

The Spotlight

February 2022

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Valentine's Day....and What Else?

By Samantha Poore

As we approach February 14th, roses and chocolates can be found nearly everywhere. Obviously, this day is most known as Valentine's Day, but it is also worth recognizing for other reasons. Below are a few honorable mentions that also claim the 14th of February:

Frederick Douglass Day

Frederick Douglass was an African American who escaped slavery and later became a crucial activist for change. As history.com explains, having been born a slave and separated from his mother as an infant, Frederick Douglass never knew his true birth date. However, he had reason to believe that his birthday was in the month of February, a primary reason as to why February is Black History month. Later in life, Frederick Douglass chose to commemorate his birthday on February 14th, hence Frederick Douglass Day - a day to honor, remember, and celebrate his life and achievements.

National Donor Day

National Donor Day is a day to recognize, spread awareness, and encourage others to help save a life. Just like organ donations, blood donations and bone marrow donations are vital. Want to help spread the love? Donate!! In Ohio, both Valentent and the American Red Cross accept blood donations from the age of 16 (with parental consent) and up. Check out their websites for further requirements, guidelines, and blood bank locations. We are currently experiencing a national blood crisis.

Please consider donating and/or asking someone who has if you have questions (you can talk to me)!

Upcoming times & dates close to home:

American Red Cross Book at RedCrossBlood.org

2/14/2022 The Olmsted Township
Community Room (7900 Fitch Road)
9:00am - 2:00pm

2/22/2022 The Olmsted Township
Community Room (7900 Fitch Road)
12:00pm - 6:00pm

League of Women Voters Day

Established by activists and leaders from the women's suffrage movement, LWV (League of Women Voters) continues to fight and express the powerful difference women can make in our democracy. February 14th, 1920 marks the day LWV was founded in Chicago. At the time, the 19th amendment had not yet been ratified. In fact, LWV.org stresses that the 19th amendment was ratified roughly six months after the establishment of LWV. This February 14th will mark LWV's 102nd anniversary.

The list continues! Others include National Ferris Wheel Day, Quirkyalone Day, Library Lovers Day, and National Cream-Filled Chocolates Day.

5 Rom-Coms To Watch Alone (And Maybe Cry To)

By Nora Barnard

What better way to spend Valentine's Day than watching some of the greatest Rom-Coms ever made? I wouldn't consider myself a professional movie ranker, but based on my own opinions as a hopeless romantic, I've compiled a list of my five favorite romantic comedies to laugh and cry to. These movies can be watched with a significant other, in a family environment, or even alone with a box of heart chocolates you bought for yourself.

How To Lose a Guy in 10 Days

Nobody else ruled the screen in the '90s quite like our Rom-Com King Matthew McConaughey. He starred alongside Kate Hudson in my very favorite rom-com of all time. Andie (Kate Hudson) is a writer in New York for a women's magazine and has to write an article on how to lose a guy in 10 days, pretty much writing on how to be a horrible girlfriend as a what-not-to-do guide for women in the dating world. But at the same time, Ben (Matthew McConaughey) bet that he could not make a woman fall in love with him in 10 days. The people that made this bet were aware of the article Andie was writing and chose her as his target. So at the same time, Andie is trying to make Ben break up with her, and Ben is trying to make Andie fall in love with her all in 10 days.

The Proposal

Maybe it's the amazing cast or just the comedic storyline, but *The Proposal* is coming in as my second favorite rom-com of all time. Starring Sandra Bullock, Ryan Reynolds, and the late Betty White, the movie has a character for everyone. It follows the story of a corporate book editor Margaret (Sandra Bullock) and her assistant, an aspiring book editor Andrew (Ryan Reynolds), faking an engagement. They had to fake their engagement because Margaret was at risk of being deported back to Canada. The majority of the movie happens in Alaska where they go to Andrews' Grandma's (Betty White) 90th birthday party. As it is a ROMANTIC comedy, I'm guessing you, as an intelligent individual, can guess what the ending is. I definitely recommend this movie to any Ryan Reynolds fan who is looking for a funny movie to watch alone, with a significant other, or even as a family film.

10 Things I Hate About You

Starring the late Heath Ledger and Julia Stiles this rom-com is coming in as my third favorite.

