

What is “rizz?”: A fundamental study

Page 3



The
Voyeur



Staff Picks: The Scout's favorite date-night restaurants

Page 6-7

Must-See reality TV to add to your Valentine's Day rotation

Anaiah Davis

Voice Editor

When deciding what to watch every love-filled February, romance-driven reality TV shows are an underrated option. They have undeniably more drama, more betrayal and – depending on the season – more fistfights than any run-of-the-mill rom-com.

Reality TV is not to be taken seriously and that's perhaps the best thing about it. These shows are meant to be cringe-worthy, ridiculous and bingeable, which is why watching them is the perfect way to unwind and laugh at other people's love lives instead of your own. Here are some reality dating shows I recommend for casual viewing this Valentine's Day.

“Are You the One?”

In this series, men and women looking for love try to find their predetermined “perfect match.” Before appearing on the show, the cast participates in extensive questionnaires, interviews and compatibility testing before a dating algorithm pairs up ideal matches. The results are hidden from the singletons as they go on dates and try to figure out what the correct pairings are over the course of 10 weeks for a \$1 million prize.

“Are You the One?” is entertaining and occasionally borders on being too trashy, but you can't help but watch until the end to find out what the right matches are. The two most recent seasons have also featured more sexually fluid casts. Ultimately, there's everything you need from reality TV: hookups, screaming matches and lots of tears.

“90 Day Fiancé”

Since premiering in 2014, this show has run for nine seasons, chronicling the challenges of international couples who have three months to get married. These pairs have applied or been approved for a K-1 visa which temporarily allows the foreign partner to stay in the U.S.

It's incredibly easy to get wrapped up in the lives of the cast and root for the couples to sort through their problems or admit that they have no business going to the altar. The first few seasons are the best, exploring connections and various cultural expectations that provide an interesting contrast to other shows. If you like “90 Day Fiancé,” consider checking out any of its 10 spin-offs



“Love is Blind”

This popular Netflix series depicts a group of singles going on dates in “pods” where they can talk to each other but never see each other's faces. What starts out as speed-dating turns into participants being able to choose longer dates with certain people. Eventually couples get engaged, meet face-to-face, and live together for several weeks as they navigate life together. Throughout this time, the participants also plan weddings before officially deciding if they want to say “I do.”

I admire the premise of the show as it tries to answer the question “Is love blind?” It's fun to watch as the relationships grow and deteriorate at a wild pace while having no hope that anyone is going home happy anyway. Overall, the experiment fails to prove the irrelevance of physical attraction, but delivers an enchanting spectacle season after season.

“The Ultimatum: Marry or Move On”

“The Ultimatum” is another social experiment that brings in six couples, each of which have a partner who desperately wants to get married while the other doesn't. Each pair has eight weeks to decide on marriage or a permanent break up during which time they have a trial marriage with another contestant. In the end, everyone reunites with their original partner and decides either to get engaged, leave with their trial partner instead or go home single.

This show earns most of its applause from being one of the only to present relationships that existed prior to filming. However, it's immediately evident that the cast is almost entirely annoying, the scenes drag on for ages and everyone would've been better off solving their problems at home. The first and only season is awful in all of the best ways and I couldn't get enough of it.

The Voyeur



'Harley Quinn: A Very Problematic Valentine's Day Special' hides heart behind raunch-fest

Daniel Kerns

Co-Editor-in-Chief

I'm no prude but there is entirely too much sex in "Harley Quinn: A Very Problematic Valentine's Day Special."

What could and should have been a story with important messages about listening to your partner's needs, self-love and not comparing current to past – especially traumatic – relationships felt distracted by several factors. There was no less than a florally censored sex montage, a kinky humiliation scene, the entire population of Gotham City going at it in the streets and – I kid you not – a giant-sized Bane thrusting into multiple buildings because he's so horned up for Brett Goldstein due to a combination of steroids and sex spells and potions.

To backtrack, Poison Ivy wants a quiet night in watching documentaries with Harley Quinn. On the other hand, Harley wants to give Ivy the best Valentine's Day ever and jumps from one harebrained scheme to the next to achieve her goal.

It can be tough for a comedy show to balance jokes with mature subjects like getting over an abusive relationship. The over-the-board nature of the sex comedy in this episode seems so tonally out of place with the story the rest of the episode is telling.

