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### Mind the Gap: An Analysis of the Function of Love in the Works of Tom Stoppard and C.S. Lewis.

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## Introduction

In comparing C.S. Lewis's *The Four Loves* to Tom Stoppard's plays *The Real Thing*, *The Invention of Love*, *Rock and Roll* and *Arcadia*, the connection between their theories of love becomes apparent: the Christian Lewis and the agnostic Stoppard are bridged by the idea of the natural law which is most clearly manifested by love.

Clive Staples (C.S.) Lewis was born on November 29, 1898 in Belfast. Though Lewis had a happy childhood overall, his mother passed away from cancer when he was only ten years old. Upon reflection Lewis mourns, "With my mother's death all settled happiness, all that was tranquil and reliable, disappeared from my life... It was sea and islands now; the great continent had sunk like Atlantis" (Hooper 6). Lewis's grieving father – unsure of how to handle two boys without the aid of his wife – sent his sons to be educated in England. It was there that Lewis would excel academically and eventually attend Oxford University (13).

Tom Stoppard, on the other hand, was born on July 3, 1937 in Czechoslovakia under the name Tomas Stausslet. (It was not until the death of his father at the hands of the Japanese during WWII that Stoppard's mother remarried to Kenneth Stoppard, legally changing Tom's last name.) At the end of WWII, the Stoppard family moved to England. Though his plays are overwhelmingly intellectual, Tom Stoppard dropped out of school at the age of 17 and took a job at the Western Daily Press in Bristol. In stark contrast to Lewis, Stoppard never went to university and is entirely self-taught (Gabbard ix).

Both Stoppard and Lewis, while being serious authorities on their respective subjects, write with a British wit. Stoppard once stated, "I want to demonstrate that I can make serious points by flinging a custard pie around the stage for a couple of hours" (Gabbard 1). In the tradition of Theatre of the Absurd, Stoppard's plays juxtapose the serious with the comic without the fairy tale ending often associated with the comic. This lack of resolution, when combined

with Stoppard's serious contemplations, shifts the philosophical focus from the Nietzschean complaint, "God is dead" to the more optimistic (if challenging) "Where is God?" (6). Indeed, uncertainty is central to Stoppard's plays as his "maturation has occurred during the period of history known as the age of uncertainty" (8). Stoppard's own uncertainty, then, becomes the basis of his plays (Gussow 63).

But C.S. Lewis cannot be described as a Christian free from uncertainty; in fact, the death of his mother and broken relationship with his father led to such a sense of abandonment that Lewis was for a long time an atheist (Hooper 12). After a stint in WWI (which left him injured) Lewis returned to University College, Oxford eventually getting job teaching English and Philosophy at Magdalen College. It was during this time period that Lewis had his conversion experience. With the help of his friends, affectionately known as The Inklings, Lewis was eventually able to convert to Theism (Christianity would come much later). Lewis calls himself "the most dejected and reluctant convert in all England" (14). Overall it is this conversion that would contribute to Lewis's logical reasoning into Christianity; he is a Christian who is full of doubt and yet able to see the validity of Christ through reason.

In order to be able to draw parallels between Stoppard and Lewis, it must first be established what is meant by the word "love". Both writers have very distinct ideas of what "true love" is. "True love", in this instance, does not refer to an eternal romantic love, but rather it describes the caliber against which different sorts of love need be measured.

Lewis makes a point of distinguishing between love for another human being and love for sub-human objects. English speakers are proud of the privilege (Lewis claims) of being able to choose between "loving" an object and "liking" an object. Other languages, such as French, have only one verb, *aimer*, with which to describe any phenomenon in which they take pleasure. The

English, however, can effectively divide their pleasures into two categories: those pleasures that they like, and those that they love. Lewis asserts that the distinction between these two types of affection lies in the human qualities of the “beloved”. Any human or extra-human object can be loved while any sub-human object can only be liked (*Four Loves* 25).

Those sub-human objects that are “likable” can be divided into two categories. They are either “Need-pleasures” or “Pleasures of Appreciation” (*Four Loves* 26). Need-Pleasures can be defined as those pleasures derived from satisfying a physical need. To a man who is extremely thirsty, a glass of water may be the most pleasurable object in the entire world (26). The pleasure that man derives from drinking the water comes from the sense of satisfaction that he feels upon the action (29).

Pleasures of Appreciation, on the other hand, do not stem from physical needs; rather those objects which are pleasures of appreciation are inherently pleasurable and do not depend upon the state of man to be so. There is a certain elegance, sublimity and refinement intrinsic to the object itself which causes man to take pause in order to truly appreciate its beauty: “They make us feel that something has not merely gratified our senses in fact but claimed our appreciation by right” (*Four Loves* 29). Lewis cites the example of a brilliant claret; the taste is inherently sophisticated, but requires a certain amount of education in order to fully appreciate: “It would be a sin to set a wine like that before Lewis,” says the expert in claret, for he is not a connoisseur of great wines. He does, however, claim a certain expertise in sweetly scented gardens (30). The scent of such a lovely garden is divine. Regardless of whether or not anyone is there to enjoy it, or whether or not it goes unappreciated, it has inherent value.

Stoppard comes to a similar conclusion in his play *The Real Thing*. It should be noted that many of Stoppard’s characters in fact speak for Stoppard himself, and so it is fair to draw

conclusions about Stoppard's philosophy through his characters. This fact comes to particular fruition in *The Real Thing*, which is essentially a symposium for the merits of true art. The character Henry has the internal argument within himself, at first believing (like the atheistic Lewis) that subjects such as art are subjective and relative. However when faced with Brodie, the abysmal playwright, Henry comes to the same conclusion as Lewis regarding the merits of inherent "good"ness in the form of a cricket bat:

This thing here, which looks like a wooden club, is actually several pieces of particular wood cunningly put together in a certain way so that the whole thing is sprung, like a dance floor. It's for hitting cricket balls with. If you get it right, the cricket ball will travel two hundred yards in four seconds, and all you've done is give it a knock like knocking the top off a bottle of stout, and it makes a noise like a trout taking a fly... Now, what we've got here is a lump of wood roughly the same shape trying to be a cricket bat, and if you hit a ball with it, the ball will travel about ten feet and you will drop the bat and dance about shouting "Ouch!" with your hands stuck into your armpits. This [cricket bat] isn't better because someone says it's better, or because there's a conspiracy by the MCC to keep cudgels off the field. It's better because it's better (*Real Thing* 51).

The connotation of the word "cunningly" put together implies that the creation of the cricket bat is done with purpose and expertise. There is an intrinsic value to a well-constructed cricket bat which cannot be ignored. Lewis would classify the cricket bat, then, as a Pleasure of Appreciation: the cricket bat earns the right to be admired.

Again, like the forms in Plato's Realm of Being, Pleasures of Appreciation and objects of refinement such as Stoppard's cricket bat need not be appreciated by humans in order to have

value. These objects exist in sublimity regardless of whether or not man is around to enjoy them. Granted there are those objects (such as the delicious claret or Stoppard's cricket bat) that arguably would not exist without man. While this is true, there is a way in which these objects transcend man. Even if the game of cricket were never invented whatsoever, the most precise method of hitting a cricket ball over a distance of two hundred yards would inevitably be to create a cricket bat in the exact way that it has been perfected. In the case of the claret, reducing grapes to their purest form and allowing it to take its own due course over time would result invariably in exquisite claret. In many ways, then, man is only the vehicle through which these perfections can be realized. These perfections will always transcend the man who creates them.

