine's Day is supposed to be spent with a partner, giving each other expensive gifts, such as giant teddy bears and dozens of pricey roses, it is not always the case.

The most important thing is to be with someone who means something to them, someone to just hang out with and do casual things with. Many of the responses had to do with going out to eat or watch movies. So, maybe this Valentine's Day will be a casual one for you – and maybe that is what will make it memorable.

Lissette Perez is a senior majoring in English-Creative writing. After graduation, she hopes to become an English teacher and continue writing. She has been a Staff Reporter for Dateline for two semesters and is also a Student Supervisor at UHD Sports & Fitness. During her free time, she enjoys drawing, playing video games, watching movies or documentaries, and reading comics.

5 not so sweet scenarios for Valentine's Day

By Naomi Cardwell

Nothing is worse than a bad day. Well, except a bad Valentine's Day. This day is meant to be a day full of celebration, love and joy. There is simply no room for mistakes. The best way to avoid slip ups on your Valentine's Day is to prepare for the worst.

1.) Allergies and lactose intolerance are things everyone should keep in mind when buying their significant other Valentine gifts. Trust me; everyone wants their date to have butterflies in their stomach, but nobody wants their date running off to the restroom to release those butterflies the whole night. So please evaluate your gift and your date. If lactose isn't their thing, skip the

chocolates this year.

2.) A traffic ticket on any day could ruin anyone's mood especially on Valentine's Day. This is a day for love notes, not traffic tickets with court dates on them. So be prepared for the things that come with any holiday. There will be traffic, a rush, and a wait at most restaurants. So, plan ahead, expect traffic, and make a reservation so you will not have any need to speed. It would be a bummer to be late to your date, but it would be more of a bummer to receive a court date.

3.) Getting cut off is a tragic tale for many people who like to drink. Valentine's Day can be a sad day for many people who tend to get lonely on

this day. The only thing sadder than a lonely person on Valentine's Day is a lonely person being cut off. So, pace yourself, find a buddy to bar hop with and don't be that person. If you are unsure of what that person means you are probably that person. If this is you, surround yourself with people, get your drink on and have fun.

4.) A break up text would be awful to receive on Valentine's Day. Now this example may be a hard one to avoid. But most people can tell they are in a rocky relationship. If this is you, get started on a back-up plan. Find out what your friends are doing, ask around and get the details. Even though it would suck to get a break-up text on Valentine's Day, having no back up plan on Valentine's Day might be worse.

5.) An unwanted burning desire would be the worst thing to receive on Valentine's Day for many reasons. But single or in a relationship, you have to be prepared for the romance that might occur on one of the most romantic days of the year. So, when you stop in to grab your last-minute chocolates and roses, make sure you add condoms to the list. Have fun, be safe and enjoy love.

Naomi Cardwell is a Technical Communications major. She is interested in social media and mass communications. She wants to use her degree to help Houstonians be better informed. In her free time she loves being with family, friends and binge watching above average television.



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Galentine's Day an alternative to Valentine's Day

By Emily Boyd

"A strong woman builds her own world." -Ellen J. Barrier

Valentine's Day is not just about love between two individuals, it is a day we share love to those we care about. Many have heard of the saying, "Galentine's Day". This is a day where women plan to appreciate the love they have for friendship. It can involve a night in with the girls and the epic love saga that is Netflix's "Romance" section. It could be where everyone dresses in their best attire and hits the clubs of Midtown. Regardless if it is a night in or out, Galentine's Day is dedicated to women coming together and celebrating the idea of friendship.

"A girl should be two things: classy and fabulous." -Coco Chanel

If one wishes to have a "night out" for Galentine's Day, Houston offers events for those who plan to channel their inner diva. City Acre Brewing Co. a local Houston brewery, is hosting a FREE Galentine's day event! They will have breakfast for dinner all night long, including a waffle station and frittata special, plus specials on girly cocktails, bottles of champagne and lots of sweets! They will also have a photo op with the world's cutest miniature horse, Lil Sebastian. This will be on Wednesday, February 13 from 4-10 p.m. It will definitely be an event to celebrate with the girls! Visit them at 3418 Topping St.