On top of the whole sex thing, the joke writing doesn't feel as sharp as it has been in past seasons. While "Harley Quinn" has used both meta and name drop comedy before, Poison Ivy talking about "binging one of the many fine scripted or non-scripted shows that HBO Max has to offer" during an emotional conversation took me out of the episode completely.

If that wasn't enough, "A Very Problematic Valentine's Day Special" not only references various celebrities and other TV shows left and right, but also turns a joke about Goldstein into a major plot point.

The HBO Max joke at least makes sense because "Harley Quinn" is an HBO Max Original. The only reason I can think of that anyone would want to relive the eighth season of "The Office" is that Comcast paid beaucoup bucks for the writers to include it.

More positively, the voice acting from the main cast was strong as usual. In addition to Goldstein playing himself, "A Very Problematic Valentine's Day Special" features special guest stars Quinta Brunson and Tyler James Williams as well as a surprising appearance by John Stamos as Etrigan the Demon.

Hopefully this episode won't spark a severe drop in viewership that leads the cutthroat regime of Warner Bros. Discovery to cancel the show entirely and remove it from HBO Max so that its cast and creators won't get paid residuals.

"Harley Quinn: A Very Problematic Valentine's Day Special" lives up to its name, though probably not in the way the writers intended. Season four is coming later this year though, and I'll still be watching.



The Voyeur

What is "rizz?": A fundamental study

Jonathan Michael

Co-Editor-in-Chief



Generation Z is responsible for an entire dictionary section's worth of new words and phrases. "Cap," "simp" and "drip" are all well engrained by now, but there's a new word that's entered the vernacular: rizz.

Prevalent more so in comment sections than in actual conversation, rizz refers to a person's, usually a man's, way of communicating with a woman in hopes that she'll become romantically interested in him (the ball is in your court, Urban Dictionary).

"Rizz, in my opinion, is what you say to some person to get them attracted to you," freshman finance major Matthew Paver said.

"It's your ability to pull," freshman mechanical engineering major Julian Gonzalez added.

Previous generations would refer to it as "game," but that makes too much sense. The person looking to gain a new partner is hoping for the pursuant to respect their game, or their style of flirting with them. It holds clear meaning outside of romantic contexts too; "He's got game," for example, means that a guy is good at his game, whatever that happens to be.

But rizz?

How does that series of letters come about? Is it short for something? How does such a random word get associated in a context where picking the right words are paramount?

"I use it as a joke; I just think it's just a funny word," Paver said. "I don't think many people use it seriously."

The word is commonly believed to be coined by a social media video star named Kai Cenat in 2021. I work primarily in sports and I have no idea who Cenat is, nor do I care that much. However, he provided his interpretation of it, much to the delight of confused millennials and parents everywhere.

"You're so slick with your words and what you're saying, to where the girl is like, 'OK, yeah, who is this?!,' Cenat said. "After [expletive] goes your way, you're like, 'Yeah, I rizzed her up. I've got mad rizz.'"

Over time, various spinoffs of the word emerged and anyone under the age of 25 has likely heard phrases like "rizzing her up," which is the action of using rizz itself, and "unspoken rizz," which is where one is so attractive that they do not even need to speak to spark a potential romantic connection.

Rizz is primarily used in situations where a guy is chasing a girl so that begs the question: Can a girl "rizz up" a guy? In this day and age, women are more than welcome to flirt with men and make the first move, but girls don't talk much, if at all, about how much rizz they have.

"Girls that I know will say it as a joke, but I don't think they say 'I'm going to rizz up this guy,'" Gonzalez said.

Someone with rizz may be praised by their friends as being "The Rizzard of Oz," "The Rizzler," or a "Rizzly bear." Props to the new generation for their creativity but it's doubtful that Prince Charming ever uses it in Rizzney movie.

Despite the spins on the phrase, there are only two words recognized by Merriam-Webster Dictionary that contain "rizz" in them: brizz and frizz. Neither one of them have anything remotely to do with flirting.

It turns out Cenat didn't just pick four letters out of a bowl of alphabet soup. The word is allegedly short for "charisma," but no one of prominence has officially said that that is an undisputed fact.

"I don't like that the word rizz is short for charisma," sophomore mechanical engineering major Ali Eickhoff said.

Whatever your knowledge or feeling towards the word is, I highly recommend you study up on your rizz before Valentine's Day on Tuesday. Rizz 101 is now dismissed.