Theologian – and good friend of Lewis (Hooper 34) – Dorothy Sayers, asserts that when man exercises his ability to create he is closest to God: “The characteristic common to God and man is apparently... the desire and the ability to make things” (Sayers 22). It is therefore not an absurd leap to say that even those man-made perfections are mere extensions of the ideal forms in the Realm of Being.

In order to understand any sort of “ideal” – whether those ideals are theorized by Thomas Aquinas or by Plato – man must think in metaphors that make sense to him. The ideal form does nothing for man if there is no practical application for that ideal. Stoppard describes this phenomenon perfectly in *Arcadia*:

...don't confuse progress with perfectibility. A great poet is always timely. A great philosopher is an urgent need. There's no rush for Isaac Newton. We were quite happy with Aristotle's cosmos. Personally, I preferred it. Fifty-five crystal spheres geared to God's crankshaft is my idea of a satisfying universe. I can't

think of anything more trivial than the speed of light. Quarks, quasars- big bangs, black holes- who gives a shit? (*Arcadia* 65)

In other words, the “true ideal” that comes through as truth in Newton’s theories and Pythagoras’s mathematics only matters insofar as man can make use of it. Stoppard also argues in the preceding statement that far more valuable are “great poets” and “great philosophers”. The implication there is that the emotional needs of humans far exceed the need for a tangible reality. The importance of emotional knowledge and understanding, therefore, becomes the most important quest of the human life.

Emotional truth, however, is much more elusive than mathematical truth. It consistently slips through the fingers of man to a point where artists, philosophers and poets spend their entire lives searching for the correct image to display that truth. One may argue that if there are so many differing metaphors that there cannot be “truth” – that there can only be opinion. “The fact is”, Sayers points out, “that all language about everything is analogical; we think in a series of metaphors. We can explain nothing in terms of itself, but only in terms of other things. Even mathematics can express itself in terms of itself only so long as it deals with an ideal system of pure numbers; the moment it begins to deal with numbers of things it is forced back into the language of analogy” (Sayers 23).

It is therefore the quest of both Stoppard and Lewis to provide reliable metaphors for the most important emotional truth, which is love. Lewis theorizes that above the sub-human loves, (Need Pleasures and Pleasures of Appreciation) are four types of love that man might experience. All of these loves are enhanced by love of God. None of these loves is greater than the other, and they all may be valued in different ways. Stoppard, similarly, writes four plays that each depict one of the four types of love. All of these loves are informed by the natural law.

Both authors, then, are theorizing that love is an inherent truth for man and that it is informed by a power that supersedes the arbitrariness of humanity. As Sayers states, “The confusion is as though two men were to argue fiercely whether there was a river in a certain district or whether, on the contrary, there was a measurable volume of H<sub>2</sub>O moving in a particular direction with an ascertainable velocity; neither having any suspicion that they were describing the same phenomenon” (Sayers 30). While Lewis and Stoppard are writing independently of one another, they are essentially saying the same thing.

Lewis uses God as the framework around which he discusses love and divides love into four types based on his observations of mankind. Stoppard uses knowledge as the framework around which he discusses love. Religion is often spoken about in terms of “a beacon” in a world of darkness. In a world where God does not exist, however, there needs to be a substitute beacon. For Tom Stoppard that beacon is knowledge. Knowledge sheds light on the unknown and helps man to grapple with his existence on this earth. Each of his plays, therefore, uses knowledge as the basis for love while Lewis uses God. Both, however, realize that their observational style is insufficient without the emotional factor coupled with the reasoning of the natural law. Both writers, therefore, are attempting to bridge tangible, earthly evidence with invisible, metaphysical evidence. While both authors are fully aware of their own intellectual and emotional pursuit, the bridge that both authors erect between the man of faith and the man of reason is hidden. However it quickly becomes apparent once the culmination of the four types of love and the four plays are expostulated that all types are governed by a higher ideal truth which can be called the natural law.

Therefore in comparing C.S. Lewis’s *The Four Loves* to Tom Stoppard’s plays *The Real Thing*, *The Invention of Love*, *Rock and Roll* and *Arcadia*, the connection between their theories



of love becomes apparent: the Christian Lewis and the agnostic Stoppard are bridged by the idea of the natural law which is most clearly manifested in their descriptions of love.

In order to analyze these writers, a close reading must be implemented and a firm grasp of historicism must be present. Both Lewis and Stoppard utilize historical events, literature, classical texts and pop culture in order to support their works, so an awareness of many subjects is key to understanding their message. But Lewis and Stoppard are more than philosophers – they are craftsmen. Every word that they write has a specific purpose, and therefore a close reading of the connotations of significant words must occur in order for an accurate comparison to take place. Each one of the four loves will be examined in turn with a culminating conclusion that bridges Stoppard and Lewis and states in explicit terms what true love is. The analysis of these texts in combination with the juxtaposition of the natural law will bring to light the way in which the natural law functions in each work and the ways in which each aspect of love comes together under the rules of the natural law.

### **Literature Review**

The natural law, though claiming to provide an objective right and wrong for the morals of mankind, is the subject of much debate. In his highly readable book, *50 Questions on the Natural Law*, Charles Rice, a professor of the jurisprudence of Saint Thomas Aquinas at Notre Dame Law School, defines the natural law as “a set of manufacturer’s directions written into our nature so that we can discover through reason how we ought to act. The Ten Commandments, and other prescriptions of the divine law, specify some applications of that natural law” (Rice 28). Rice makes a point of saying that each and every object on earth has nature written into it: “The nature of a rock is such that it will sink if you throw it into a pond... Natural science is easy to understand when we are talking about physical nature. But it applies as well to the moral

sphere” (27). Here Rice is saying that while the natural law is one that follows scientific law it is also manifested morally. He cites the Ten Commandments as an example of divine law that follows the natural law in an attempt to prove the validity of the Ten Commandments.

While the comparison between the Ten Commandments and the natural law makes sense to a person of faith, there are others who draw a strict line between the natural law and law of divine revelation; indeed, much of the reason for the existence of the natural law is to have a morally explicit law that is not dependent on religion. In his essay “On naturalism” [in the works of C.S. Lewis], Charles Taliaferro makes the point that “all broad or strict naturalists agree on is that there is no God, no souls or afterlife, and no irreducible, objective moral values” (Taliaferro 105). He goes on to say that there is danger in morals that are reasoned rather than prescribed, because of the dangers of relativism:

[One] way to reduce or eliminate objective values would be to take the route of cultural relativism and treat moral claims as reflecting culturally embedded judgments so that to claim ‘Murder is wrong’ becomes ‘In my society, murder is condemned’ (Taliaferro 105).

In order for the natural law to be universally applied, then, it must be true of all cultures and of all people, and not subject to the whims of emotional people or to the fallacies of irrational people.

Returning to the natural law as being a law of science, it becomes an even less reliable form of moral law when one realizes that even the most well-established scientific laws are nothing more than theory. In his book *Natural Law, Laws of Nature, Natural Rights*, Francis Oakely (Edward Dorr Griffin Professor of the History of Ideas Emeritus at Williams College) points out that those who want to distinguish the natural law from prescriptive moral law need

only to cite the irregularities of the scientific world. He cites Joseph Needham, who says “In the outlook of modern science there is, of course, no ... notion of command and duty in the ‘Laws of Nature’. They are now thought of [rather] as statistical regularities, valid only in given times and places, descriptions not prescriptions” (Oakely 37). If this is the case, however, the door is open for moral relativism around the globe to devise arbitrary morals, for nothing can be described with any real authority.