"A woman is the full circle. Within her is the ability to create, nurture, and transform." -Diane Mariechild

If hitting the town is not your style for Galentine's Day, there is no need to panic. Nights in can make the best memories. Galentine's day can be

spent making crafts or channeling your inner artist! Brit + Co is a site that offers lifestyle and activity tips. Their writing team published an article offering ideas for a girls night in. The article offers ideas such as a puppy play date, a cooking party, and even Netflix marathons. The possibilities are endless! Visit their website for ideas on how to spend your Galentine's day in the comfort of your own home.

"When a woman becomes her own best friend, life is easier." -Diane Von Furstenberg

At the end of the day, a woman does not need a spouse or a loved one to enjoy a holiday based on society's expectations. Any female can enjoy the season of love with a friend by her side and new adventure to experience. Whether you stay at home or take a night out on the town, it is important to remember that Galentine's day is about creating new memories and sharing love with those around you.

Emily Boyd is a Senior at UHD and plans to graduate this year. She is a volunteer at the Houston local animal shelter and loves spending time with her four dogs. She spends her free time exploring the city with her mom, studying photography, and enjoys running through Buffalo Bayou Park. She hopes to use her degree as a way to move up in the business world and possibly become a Journalist.



Photo credit Emily Boyd

Art club holds Valentine's Day fundraiser

By Christina Loos

Valentine's Day conjures up images of romance, thoughtful gifts, and pink and red cards covered with hearts. There may not be much romance at the UHD Art Club's upcoming fundraiser, but it will have an abundance of cards designed by members of the new Art Club and will present an opportunity to help fund the Art Club's events.

Kelsi Rios, an officer of the Art Club, said "The Valentine's fundraiser from Art Club is just to help us be able to save enough money so we can start doing more events, because we have an event coming up a couple weeks after the fundraiser and I mean right now we're basically putting our own money into it so that's why we decided on the fundraiser."

Rios explained that all of the Art Club's officers played a part in coming up with the idea for a fundraiser. "Since I had joined CAB [Campus Activities

Board] as a director for the fine arts and culture they were doing a Valentine bash and also me and a couple of other people are in an art show for Valentine's and we were making cards and that's when decided hey you know we should just make and sell Valentine's cards; that's what we do for a living anyways," Rios said.

She stated that she hopes that the fundraiser will bring the Art Club to the attention of more students along with raising funds that will enable the Art Club to hold events like watercolor workshops and photography workshops for all skill levels for free.

"Even though during Welcome Week we signed a lot of people up for our group, we want more involvement. We want people to actually come and show up to our meetings and participate and take advantage of you know of helping the club out and also, I mean we're exposing them also to art shows all around Houston. So it's not that they're doing something just for us, we're trying

to help them out at the same time," she said.

During the fundraiser, the Art Club will sell Valentine's cards designed by over 15 artists, along with custom-made buttons and stickers. They will also have a photo booth that students can use for free. The Art Club will also accept donations and the UHD mascot Ed-U-Gator will make an appearance so students can take pictures with him.

Rios was quick to add that students who cannot afford to purchase the items being sold or donate can still contribute by volunteering during the fundraiser.

"People can help set up. People can come and help sell Valentine cards, especially for the people who aren't going to be there physically. We're going to need that help to keep track of everybody's cards that are being sold and we need someone to come and help take pictures on people's cellphones for the

backdrop and just be standing out there in the hall saying, 'Hey you know, Art Club's having a fundraiser. Why don't you come check it out?'" she said.

The fundraiser will be held on February 11, February 12 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and February 14 from 12 p.m. to 3 p.m. in room A300.

Students can follow the UHD Art Club on Instagram at @artclubuhd and on Facebook. Students interested in volunteering can email the Art Club at artclubuhd@gmail.com.

Christina Loos is a Technical Communication major and an English minor. She is passionate about social justice, horror, writing, and learning about other cultures. In her free time, she enjoys listening to 80s goth rock and new wave, writing and reading, and watching other people play video games because she isn't very good at them.

