



The Mystery of Love

ON PBS
Wednesday, December 13th
at 9 PM

Summary of the Segments

A Production of
The Independent Production Fund
and
Joan Konner Productions, Inc.

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Major Funding Provided By

The Fetzer Institute

Additional Funding By

Southwest Airlines
The Betsy Gordon Foundation

Presenting Station
KLRU, Austin, Texas

Love and Marriage

"A happy marriage is a long conversation, which always seems too short."
– Andre Maurois

Gary Overgaard and Emily Lodine have been married for 11 years. She is an opera singer; he is a pig farmer. They live in Minnesota. They met sitting next to each other on a plane to London. Coming from totally different worlds, he assumed they would have nothing to talk about and the trip would be boring, but they never stopped talking. Although she lived in Chicago, they got together when each returned home, connected, fell in love and eventually married. She thought living on the farm would be like Julie Andrews where the hills would be "alive with the sound of music." She discovered that her singing agitates the pigs, so she practices indoors. They are deeply attracted to and understanding of each other's lives and interests, even now, nine years later.

Love and Family

"The family is the country of the heart." – Guiseppe Mazzini

Meet the Swann family of Baltimore—a mother and her three sons. Ann Swann divorced shortly after her twins were born, and she raised her three sons with the help of her mother and by holding several jobs. Ryan and Bryan, the twins, joined the military after high school and then, along with Henry, served in the Iraq war at the same time. Just before they shipped out, their grandmother was murdered in the flower shop she owned. For the first time in her life, Ann experienced the pain of being alone. Thankfully, her sons returned safely from Iraq. Through separation and tragedy, they found that they all have a renewed deep and daily appreciation of how family love sustains them.

Love and Altruism

“We cannot do great things. We can only do small things with great love.”
– Mother Teresa

BACA (Bikers Against Child Abuse) is a nationwide organization of motorcyclists that works closely with local authorities to give love and protection to victims of child abuse. Many of the bikers were themselves abused children. We see the group “adopt” a 13-year old girl, nicknamed “Daredevil,” whose life is spiraling out of control. BACA rescues her from drugs and sexual abuse. Daredevil finds community, caring and loving-kindness through the efforts of this unique organization, which becomes a second family for her and other children in abusive situations.

Love and Romance

Meet Mark and Monica, two musicians who met on the Internet. She planned to move from Boulder to Austin after being involved in a series of unhappy romances. Monica found Mark on-line by seeking friends and connections in her new area code. They met and liked each other immediately. They had a lot in common including their work as musicians. But as she discovered, no one person lives up to her ideal. As she said, “Married twice with kid” was not what she had in mind for her partner. And Mark had always believed that marriage was “as long as you both shall love.” With a shift in their understanding of the meaning of commitment, the two were married with our cameras present.

Divine Love

The theme of divine love as told in Dante’s great classic, *Divine Comedy*, is interwoven with the extraordinary story of Harriet Rubin. Harriet traveled to Rome to write a book about Dante, by walking the path that Dante took from Florence to Rome. By chance, during her first few days in Rome, she met Steven, a Virgil scholar at the gates of the American Academy where both had fellowships to work on projects. They immediately felt a deep connection. “My love was a clap of thunder. Dante already had me in his story,” she related. Soon after, they decided to marry and set the date for their wedding and found a home. Suddenly, Steven suffered a seizure. Rushed to the hospital, he was diagnosed with terminal brain cancer. Harriet was devastated. Despite his condition, they married—in his hospital room, and he died

soon after. During this time, Harriet completed her research and her book *Dante in Love*, was published. She came to recognize and experience Dante's definition of "divine love," as the pure love one feels when one can transcend one's own limitations by seeing the world, the moon, the sun, the whole universe—seeing God in another person's eyes."

Love in the Animal Kingdom

Meet Dr. Frans de Waal, director of the Living Links Center at the Yerkes National Primate Research Center of Emory University, world famous research scientist and expert on the behavior of chimpanzees and bonobo apes. He shows us how friendship and connection operate in the world of primates which is quite similar to human behavior. We see how the chimpanzees and bonobos exhibit feelings of empathy, compassion, friendship and even altruistic behavior, but only for their own clan members. They do not care, and even might kill, outsiders vying for resources.

