

Paper 2

For this essay, you will choose one of the topics below and write an essay that expresses your opinion on that topic. I will be grading you on a) how well you construct and defend an original thesis and b) on how well you incorporate outside sources into your writing.

Specifically, this essay should

- * be 3-4 pages in length, typed, double-spaced, 12 point font,
- * have at least 2 sources quoted in the body of the paper, and
- * have an attached annotated bibliography that lists at least four sources. (One of the four sources may be a reputable website; the other three sources should be articles from journals, magazines, newspapers, or books that we have not read for class.)

1. Barbara Graham writes in “The Future of Love” that “we expect our marriages and relationships to be long-running fairy tales. When they’re not, instead of examining our expectations, we switch partners and reinvent the fantasy, hoping this time we’ll get it right” (9). Explore some of the messages that our culture gives us about marriage, providing specific examples from the media. How do these images of “happily ever after” differ from what experts (psychologists, sociologists, pastors, etc.) might describe as a successful marriage?

2. In “The Radical Idea of Marrying for Love,” Stephanie Coontz argues that “[f]or most of history it was inconceivable that people would choose their mates on the basis of something as fragile and irrational as love” (251). Do you think modern marriages, which are often based on love rather than on economic, social, or familial issues, evidence a good change in the way of doing things? How might one address the fact that this new method results in an inordinate number of failed marriages and broken homes?

3. In “Single Minded,” Keith O’Brien claims that many Americans have no desire to get married. Do you think there is a trend toward “singleness” in our country? What is your opinion on this phenomenon, if it exists? (Is it good? Bad? What possible consequences (good or bad) might it have on society as a whole?)

4. Write an essay that argues either for or against the legalization of gay marriage in the state of South Carolina.