Popular candy disappears from shelves

By Joshua Williams

There will be one less way to say “I love you” this Valentine’s Day.

Sweethearts, the classic heart shaped colorful candies with Valentine’s Day-esque messaging will be not be on shelves this year. This comes after the makers of Sweethearts, New England Confectionery Co., was sold to Spangler Company in May 2018 for a reported \$18.83 million. Spangler backed out of the deal, and the company was then sold to Round Hill investments two months later for \$17.3 million.

Many of us can remember giving those tiny hearts to our peers in grade school

The Boston Globe first reported of Round Hill investments announcing its plans to sell Necco brands to yet another manufacture soon afterwards. Finally, it was revealed that the company responsible for making these conversational sugar hearts received a secret bid from Ohio-based Spangler, makers of Dum Dum lollipops and Circus Peanuts. The federal bankruptcy auction took place in Boston and the company was resold to Spangler.

According to USA Today, Necco’s closure was so abrupt the city it was headquartered in didn’t receive



Photo courtesy of Spangler

any advance notices and had to make do with media sources. After the Revere, Massachusetts factory plant shut down last year, the mayor of the city, Brian Argo, said the following in an email, “we are disappointed that Round Hill could not follow through on the enthusiasm it expressed when it acquired Necco.”

The Necco company has faced trouble before, including an investigation by the U.S. Federal and Drug Administration after evidence of rodent activity and unsanitary conditions were discovered according to the Boston Globe. Necco CEO Michael McGee warned local and state officials of the potential consequences of not finding another buyer for the company, including its 395 workers losing their jobs. It’s stated that

Necco filed for bankruptcy protection a month after notifying officials in the Massachusetts area that it would need to lay off its factory workers if it didn’t find another buyer in time.

Once word got out of Necco’s financial troubles, fans of the brand began hoarding their products, causing a spike in sales as well as shortages. Candystore.com called it “the great Necco panic” with some fans even going as far to offer their vehicles in exchange for a shipment of Necco products.

230 workers were laid off when the plant was shut down, leaving many of them in high demand. The announcement of Spangler being the new purchaser of the company came simultaneously with the news of the shutdown. Spangler then announced its plans to restart manufacturing of Necco wafers, Sweethearts, and Canada Mints, while other products would remain in limbo. What many didn’t expect was that Sweethearts would remain in limbo for at least one more year.

Necco dates back to the days of Chase and Company, which was founded by brothers Oliver R. and Salias Edwin Chase in 1847. The company soon morphed into New England Confectionary Co. after a

merger in 1901. Since then, the company became responsible for one of America’s longest lasting candies.

During the 1930s, American Navy admiral, Richard Byrd, carried with him two tons of Necco wafers on his expedition in Antarctica. Sweethearts in particular have been around since the 1860s, and have gone through changes

fans of the brand began hoarding their products, causing a spike in sales as well as shortages

over the years, with the addition of messages such as “Fax me” and “Tweet me.”

Many people can remember giving those tiny hearts to their peers in grade school. With sweethearts now gone at least until 2020, it seems like the days of grade school Valentine’s Day parties and carnations are in the past. For now, fans of the popular treat will just have to say “Be Mine” another way this year.

Joshua Williams is a current UHD senior expecting to graduate in the fall of 2019. His passions include playing video games and spending time with his family. He’s also a huge fan of online movie talk shows on YouTube.

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Cupid's chemical imbalance

This classic article about the chemical processes of falling in love originally appeared in a Spring 2007 issue of Dateline: Downtown.

By Kristopher Overholt

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 happier 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 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 wellbeing. 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 honorand 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 your 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

Learn to be a Valentine's Day NINJA!

These tips on being successful on Valentine's Day was originally published in a Spring 2013 issue of Dateline: Downtown.

By Jessica Zamora

Flowers, candy and mushy cards are what Valentine's Day is about, but do we honestly keep all those gifts? We all know that somewhere in your closet is that oversized bear from a couple of years back and that long message on a card you skimmed through and then put aside for "safe keeping". Let's get real people; Valentine's Day does not have to be about spending money and getting every piece of pink and purple candy there is, it's about having a good time with people you love and not breaking the bank while doing it.

