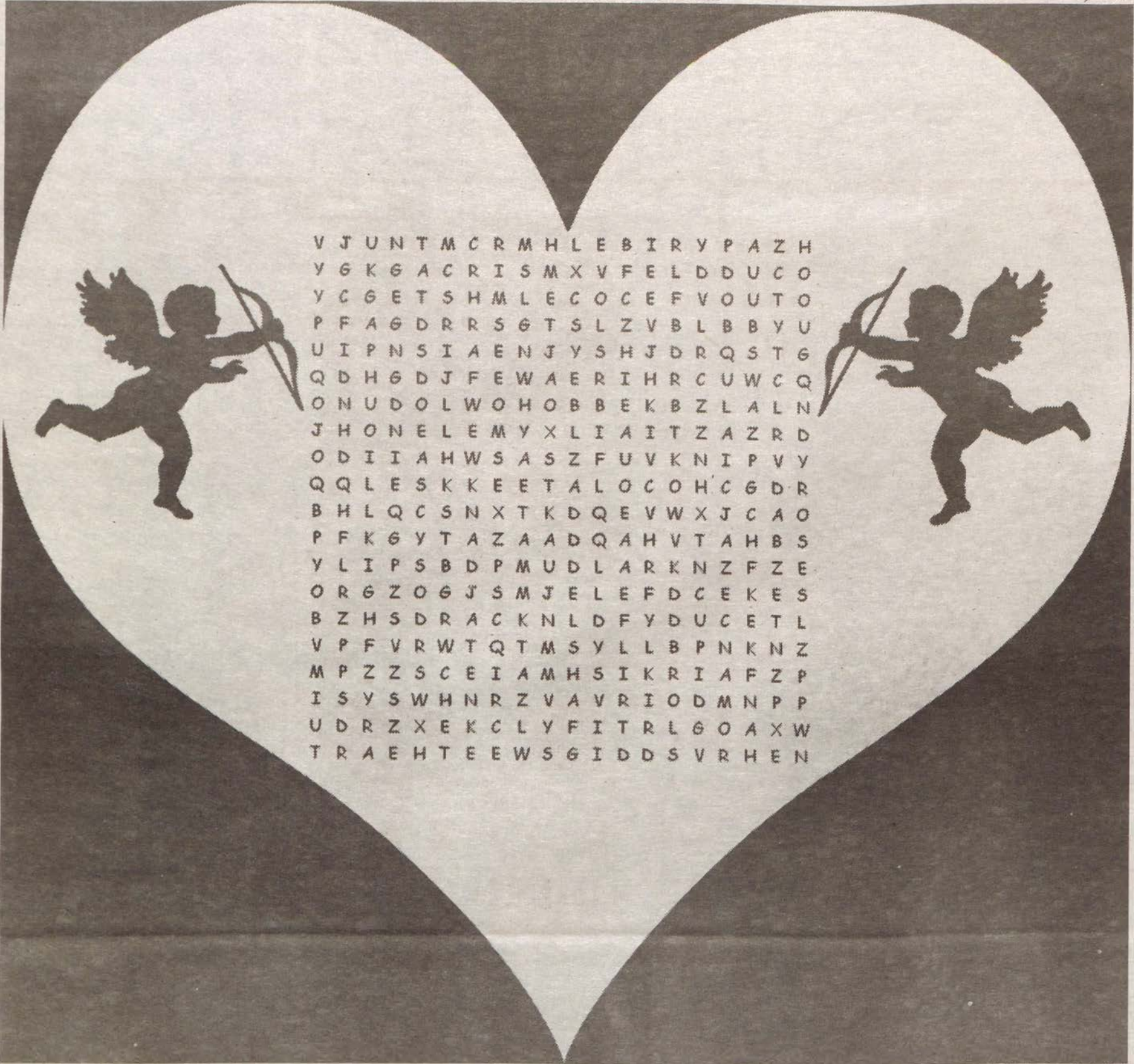


VALENTINE'S DAY ISSUE



Photo by TRACY DONADIO '06/The Cowl



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Graphic by Ryan Wenk '06

Need a break from planning the perfect Valentine's Day? Don't have any special plans yet? See how many words you can find in our Valentine's Day word search!

- | | | |
|-----------|----------|------------|
| Candles | Flirt | Passion |
| Candy | Flowers | Pink |
| Cards | Hallmark | Red |
| Chocolate | Heart | Romance |
| Cuddle | Hugs | Roses |
| Cupid | Kisses | Sweetheart |
| Date | Lips | Valentine |
| February | Love | |

Poetry Corner

I Found Your Earrings

BY STEPHAN DELBOS '05
 PORTFOLIO STAFF

There where we were,
 Trading secrets for free,
 Is now but an island
 On memory's sea,
 And I look back through darkness
 At what will not be.

This place was once ours
 But is now mine alone;
 There is no fertile ground
 For the seeds that you've sown.
 Every object is an island,
 But these things that were yours,
 Stand out from the ocean
 By the flames on their shores.

Secret

CHRISTINE HICKEY '05
 PORTFOLIO STAFF

There is always
 that secret morning moment
 when I am drinking in
 the light and shadow dance
 that plays across your face.
 Like wine, I sip your soft smell,
 your red summer skin.
 Consuming every pure color,
 the blue sky song in every breath.
 Our morning whisper
 hovers between our lips;
 The greatest secret.