Love and War

When we think of love, war does not come to mind. But in this thought-provoking segment, Jungian psychologist and author Dr. James Hillman addresses a "terrible love of war," also the title of one of his books. Hillman discusses the feelings of community and brotherhood soldiers find on the battlefield, a feeling difficult to find in a society based on competition. Hillman says of war, "The ecstasy can be the highest moment ever experienced, as many battle veterans say. That would make it in common with other kinds of passionate love: sexual love; divine love; mystical love. You become crazy, in a way, just as you do in a passionate affair. You break the rules; you break the bounds; you're outside of yourself; you find a whole new personality in yourself. Maybe that's a shadow of love." Hillman tells why he thinks humans love war. "What all loves have in common," he says, "is the Other." He gives evidence for his thesis by tracing themes in both history and mythology.

Brotherly Love and Forgiveness

"I met 100 men on the road to Delhi, and all were my brothers." – Hindu proverb

Meet Azim Khamisa, a Muslim father whose 20-year old son Tariq was

murdered by 14-year old gang member Tony Hicks. Azim was heartbroken. He became despondent at the loss of his beloved son. As a Sufi Muslim, he believed that doing good deeds and being compassionate create “spiritual currency” and this can be transferred to departed souls. So he decided that for the sake of his son, he needed to find a way to overcome his sorrow. Azim came to realize that there were “victims at both ends of the gun.” So, in his heart, he forgave his son’s murderer and connected with the murderer’s grandfather, Ples Felix. In the atmosphere of understanding and forgiveness, they decided to work together to educate young people about the terrible effects of violence. In this process, they have become as close as brothers. Out of tragedy has developed a loving friendship.

Love and Friendship

"Friendship is the happiest and most fully human of all loves; the crown of life." – C.S. Lewis

Camilla, now in her 80s, was the first African-American singer to have a contract with the New York City Opera. Boris, an immigrant from Bulgaria now in his 90s, was her longtime accompanist. They performed together all over the country for years, and their two families became close. When Camilla retired from the stage, she joined the music faculty of Indiana University. The families stayed in touch. Camilla’s husband died many years ago. When Boris’ wife died a few years ago, his sons suggested that he might live happily with Camilla, if she was willing. She was delighted. They live together as longtime, close friends, platonically, in Bloomington and both are enriched and nourished by the arrangement. Camilla says, “I think there’s all kind of love. There’s romantic; and then there is friendship. And I thank the Lord every day for the friendship of Boris.”

Unconditional Love

"What children take from us, they give." – Sonia Taitz

The Johnson family lives in Minnesota. Therese is a devout Catholic, active in her church and community. Lee is Lutheran. They have four children. Their eldest son Ryan, 17, is an independent spirit. He plays in a rock band and had one of his ears pierced without his parent’s permission. His parents assume and hope he will become confirmed in the Catholic faith, but Ryan causes a crisis in the family when he announces his interest in Buddhism.

Ryan had doubts and questions about Christianity. Therese and Lee confront what it means to love a child without conditions, even when that child resists and tries to go his own way. The story deals with parental love and with the questions and challenges inherent in parent/child relationships.

The Communal Heart

“We are made for a delicate network of relationships. We are meant to complement each other.” – Bishop Desmond Tutu

Conspirare is a vocal group based in Austin, Texas. Conspirare literally means to breathe together. The group, made up of soloists from all over the country, and its caring leader, Craig Allen Johnson, are exemplars of how individuals can subordinate their own ego to achieve a goal that cannot be realized alone. This group demonstrates the principle that a “communal heart” can and does develop in many settings in life—within any group that is working together to achieve a common creative goal. In this closing segment of the program, some of those interviewed in the previous segments appear in Austin at one of Conspirare’s concerts. In the audience are commentator Betty Sue flowers, who lives in Austin; Lee and Ryan Johnson and Mandy Inhofer from Minnesota; and Mark and Monica Cravotta and Mark’s daughter Audrey, who have been following the Conspirare concerts because of their love of music. Emily Lodine, the opera singer who married the pig farmer, is one of the singers in the group. Emily said that one of the reasons she loves singing and music is because “you connect to other people and you can feel the connection.” She says, “Love is feeling safe.” We hear the beautiful harmony of Conspirare singing about lighting candles to lovers. The final encore is the song, “The Road Home” which suggests that “home” is a place of belonging and safety and a metaphor for love.