There are a few ways to spend this year's Valentine's Day without being alone or spending money at a restaurant you feel like you have to whisper in. The idea is to make the day memorable with loved ones and friends and not try to

overcompensate for the days you don't plan something special for your significant other. Take it from me, there are other options my husband and I have opt for besides going all out on an expensive date. By the end of the night, I'm satisfied with the outcome of our plans and our wallets still feel heavy.

Planning a day or night out for Valentine's Day can happen with three main rules: First, plan on how much you would like to spend. From a woman's point of view, I personally don't like receiving flowers because they eventually die, and I don't like receiving chocolates or any other kind of candy because I wouldn't want to ruin my new year's resolution after a month of being good. Listen up; don't waste your money on buying these overpriced gifts - simply exchange it with something indulging but still bikini-season friendly, preferably something homemade. This option is cheaper and tastes way better, and you can control the calories by the ingredients you use. If you can't figure out how to bake something out of a box, I'm at a loss as to how to help you. It's not brain surgery. (Maybe have a mint. You can't

go wrong with a mint.)

Second, whether you are single or coupled up, always think about what you would like to do. Typically, couples want to have dinner together, but what can you possibly talk about differently on Valentine's Day that you didn't talk about the night before? Saying the words "I love you" as many times as you can while tearing bread doesn't sound very special to me, and it can be annoying if you're trying to enjoy the tasteless yet overpriced meal. Why not gather some friends, couples or singles, and plan a home cooked meal or BBQ to lighten the day to a level much less mushy and romantic? Not only do you save money, but you save time on waiting for a table while spending most of your Valentine's night sitting in an overcrowded waiting area, dealing with some random couple disgustingly making out next to you. (Don't be that couple. Everyone hates that couple.)

Finally, make the night fun by having a Valentine's Day theme night to go along with your dinner. Get creative with it to keep the cost down. A game

board or karaoke is the way to go. Don't want to spend too much on a new game board? Make up games with charades or invent a card game with a twist for the loser. Most bars with karaoke don't have a cover charge, so go right on in, have a drink or two, and sing a few songs for your audience (who probably think you shouldn't be singing in the first place).

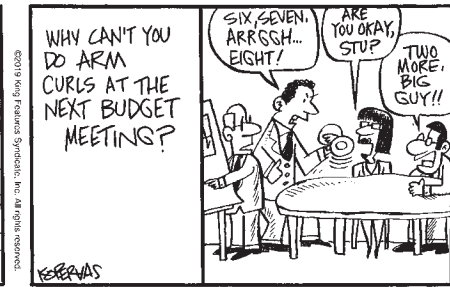
Be the one to make your loved one and friends remember this year as throwing the best Valentine's Day party without putting a hole in anyone's pocket or wasting the night away. For all you single ladies (or gents), this just might be the best thing to catch the eye of the one you've wanted to impress with your creative and inexpensive ideas.

Good Luck!

Out on a Limb



by Gary Kopervas



GRIN and BEAR IT



Just Like Cats & Dogs



Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

	8		1		9			6
		5		7		2	9	
9	2		4					1
	5		2		1			4
6				8		9	3	
7		2			6			8
1		8	9			4		
	3			1	7		2	
		9	6		3			1

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ♦

♦ Moderate ♦♦ Challenging
♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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MAGIC MAZE • "DEM DRY BONES"

D E B X U R O K L I E B Y V S
Q N N K H E E N B Y W T R O L
J (S H O U L D E R) G E B Y W L
U R P N S K A E K I G D B E Z
X V S Q O N E U T M K I I G E
C A Y W U A H S T C Q K P L N
L J H F E P G O C I E K C A B
A Y X V U S I Q J Z R N P E N
M K J H F E H H E W C I N H N
B Z Y X V U T O O F J H P O T
R Q P O M L K I T H G S E S C

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally

Ankle Foot J.W. Johnson Spiritual
Back Head Knee Thigh
Connected Heal Neck Toe
Ezekiel Hip Shoulder

