

"All You Need is Love" *The Beatles*
"Crazy Little Thing Called Love" *Queen*
"Love Stinks" *J. Giles Band*



"Burning Love" *Elvis Presley*
"Love Will Tear Us Apart" *Joy Division*
"Love is a Battlefield" *Pat Benatar*

John Lennon and the boys taught us a little something about love. There's a reason we don't have a catalog of songs singing the praises of furthering negative emotions, and no one serenades the love of his life to the tune of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic"; there's no feeling quite like love. Whether it's loving our neighbor, loving our country, loving literature, loving our pets, loving our family, loving money, loving sex, loving possessions, loving attention, or loving being loved, we have experienced some form of love. Detractors will say loving material goods is not truly love, but you show me a 60" plasma television, and I assure you my heart will skip beats at more than 78 RPM, and I might even throw myself in front of a train to rescue one if needed. Indeed, love works in mysterious and wondrous ways.

Love compels artists to burn with creative desire; Pablo Neruda created dozens of heart-breakingly beautiful poems on this singular theme. Charlie Parker loved the escapes of jazz and heroin so much he sacrificed his life for them. Poe lost every woman he ever loved, and his tremendous loss manifests itself in our literary fortune. Allen Ginsberg loved this country; it pained him to see the best minds of his generation destroyed. Antonio Salieri so loved music that he couldn't bear to see Euterpe, the muse of music, residing in the boy genius Mozart. Freddie Mercury adored his crowds with complete devotion, yet he wasn't able to love as long as he deserved to. And we're all familiar with Van Gogh's love woes.

Love, like no other emotion, propels us into astonishing acts. So certain we will love indelibly for eternity, we tattoo others' names into our flesh—heading for definite breakup within six months. When our love feels threatened, it precipitates blinding feelings of jealousy, lust, and wrath; they don't call them crimes of passion for nothin'. Love sometimes so clouds our judgment with Bonnie and Clyde-style abandonment that we die figurative and literal fiery deaths for it. And yet still we love—because after all, it is a many splendored thing.

Love forces us to embrace even the dorkiest of impulses...at any age. At one point, love convinces us all we are poets, producing epically rhymy poetry to later haunt our sock drawers or tippy-top closet shelves. Love compels us back to the most juvenile of experiences; we save napkins from our first dates...and sometimes we frame them. Yes the mix tape might be dying a technologically obsolete death, but love ensures dedicated playlists will carry the torch, providing the soundtrack to our devotion—though the image of John Cusack holding an iPod over his head in the rain seems a bit less dramatic than the original.

Today we are faced with a love shortage. You'll see no protests, no benefit concerts, no love soup kitchens, and no picket lines (except in reference to who's allowed to love whom), but we are in fact witnessing a depression de amor. Love doesn't possess the bankable value of say, oil, and love cannot pay your cell phone bill—unless *you* are loved by Mr. Verizon. And it's increasingly difficult to persuade people to love unconditionally and wildly when the payoff resides strictly in emotion. Without a surge in love, we most certainly will never live in peace and accord with our fellow humans. Forget the War on Christmas. Forget the War on Terror. There is a war on love, and we're all in danger of losing—much to John Lennon's disappointment.