



The Not So Sweet Truth About February 14th

By: Cassie Grillo (Practitioner in Training at Cortica)

While it may be tempting to associate VALENTINE'S DAY as a holiday intended for indulging in chocolatey impulses and filling your home with heart-shaped decorations, this holiday's origin isn't as sweet as one would assume. The history of Valentine's Day dates back to 268 A.D. Legend has it that during this time period, many Romans were converting to CHRISTIANITY. EMPEROR CLAUDIUS II was a PAGAN (e.g., a person who worships many gods or goddesses) and created inflexible laws about what Christians were allowed to do. Emperor Claudius yearned for a fierce team of men to fight in his army. He felt that when his SOLDIERS were sharing their life with a wife and children or were in love, that they were more cautious in battle. To strengthen his armies, he BANNED (to prohibit, forbid, put an end to or stop) MARRIAGE for those young men.

Spell: HOLIDAY

Spell: SWEET

Spell: SOLDIERS

Who banned marriage for young men? EMPEROR CLAUDIUS II

Emperor Claudius II wanted a strong _____ . ARMY

What items are typically associated with Valentine's Day as mentioned above?

CHOCOLATE or HEART SHAPED DECORATIONS

Give one synonym for banned mentioned above. STOP, PUT AN END TO, FORBID or PROHIBIT

Name another gift that is usually given on Valentine's Day. CARDS, JEWELERY, FLOWERS

How do you and your family celebrate Valentine's Day?

Although Claudius banned marriage, this did not stop people from falling in love and wanting to be viewed as one under the eyes of the CHURCH. A romantic and brave PRIEST named VALENTINE felt Claudius' law was unjust (*unfair, wrong, undeserved or unwarranted*). He decided to defy the emperor's orders and secretly marry couples. Unfortunately, he was caught and later EXECUTED (murdered, killed, or put to death) on FEBRUARY 14th of the year 270. Legend also tells of another story, in which during imprisonment, Valentine tutored a blind girl named JULIA.

Question Type Key

KNOWN – SEMI-OPEN – PRIOR KNOWLEDGE – MATH – OPEN – VAKT



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It is believed that on the eve of his execution, Valentine sent the first “valentine” to her, signing it with a familiar phrase, “From Your Valentine.” Centuries later, POPE GELASIUS I, announced the day of his death as St. Valentine’s Day.

Spell: CHURCH Spell: BRAVE Spell: POPE

Who defied the emperor’s order and secretly married couples? VALENTINE

What month was Valentine executed? FEBRUARY

Where did Valentine meet Julia? JAIL

Valentine was described as _____. BRAVE or ROMANTIC

Give one synonym for unjust mentioned above. UNFAIR, WRONG, UNDESERVED, or UNWARRANTED

What is another term of endearment? SWEETHEART, DARLING

As some believe that Valentine’s Day is celebrated in the middle of February to honor the anniversary of Valentine’s death- others claim that the CHRISTIAN church selected this date to “Christianize” the Pagan celebration of LUPERCALIA. Lupercalia was an ancient FESTIVAL held on February 15th in ROME. It differs from Valentine’s Day in that it was a more violently charged celebration, with random match making and animal sacrifices, in hopes of fending off evil spirits and infertility. Roman priests began the rituals at LUPERCAL CAVE where they performed the SACRIFICE of one or more male goats and a dog. Following the ritual sacrifice was a feast and then a drawing of names to determine couples for the duration of the festival. Couples often stayed together until the following year’s festival. Many fell in love and married.

Spell: EVIL SPIRIT Spell: CAVE Spell: ANIMAL

Where city was Lupercalia held in? ROME

The second event in the festival was a _____. FEAST

People performed animal sacrifices in hopes to fend off _____. EVIL SPIRITS or INFERTILITY

Name one animal that was sacrificed. A DOG or A GOAT

What are one of the events that take place at Lupercalia? DRAWING OF NAMES TO DETERMINE COUPLES, SACRIFICE OF ONE OR MORE MALE GOATS AND A DOG, or A FEAST

How many days apart is Valentine’s Day and Lupercalia? 15th – 14th = 1

What are your thoughts or opinion of the events that take place during Lupercalia?