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GO FIGURE!

by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

	-		x		7
x		x		÷	
	x		+		13
+		+		+	
	÷		x		10
14		16		12	

1 2 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

DIFFICULTY: ★★★

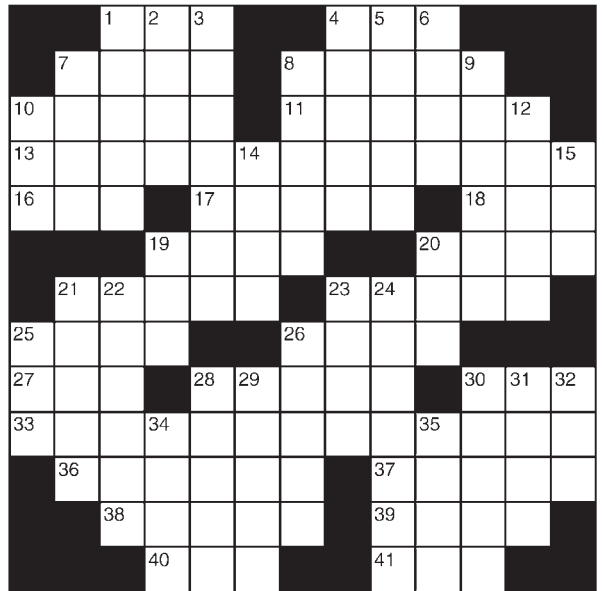
★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

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King Crossword

ACROSS

- Sleuth, slangily
- Pod dweller
- Crafty
- Equilibrium
- Overuse the mirror
- Motor
- Fee for work done
- Officeholders
- Break a Commandment
- Sphere
- Diminish
- Small blister
- Milky stones
- Young turkey
- Profess
- Science workshops
- Pooch
- Paris river
- Cleopatra's slayer
- Navy, with "The"
- Seriously loyal
- Madagascar critter
- Surrounds
- Thing
- CSA boss
- Affirmative action?



DOWN

- Layers
- Ht.
- Sneeringly doubtful
- de Leon
- Square dance quorum
- Europe's neighbor
- Small songbird
- Annoyance
- Sign up
- Greek letter
- Heron's kin
- Swindles
- Recede
- "This means -!"
- Urban transport
- Egg-shaped
- Pirate costume feature
- Sheet of glass
- Ohio college
- Billboards
- Rosters
- Sleep soundly?
- Chopin piece
- Picked a target
- Pond gunk
- Apiece
- Satan's forte
- Kill a bill

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STRANGE BUT TRUE

by Samantha Weaver

* It was Henry Brooks Adams, American historian and descendant of two U.S. presidents, who made the following sage observation: "They know enough who know how to learn."

* Spanish explorers named California after a mythical island of Amazon women ruled by a warrior queen named Califa.

* Though an electric eel is born with the ability to see, by the time it becomes an adult it is blind. This lack of sight is not a hindrance, though; the fish uses electricity to create an image of its surroundings in much the same way that we use radar. The electricity also is how the electric eel kills its prey, producing a 600-volt shock -- five times more powerful than the shock you might receive from a household outlet.

* You might be surprised to learn that Philadelphia-brand cream cheese was originally made in New York.

* With 1.45 million lightning strikes per year,

Florida experiences more lightning than any other state in the country. Though it's not a tagline you'll see in any tourism brochures, Central Florida is unofficially known as the Lightning Capital of the World.

* In 1811 and again in 1812, earthquakes caused the Mississippi River to temporarily reverse course.

* If you're of a certain age and facing up to wrinkles, you might be interested to learn that, according to the American Academy of Dermatology, one of the top causes of skin wrinkles is your habitual sleeping position. Rounding out the top five contributing factors are sun exposure, gravity, smoking and facial expressions.

* If you ever travel to China, keep in mind that the menu item known colorfully as phoenix talons are actually just chicken feet. ***

Thought for the Day: "Only two things are infinite, the universe and human stupidity, and I'm not sure about the former." -- Albert Einstein

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Solutions to last week's puzzles

King Crossword

Answers

Solution time: 27 mins.