The distinction then between natural moral law and scientific law that has been reasoned through is “whether the recognition of such statistical regularities and their mathematical expression could have been reached by any... road [other] than that which Western sciences actually travelled” (Oakley 37). It is the intention of this essay to demonstrate how two great thinkers, though coming from opposing ends of the philosophical spectrum, can both come to the same conclusions – even with a subject as volatile as love.

The works of both Lewis and Stoppard are subject to acclaim. Though they are not without their critics, (Lewis is often criticized for being a Christian apologist while Stoppard is often criticized for plays that are too boring to be on stage for more than an hour) both are also acclaimed for being strong British voices that speak with moral authority in a morally relative age.

Tom Stoppard, in particular, is the subject of many critical inconsistencies. In her book *The Stoppard Plays* Lucina Paquet Gabbard cites critic Harold Clurman as an example of this contradictory phenomenon; “After his initial review of *Jumpers* [Clurman] wrote a second article to explain his original misconceptions of the meaning of the play. One week later, he wrote a third article to elucidate his seeming contradictions in the second article” (Gabbard 1). Clearly

then Stoppard's plays are ones that can be pondered for days after being seen or read, implying his baffling contradictions.

"To begin", Gabbard says, "critics seem not to agree whether Stoppard's plays are farce, high comedy or Theatre of the Absurd" (Gabbard 1). In actuality, however, the plays of Stoppard are less like the plays of Edward Albee and are more like the works of T.S. Eliot. Like Eliot, Stoppard encodes his works with hidden references to other works of literature, scientific theories and religious allegories. "In *Jumpers*, Dotty recalls her first impressions of George with a quote from T.S. Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" – "How his hair is growing thin!" (Gabbard 4) This reference is un-sung: It is not led into either by theme or by character but if the audience is astute enough to pick up upon it the reference adds a depth to the character and the situation that all allegory does. Stoppard's works, therefore, are complex maps filled with the weight of great thinkers who came before him and informed his ideas.

On top of being an extremely intellectual playwright, Stoppard also has a moral compass that guides his plays, contributing to his devotion to the ideals of the natural law. He does not, however, ascribe himself to cliché moral traditions, but rather creates scenarios through which morality can emerge. As professor of English Paul Delaney writes in his book, *Tom Stoppard: The Moral Vision of the Major Plays*, "Stoppard's affirmation of art as inherently moral continues to be far removed both from the critical orthodoxies of academe. As a result, it has taken some time for sophisticated observers to discern the power of plays which ordinary audiences have, all along, found moving" (Delaney 149). Again, Stoppard's complexities contribute to the continued divergence by critics regarding his works.

Stoppard does indicate, however, that his moral vision is a conscious effort to affect change rather than a happy accident of playwriting. Delaney reports that Stoppard told Michael

Billington about his moral stance: “I still believe... that if your aim is to change the world journalism is a more immediate, short-term weapon. But art is important in the long-term in that it lays down some kind of matrix for moral responsibility” (Delaney 149). Therefore, even though Stoppard does not follow a particular faith, he still understands the responsibility of the artist to present his audience with morally sound art.

Like Stoppard, C.S. Lewis desires to present morality to his readers. Indeed, his many popular theological works, such as *The Screwtape Letters*, propose moral visions of how people should behave in the face of evil in the world. *The Screwtape Letters* was in fact created as a reaction against the speeches of Hitler. Lewis’s cousin writes to him, saying “Statements which I know to be untrue all but convince me, at any rate for the moment, if only [Hitler] says them unflinchingly” (Hooper 267). This comment inspires Lewis to write about the allure of evil and how man can overcome it. In his book, *C.S. Lewis: A Companion’s Guide*, Walter Hooper goes on to describe how Lewis’s more entertaining books (such as *The Chronicles of Narnia*) are, in fact, roadmaps of morality based on the Christian tradition but supported by empirical evidence that can be observed in everyday life.

*The Four Loves*, in particular, embodies Lewis’s quest to spread the Christian Word. When asked to make tape-recordings that would be played over the air via the Episcopal Radio-TV Foundation of Atlanta, Georgia (the subject being left up to him), Lewis replied, “The subject I want to say something about in the near future in some form or other is the four loves – *Storge*, *Philia*, *Eros* and *Agape*. This seems to bring in nearly the whole of Christian ethics” (Hooper 367). *The Four Loves*, therefore, is a way of viewing morality.

Lewis can also be described as a Christian apologist. In his book simply titled *C.S. Lewis*, Joe R. Christopher defines an apologist with the Latin root *apologia*, meaning defender.

Much of his works begin in the defensive position (Christopher 63). As in *The Screwtape Letters*, Lewis is contending against evil and those who would deny the presence of Jesus Christ in this world. It is important that his works are considered in these terms and not in the terms of someone attempting to be relative: to Lewis, God exists in no uncertain terms. His musings on love are grounded in a belief in God.

### **Analysis:**

#### **Affection**

The first and most familiar type of love is Affection or *storge*. The most primal and natural form of love, Lewis categorizes it as the love that serves as the cornerstone for the other three types of love: “As gin is not only a drink in itself but also a base for many mixed drinks, so Affection, besides being a love itself, can enter into the other loves and colour them all through and become the very medium in which from day to day they operate” (*Four Loves* 57). The most basic sort of this love is the love between a mother and child (53) and later the love between siblings (54). Affection is the sort of love that comes from a deep knowledge of one who has “ ‘always’ been there – the short but seemingly immemorial ‘always’ of childhood” (56).

In Stoppard’s *The Real Thing*, *storge* becomes the premise around which Henry develops his final ideas of what “real” love is. The title *The Real Thing* is suggestive in itself. In the title Stoppard is asserting, like Lewis, that there is a distinction between “love” and “the real thing”. It is no coincidence that the cricket bat metaphor appears in *The Real Thing*. In fact, the title serves to establish that the foundation of the play will be the quest to distinguish between

common love and “the real thing”. Like Lewis’s *storge*, *The Real Thing* will be the basis for exploring the other three types of love.

At the opening of *The Real Thing*, Henry is a relativist who finds that true love is no more “true” than friendship or acquaintances. He goes as far as to say that, “Loving and being loved is unliterary. It’s happiness expressed in banality and lust” (*Real Thing* 39). He is, in fact, willing to disregard the familiar and affectionate love of his wife, Charlotte, and to lust after one of his co-workers, Annie. The trouble with such affairs is that they can so easily “go wrong, change, spoil. [That’s how you know] it wasn’t the real thing” (27). According to Lewis, then, the reason that these affairs will spoil is because they lack the intimate knowledge of one another, or affection, required in order to experience love.

Henry’s initial love affairs stand in stark contrast, then, to the way he feels about love when confronted with the love affairs of his daughter. Again at the heart of *storge* is the love between a parent and a child. This pure love is what puts the true nature of love in perspective for Henry. Debbie, being of the “younger” generation that is free from any of the previous formalities of love, decides that she wants to run off with her Latin professor, Terry. Though Henry has been the pioneer of love affairs in his lifetime, he has a strong disapproval of Debbie’s affairs.

Debbie insists that sex is just that. There is nothing more to having sex than simply the act of it and love does not hinge upon it. The reason why people pine and obsess over love, she insists, is that they elevate sex to a level of mystery and the unknown: “[Crisis is] what comes of making such a mystery of [sex]. When I was twelve I was obsessed. Everything was sex. Latin was sex. The dictionary fell open at *meretrix*, a harlot. You could feel the mystery coming off the word like musk... I [had sex] in the boiler room and it turned out to be biology after all.