This film revolves around the lives of high school students so it is very relatable for us adolescents. A teenage girl named Kat (Julia Stiles) has no interest in dating, but her younger sister Bianca is very interested in dating the new kid Cameron. The catch is, Bianca is not allowed to go on a date until her older sister Kat goes on a date. Cameron, being desperate to date Bianca, makes a deal with the resident bad boy Patrick (Heath Ledger). The deal entails Patrick convincing Kat to go to the dance with him, so watch the movie to see how the bet works out in the end. This story of love, heartbreak, and betrayal is always a good choice for a movie night.

Miss Congeniality

Sandra Bullock shows up on my list once again by starring in *Miss Congeniality*! She starts the movie as a cop, Gracie, who is great at her job and prides herself on being "just one of the boys." To investigate, she has to go undercover as a contestant in a beauty pageant. To do this, she needed a makeover. In the pageant, she learns a lot about the other contestants, love, and herself. The best part about this rom-com is that it is not only centered around the main character trying to find love but she also discovered a lot about herself and grew as a person along the way.

The Wedding Planner

This movie is yet another example of how Matthew McConaughey ruled rom-coms of the '90s and early 2000s. Starring alongside Jennifer Lopez, they truly embody their characters stuck in a right-person/wrong-time situation. Mary (Jennifer Lopez) is saved from being crushed by a runaway dumpster by a random man in the street named Steve (Matthew McConaughey). After he saved Mary, they went on a date-like excursion in the park. In a wild turn of events, Mary gets hired as the wedding planner for a big wedding for a wealthy internet tycoon. The groom for the wedding just happens to be Steve, the man she shared a very special night with in the park after he saved her from a runaway dumpster. Will Steve go through with the marriage plan to a woman who isn't his soul mate? Will Mary still plan the wedding of the man she loves? Will they get together in the end?



Valentine's Candy: On A Budget

By Audrey Helms

As Valentine's Day is quickly approaching, I decided to go to Target to buy some Valentine chocolate truffles and candy to find out which one is the best. Whether you are single this year or have a special someone, this is the guide to which candy to buy and which to avoid when working with a budget. I decided to review Russel Stover, Fannie May, Elmer, and Ghirardelli.

Russel Stover Assorted \$1.00 ❤️ ❤️ ❤️

This assorted box came with three chocolates total, including a milk chocolate caramel, dark chocolate coconut, and milk chocolate vanilla creme. All of the chocolates were okay--what you would expect for the price. My favorite was the milk chocolate caramel. Although the caramel was a little hard to chew, it was still decent. As someone who doesn't like coconut, I can't review it fairly. As for the vanilla creme, it was decent as well. If you are looking for an inexpensive truffle assortment, I would recommend this box.

Fannie May Dark Chocolate

Decadent Duo \$4.99 ❤️ ❤️ ❤️ ❤️ ❤️

This box comes with 7-8 chocolates, including dark chocolate brownie batter and dark chocolate lava cake caramels. Each chocolate was individually wrapped and although being called a "duo," there was only one dark chocolate lava cake caramel and the others were all dark chocolate brownie batter. Both of the chocolates and fillings were delicious. This is definitely the box for those who love chocolate, especially dark chocolate. The brownie batter filling was super rich while the caramel one was really

creamy and luscious. Overall, this Valentine's box exceeded my expectations and I would highly recommend it.

Elmer Assorted \$1.00 ❤️ ❤️

This assorted box came with five chocolates including caramel, strawberry creme, orange creme, cocoa truffle, and chocolate caramel. As for both caramel chocolates, I wasn't a fan. Something about them just tasted a little off. Surprisingly, I did enjoy the strawberry and orange creme ones. The fillings were nice and silky and went well with the chocolates. The cocoa truffle was like any other. Once again, if you are looking for a cheap truffle assortment, this would be a good option. It's hard to find a better value than five Valentine chocolates for one dollar!

Ghirardelli Milk Chocolate Caramel

Duet Hearts \$1.19 ❤️ ❤️ ❤️ ❤️ ❤️

For people like me who aren't a big fan of truffles, a simple chocolate might be better, so I decided to try some simple Ghirardelli caramel hearts. Two of them came in the pack that I bought, but a larger pack was also available. The caramel filling was silky and delicious. This would be perfect for those picky eaters who like something a little more simple.



Valentine's Day Is A Farce

By Sam Gaba

Valentine's Day: corporate America's favorite holiday! Let's buy material items like chocolate and jewelry to convey the impossible-to-convey emotion of love to our significant others!