Happy Frickin' Valentine's Day

ERIN KELLY '06
 PORTFOLIO STAFF

A campus abuzz with warmth and love
 As Cupid takes aim from up above
 While lovers await a night of sin
 The week of preparations begins

From the greatest love songs of all time
 To the cutest Russell Stover you could find,
 Love poems sealed with a lip-glossed kiss,
 Sickly-sweet teddy bears, a Valentine's wish

For those who won't get roses this year
 Who still watch *Sleepless in Seattle* in tears
 Who get their box of chocolates from Mom
 Who shamelessly belt out Celine Dion—

Don't fear, loveless, you can wear your red
 Even if tonight, you're alone in bed
 Maybe next year you'll get your way...
 Happy frickin' Valentine's Day.

10 simple rules for alienation

By KATHRYN TREADWAY '06
WORLD EDITOR
&
SARAH VAZ '07
ASST. WORLD EDITOR

In recognition of all the fabulous single girls this Valentine's Day, we have compiled a list of the top reasons we remain single. With the complicated multiple hook-ups that compose relationships on this campus, here is a list of how to lose a girl in 10 days, dedicated to none other than PC's finest bachelorettes. While we know that girls do their fair share of things to drive guys away, there is already an entire movie dedicated to that specific subject. Here is our rebuttal:

You meet someone and your casual relationship is going well. Everyone is happy in the honeymoon period but then things start falling apart and people start acting "sketchy," and by people we mean boys.

Day 1: Sketchy behavior begins. For the first time, you don't visit her, or call for that matter. When you do talk, it's via AIM. You ask a question, then unbeknownst to her, leave to watch *SportsCenter*. When you return an hour later, halfheartedly end the conversation as if you hadn't left her hanging mid-response.

The trouble is, the previous two weeks will most likely have deluded her into thinking these activities (or lack thereof) are insignificant, while most likely they are her first, most vital indi-

cations that *you're just not that into her* (or at least won't be in a short while).

Day 2: Inconsideration as a rule. Begin to be honest with her. Brutally honest in fact, making sure to point out that she probably shouldn't have that third slice of pizza at Golden Crust, writing for *The Cowl* is one of the top 10 least desirable attributes of a college girl, and no of course you don't read her articles. Oh, and you must have just forgotten to introduce her to your friends when they approach you at Slavin.

Day 3: Indifference as a rule. Don't visit, call, or even IM her. Maybe toss a text message on over if you're feeling generous, but don't respond if she replies. If she's foolish enough to call you, either act busy, or sound so bored that she hangs up and blames herself for boring you. If you are in fact bored, let her come over for some "quality time" to watch you play a one-player video game on your X-box, and expect her to reward you for your benevolence with some sort of intimacy or affection.

Day 4: Forget about it. You make plans. You ask her to go to dinner or to come over later. Then you somehow forget completely and don't call to apologize or show that you remembered that you forgot her. You say "hey, I was just real busy with some things" when she asks what happened after four hours of waiting.

Day 5: Fake an injury or illness. You

milk your newfound disability as the reason for everything that you choose to do wrong. It's the compelling excuse you have for not being able to dial her phone number, or click on her screen name, much less visit her. You also elicit sympathy from her, and convince her that she should come "cheer you up."

Day 6: Deception is essential. You tell her you can't possibly go out. You're swamped with work, four classes tomorrow, not to mention a 6:30 wake up call. And you might actually have food poisoning from Ray. Ironically, when she calls to cheer you up, you let the girl standing next to you at Fish Co. answer. When you call her back, you ask if there's any way she could arrange a ménage a trois with her best friend, or at the very least could the two of them give you a massage later?

If at any point she begins to harbor any resentment or anger towards you, make sure to act like she is coming out of left field with these complaints when you ask "what's wrong?" and she makes the mistake of answering. One great approach is to ask her if this has anything to do with her "28-day cycle." Make sure that you make concerned faces and ask her friends what's bothering her, as if you care.

Day 7: This is a day of rest, as God intended. As such, you won't torment the girl, but you won't contact her or deal with her at all. In fact, don't bother answering or responding if she tries to get in touch with you either. After all this

hard work you deserve a break, right? **Day 8: I don't know her!** Avoid eye contact and mumble hello under your breath when you see her in public. If she approaches you, put forth your best effort to make it look like she's annoying you. When you're both out at Brad's later that night, make sure to talk to another girl the entire time, and then grab her arm angrily when she dares ignore you, as if you are deeply hurt by her hostility. If you're lucky enough to get into an argument later, feel free to leave her standing in the rain once she starts getting "irrational" and begins to cry.

Day 9: Do or die. You ignore her all day, as per usual now. Anywhere between 12:53 a.m. and 1:07 a.m. feel free to ask for her "help." Just for 20 minutes. Really. If she's misguided enough to say yes, be sure to kick her out afterwards. Also, be sure to tell all your friends to feel free to try to hook up with her, and feel free to start chatting up her friends too.

Day 10: The painful truth! You guilt trip her into lending you her laptop, and use it to talk on AIM, only not to her of course. Eventually, you let her come get it if she really wants it back. Inadvertently, she stumbles upon some of your IMs, and happens to see how you really feel about her via a shockingly candid conversation with one of your sleazy comrades on your various exploits, with your various girls. You make sure there's some degrading or explicit language involved, too.

The memory of Valentine's Day past

By KRISTINA REARDON '08
PORTFOLIO STAFF

Looking back, she could not think of what it was that brought the all too familiar feeling back on. Maybe it was the way the wind blew that evening, maybe it was the stars shining so brightly in the quickly darkening sky. Maybe it was the sullen oak swaying forlornly, or maybe it was just the innate knowledge that something beautiful had been lost forever.