The Voyeur

Four non-romance movies to turn on this Valentine's Day

Logan Wessel

Contributor

As Valentine's Day draws closer, it can be maddening trying to avoid seeing anything that isn't associated with relationships, especially in the media. If you're looking to escape the whirlwind of romance-related TV and film, here are four movies to take your mind off of the love in the air and all over the screen.



"Evil Dead 2"

Horror movies are an obvious choice when it comes to taking someone on a date to a movie theater. "Evil Dead 2" kicks down the door and chases you with its blend of comedy and horror. The film follows Ash Williams, played by Bruce Campbell, as he tries to survive another night under the constant assault of demonic Deadites. Ash attempts to make it through the night without succumbing to the insanity he finds himself in. Memorable scenes take all these disparate tones and create harmony between them that will leave you forgetting all about romance.

"John Wick"

This series needs almost no introduction, but the Keanu Reeves franchise undoubtedly makes for an enjoyable experience. In the first installment, the titular character's checkered past as an assassin catches up to him, resulting in the murder of a close friend while those responsible get away. Wick is tasked with tracking them down and inventively orchestrating his revenge against them. If you're a fan of thrills and suspense, these films are an excellent choice.

"Bullet Train"

This slick, stylish action film is willing to take as many risks as its characters. There are plenty of backstories and non-chronological sequences in this box-office hit. You can expect it to take place on the titular bullet train but surprises await with an enjoyable script that only suffers from some annoying quips. Performances from Aaron Taylor-Johnson and Brian Tyree Henry as Lemon and Tangerine, respectively, display a great duo that future films could benefit from. Brad Pitt adds a nice performance as the straight man to guide the audience through this cutthroat world of hitmen. The film captures and keeps the viewer's attention throughout.

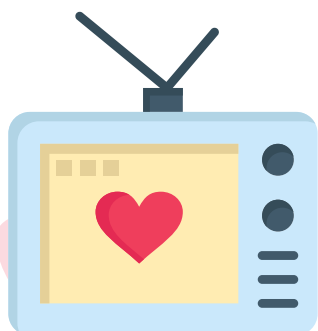
"Knives Out"

"Knives Out" is a beautiful film with the twists and turns of an unconventional mystery. The setting is one that comes straight out of Romantic literature and associated with the likes of Frankenstein, where emotion triumphs over logic. Here Benoit Blanc, played by a southern-twanged Daniel Craig, aims to uncover the murderer of a famous mystery writer. Marta Cabrera, played by Ana de Armas, works with Benoit to reveal the culprit amongst a den of vicious relatives. The comedy here is quick-witted and hit-or-miss, but the plot moves along briskly and the mystery is satisfying. I would recommend this movie and its sequel, "Glass Onion", if you're in the mood to get away from romance and aren't interested in the action and violence shown in the other films on this list.





The Voyeur



Slow burn to star-crossed: the best on-screen romances of the year

Lee Lard

Copy Editor

With Valentine's Day approaching fast, it's the perfect time to cuddle up with someone special (or maybe just a snack) and watch some of the best on-screen love stories of the last year.

Janine and Gregory - "Abbott Elementary"

"Abbott Elementary," created by actress, comedian and producer Quinta Brunson, has become one of the most popular modern sitcoms on television. Airing every Wednesday on ABC and streaming on Hulu, the show follows the staff of a fictional elementary school in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, as they are filmed for a documentary.

Two main characters, Janine Teagues and Gregory Eddie, played by Brunson and Tyler James Williams, have been dancing around each other in a slow burn romance since day one. Their meet-cute in the pilot episode has had fans rooting for them well into the second season. Since then, both characters have gone through their own relationship arcs while realizing their feelings for each other.

Bill and Frank - "The Last of Us"

If you're looking for something a little grittier and aren't completely sick of hearing about a pandemic, then I recommend picking up "The Last of Us" streaming on HBO Max. Adapted from the video game series of the same title, the series is set in 2023, 20 years after the start of a global pandemic that turns its victims into zombie-like "Infected." Starring Pedro Pascal and Bella Ramsey, it's a beautiful look into a bleak world.

One of the best parts of the show is the love story told in the episode "Long, Long Time" between doomsday prepper Bill (Nick Offerman) and Frank (Murray Bartlett), the wanderer he took in.

The pair met in 2003 when Frank stumbled into a trap that Bill set in order to catch the Infected. Frank asks for help and food and Bill begrudgingly lets him inside. As they eat together, Frank enjoys his first meal in a while and Bill relishes in the company he's lacked for even longer. The pair bond over music and their mutual loneliness, both because of the end of the world and their identities in a homophobic society.