No, but to be completely transparent, Valentine's Day isn't about love. Not to Russell Stover or Ferrero Rocher or Godiva. To companies like this, Valentine's Day represents a day of massive profit, generated by exploiting hopeless romantics and hapless lovers. Many of you are probably saying, "You're just a pessimist who dislikes Valentine's Day because of

some terrible experience with love." I'll raise you this hypothetical scenario: You got a dog (terrible choice, by the way, I'm a cat person), and you named it Spot because it's a dalmatian. And then, one day, you find out that your dog, Spot, is actually not a dalmatian, and that the man who sold you the dog just dyed the spots onto the dog's fur because he wanted the money for a purebred dalmatian. How would you feel? Now apply that to Valentine's Day, a holiday you once believed to be about love, but instead have been exposed to its true capitalistic meaning (by yours truly).

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So now that we have established that the Valentine's Day sentiments of love are actually a farce driven by greedy capitalists, let's get real: Why do we need Valentine's Day?

The easy answer: you don't. Valentine's Day, for the past fifty years or so, has functioned solely on economic principles. Sure, love is a nasty side effect of this implementation, but the holiday exists solely for commercial profit. Well, at least the gift-giving side of the holiday does. How does it feel knowing that your love is exploited in order to put money in the pockets of people who don't even need money? People shelled out more than \$21.3 billion worth of

gifts for Valentine's Day in 2021. That's how expensive your love should be! Not just a \$5 box of chocolates!

So what's the point of all of this? To raise awareness, to re-sensitize you to the holiday that the brainless corporations have desensitized you from. This is the season of love! Just not corporate-motivated, commercial-based love. Real love.

February Horoscopes

By Claire Wiggernhorn

Capricorn (December 22nd- January 19th)- Always focusing on work? Try to ease up because your next winter romance is on its way, and stress causes wrinkles.

Aquarius (January 20th- February 18th)- That special someone is right around the corner. Get ready for a great Valentine's Day showered in chocolate!

Pisces (February 19th- March 20th)- Get the popcorn ready! A rom-com marathon with your friends is in your Valentine's Day future. Who needs a man anyway, right?

Aries (March 21th- April 19th)- Keep your partner safe. Cupid's arrow was sent by someone else...

Taurus (April 20th- May 20th)- The search is over! Your next love is coming to you in the near future. Listen carefully to everything everyone says.

Gemini (May 21st- June 20th)- When a door closes, look for that open window. It might be time to start looking in a new direction for love. Love is everywhere!

Cancer (June 21st- July 22nd)- Maybe a winter romance isn't for you; wait till spring for that special someone to make their grand entrance. It will definitely be magical.

Leo (July 23rd- August 22nd)- Throw care to the wind! Put yourself out there and a winter sweetheart will definitely find you!

Virgo (August 23rd- September 22nd)- Spending a quiet night in with either your friends or your true love is exactly what you want to do this Valentine's Day! Maybe order a heart-shaped pizza and embrace your loved ones!

Libra (September 23rd- October 23rd)- Next time someone catches your eye in the hallway, go for it! You never know if it will bring you peace. Plus if it goes bad you can always take a new way to class...

Scorpio (October 24th- November 21st)- Sometimes a Galentine's Day is better than a Valentine's Day date. Don't worry about finding a sweetie this V-Day. Focus on yourself.

Sagittarius (November 22nd- December 21st)- An adventure with someone special will definitely find its way to you. Make sure to enjoy the trip along with the destination!

What NOT To Do On Valentine's Day

By Abby Guthrie

It's that time of year again: Valentine's Day, when people celebrate their love for each other. Valentine's Day isn't only for couples, although it is often viewed that way. There are, however, some things that should be avoided on Valentine's Day. I, along with the rest of The Spotlight staff, compiled a list of what NOT to do on Valentine's Day in hopes that this will help you prepare for the holiday.

First, I recommend that you do not do what you did last year. People like it when you are original and put some thought into it to make it special. Speaking of being original, Claire Wiggernhorn suggests that you are original in your gift choice. She states, "Don't get anyone any heart-shaped jewelry. It's ugly, and no one would wear it the next day." If you are buying jewelry, be creative in your choice.

In my opinion, the most cliched gift you can give to someone is chocolate; unless you know they absolutely love chocolate, I wouldn't do this. Why buy high-priced chocolate when you can buy cheaper chocolate any other day of the week? The often over-priced chocolate is not that good anyway. Spotlight editor Hadley Allen feels that a different type of candy is the worst. She states, "Never get someone conversation heart candy. They are a little cliched, and they taste like chalk." Whatever gifts you decide on, consider Spotlight editor

Katie Cleary's advice: "Don't talk about how expensive everything is. And remember, no gift is fine!"