A Valentine's Day postcard from 1910.

One may be wondering, what part does Cupid play in Valentine's Day? The original CUPID was more of a HEARTTHROB than a cherub (*a beautiful or innocent-looking child*). Dating back to 700 BC, "Cupid" was called EROS. Eros- the son of APHRODITE (the goddess of love), would play with the hearts of GODS and MORTALS to cause COMMOTION (i.e., disturbance, racket, uproar, or mayhem). He was considered both good looking and threatening, as he would use his power to make people fall in love. Most associate Cupid with an image of a winged baby boy with an arrow, who is yet another symbol of the loved filled holiday.

Spell: ARROW Spell: LOVE Spell: POWER
 Who was the Goddess of Love? APHRODITE



A _____ is defined as a beautiful or innocent-looking child. CHERUB
Name another word for 'commotion'. MAYEM, DISTURBANCE, RACKET or UPROAR
Eros played with the hearts of _____. GODS or MORTALS
Who is another Greek God? ZEUS, POSEIDON, APOLLO, ATHENA, HADES
VAKT: Draw a heart as it is shown in the post card.

As the years passed, the holiday grew much sweeter. SHAKESPEARE and CHAUCER romanticized it in their work, which caused it to gain popularity throughout EUROPE. The INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION introduced factory-made cards in the 19th century. In 1913, HALLMARK CARDS of Kansas City, MISSOURI began mass producing valentines. Then, along came HERSHEY's, CADBURY and other chocolate manufacturers advertising sweets for one's sweetheart. Because it was thought that the *avian or bird* mating season begins in mid-February, birds also became a symbol of the day. Greeting card companies estimated that over a billion cards are purchased on Valentine's Day, in addition to people sending flowers, jewelry and candy. The top spending categories on Valentine's Day 2020 were JEWELRY (totaling \$5.8 billion of all spending's), an evening out (\$4.3 billion), flowers (\$2.3 billion), clothing (\$2.9 billion) and candy (\$2.4 billion).



Valentine's Day Chocolates

Spell: CARD Spell: CANDY Spell: SWEETS

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Hallmark Cards are located in Kansas City, _____. MISSOURI
_____ or bird mating season is also in February. AVIAN

Name one top spending category from 2020. JEWELRY, AN EVENING OUT,
FLOWERS, CLOTHING or CANDY

Name a poet who helped to romanticize the holiday as mentioned above.
SHAKESPEARE or CHAUCER

How many years has Hallmark Cards been in business? $2021 - 1913 = 108$

Consumers spent _____ billion dollars more on jewelry than candy in
the year 2020 for Valentine's Day. $5.8 - 2.4 = 3.4$

Name another famous poet. EMILY DICKINSON, ROBERT FROST, WALT WHITMAN,
EDGAR ALLEN POE, etc.

What's another candy/chocolate manufacture not mentioned from the text?
FERRERO, NESTLE, LINDT, HARIBO

What are your favorite sweets?

VAKT: Point to both red heart chocolates.

Creative Writing:

1. If you could be a Greek god, what power would you want and why?
2. Describe your 'picture perfect' Valentine's Day.
3. What would your Valentine Card look like?

Extension activity:

Make a Valentine's Day card for a loved one.



Cassie Grillo is a New Yorker living in sunny, Southern California. She is a Speech Language Pathologist and is passionate about the nonspeaking community as well as puns and canine companions. Her hobbies include reading, visits to the Zoo and hiking.



Resources

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<https://www.history.com/topics/valentines-day/history-of-valentines-day-2>

<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/explore/celebrations/valentines-day/>

<https://www.npr.org/2011/02/14/133693152/the-dark-origins-of-valentines-day>

https://www.safesearchkids.com/the-history-of-valentines-day/#.YAdYzy1h3_R

<https://time.com/5516579/history-cupid-valentines-day/>

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