That's what free love is free of – propaganda" (62). Debbie, representing the inexperienced youth, is Stoppard's counterargument to the idea of there being a "real thing" whatsoever. The sexual liberation movement seems to have taken the idea of certainty in love out of relationships, and certainly out of sex.

The irony here, and the danger that Stoppard warns his audience against in *The Real Thing*, is that Henry has ground upon which to base his argument that Debbie should not run off with Terry. According to Lewis's theories, Henry's lack of foundation comes from his lack of affection with his daughter. At the opening of the play neither Henry nor Charlotte view Debbie as a priority:

**Henry:** It's a little early in the day for all this.

**Charlotte:** No darling, it's a little late.

**Max:** Er, where's young Deborah today?

**Charlotte:** (*Baffled*) Debbie?

**Max:** Your daughter.

**Charlotte:** Oh daughter.

**Henry:** Riding school.

**Charlotte:** Must be some mistake. Smart talk, that's the thing. Having children is so unsmart. Endless dialogue about acne. Henry couldn't do that. He doesn't like research.

Disregarding the well-being or happiness of their daughter, Henry and Charlotte are not even concerned with who she is in a casual conversation. It is also telling that Debbie is at "riding" school, the sexual connotation of the word "riding" serving as foreshadowing to the later problems of the play: Debbie's entire sexual education was done on her own time without the example of her parents to show her what true affection is.



The lack of affection between Henry and Charlotte transfers onto the relationship between Debbie and her parents. Here Stoppard shows that it is difficult to enforce the ideals of love onto a child who comes from a marriage lacking the most basic form of love, affection. Recall that Lewis says that affection must be more than mere familiarity; rather, it must be familiarity coupled with courtesy in a constant balancing act: "... Affection at its best can say whatever the rules that govern public courtesy; for Affection at its best wishes neither to wound nor to humiliate nor to domineer... But the domestic Rudesby means something quite different when he claims liberty to say "anything" (*Four Loves* 68). Affection is not only a love, but an action that needs to be consistently practiced.

Due to Henry and Charlotte's lack of civility (and near lack of concern whatsoever) toward Debbie, she feels as though she can act familiarly toward them without the respect afforded by the fact that Henry and Charlotte are her parents. Debbie calls her parents by their first names, much to Henry's chagrin: "I don't much like your calling me Henry. I liked being called Fa. Fa and Ma" (*Real Thing* 60-61). When Debbie does call him Fa, however, it is again with familiarity lacking civility: "*Fa*, you're going on" (63). Here, Debbie utilizes the tactic of causing pain to her father by imposing an intimate relationship on what has always been a polite one in an odd reversal of what Lewis theorizes.

"To be free and easy," Lewis argues, "when you are presented to some eminent stranger is bad manners; to practice formal and ceremonial courtesies at home... is – and is always intended to be – bad manners" (*Four Loves* 69). Because there has not been an intimate relationship in any sense of the word, Debbie imposes pain on her father by implementing an artificial one. The italicized *Fa* implies direct purpose and an edge of sarcasm. Juxtaposed then with Henry's foretelling, "It's too early in the day for all this" and Charlotte's assertion that,

“No, darling, it’s a little late”, the familial problems between Debbie and her parents show themselves early on in the play due to a lack of *storge*.

It is only after Henry realizes that he has essentially failed in his relationship with his daughter that he realizes what “real” love is. As Lewis theorized, the “real thing” is based on an intimate knowledge of another in what can only be called affection. Stoppard describes it as “carnal knowledge”:

It’s to do with knowing and being known. I remember how it stopped seeming odd that in biblical Greek knowing was used for making love. Whosit knew so-and-so. Carnal knowledge. It’s what lovers trust each other with. Knowledge of each other, not of the flesh but through the flesh, knowledge of self, the real him, the real her, *in extremis*, the mask slipped from the face. Every other version of oneself is on offer to the public. We share our vivacity, grief, sulks, anger, joy... our lovers share with us the passing trade. But in pairs we insist that we give ourselves to each other. What selves? What’s left? What else is there that hasn’t been dealt out like a deck of cards? Carnal knowledge. Personal, final, uncompromised. Knowing, being known. I revere that (*Real Thing* 62).

Through Henry’s monologue Stoppard aligns with Lewis’s thought that true intimacy comes from a deep knowledge of another person.

Ironically Henry does not “revere” the intimate knowledge of another until he realizes that he has not instilled that value in his daughter. This is due to the jealous nature of *storge*. Because affection is primal and instinctive, “its jealousy is proportionately fierce” (*Four Loves* 71). “And why would it not?” Lewis asks, “Something or someone has stolen “our” boy (or girl). He who was one of Us has become one of Them. What right had anybody to do it? He is

ours” (71-72). Henry resents the fact that this “Terry” can steal his little girl away from the family – can take her to the streets. It is not until he is violated via the theft of his daughter that Henry realizes that he has the same *storge* with his wife, Charlotte.

Though Henry initially thinks that he can, like his daughter, freely give and take love (as Debbie says “Exclusive rights isn’t love, it’s colonization” (*Real Thing* 63) when the woman he loves is “taken” from him he is unable to react with any sense of intellect and he is reduced to primal grunts. His wife, Charlotte, articulates this phenomenon perfectly as she distinguishes between Henry as a writer and Henry as a person: “That’s the difference between plays and real life: thinking time. You don’t really think that if Henry caught me out with a lover, he’d sit around being witty about Rembrandt place mats? Like hell he would. He’d come apart like a pick-a-sticks. His sentence structure would go to pot closely followed by his sphincter” (21). Indeed Charlotte is correct, for when Henry is certain that Annie is running off to her lover, the generally verbose and long-winded Henry is reduced to the sentence, “Oh please, please, please, please, don’t” (77). There is no wit here. No articulation. It is “as if the physical world has been wired up to pass a current back to the part of your brain where imagination glows like a filament in a lobe no bigger than a torch bulb. Pain” (63). It is this pain that proves that love is present. Love is most felt, then, in its absence. The fact that there is a physical reaction of the body against a lack of love demonstrates that there is a biological need for love – or that it is natural to be in love.

Again the treatment of a child by his parents is the most basic form of human love. Biologically speaking, it is this love that keeps man alive throughout the beginning years of his life. The feeling of love is what separates man’s family from “a mere personal contract, just as an agreement by one person to cut another’s lawn every week is a contract” (Rice 243).

However, the family, in the words of Aristotle, is “a union of those who cannot exist without each other; namely, of male and female, that the race may continue” (243). In other words, man’s family which is brought together by love is part of the natural – if only biological – progression of the human race. Affection is necessary literally in order for man to survive and becomes the model around which man bases his own love when he chooses a family. The natural love between parents and children, then, becomes the love that is the cornerstone of every future relationship.

### **Friendship**

While *storge* is the most primal and natural form of love and is necessary to the development of mankind, friendship, Lewis argues, is the most unessential form of love. In being the most unessential form of love, however, friendship is in fact the pinnacle of what man aspires to when he loves.

Over the course of history friendship has experienced a major decline in value. Indeed, hardly any serious musings on friendship have been delivered since Aristotle’s *Philia* or Cicero’s *Amicitia* (*Four Loves* 88). Lewis argues that the reason why friendship has experienced such a demotion in value is because few people truly experience it. As a result, many do not recognize true friendship, making the every-day interactions, acquaintances and cooperation necessary to the survival of a society seem like friendship. “Friendship, [Lewis states,] is the least natural of loves; the least instinctive, organic, biological, gregarious and necessary... without Eros none of us would have been begotten and without Affection none of us would have been reared; but we can live and breed without Friendship” (*Four Loves* 88). All of these facts beg the question, “Why does man bother with friendship if it is unnecessary?”