Olivia despised those girls who always had a boyfriend on their arm and needed to be in a relationship to feel validated. Even more, she hated Cupid, stupid red hearts, Valentine's Day, and everything it stood for. There was nothing more disgusting, superficial, or commercial than the holiday manufactured by American card companies celebrated on Feb. 14. And yet here it was, Feb. 14 again, and Olivia

was sitting outside, alone, on a park bench under the dark sky.

The breeze came again, and her skin tingled with the sensation. She shuddered and pulled her black blazer more closely around her as she contemplated the universe. She hated Valentine's Day, chivalry and all the rest, but she did not hate love. And the beautiful loss in her life had been love—if she knew anything at all, she knew this. It takes trust and a little bit of the vulnerability she would rather not give up to fall in love, and sometimes, Olivia realized, you fall out just as quickly as you fall in. Only it was not Olivia who had fallen out of love. It was she that had been left behind.

How many years would she continue to think about a love lost so bitterly and so uselessly? How many Valentine's Days would she spend in this park, watching the heavens, praying one day she would find love again? As the slightest tears from heaven began to sprinkle her hair, she reached for the umbrella she had conveniently forgotten.

No matter. Wet hair and runny eye make-up made little difference when there is no one there to see you. Olivia glanced at the chipped nail polish on her right hand, and sacrificed any dignity as she purposely smudged the black mascara before its time. As the rain began to fall harder, Olivia stood and clutched her bag close. Her heels resounded loudly in the emptiness of the park's center. She began to run, splashing in puddles as the wind blew harder and harder, her wet hair sprawling across the air like Medusa's snakes. Medusa's snakes. She laughed at her own sorry humor.

She found the mail box on a street corner three blocks away. But the lid was stuck and no matter how hard she tried, she could not pry it open. The letter would have to wait till morning. Sobbing as if she were responsible for the rain, Olivia let the pink envelope drop to the ground, and watched as the rain ruined her perfect cursive scrawl on its front. She watched as the thick card inside began to peek through the splattered ink

and disintegrate. It was to be her last love letter, the last pink envelope she would seal in her lifetime. Her final good-bye. And it would never be mailed.

Dripping and cold, Olivia rose and smoothed her blazer. She was wonderfully out of place and smiled in spite of herself. Far away, in a café or a fancy restaurant, someone was being proposed to tonight. Someone was opening a pink envelope and getting teary-eyed over a glittery card a hundred others would receive. And somewhere else, someone's heart was breaking and love was disintegrating, just as her last love letter. But she walked on, though she had nowhere to go. She walked because she was hundreds of miles from home and it somehow did not matter. She walked because she had been left behind by the only man she would ever love. But she walked because every step took her further away from that graveyard, took her further away from Valentine's Day, Cupid, and superficial love—and brought her one step closer to eternity.

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WHEN: Tuesday, February 15th

WHERE: Library 333 (EClassroom)

TIME: 6:00 pm

TEST TAKING PRESENTATION

Learn test taking strategies for multiple choice, essay, and true/false exams

WHEN: Wednesday, February 16th

WHERE: Library 104B

TIME: 3:30 pm



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Friday, February 18 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Saturday, February 19 12 Noon - 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, February 20 12 Noon - 5:00 p.m.

Monday, February 21 12 Noon - 5:00 p.m.



Now and then – Valentine's Day style

One writer takes a look back at gifts and ghosts of Valentine's Day past to find the true meaning of the holiday

MEGAN BISHOP '07
ASST. PORTFOLIO EDITOR

As Feb. 14 quickly approaches and the days dwindle down on our mental countdown lists, I find myself reflecting, as I tend to do, on Valentine's Days past.

ESSAY

Reliving the past memories with some pain and regret, I reluctantly come to the conclusion that I am gift-giving impaired when it comes to this holiday. During Christmastime, I am always the first to lecture on the importance of sentiment in the gifts we give. But somehow when the man in red slinks into the background as red fades to pink, I freeze. Flowers, candy and teddy bears just don't seem appropriate gifts for a significant other. To me, that's like getting everyone a fruit cake and calling it a day. And so, the past has reared its ugly head. I am ready to confront it, to prove that you can learn to become better at this thing we call Valentine's Day.

Cue boyfriend number one, whose bowl haircut was immaculate and a primary reason for our relationship. We began dating a mere six days before V-day, and I remember my panic. I stood in the aisle at our local pharmacy for such a duration that I seated myself on the

worn red carpet. I stared up at the display of red and pink heart-adorned goodies bewildered. What was this? Was Brooks' Pharmacy joking? How was I supposed to purchase 13-year-old Bowl Haircut Boy, whom I had known for less than a month, something that was, not only free from tackiness, but not girly?

After careful consideration I settled on the most masculine-looking box of candy and walked out of the store, clutching that plastic bag as if it contained the most embarrassing commodity ever known to teenager kind. I dreaded going into school and the awkwardness that would ensue.

The next day I sheepishly slid that box of candy into my locker, sandwiched between my history and science books. When most girls would have been bubbling with enthusiasm, wearing heart shaped earrings and luminescent smiles, I was nervously biting my lip in the corner of the classroom. Bowl Haircut Boy approached me smiling, with a teddy bear that was holding a much larger heart-shaped box of candy than I had purchased. I felt a little inferior, but he was a boy, he didn't need anything special, right? Besides, I had seen that smug-looking bear for \$14.95 at Brooks' the night before. I guess Bowl Haircut Boy was not the Romeo I had once thought.