U	M	P	G	I	F	T	L	E	V	I	
S	U	E	O	R	E	O	I	M	A	M	
S	T	R	E	A	K	E	D	B	U	R	P
R	E	P	U	T	E	D	R	Y			
			L	E	D	L	E	A	K	E	D
T	E	P	E	E	W	E	D	A	R	E	
A	P	E	R	J	A	R	S	L	A	B	
L	E	E	P	O	X	C	H	E	S	T	
L	E	N	G	T	H	C	O	O			
			R	A	N	U	N	R	E	S	T
S	A	R	I	S	T	R	E	N	G	T	H
A	B	E	T	O	I	L	Y	G	E	E	
C	A	P	S	N	E	S	S	S	P	Y	

Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

1	7	4	2	9	3	6	8	5
8	2	6	1	7	5	4	3	9
3	5	9	4	8	6	1	2	7
4	9	3	5	1	2	8	7	6
2	1	7	9	6	8	3	5	4
5	6	8	3	4	7	9	1	2
9	8	5	6	2	1	7	4	3
7	4	2	8	3	9	5	6	1
6	3	1	7	5	4	2	9	8

Go Figure!

answers

9	+	8	x	2	34
+		x		+	
6	x	5	+	9	39
x		-		x	
1	+	7	x	3	24
15		33		33	

Insight about social anxiety disorder

By Aansa Usmani

*As a mental health advocate, my mission is to educate others on mental disorders, helping to remove the stigma surrounding those suffering from these issues. The more we educate ourselves on these issues, the more likely we will be able to understand those suffering from them around us. **DISCLAIMER:** I am not a licensed psychologist; the facts and figures are from the internet. If there are any serious concerns, please visit your local therapist.*

This month's edition of Insightful Awareness focuses on anxiety; in particular Social Anxiety Disorder. According to the Anxiety and Depression Association of America, this form of anxiety is the second most diagnosed anxiety disorder, predominantly affecting teenagers and adolescents alike. However, it is more common for females to suffer from this type of anxiety compared to their male counterparts.

This form of anxiety can cause fear and nervousness during social situations; it can range from having nerves during a social gathering of many people to having an individual one-on-one conversation. Although there is no specific

cause of Social Anxiety Disorder, factors such as environmental exposure or genetics can be attributed.

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, underdeveloped social skills may attribute towards Social Anxiety Disorder. From an early age, social skills are developed throughout one's socialization exposure. Yet if one is exposed to negative or traumatic situations or has a direct relative with this type of anxiety, they are two to six times more likely in developing this. Roughly seven percent of the American adult population suffers from this type of anxiety annually, with 75 percent of people experiencing symptoms of social anxiety in their childhood to early teenage years.

Alongside socialization, personality may also play a role; according to Timberline Knolls, characteristics such as having low self-confidence, sensitivity to criticism, or poor social skills may be attributed towards developing this type of anxiety.

Symptoms of social anxiety range from emotional to physical, depending on the person and/or situation. Emotional symptoms include having fears of being judged, humiliated, disliked, or having others notice different

social cues about oneself (i.e. being awkward), while physical symptoms range from having digestive issues to having palpitations of sweat or having shakes whether it be teeth chattering or having restless arms/legs. These symptoms of anxiety can affect one's day-to-day life, and it can cause setbacks for themselves, whether it be relationships, careers or other opportunities. In addition to these symptoms, harmful actions such as overeating, substance abuse, or self-mutilation can be attributed to one's anxiety in a stressful situation.

When treated, it can help one overcome the obstacles that impede them from living their life. Although it may vary, common forms of treatment include seeking therapy and administering medication. Alongside conventional therapy, there are also support groups one can join, both physically or electronically. These groups teach the importance of recognizing the symptoms and developing coping mechanisms in dealing with anxiety. Through support and determination, one can overcome this.

(To anyone reading this, you can do it. It may be difficult in the beginning, but once you are able to find methods of coping, it will help ease your anxiety.)

If you think that these symptoms sound similar to what you experience on a near daily basis, please contact your local therapist/counselor.