While Sayers states that man is most human when he creates, others argue that he is most human in his ability to make choices. If God did, in fact, give man free will, then in making free choices man is experiencing that humanity which God has bestowed upon him. The choice of friendship functions at the highest state of one's individuality and of one's intellect. Friendship is immune to the baser and more primal loves (such as Eros and Affection, which is based nearly entirely on a "tugging [of the] guts and fluttering in [one's] diaphragm" (*Four Loves* 89). Friendship, rather, is most spiritual and "[seems] to raise [one] up to the level of gods or angels" (89). In taking on a friend, then, one is willing to set aside the base needs of the physical and focus on human relationship that has no other value or ulterior moment other than what is inherent.

While Friendship, upon first glance, seems like a force that would bring a society together, Lewis argues that in fact most societies fear it due to the precise individual nature of it. "[Friendship] withdraws men from collective "togetherness" as surely as solitude itself could do; and more dangerously, for it withdraws them by two's and three's" (*Four Loves* 90). Democratic nations, ironically, have the most natural aversion to it because intrinsic in Friendship is a hierarchy of man. "To say 'These are my friends' implies 'Those are not'" (90). Such preferences have no place in either politics or world affairs – and yet it is just those common interests that bring men together as friends.

The essential difference, then, between Friendship and the other three types of love is the image evoked by each respective love: "Lovers are normally face to face, absorbed in each other; Friends, side by side, absorbed in some common interest" (91). Again, Friendship is based entirely on one's preferences as an individual: one's likes, one's dislikes; his personality, her

level of education, his demeanor and her overall spirit all naturally mingle together to form a friendship.

Tom Stoppard's play, *The Invention of Love*, visits a set of friends. Having all attended Oxford University, these friends in particular have their level of education and their love of scholarship in common. These friends include such famous names as A.E. Housman, Moses John Jackson, Alfred William Pollard, Mark Pattison, Walter Pater, John Ruskin and Benjamin Jowett. These men have nothing in common beyond their place of education. Indeed, much of their discourse consists of academic disagreements and arguments – and yet, these men find themselves circling around one another in the afterlife. The implication by Stoppard is therefore similar to the conclusions of Lewis; those common interests and experiences that define friendship in life are important enough to haunt one's death.

*The Invention of Love* follows A.E. Housman as he grapples with the fact that his entire life was a lie: A closeted gay, Housman relives the painful memories of all the times that he denies his true self and remains friends with Moses Jackson, when in fact he wants to be Moses' lover. Housman's misery is held in stark contrast to Oscar Wilde whom Housman also finds in the underworld. Wilde is infamously outed in a scandal and died a martyr to "the love that dare not speak its name" (Douglas). However, in the words of Stoppard's Wilde, "Better a fallen rocket than never a burst of light" (*Invention* 96). In other words, it is better to be one's self as truly and brilliantly as possible than to fade from existence as a ghost of one's self. In comparison to the bravery of Wilde, Housman flounders in the underworld with neither his love nor his true self to comfort him.

Lewis makes an explicit point that Friendship and homosexuality have nothing to do with one another. In fact, the diction that he uses to describe homosexuality (with words such as

“abnormal” and “contamination”) is nothing short of offensive to the modern audience. Lewis also goes on to say that it is implausible for men and women to be friends considering that they would have no common interests (*Four Loves* 105). These thoughts, while they may have been true in Lewis’s time, have little in bearing in the modern world. Women are no longer confined to the house and therefore would share common interests with men. The biological need to procreate is no longer necessary for the survival of the species; therefore, love can comfortably, and naturally, extend itself in the direction of homosexuality.

Therefore, when analyzing *The Invention of Love*, Friendship should not exclude romantic love, but rather inform the depth with which Housman loves Jackson. Theirs is a love based on camaraderie, common interests and (of course) friendship. There is, however, an overwhelming heartbreak in *The Invention of Love* when Housman finds that his friendship with Jackson is not enough to foster a more intimate relationship: Moses is straight. For him, Friendship will never progress into Eros. The main study of *The Invention of Love*, therefore, will be in comparing Housman to Oscar Wilde and their search for love. Unlike Wilde, Housman’s dishonesty with himself prevents him from gaining either true friends or an intimate relationship.

Stoppard literally divides A.E. Housman into two distinct characters in order to represent his inner conflict: The younger version, Housman, is still very much a poet. Housman has not yet been scorned by love or life and believes that he can truly be himself in Oxford. AEH (the older A.E. Housman) is not so naïve. In the underworld, AEH can only sigh at the appearance of Moses Jackson and reflect upon the actions of his younger self.

In their interactions, AEH plants the ideas of his older self into his younger self and those ideas inevitably take root and affect the actions of Housman. The way Stoppard writes it, it is clear that Housman and AEH are of the same consciousness but are separated by time:

**Housman:** ... Do you know Munro?

**AEH:** I corresponded with him once.

**Housman:** I'm going to write to him (*Invention* 36).

Housman speaks these final words as though the thought had just occurred to him, when in fact they are planted in his mind by a self that is 50 years his senior. When Housman asks AEH why he cannot be both a scholar and a poet, AEH replies, "Humbug...poetical feelings are a peril to scholarship" (*Invention* 31-36). Later, when speaking to Pollard and Jackson, Housman mentions that man needs science to explain the world, and that the rest is "all humbug" (*Invention* 46). By adopting AEH's cynical diction, Housman is beginning to turn into his "older" self.

Meanwhile, however, Housman and AEH are taking their desires for romantic love with another man from ancients that are thousands of years their senior. In this way, Stoppard seems to be in a direct confrontation with C.S. Lewis, who scorns the idea of "Hrothgar embracing Beowulf, Johnson embracing Boswell... and all those hairy old toughs of centurions in Tacitus, clinging to one another and begging for last kisses when the legion was broken up" (*Four Loves* 93). Lewis speaks of Friendship as love, and one of the most important loves at that, but he does not cross the line into Eros.

Housman agrees that many of the ancients were not in love with one another:

Theseus and Pirithous. They were kinds. They met on the field of battle to fight to the death, but when they saw each other, each was struck in admiration for his adversary, so



they became comrades instead and had many adventures together. Theseus was never so happy as when he was with his friend. They weren't sweet on each other. They loved each other, as men loved each other in the heroic age, in virtue, paired together in legend and poetry as the pattern of comradeship, the chivalric ideal of virtue in the ancient world (*Invention* 76).

Housman's vision of Theseus and Pirithous aligns perfectly with Lewis's view of friendship, which is that "Lovers are normally face to face, absorbed in each other; Friends, side by side, absorbed in some common interest" (*Four Loves* 91). Both Theseus and Pirithous – and indeed Housman and Jackson, love each other as friends. They are absorbed in a common interest. Theseus and Pirithous are absorbed in battle and war while Housman and Jackson are absorbed in scholarship. There is, however a second and more secret element to many of these loves, as coined by Lord Alfred Douglas, "The love that dare not speak its name" (Douglas). It is this love that Lewis nominally leaves out and that A.E. Housman struggled with his entire life: when friendship crosses into erotic love.