Not bad you say, not bad. But Boyfriend Two was worse. While Bowl Haircut Boy and I had been dating a brief six days before the big day, I had been with Boyfriend Two three long months. This, at the time, was like marriage. I will ruin the ending by telling you that we did not end up like many of the fated fairy tale Disney characters. He broke up with me not long after this day, so we will name this boy Big Loser. As I stretch my memory back to the days of "Big Loser plus Megan equals true love

forever;" I remember very little. But, I do remember exactly what I got him: a giant bag of pink and white peanut M & Ms. I didn't put it in a gift bag, or wrap it with care, or even attach a card. Nope, not me. I just slapped it atop my American history and biology books and handed it over. Big Loser looked excited at the prospect of a sugar high later that day, and ignored the lack of presentation.

He, in turn, casually tossed me a red velvet box containing a heart-shaped necklace and a small teddy bear with hearts etched in its faux fur. We hugged, maybe kissed, and walked to our respective classrooms. Some days later, my dog tore that teddy bear apart and I did nothing to stop her.

Enter Boyfriend Three, oh, Boyfriend Three. He was something special. He loved the beach more than life itself, and for the sake of this I shall christen him Wave Runner. Remembering my past gift giving mishaps, I made a valiant attempt to right my wrongs.

“We make memories everyday, so what makes Valentine's Day so special? My advice to the campus of Providence College is to reflect back on your Valentine's Days past. Good, bad, or very ugly, it is all a learning experience.”

I decided I was going to try to stay away from boxes or bags of candy because those were of course the reason for my past failures. *Of course.* Instead I decided to make my own container for the candy. I went to good old Bed Bath & Beyond, and purchased a jar that housewives store large amounts of sugar and flour in. Then, using my roommate's paints, I decorated the outside of the jar

in blue and green 'masculine' colored stripes. I even took the time to write a personal message on the inside and painted a red heart next to my name and date. After filling it with his favorite candy, I unanimously proclaimed myself to be the best girlfriend ever. I was so impressed with my gift that I pardoned all my past screw-ups and considered myself a new gift-giving woman.

Wave Runner's gift to me, though similar to the gifts of the past, was different in other ways. I received another teddy bear, and some candy, but it was special in its own way because I truly cared about him. It was here that I realized the day on the calendar, and more importantly the gifts, didn't matter. Why did I give Bowl Haircut Boy and Big Loser craptastical gifts? Well, because we had less-than-significant relationships. For some reason, we were forced to have our parents spend \$15 on each other just because the sun rose on Feb. 14.

What have I learned from all of this? The gifts from guys one and two are now as nonexistent as students in 8:30 Civ on a Friday morning. What remains from the \$20 bill and trip to the drug store (aside from some change), are the memories. We make memories everyday, so what makes Valentine's Day so special? My advice to the campus of Providence College is to reflect back on your Valentine's Days past. Good, bad or very ugly, it is all a learning experience. If I didn't hand Big Loser those peanut M & Ms, who is to say I wouldn't have done the same for Wave Runner. In this life that floats by, relationships can change with each gust of wind and ripple in the tide. Ultimately all we are left with are our memories. So let us cast aside those teddy bears and heart shaped boxes of candy, and for once, enjoy the love we have.

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Strange Love

Matt Hess '05 explores some unlikely celebrity loves

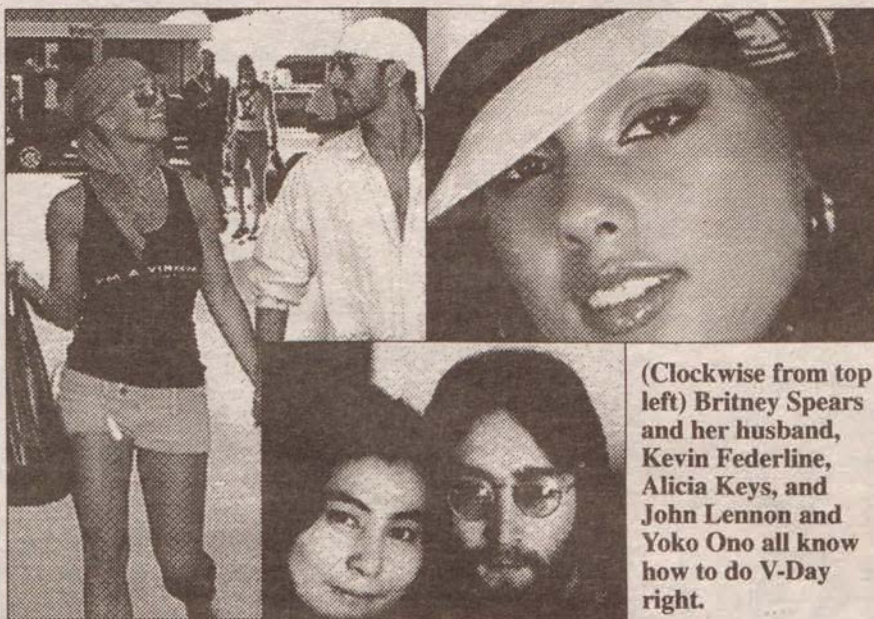
Well kids, it's getting close to that time of the year again—that magical day when hearts swell and cheeks blush. Yep, Valentine's Day is just around the corner, and while you're running around the mean streets of Providence trying to find that ever-elusive "unique, thoughtful, and creative" gift for your very own valentine, some of your good buddies in the music biz will be doing the same.