If you or someone you know needs to talk to someone regarding mental health issues confidentially, here are some useful phone numbers to call/text:

Suicide Hotline: 1-800-784-8433

Depression Hotline: 1-630-482-9696

Grief Support: 1-650-321-5272

Aansa Usmani is a first-year college student attending the University of Houston-Downtown. She is a Political Science major with plans to run for political office. She identifies herself as a social justice warrior, advocating for women, LGBT, immigration, and other liberal causes. Alongside politics, her passions include photography, writing, and debate. Although relatively young, she has demonstrated literate competency, writing about topics ranging from mental health to current events

Love liberates us

By Naomi Cardwell

Valentine's Day is a day of celebrating kindness, love and joy. How could one possibly formulate an argument against such a positive holiday? They can't; they formulate arguments over consumerism which is not the meaning behind Valentine's Day. The argument against that is a totally different subject of discussion and can be correlated to almost everything and every holiday, even birthdays.

This holiday is what you make of it. It does not have to be a day revolved around romantic gestures, fabulous dinners, beautiful flowers and divine chocolates. However, it can be and honestly, what about that sounds so terrible? The day can consist of a low-key movie, a walk in the park, a picnic or any other excuse to get out and do something special with a loved one.

I have heard some people argue against Valentine's Day with reasoning such as "Valentine's is a dumb holiday. People should love each other and treat people well all the time." This is a very weak attack at the holiday because if this is true, why do these people have such a problem with it being celebrated one day out of the year? Since they claim to be such loving creatures who exemplify their love to all their friends and family 365 days out of the year, they should appreciate an opportunity to display their affection.

Also, would this not be a strange argument for any other holiday? What if someone insisted, "Fourth of July is a dumb holiday. We should eat barbeque, go swimming, watch fireworks and celebrate patriotism every day of the year." I hope people see the falsehood and irrationalism in thinking like this. The constant critique, hate, and cynicism towards the holiday of Valentine's Day seems exhausting. It is insane to me the amount of people who dislike and boycott this holiday.

This holiday grants us with the rare opportunity to include everyone, be kinder and share love more freely. This is not a holiday meant to divide one another. Only people can do that through hate. Of course, love looks different to everyone and how they express it. But Valentine's Day gives people the opportunity to discover what love looks like to them.

Love is simply something we all share. It does not belong to a certain type of people, culture or country. Love is everywhere. Love is in everybody. Love is what makes us human. So why can we not agree that this is a day worth celebrating? Valentine's Day is a day for everyone.

"I am grateful to have been loved and to be loved now and to be able to love, because that liberates. Love liberates." - Maya Angelou

Valentine's Day cynic

By Aansa Usmani

Note: The views and cynical commentary reflect the author's views of this holiday. This does not intend to offend anyone who is a fan of Valentine's Day.

Around this time every year, stores emblazon the symbols of love everywhere. From Valentine's Day cards to boxes of chocolate, items covered with hearts, cupid, or anything "romantic" are on display waiting to be bought and given lovingly to someone whether it be romantic or as a friendly gesture. It is a promotion of materialistic tendencies straying away from the holiday's true message.

Consumerism has turned this "lovely" holiday into a holiday dependent on affectionate gifts such as teddy bears, chocolates or flowers. Although gifts are a flattering gesture, they can also cause offense. For example, one may take getting a bouquet as a sign that their love is not eternal and like the flowers, it too shall die. Contrarily, if one forgets to get a gift for their significant other, it can be taken as a sign that they are not worthy of their love.

This consumeristic dilemma can be attributed to ideas promoted in Hollywood, romantic novels, pop culture and other idealistic publications or shows. Love depicted in these idealistic worlds is NOT realistic; rarely does someone throw elaborate celebrations of love, as it is both expensive and time-consuming.

Companies such as Hallmark and Kay Jewelers promote this idealistic standard for Valentine's Day; on television, ads from these companies promote giving one's significant other the "perfect gift" ranging from pop-up cards, to pop up flower vases, to even engagement rings. Sure, an engagement ring is nice, but it's just a symbolic gesture of one's relationship status. These ads distort the meaning of Valentine's Day, focusing on materials that are not fulfilling; items cause temporary happiness, and they do not fulfill one's internal desire for happiness and love.