C.S. Lewis admits that when members of the opposite sex endeavor to be friends, they will almost inevitably turn to Eros as the natural progression of that love. To a homosexual, however, particularly in a time period when the term "homosexual" had not yet even been invented (*Invention* 91), that progression can rarely come to fruition, and the result is a painful loneliness for which others have no empathy. AEH translates Horace in order to express this heartwrenching truth:

I take no pleasure in woman or boy, nor the trusting hope of love returned, nor matching drink for drink, nor binding fresh-cut flowers around my brow – but why, Ligurinus, alas why this unaccustomed tear trickling down my cheek? – why

does my glib tongue stumble to silence as I speak? At night I hold you fast in my dreams, I run after you across the Field of Mars, I follow you into the tumbling waters, and you show no pity (*Invention* 49)

In the stage directions Jackson appears at the back of the stage as a runner who gets no closer to Housman no matter how long he runs (*Invention* 49). In translating Horace, Housman is expressing his love for Jackson and the heartbreak at his inability to express it.

Oscar Wilde, on the other hand, is able to pour out his love to anybody who comes his way and to any object for which he feels even a glimmer of affection. After the “Turkish atrocities in Bulgaria”, Wilde “[swears] never to touch Turkish champagne, and eat only Bulgarian Delight” (*Invention* 94). Every fabric of life that Wilde touches explodes with vivacity. On Jubilee Day children shout for him, “*Vive Monsieur Melmoth!*” After Wilde buys an armful of lilies a boy stops him on the street and says, “Oh how rich you are!” The thought of this makes Wilde weep (*Invention* 94). And yet, in spite of the energy that seems to radiate from Wilde, AEH pities him: “I’m very sorry [AEH says]. Your life is a terrible thing. A chronological error” (*Invention* 96). AEH is convinced, then, that had Wilde been born in a time when man’s Friendship could progress to Eros that he would not have come to such a tragic end.

What AEH does not realize, however, is that the lesson of Wilde’s life has little to do with homosexuality. To be sure, “the blaze of [Wilde’s] immolation threw its light into every corner of the land where uncounted young men sat in their own darkness” making him a martyr for homosexuals across nations and centuries; but the advice that Wilde gives to AEH is, essentially, to be himself.

Wilde asserts that “the betrayal of one’s friends is a bagatelle in the stakes of love, but the betrayal of oneself is lifelong regret” (*Invention* 94-95). This line is truly the crux of the play

and is the reason why AEH finds himself “on [an] empty shore with the indifferent waters at [his] feet” (*Invention* 115) in the afterlife having to reflect on the mistakes of his youth.

Housman believes that he could make his mark on the world as a poet and as a scholar. AEH tells Housman that it is not possible nor is it desirable, and that poetry only undermines true scholarship. True translations, AEH argues, are more important than an exquisite but corrupt line of verse (*Invention* 36). Once, Housman could “weep [when he thought of] how nearly lost it was, that apple, that flower, lying among the rubbish under a wine-vat, the last, corrupt, copy of Catullus left alive in the wreck of ancient literature” – whether it is corrupt or not – just like Wilde (*Invention* 36). As he grows older, however, Housman begins to focus his duty on the scholarship rather than on the poetry of the subject and consequently begins to lose his true self.

Wilde is bold, daring and has truly left his mark on the world not by being a poet or a scholar, but rather by being himself. The *facts* of who he is are of no importance in the face of the *truth* of who Wilde is: “I was said to have walked down Piccadilly with a lily in my hand [Wilde tells AEH]. There was no need. To do it is the truth about me” (*Invention* 93). In essence, then, Wilde turns his life into a work of art by allowing his inner truth to flourish (even at the hands of others) so that he may bask in it. AEH is never able to come to this point, and only in the afterlife, which is a shadow of what occurs in his lifetime, is he able to be truthful about his love for Jackson without hiding behind his poetry.

The story of AEH is, at the end, not a tragedy of Eros but a tragedy of Friendship. Because AEH was unable to truly be himself around his peers, and in particular around Jackson, he is unable to participate truly in either Eros or Friendship. Lewis theorizes that Friendship is based on a distinct kinship, and that the start of any Friendship may be, “What? You too? I thought I was the only one” (*Four Loves* 96). Lewis goes on to cite Ralph Waldo Emerson in

saying that, to friends, “Do you love me?” may be translated as, “Do you see the same truth?” (97). Because AEH concerned himself with facts and not with truths, his Friendship suffered. He is unable to live his own truth, and therefore cannot share that truth with others.

There are many implications in the fact that *The Invention of Love* is set in the afterlife but it does not imply that the actions of the play can somehow altar or inform the “actual” events of A.E. Housman’s life. Housman does, after all, confess his love to Jackson in *The Invention of Love* and for all intents and purposes, Jackson is a good friend to Housman. Knowing that he cannot reciprocate Housman’s feelings, Jackson offers forgiveness. In what could have been an awkward or devastating moment, Jackson alleviates Housman’s anxiety by saying, “We’ll be just like before... It’s rotten luck but it’ll be our secret... We’ve been pals a long time” (*Invention* 77-78). In this way AEH can justify his life of silence by trusting that Jackson will be a “true friend” to him.

Lewis states that true friends scorn talk of business and affairs – that it only keeps them from enjoying pastimes together. “A Friend will, to be sure, prove himself to be also an ally when alliance becomes necessary... [but] the occasions for them are almost interruptions” (*Four Loves* 102). Jackson’s seemingly gracious but really near-dismissal of Housman’s feelings for him has the “Don’t mention it” tone mentioned by Lewis (102). Therefore, in the wish-fulfillment afterlife of *The Invention of Love*, Housman had true friends and was a true friend.

One must ask oneself, however, for what was Housman being forgiven? Housman’s confession, though it took on a role of “business or affairs”, is Housman’s only moment of true honesty. Jackson is more than Housman’s friend: Jackson is half of Housman’s life (*Invention* 77). Jackson, on the other hand, is denying Housman the same affection that he would give a dog that jumped into his lifeboat: “You kissed the dog [Housman mourns]. After that day,

everything else seemed futile and ridiculous” (*Invention* 77). Housman hides his true self from Jackson, and as a result Jackson never really *sees* Housman.

In the words of A.E. Housman’s poem, “...they’re taking him to prison for the colour of his hair” (*Invention* 82). In other words, for something about him that he cannot change, Housman is being dismissed by his friend. “Eros will have naked bodies; Friendship naked personalities” (*Four Loves* 103). It is due to Housman’s inability to be “naked” to the world that when Wilde asks him if he has any friends, Housman replies, “I had colleagues” (*Invention* 94). Therefore, due to Housman’s dishonesty with himself and with the world, he was unable to attain the Friendship of the ancient warriors, or the homoerotic love of the Greeks.

Therefore, in comparing the internal struggle of A.E. Housman explored in *The Invention of Love* to the life of Oscar Wilde as imagined by Tom Stoppard it can be surmised that the true failure on the part of A.E. Housman is a failure of Friendship: due to society’s inability to accept homosexuality Housman is unable to reveal his inner truth. As a result, Housman can neither find true Friendship nor can he enjoy the pleasures of Eros. Housman then truly embodies Sophocles’ thought that “Love... is like the ice held in the hand by children. A piece of ice held fast in the fist” (*Invention* 43). It can thus be concluded that in order to experience love of any kind, a love and appreciation of oneself is the necessary first step, particularly in the case of Friendship, which is a love that relies on mutual recognition of one’s selves.

Again, Friendship is entirely natural. Friendship has existed since written history and will continue to exist. Now that men and women are more equal within society, Friendship can be the basis for their love. It is universal, however, that in order to achieve love that is based on Friendship, one must be able to give himself fully to his lover and must therefore first be friends with himself.