Just take quasi-retired hip hop superstar Jay-Z. I think it's fair to say that a new chinchilla coat and trendy Mercedes will await the bootylicious Beyonce Knowles, come Feb. 14th. But what about a more "unorthodox" couple, like Brigitte Nilson and Flavor Flav? What exactly can these two crazy characters do to express some Valentine's affection? As long as it doesn't involve public nudity, I think they can pull it off.

And so, in honor of Valentine's Day and the priceless unintentional comedy that celebrity odd couples have provided us throughout the years, I've compiled a list of some of the greatest/weirdest/sickening strange loves that have graced the music industry. And since I'm feeling so cherubic today, I'll even throw in a few V-Day suggestions here and there. Trust me; I'm the kid that had the coolest Ninja Turtles valentines in second grade.

1.) Brigitte Nielson and Flavor Flav

Just one look at these two should set them apart as the most physically ridiculous odd couple of all time. He's the short, obnoxious hype man from Public Enemy, better known for his ridiculous wardrobe than his musical talent. She's the tall, uber-European actress that played Ivan Drago's wife in *Rocky IV*, and damn, has she aged horribly.



(Clockwise from top left) Britney Spears and her husband, Kevin Federline, Alicia Keys, and John Lennon and Yoko Ono all know how to do V-Day right.

My Valentine suggestions: for Flav, more oversized clock jewelry that keeps track of his 15 minutes, and for Brigitte, a carton of cigarettes and multiple Botox sessions.

2.) John Lennon and Yoko Ono

I guess these two would be more of a tragic couple than an odd couple, depending on how much you dig the Beatles (or what you believe about them). He was one of the greatest songwriters in the history of popular music, and she was...well...a struggling Asian artist. While Lennon continued to make phenomenal music without his Liverpool mates, many cynics credit Yoko's presence as the catalyst for the Beatles' breakup.

3.) Mariah Carey and Derek Jeter (or any member of the 2004 Yankees)

I think there's a "greatest meltdown of all time" joke in here somewhere.

4.) Britney Spears and Random Dudes

In a shocking/hysterical display of moral depravity, Britney Spears eloped with not one, but TWO slacker hubbies during the course of 2004. Not only is B-Spurrs' social decline hilarious to watch, it also gives random dudes across the country (like my roommate Chris) hope that even the most prevalent pop princess will go through with a haphazard Vegas wedding if the mood is just right (and by "right" I mean extremely intoxicated and pathetic). He's got his eye on you, Hilary Duff.

My Valentine's suggestions: for Kevin Federline (hubby No. 2), a wife-beater without Spaghetti-O stains, and for Ms. Spears, a shred of self-respect.

5.) Lyle Lovett and Julia Roberts

He was a mediocre country musician with a haircut that is rivaled only by Cosmo Kramer's, and she was a beautiful actress in her prime. While this

strange love ended with a speedy divorce, it seems that Roberts has yet to learn from past mistakes — she's had a mean streak of ugly bastards for as far back as I can remember.

6.) Michael Jackson and Pretty Much Anyone

If only you could separate the man from the music. I know I've been a little hard on the Almighty Gloved One lately, but let's be honest here—I don't think the poor guy has had one relationship in his entire life that wasn't absolutely nauseating. I'll run down the list: Brooke Shields, Lisa Mary Presley, the surrogate mother of the month, Webster???

My suggestions: I think everyone involved would be happy if MJ magically returned to sanity this V-Day.

7.) Mick Jagger and David Bowie

I'm not sure what they needed more of to make this happen: cocaine, or mascara.

8.) Renee Zellweger and Jack White

Let's face it: she gained a bunch of weight for that Bridget Jones sequel, and she still looked way too good for him. Plus, I can't blame her if she was a little put off by the whole "Well, my ex-wife plays drums in my band, but I just tell everyone she's my sister" shtick for White's band, the White Stripes.

9.) Alicia Keys and Matt Hess

This one seems like a pretty natural couple to me. She's an accomplished piano playing Nubian goddess with multiple industry awards and accolades, and he's a lowly newspaper writer who can still recite the entire opening scene to *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* after multiple power hours.

Hell, I can dream can't I?

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Un-Valentine Application

BY KATIE HUGHES '06

I am currently in search for someone with whom to spend the awful, over-commercialized, greeting-card-company-invented day of mourning for singletons. If you hate the day as much as I do, please fill this out, bring it to *The Cowl* office in lower Slavin, and you may be lucky enough to get picked to hang out with me and make fun of couples we know and don't know. It will be a night of sarcasm, wicked humor, and discussion of arbitrary non-valentine related topics such as the current state of media entertainment, imitations of favorite television infomercials, and preferred kitchen appliance brands. If you are interested in the unconventional, please fill out the form below. Romantically minded need not apply.

- Name
- Year
- Major (if applicable)
- What did you do last Valentine's Day?
- Any hidden talents?
- Cher or Madonna?
- Theatre or Ice Capades?
- Dazed and Confused or St. Elmo's Fire?
- Freud Finger Puppets or Kafka shaped ice cubes?
- John Mayer or Counting Crows?



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Valentine's on a budget

MEGAN COMERFORD '06
NEWS STAFF

Planning on wooing a special someone this Valentine's Day but don't have the money for dinner at a nice (aka: expensive) restaurant? No problem. A quick trip to the supermarket and a little creativity can result in a romantic dinner that won't fail to impress.

