Why You Should Wear Black on Valentine's Day

By [Marie DeFreitas](#) • SCAD Contributor • [Lifestyle](#) February 10, 2018 at 11:30pm

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The lovey dovey holiday that is February 14th certainly attracts a lot of attention. Stores lay out mountains of chocolate and teddy bears on what seems like as soon as the day after Christmas. It's definitely fun getting spoiled by your significant other and stuffing your face with chocolate, but where do the origins of this Hallmark best seller holiday lie? I'll tell ya why you should swap your pink outfit for a black one this Valentine's Day.

Romans

Not to be dark and skewed, but that's pretty much how the history of Valentine's Day is. The story starts way back in ancient Rome with those crazy, aggressive Romans. There was this festival called Lupercalia, where Roman men would sacrifice an animal like a goat or dog, and then whack the ladies with it. Who needs pick-up lines anyway? And crazy enough, the Romans chics were actually pretty into this because they thought it would somehow make them fertile.

The festival would then moved onto the scene where the men draw ladies names from a jar and those two would get it on for the rest of the festival, or even longer if things went smoothly. I mean, who isn't in the mood after getting beat with a dead goat?

St. Valentine

The main reason I think black might be more appropriate in respects to one of the aspects of the holiday's history, is because it was the day St.Valentine supposedly was executed.

So although there were multiple guys named Valentine in history's mix, the St. Valentine we hear about the most was a Roman priest who stood up in the name of love. Emperor Claudius II, the emperor at the time, was a pretty intense guy, and he wanted to maintain a strong army. However, he was having some trouble getting guys to join, and he blamed it on them not wanting to leave their wives and families (you know, because who needs a wife and family when you can go off to war?) So to counter this Claudius outright banned marriages. But our guy St. Valentine knew this was some bullsh*t and he performed marriages for couples in secret.

Eventually Valentine got caught and arrested and was to be put to death. Along the lines of this story it is also said that Valentine became pretty good friends with the jailer's daughter while he was prison. Before he died he left her a farewell note signing it, "from your Valentine".

It was after all this that Valentine was declared a saint for everything he did. Later the Catholic church made him a martyr with the creation of St. Valentine's Day.

Down the timeline a bit, things got a little more unclear. In the 5th century Pope Gelasius I combined the festival of Lupercalia and St. Valentine's Day because he just couldn't have any of those pagan rituals associated with it. It started to become more like a theater-like party, but it's roots of love and fertility still remained.

Just to add to the confusion, the holiday of Galatin's Day was celebrated around the same time by the Normans. Since these two sounded pretty similar, and had similar things they were celebrating (the word Galatin meaning "lover of women"), time kind of just muddled them together into one lovey dovey holiday.

Valentine's Day evolved over time; being romanticized about by the greats like Shakespeare and Geoffrey Chaucer. Throughout Europe handmade love cards became a thing during the Middle Ages and eventually Hallmark came to the scene in the early 20th century.

Nowadays, Hallmark reigns with mushy, funny cards, and every chick-flick ever, Russell Stover makes us all forget about our diets, and Kay Jewelers entices us with everything shiny. Valentine's Day definitely has some mixed up roots, but a large portion of it is pretty dark. Mix it up this holiday and put on a black tee instead of a pink one to remember the guy who gave the finger to the man and stood up for love.

Sources:

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