Companies utilize these tactics to lure customers into buying their products, promoting a culture of materialistic happiness and capitalistic profit. This consumeristic agenda strays from the real meaning of this holiday: spending time with one another. One cherishes time spent together rather than a gift given for a single day.

This agenda also creates a toxic culture of assumption, creating expectations of receiving materialistic items, rather than cherishing the love felt whether it be physical or emotional. It promotes a culture of materialistic expectations for a holiday dedicated to love.

Valentine's Day should be a day of togetherness rather than creating a hole in one's wallet. Although gifts are a flattering way of demonstrating affection, it is what is inside that counts; one can love someone materially, but without demonstrating it either physically or emotionally, it is pointless.

12 Gators expressing themselves

The Seasons

Summer has hot breath,
She wraps my hair with much care
In red salty hands.

Twilight comes quickly.
We are thirsty for cool nights
But the moon won't shift

I know the winter.
When summer has passed
Rain falls in cold drops.

Flowers bloom every spring,
When the mushroom emerges.
Still I slip on ice.

My warm woolen clothes
Protect me little from chills.
Bayou winds fill my lungs.

Decay and ferment
Announce the water's secrets
But the fish will not.

I stand in a garden
No hands receive the fruits
Ripeness lingers here.

– Amanda Howard, 2019

Amanda Howard is a recent graduate of UHD earning a bachelor's degree of Natural Science with a minor in Biology. She currently teaches garden education to high school students with the Texas A&M Argilife 4H program and works in the campus student food market. Her passions include: organic food production, sustainable living and tackling food waste. When Amanda is not obsessing over perfecting her compost methods she can be found quilting, illustrating and writing either poetry, or short stories.

Southern Winters

Winter birds return home,
their flocks bring on chills
Momentarily.

Late September days
and I sweat like it's June.
My hair cut shorter.

If I were a tree
my Carotene would show.
Chlorophyll deplete.

When the fruits form
on my vine, pick carefully,
I might be poison.

Wood must grow old
mushrooms and insects prevail,
brown rotten log.

Rains come opened armed.
she assumes you have a coat,
Nothing changes that.

I once stood
next to you alone my friend,
but now you leave too.

– Amanda Howard, 2016

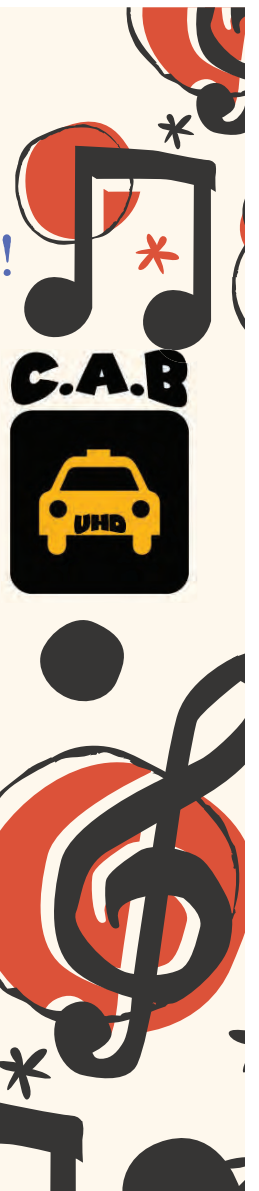


Ifunanya Joseph Mamah is currently a criminal justice senior at UHD. He also has a passion for making art. He discovered drawing at a young age and has been doing it ever since. Being able to contribute to Dateline: Downtown as an illustrator has been a pleasure for him and inspires him to continue working with the paper and other outlets.

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The spotlight is yours!
Online auditions run from February 13-
march 6th!

If you interested send a 2-5 minute recording introducing your talent and performing it to:
cabuhd@gmail.com
including your name and phone number with video for more details!
Deadline to turn in your audition videos is 3/6/19
We will contact you if you made the cut good luck!



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TIME: 3:00PM
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