I'd suggest simulating a restaurant meal by serving in courses: a salad, an entrée, and a dessert. Make a couple of mixed drinks, and you're all set.

Like a good host, offer a drink to your guest. Because it's Valentine's Day, think pink. Literally. Or red, of course. Drinks are probably the easiest thing to perk up and make festive.

Go beyond the Shirley Temple idea and try something more exotic. Pomegranate juice mixed with lemon-lime soda is a little sweet, a little fizzy, and appropriately red. Passionfruit nectar is another good choice. To add pizzazz, rim the glass with crystallized sugar and garnish with a maraschino cherry, a slice of lime, or even a strawberry.

The salad is probably the easiest part of the meal to make. You have the option of throwing it together in advance or right before your date arrives.

Buy some bagged lettuce (no washing or cutting required), but avoid iceberg. Even McDonald's doesn't serve iceberg lettuce. You can mix in tomatoes, carrots, or whatever vegetables you like. Want something a little more memorable? Try using the spinach salad mix and tossing it with sliced strawberries and chopped walnuts with a balsamic vinaigrette. By the way, strawberries are a supposed aphrodisiac.

As the central part of the meal, it's important that the entrée tastes good to both you and your guest, so make sure you pick something both of you will enjoy and that is a realistic reflection of your culinary skills.

For those of you who feel a sense of accomplishment after making grilled cheese, I'd go with something simple with only a few steps. Pasta a la vodka is a great choice; you can buy vodka sauce in a jar, which means this dish has only two ingredients and only requires that the chef boil water and heat the sauce.

Also, vodka sauce is a little fancier than regular tomato sauce and its pink color makes it a great Valentine choice. Though many restaurants serve their

vodka sauce with penne pasta, you can find heart-shaped pasta at specialty food stores like Le Gourmet Chef if you're willing to spend about \$3 for the bag.

If you're a little more competent in the kitchen, a chicken dish is a great choice, since poultry is relatively inexpensive and very versatile. You can sauté, bake, or cook the chicken however you like it.

Try serving it with red peppers (for the color) and asparagus (another aphrodisiac) either over pasta or with rice. You could use one of those Lipton Rice Sides or, to add elegance, make jasmine or basmati rice.

Since this holiday is associated with all things sweet, what better way to end a meal than with a scrumptious dessert? It's the finale, so make it a good one.

You can go easy and cheap with Pillsbury Slice-and-Bake cookies. You know, the ones with the red hearts in the center. They're moderately priced and only require a knife (even if you have to pilfer a plastic one from Slavin), a baking sheet, and an oven.

If your date is a little more high maintenance, try a parfait. Layer vanilla or chocolate pudding (you can even buy the little cups so you don't have to make the pudding yourself) with Cool Whip and fresh berries for a dessert that looks especially pretty in wine glasses. Crumbled Oreos function well as a garnish—you can even use the ones you get with a boxed lunch from Ray.

Like to bake? Duncan Hines sells a Red Velvet cake mix, which is chocolate cake that has a reddish tint, nicely in tune with the color scheme of St. V's Day. Frost and decorate as you're inspired to. A nice plus? The flour, sugar, baking powder, cocoa, and all of those cake ingredients are spared.

And what would Valentine's Day be without chocolate covered strawberries? If you're not about to drop three bucks per berry at Godiva, make them yourself with either Hershey's chocolate syrup or Nutella. Place the dipped strawberries on waxed paper and refrigerate until the chocolate coating is set. You can also try rolling the freshly dipped strawberries in chopped nuts, coconut, or sprinkles for a special touch.

With some smart shopping, you could definitely pull off a great Valentine's Day dinner for your sweetheart for half of what you'd pay at a restaurant. Not to mention you get bonus points for doing all the cooking, which just might result in a sweet reward.

Advice from an expert

KATHRYN TREADWAY '06
WORLD EDITOR

Dear Kate,

I recently ended a relationship and I find myself buying lots of shoes in an attempt to feel better. Do you think that I will ever find Mr. Right and save my bank account?

Sincerely,
Depressed in Debt

Dear Depressed in Debt,

I understand your loss and your need for compensation. In an attempt to solve both of your problems in one fell swoop, I am going to share my personal secret to keeping your optimism when all hope seems lost: men are like shoes. I know this sounds awful at first, but if you had seen my shoe collection you would understand the profound respect and love that I have for shoes, which makes this analogy, in fact, a positive one. Keeping my statement men are like shoes in mind:

Imagine that you have just walked into a shoe store. After overcoming that intoxicating smell of new shoes, you begin to browse, walking up and down the aisles, inspecting. You pick up some pairs and put them down uttering mur-