## Eros

The third type of love as theorized by C.S. Lewis is that love which is most passionate and all-encompassing: Eros. In Lewis's theory, Eros is not limited to that which is purely sexual. (*Four Loves* 132). He separates the two facets of Eros in order to remove the moral implication that tends to accompany erotic love. The sexual act, Lewis argues, has little to do with love nor does it have much to do with marriage. Sex without Eros is simply sex – and certainly could be immoral or adulterous – and marriage without Eros is simply a business arrangement (132). True love requires the emotional obsession that comes from Eros.

Those men and women who experience true Eros are often too distracted to consider sexual relations with their beloved: “The fact that [the beloved] is a woman is far less important than the fact that she is herself. He is full of desire, but the desire may not be sexually toned” (*Four Loves* 133). The man who is experiencing Eros can only be described as being “in love”. Every spare moment in his day is spent thinking of his beloved and he hardly governs his own self: “Eros enters him like an invader, taking over and reorganizing, one by one, the institutions of a conquered country. It may have taken over many others before it reaches the sex in him; and it will reorganize that too” (134). In other words there is a *sensual* desire for the beloved. The sexual desire is secondary and need not be present at all in order for Eros to occur. Eros is the preoccupation, the obsession, the unconditional faith and the perpetual naiveté that is often attributed with love.

Accompanying the throes of Eros are two distinct dangers. The first is that lovers take Eros entirely too seriously and thus lose their joy in one another. The second is that Eros becomes god-like to them and they begin to follow a the feeling blindly.

Eros, in the media, in film and on the stage is too often depicted as rapt, intense, and “swoony-devout”. Seldom does it contain any gaiety (*Four Loves* 139). These images, which are presented to people as the pinnacle of Eros and Venus combined, Lewis argues, are what villanize Eros and turn her into a “false goddess”. In this case Eros would be falser “than Aphrodite of the Greeks; for they, even while they worshipped her, knew that she was laughter-loving” (141). When it happens that lovers lose the joy of being in love in the wake of being “serious” lovers, they lose the naked vulnerability that is necessary in order for Eros to endure. No man is god-like. The amount of admiration and worship afforded him by his lover allows him to wear a “paper crown” that gives him status, but is, at the end of the day, made of paper (147). The vulnerability afforded by Eros comes from the constant reminder of one’s own buffoonery, and the love of another in spite of her buffoonery.

The second danger of Eros comes when one imagines that his “paper crown” has become real and he begins to worship Eros as the ultimate god. Near worship is, of course, necessary in order for love to be permanent. The belief in love’s eternity is necessary in order to overcome the difficulties that life and time will bring to any relationship. However “it is in the grandeur of Eros that the seeds of danger are concealed. [Eros] has spoken like a god. His total commitment, his reckless disregard of happiness, his transcendence of self-regard, sound like a message from the eternal world” (*Four Loves* 151). When Eros becomes the god over the beloved, however, it is likely that such misplaced love will lead to “cruel and perjured unions... to suicide pacts and [to] murder” (151). There is a fine line, then, between love to a point of rapture and love to a point of disaster. With Eros, one must be on constant guard.

Tom Stoppard’s *Rock ‘n’ Roll* explores the passion of Eros in three facets: love, politics and music, also known as sex, drugs and rock and roll. Love and sex clearly parallel one

another, particularly where Eros is concerned. Politics, to people around the world but specifically to the communist loyalists of Czechoslovakia, is very much like a drug: despite the consistent let downs, disappointments and atrocities there is a consistent belief in the ability of the political system to fix everything. Similarly, rock and roll is a constant companion to those who are in distress and speaks for generations of people in need of a voice. All three are subjects in which people become fully immersed and which can cause the subject equal pleasure and pain. Stoppard addresses each facet of Eros by telling gripping tales of love and attraction, examining political theory and playing rock and roll songs. Each of these factors become primary sources which prove his theory that Eros is the central figure to all of these human institutions and that each of these institutions culminates in what can only be described as love.

Eros is a subject that is given particular attention in *Rock 'n' Roll*. Eleanor, Max's wife and linguistic scholar, gives private lessons regarding the treatment of Eros in classical texts. Similar to A.E. Housman, Eleanor puts all of her energy into the placement of punctuation, the origins of words and the way in which those words have evolved. To Stoppard, knowledge of Eros is just as significant as the Eros itself.

In the modern world Eros is seen not as a tangible force but as a concept or an idea. Eleanor's student, Lenka, remarks upon this fallacy, saying "There are some among us who think knowledge is advanced when we give something a new name. Goodbye, Eros; hello, libido. Goodbye, Muses; hello inspiration" (*Rock* 46). Again, the modern world is confusing Eros as a feeling that can somehow be controlled by the person (such as the sexual feeling described by Lewis) rather than as a third party that takes over the individual. Too often Eros, because it is associated with the sexual and ignoble, is trivialized as a concept that can be controlled by the



mind. Eros, however, takes over the mind, reorganizing it and reeducating it to include a passion that was not present before.

Other passions that are caused by Eros in Stoppard's *Rock 'n' Roll* (beyond love of another person) are love of music and love of Communism. Max is a communist supporter who stubbornly refuses to accept that the world has, as a whole, moved away from communism and has embraced capitalism, including his beloved Czechoslovakia. He mourns, "Why do people go on as if there's a danger we might forget Communism's crimes, when the danger is we'll forget its achievements?" (*Rock* 50) Max's counterpart, Jan, feels similarly about Rock and Roll. Though his records are destroyed by the Czechoslovakian communist regime as a method of keeping his radical western ideas at bay, Jan still risks his life in order to obtain underground recordings of Pink Floyd and The Rolling Stones. In the words of Lewis, those under the influence of Eros are "ready for every sacrifice except renunciation" (*Four Loves* 151). These passions cannot be satiated; rather, they continue to grow with each passing moment as though the feeling feeds upon itself.

The relationship that Max has with Communism and that Jan has with rock and roll can be compared to the experience of two lovers. In order for love to thrive and to continue to thrive there needs to be an unconditional belief in its ability to regenerate and grow despite being destroyed time and time again. In the words of Alexander Pope, "hope springs eternal". Eros survives on the sole fact that man will continue to love even after being destroyed.

In the classical world, however, Eros is not just an idea, it is a god. This personification allows for Eros to become a conscious force in itself rather than just a phenomenon experienced when man falls in love of his own free will. Similarly, Eros is personified in modern times by Tom Stoppard in the form of the "Piper".

The Piper is the first image of Eros presented in the play and is playing a Syd Barrett tune based on a poem by James Joyce (*Rock* xxi). Immediately The Piper catches the attention of Esme, who is described as wearing a flowing garment with long golden hair (*Rock* 1). The song that The Piper sings to Esme is

Lean out of your window,  
Golden Hair,  
I heard you singing  
In the midnight air.  
My book is closed,  
I read no more... (*Rock* 1)

Here The Piper and Esme become symbols around which each example of Eros in *Rock 'n' Roll* can be formulated.

The Piper referencing “Golden Hair” gives Esme the impression that he is singing directly to her. Similarly, she who experiences Eros experiences it as though it were meant singularly for her – as though the situation was unique, original and new, even if she has experienced it before. The line, “I heard you singing/ In the midnight air” reciprocally implies that her song was meant for him alone, and that he needed to follow that voice. The use of “midnight” further implies that there is a magic in the air, again bringing in the intangible and metaphysical aspect of Eros. When The Piper continues by saying “my book is closed/ I read no more” he is referring to the ability of Eros to completely take over one’s self, to a point where syntax becomes worthless to him (recall Henry in *The Real Thing*). Eros is, therefore, not a mental faculty but rather one that is entirely physical or emotional.