If you have a new crush, do not send an anonymous Valentine's Day card because you shouldn't be a coward! If you like someone or want to express your love to someone, be bold enough to sign your name! If you want to ask someone out, Nora Barnard suggests that you "don't ask anyone out in front of a group of people." Ellie Phillips adds some great advice: "Never plan a first date for Valentine's Day. There's always going to be a miscommunication on how much or how little you expect."

Perhaps the most important thing people should not do is complain about being single. I know this is hard to do and I've even found myself complaining. If you want a significant other, it is better to let it happen on its own time and should not be rushed. Lastly, if you have a significant other, do not forget about Valentine's Day! You might be surprised how fast it can sneak up on you.

The Perfect V-Day Dessert

By Ellie Phillips

Valentine's Day is a sweet time. Want to know how to make it even sweeter? A delicious batch of Brownie Cheesecake bars! It's a great way to tell that special someone you love them, or it's just a delicious treat!

Ingredients

- 1 cup unsalted butter, melted
- 1 1/3 cups semi sweet chocolate chips
- 3/4 cup cocoa powder
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 2 eggs at room temperature
- 1 egg yolk
- 1 tbsp coffee
- 1 tbsp vanilla extract
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tbsp water
- 16 oz cream cheese room temperature

- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 tbsp vanilla extract
- 1 pinch salt
- 2 eggs
- pink food coloring (optional)

Directions

Add the melted butter and one cup of chocolate chips to a large bowl. Microwave on short bursts at low power until mostly melted then stir together until smooth.

Immediately dump in the cocoa powder and salt then mix until fully incorporated.

Mix in the white and brown sugars then add eggs and yolk, vanilla and coffee then mix until smooth.

Drop in the flour and mix until almost combined then fold in the remaining chocolate chips

Add the room temperature cream cheese to stand mixer fitted with a whisk attachment and mix at medium speed for 3-4 minutes

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Reduce speed to low and slowly add sugar, then salt and vanilla.

Add eggs one at a time, allowing each to incorporate before adding the next. Scrape the bowl down and mix once more.

Add the cheesecake mixture to the brownie base and spread out

Add chocolate-cheesecake spread with a skewer.

Bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes then reduce oven temperature to 325 degrees and bake another 35 minutes. Enjoy!



Recipe and
Picture by
Treats by
Tess!

The Worst Valentine's Day Gifts of 2022

By Katie Cleary and Hadley Allen

Searching for a meaningful, elaborate, heartfelt gift for your significant other? Well, look no further (at this article that is), because we plan to give you a list of the worst possible gifts to get your special someone in 2022. Whether it be cliched Valentine's-Day-specific, mass-produced merch or just your everyday awful present, your affection will surely go unnoticed (or at least unappreciated) if you go for any of these gifts this year.

Valentine's Day Specific Bear-

If you are going for the classic rom-com romantic gesture, then don't. If you plan on getting your significant other a bear for Valentine's Day, that bear better sing, dance, light up, and do your homework all simultaneously; otherwise, these bears, if Valentine's Day specific, will be thrown out in the near future. There is just no other time when it's an appropriate decoration. This will either be found in the basement or a dark closet...don't do the bear like that.

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Hadley Allen (editor)	Elaina Phillips
Katie Cleary (editor)	Samantha Poore
Nora Barnard	Claire Wigenhorn
Samantha Gaba	
Abigail Guthrie	
Audrey Helms	

Anything from Bath and Body Works-

Candles can be a great gesture; we only caution against getting a candle because those things are expensive and it might never be burnt because it smells bad. What you think smells amazing, they might just have to awkwardly sniff and pretend to smile. No offense to our hopeless fellas out there, but we just know you'll be going straight to the Valentine's Day "themed" scents. And despite the cutesy names, it's quite literally impossible to tell what a lotion or soap will smell like based on the B&BW marketing team's best titles. Trust me, nobody wants to smell like "Be Mine" or "Love's First Breath." If the scent is a message like "You're Beautiful," please just say that to their face. The smell might be horrible.

Love Songs

If I were you, I would not write a love song specifically for them and then sing it to them live. It's just really awkward. Your significant other, even if the song is amazing, would just have to sit there and nod and smile. Writing a love song for someone can be really cute, but trust me, it's not going to be like Troy Bolton in *High School Musical*.

Promise Rings

Let's not make promises we can't keep...enough said.