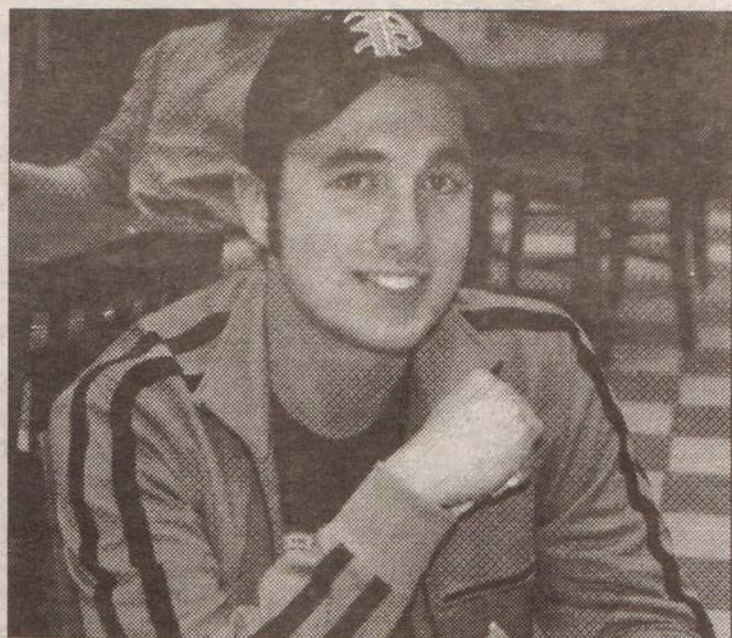
murs of approval or disapproval; you examine several pairs closely but then one pair catches your eye. This amazing pair of shoes is a fantastic color in your size, and best of all they are on sale. Unfortunately, you seem to have forgotten your credit card. You return the next day to find that this perfect pair of shoes is gone! The store no longer has your size or the right color. In fact, the sale is over! You leave the store obviously disappointed only to find that right outside the store is a woman wearing the shoes you so desperately loved—the right size, the right color, and worst of all they look better on her. And while your first instinct may be to be horribly depressed, take comfort in knowing that somewhere out there is a pair of shoes that will be perfect on you and no one else. Besides, at least you didn't end up with the shoes that you thought were perfect but really fit someone else better.

I hope that you will use this newfound wisdom in seeing the positive side to your "shoe" losses, for if you do, your need to compensate by shopping should diminish.

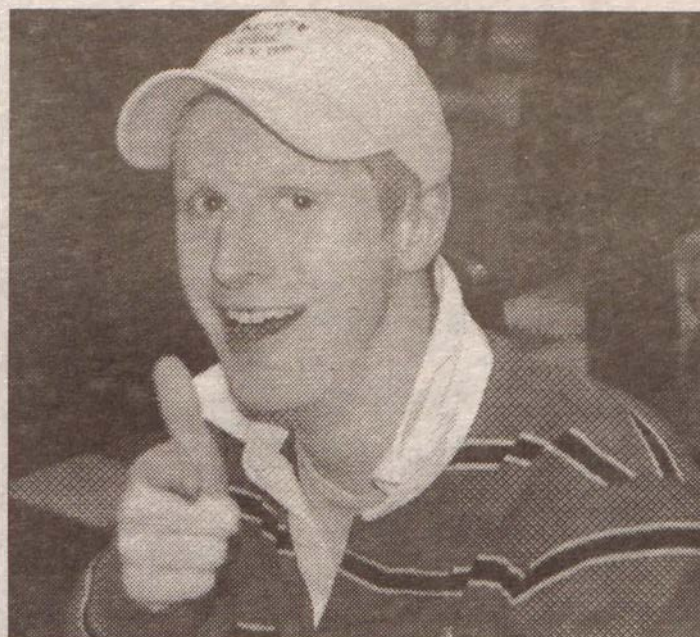
Sincerely,

Kate

What would be your ideal Valentine's Day gift?



Tim Fogarty '07
"A heart-shaped car."



Jay Myers '07
"A PC Basketball victory."



Lindsay Young '05 and Kristyn Desjardins '05
"Goldencrust gift certificates."



Meghan Kain '07
"A date with the cute roving guy."



Tyler Doyle '06
"Hugs and kisses from my girlfriend."



Brad Pitt and Jennifer Aniston

"Divorce papers. Happy Valentine's Day."



Cupid or stupid...he said, she said

So Valentine's Day is just around the corner. It's the preferred holiday of Hallmark and Hershey. Husbands dread it, boyfriends fear it, secret admirers relish in it, and the lonely loathe it. So what's it going to take for you to sink or swim? Six of *The Cowl's* seasoned sweethearts (Stephanie Barkus '05, Lauren DeMauro '05, and Stephanie Smith '06) and Valentine's veterans (Pat Brown '05, Joe Carbeau '05, and Larry Harvey '05) put their heads and their hearts together. This article hopes to bring out the cupid and not the stupid on V-Day. It'll be the difference between ending up like Don Juan or long-gone.

Relationship Status

The ladies: No matter how long you've been dating, you need to do something for Valentine's Day. It doesn't have to be big, but acknowledge the day.

The fellas: Whether you're in the early stages of teasing or the final phases of pleasing, she's going to expect something. So step up to the plate on this one.

Flowers and candy

The ladies: Actually, one Valentine's Day my boyfriend bought me a box of chocolates which his brother ate before he could even give them to me. They weren't even replaced. Make sure the girl is actually the recipient of said box of chocolates, because nothing's more romantic than empty wrappers.

The fellas: Whatever you do, don't wait until the day before to get this done. She'll know they're from Exxon. The plastic wrap will get you every time. But don't go overboard either; whatever rare flower you get her is going to die.

Teddy bears and other gifts

The ladies: Depends on how long you've been dating...

The fellas: Not applicable in the short run; any relationship ending in the word years is going to need something more than a teddy bear.



TRACY DONADIO '06/The Cowl

Spending amount

The ladies: Also depends on how long you've been dating. Things that don't necessarily cost money can sometimes be the best presents/dates.

The fellas: It's a simple equation:

$$\text{Amount required} = \frac{\text{Time together} \times \text{affection}}{\text{Creativity of night}}$$

Location

The ladies: Some place that doesn't have red and yellow booths. We really like nice restaurants, so maybe some place that doesn't serve fries.

