

Love: A Discovery in Comics

Margreet de Heer

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Margreet de Heer conducts a sometimes historical, sometimes personal tour of love and its many forms and definitions in her *Love: A Discovery in Comics*.

De Heer begins by introducing seven kinds of love, with examples from Greek and Roman history and the Bible. These include eros (romantic love), philia (loyal friendship), storge (family love), and pragma, the rational, pragmatic form of love, epitomized by a Darwin list that objectively reviews the pros and cons of getting married.

From there, the book takes a personal turn, and de Heer focuses on her own relationships and life experiences in addition to social or historical ideas of love. The integration of her personal experiences makes the book more earnest and intimate, though objectivity is sometimes sacrificed in the process. De Heer is an involved narrator.

At times reminiscent of Larry Gonick's *Cartoon Guide* series, the book includes humorous but informational guides, baseball analogies as they pertain to sexual behavior, references to the Kama Sutra and tantric sex, and a fascinating analysis of the ways that the plots of romance novels have changed with the times and culture.

Love is first and foremost a memoir, and de Heer is unflinching when it comes to examining her own romantic history, including its successes and failures. She incorporates her feelings and advice on falling in love, dating, marriage, and knowing when you've found "the one." The depths of love's mysteries may be endless, but de Heer's book is an entertaining attempt to explain it all.

PETER DABBENE (July/August 2019)

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