Frank decides to stay for a couple of days, which turn into a couple of years, which turn into a couple of decades. The episode follows the evolution and heartbreaking conclusion of their relationship.

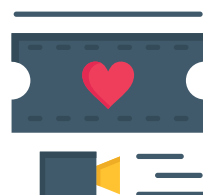
It's a gorgeous representation of finding love later in life and expands on the show's theme that life is better if you have someone to live it with. Somewhere between watching Ramsey crack jokes and Pascal shoot monsters, you'll be reaching for the tissues. Frank said it best, "Paying attention to things – it's how we show love."

Charlie and Nick - "Heartstopper"

If you're looking for a classic coming of age rom-com, I can't recommend "Heartstopper" enough. Season one came to Netflix in 2022 and we're gearing up for the release of season two as early as this summer. Based on a webcomic by Alice Oseman, the series follows teenage boys Charlie Spring (Joe Locke) and Nick Nelson (Kit Connor) as they navigate school, friendships and their own identities.

Charlie is a gay high schooler who is harboring a crush on the (presumed straight) rugby player Nick. His friends, transgender Elle Argent and ally Tao Xu, are understandably wary. It turns out that his feelings are reciprocated and Nick spends the first half of the season coming to terms with his bisexuality and the second half pursuing a relationship with Charlie.

The multiple queer love stories in "Heartstopper" are straightforward and while their premises have been done to death for straight audiences, it's a breath of fresh air for LGBT+ viewers. Portraying LGBT+ identities as lighthearted and innocent is something we haven't seen very often. It's definitely one of the best young adult romances on air right now.

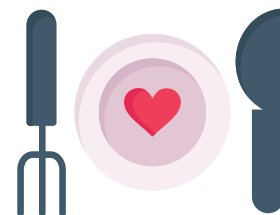




The Voyeur

Staff Picks: The Scout's favorite date-night restaurants

Whether you're celebrating a special occasion with someone, trying to keep the spark of your relationship alive or even embarking on a first date, going out to dinner is a safe choice. Here are The Scout's selections for restaurants.



My boyfriend's kitchen

I got lucky enough to start dating someone who is obsessed with finding new recipes to test out every now and again. It also pays off that he has created multiple different recipes on his own. So, I don't really have a favorite date restaurant other than the dates we have spent together where he cooks and I help when I need to. To those who normally go out to restaurants, why not plan a night where you stay at home and find a fun recipe to cook together?

— Madalyn Mirallegro

Olive Garden

The comfort of a corner booth coupled with the golden glow of table lighting is the perfect date night scene. The food comes in large portions so you'll always leave with leftovers, not to mention never-ending refills on soups and salads. Honestly, there is no better feeling than reaching across the table and touching hands with that special someone as you both go for the last breadstick.

— Anaiah Davis

Thyme Kitchen + Craft Beer

Located in the Warehouse District on Peoria's scenic Riverfront, Thyme is a gastropub that offers multiple culinary styles along with arguably the largest selection of alcohol in the city – if that's something you're interested in. The restaurant is split between the main level and an upper loft area; which works for both large-group outings like Galentine's Day or more intimate dinners for two.

— Daniel Kerns



The Voyeur

Staff Picks: The Scout's favorite date-night restaurants

Panda Express

For my boyfriend and I's first few dates, we went to Panda Express. I only started eating there shortly before I met him, so the delicious fast food chain always reminds me of him. Every time I go, I get the orange chicken with fried rice and it never gets old.

— Payton Egnew

Culver's

Culver's is a midwestern classic, famous for custard and cheese curds. It's my favorite date spot, though, because it's they're the only affordable restaurant in the area that offers gluten free buns for their sandwiches. While they're technically a fast food chain, the atmosphere in their buildings is so warm that I don't mind sitting down to eat.

— Lee Lard

Edge by Chef Dustin Allen

Edge is a trendy place in the eating establishment-heavy area of Peoria Heights that offers something for all seasons. Not only does their delicious menu change seasonally, but you can dine both in their semi-upscale dining room, or on the roof at the adjacent Twelve Bar.

The outdoor experience is personally my favorite during warmer months and has a fireplace, which is nice during nights in the spring and the fall when temperatures dip.

—Jonathan Michel