The fellas: See equation. Just make sure it's someplace without a drink special.

What to say?

The ladies: Compliment us. Even if you think we look heinous, it's okay to lie. This time. Keep it light; politics and religion should be left at home. Make us laugh, but don't try too hard.

The fellas: To the guys, keep

the *Family Guy* and *Anchorman* quotes to a minimum. For the girls, don't tell us how the last guy did it or about the bad V-Day you had last year. It's a lot of pressure. Also, avoid the L-bomb.

What to write? A good card

The fellas:

Dear (Date's name),
Happy Valentine's Day.
Sincerely,
(Your name)

The ladies: ...Or, something a little more serious, but not too sappy. E-cards are frowned upon.

Entertainment

The ladies: You have to go somewhere after dinner. Not the movies, not Louie's. An after-dinner drink or someplace for dessert allows for good conversation. Don't get trashed; I can't and won't carry you home.

The fellas: Listen Woman. By now I'm \$70 in the hole. You better like ice skating or the free

walk in the park. Also, if I had a Bentley, I'd drive you in that, but I don't, so RIPTA it is.

Reservations

The ladies: It's impressive on any other day, but they are required on Valentine's Day. It's frustrating to wait three hours for a table, and it looks like you made no effort.

The fellas: Like the Exxon flowers, she'll know if you waited until the last minute. Your 4:28 dinner reservation won't fool her.

Etiquette

The ladies: Guys, pull the chair out, put your napkin in your lap, open car doors (and that doesn't mean leaning over to open the door once you're already in the driver's seat). Don't make your date wait forever to have an idea of where you're going. She has to know what to wear.

The fellas: To the ladies, do not take food off my plate. I'm a growing boy and the entree's

only so big. If we open your door, you should lean over and unlock ours. And a word to the wise: keep your hands and fingers in appropriate places. The only thing you should be scratching is the surface of your date's personality.

Attire

The ladies: Okay girls, you want to dress nicely but don't go overboard. Dress pants or a skirt are both appropriate. He better tell you that you look pretty anyway, so don't stress. Guys, look nice, and remember the chances of us giving you a goodnight kiss increase dramatically when you've actually shaved.

The fellas: This is so easy guys: khakis, nice shoes and a collared shirt. This is not a chance to show your date how creatively you can dress. Your lime green sport coat and Nantucket red pants belong in Barnum and Bailey, not Napa Valley. Ladies, don't worry about it. You look good no matter what. And if you don't, you told us to lie about it anyway.

The evening's end

The ladies: If we want you to kiss us, you'll know (wink). If we don't want you to kiss us, you'll know that too.

The fellas: To smooch or not to smooch? That is the question. This is easier than you think. If most of your advances were met with rolling eyes, just say goodnight. But if she's all smiles and keeps rubbing your leg, go for it. Girls, you know how the date is going, so let us know too. Don't string us along because you think it's funny to crush our souls at the end of a \$100 date.

Going it alone?

The ladies: Who says that you need to have a date to have fun? Go out with the girls, and have a good time.

The fellas: You're so money and you don't even know it. Now get out there and find yourself a beautiful baby. Just don't approach a girl by saying "Are you gonna walk to your car by yourself later?"

It Could Be Worse: History's Dysfunctional Relationships

By JEN JARVIS '07
ASST. NEWS EDITOR

My first relationship was with an older man. I was four, and our fling would have quite literally been cradle-robbing had he not been a pre-schooler himself. Our first date consisted of playing house and a kiss behind the LA-Z Boy. But, alas, the relationship was not to endure. We had nothing in common. He thought G.I. Joe was much cooler than Barbie, and I could not believe he did not like Ecto-Cooler juice boxes. But when I think back on my first failed love, I just remind myself that it could be worse.

All through history, people have royally screwed up relationships. If Civ has taught us anything besides the date of the fall of the Roman Empire (1812, right?) it has taught us that to have a successful relationship, you cannot be a famous historical figure. Here are some first-hand accounts of love gone wrong:

— "Yeah, I had a girlfriend, but she

participated too fully in the Form of Clinginess, so she had to go."—Plato

— "Aeneas? That is SO over. Apparently founding Rome is more important than a relationship. Whatever."—Dido, *The Aeneid*

— "He wouldn't stop whining about Beatrice, so I told him to go to Hell. I haven't heard from him since."—Dante's significant other

— "Of course I had successful relationships. I was a regular lady-killer."—King Henry VIII

— "My husband leaves for 20 years and the first thing he does when he gets back is mess up the kitchen. I cook, I clean, I mop up the blood of slaughtered suitors, and he doesn't even appreciate my tapestry!"—Penelope, *The Odyssey*

— "Women, like the rest of depraved humanity, are like dung heaps covered in snow. No thank you."—Martin Luther

— "I wrestled with Grendel's mom once, does that count?"—Beowulf

I rest my case. Pass the Ecto-Cooler.

Jen Skala '05's Top Ten List... Rejected Conversation Hearts

10. It's definitely 2 L8.
9. You're just OK.
8. I'm on the rebound.
7. It's not me, it's you.
6. Got a sister?
5. He's not *really* my boyfriend.
4. Let's date (online).
3. Facebook me.
2. Hey, who's your friend?
1. Text me, call me, fax me, e-mail me, IM me, page me—do anything but actually come face-to-face and talk to me without the aid of electronic devices.