Esme does not, however, get a chance to speak to The Piper. Before she has a chance to find out who he is, The Piper with “wild dark hair” disappears over the garden wall, laughing quietly to himself (*Rock* 1). Esme spends the remainder of her life puzzling over his sudden

disappearance and attempting to recapture that feeling of being sung to by “Pan” (a reference to the mythical Greek piper). Again his disappearance is a metaphor for man’s interaction with Eros. The feeling is strong and consumes the person, sometimes for the remainder of her life, but Eros itself is an elusive concept, and is often difficult to capture or to comprehend. Eros is mischievous, but powerful. The title “The Piper” evokes images of the Pied Piper who need only play his pipe for scores of children (and mice, as it were) to follow him. Rock and Roll and Politics have a similar effect on the characters of *Rock ‘n’ Roll*, demonstrating how Eros is hidden in many aspects of life.

Eros is most explicitly seen in Eleanor’s private lessons on Sappho and the argument that follows between her and Max. Lenka translates the Greek in order to achieve an understanding of “Eros the knee-trembler” (*Rock* 9). Eros is a god here – a true force that inflicts himself upon the unsuspecting lover. The lover cries, “Eros shook my mind like the wind shakes the oak tree... Eros! Who melts my limbs, sweet-bitter rascal...” (*Rock* 9) and describes her physical reaction as a result of Eros:

...Sappho is describing what it’s like to experience love and desire and jealousy. Because there, down the table, this man is leaning in to listen to her girl’s sweet speaking and lovely laughing and it’s Sappho’s body that goes beserk. Her heart jumps around like a bird beating its wings, her eyes stop seeing, her tongue breaks, her ears fill up with noise, her skin goes hot, then cold and clammy, her body’s out of control – it’s all happening like that, in the third person (*Rock* 44).

Because Eros (in this context) is a god, the physical reaction to jealousy can be seen as a conscious infliction upon her by Eros.

Max does not agree that Eros is a physical reaction, but rather thinks that all love is a function of the “brain” (distinguished from the more complex and artistic “mind”). Max states that “the brain is a biological machine for thinking. If it wasn’t for the merely technical problem of understanding how it works, we could make one out of beer cans. It would be the size of a stadium but it would sit there, going, “I think, therefore I am” (*Rock* 47). Lenka argues that brains all work in the same way, while minds do not. Max cannot agree, however, and is resigned to the idea that love, political beliefs and taste in music are all results of the body: consciousness is collective and can be altered based on surroundings. Max therefore takes on the idea that Eros is nothing more than the physical desire for another person that can be overcome or reasoned away.

The idea of Eros being a function of the body fits in with what Lewis calls a misunderstanding of Eros. Again, Lewis makes the distinction that Eros is not mere sex but is a preoccupation with the beloved. Stoppard compares this misunderstanding to a pinball machine that Max dreams up: “[A] Pinball machine... It does love. It does inspiration. It does memory. It does thought. If mental is separate from physical, how does it make Sappho go hot and cold and deaf and blind at lunch?” (*Rock* 46) Again Lenka makes the argument that the physical and the mental can be separate from one another but can still interact. In the case of Eros, the body has no idea that it is being taken over by an outside force that begins in the mind and travels elsewhere, consuming a person until he becomes a slave to love: “Sappho didn’t know why things fall to the floor. So what? They fell anyway. She looks down the table and she is love separate from her body” (46). It is therefore possible for Eros to be entirely mental and to exclude the physical almost entirely.

Though he does not admit it, Max realizes this truth in his marriage to Eleanor, who has recently had one of her breasts removed during her battle with breast cancer. It is difficult for Eleanor to believe that she can be sexually attractive with only one breast. In fact, she feels quite like a freak living in the polite British world: "... I opened the door to him without my falsy and didn't catch on till he kept staring at my face – he daren't drop his eyes, it scared him. Doesn't she know she's only got one tit?... He was sucking on a lozenge, he offered me one, gazing into my eyes and breathing eucalyptus at me like a koala caught in the headlights" (*Rock* 5). Eleanor's discomfort here is due largely to the fact that Eros is defined in terms of the physical. Max says that it makes no difference, but Eleanor fires back with, "If it makes no difference, Max, you don't have to stop making love to me from behind" (6). Without the self assurance that one is physically attractive (at the very least to her partner) it is impossible to believe in the possibility of Eros.

With Eleanor, Max's paradoxical thinking becomes evident. On the one hand he believes that the physical is everything. The soul of a person – the consciousness of a person – can be entirely recreated if only given the proper surroundings. This is clearly displayed in Max's "pinball machine which thinks it's in love" (*Rock* 46). Eleanor is hurt by this thought and defends the fact that there resides within each person an inner being that is deserving of love:

My body is telling me I'm nothing without it, and you're telling me the same...  
 It's as if you're in cahoots, [Max], you and my cancer...They've cut, cauterized  
 and zapped away my breasts, my ovaries, my womb, half my bowel, and a  
 nutmeg of my brain, and I am undiminished. I'm exactly who I've always been.  
*I am not my body.* My body is nothing without *me*, that's the truth of it... [My  
 body] does classics. It does half-arsed feminism, it does love, desire, jealousy and

fear – Christ, does it do fear! – so who’s the me who’s still in one piece?...I don’t want your “mind” which you can make out of beer cans. Don’t bring it to my funeral. I want your grieving soul or nothing. I do not want your amazing biological machine – I want what you love me with (*Rock* 50-51).

Max, like Henry of *The Real Thing*, realizes that true love is preoccupation with the spirit of another that comes from a deep knowledge of the person. He further realizes, like AEH of *The Invention of Love*, that love necessarily involves a validation of the other person by recognizing his inner spirit. As Charles Williams says, “Love you? I *am* you” (*Four Loves* 136). Max says to Eleanor, “[My mind is] what I love you with. That’s it. There’s nothing else” (*Rock* 51). Here Max comes to the true meaning of Eros. Though it can be elusive, mischievous and impossible to comprehend, it is, at the end, the knowledge that two souls are singing only for one another. Nobody else would ever do. Eros is an outside force that reorganizes first one’s mind and then one’s sex until finally one is entirely preoccupied with his beloved. Both Lewis and Stoppard come to this conclusion in similar ways, demonstrating how Eros is a phenomenon that is entirely universal.

### **Charity**

Previously the formula of this paper has been to explain a particular type of love as theorized by C.S. Lewis then to compare how a Tom Stoppard play fits into that view of love. However in the final type of love, Charity (hereafter referred to by the Greek, *Agape*), a closer comparison of the two writers becomes necessary. This is because, while the views of both Stoppard and Lewis are governed by the natural law (as has been demonstrated), it would be entirely wrong to impose beliefs upon the two writers. C.S. Lewis *wants* his writings to be read under the context of God. It is not his intention to write a book without this principle as the clear

governing body. Stoppard *does not* write with the intention of inspiring divine revelation; indeed, while he finds the idea of God to be slightly more plausible than evolution (Gussow 63), he still does not necessarily believe in a supreme being – and even less one that has been institutionalized to the degree that the Christian God has. To impose these ideas onto each author would be inaccurate if not unethical.

That being said, however, there are clear parallels between the final type of love, *Agape*, and Stoppard's play *Arcadia*, which describes a love that transcends time, age and scientific law. These final types of love encompass the ideals of the previous three types of love while bringing in a fourth and final factor of love – the metaphysical. Metaphysical love goes beyond that which can be learned (Affection), that which can be discovered (Friendship) and that which can be felt (Eros) and takes love to a level that is worthy of divine sanction.

Lewis uses a garden as a metaphor for understanding *Agape*. A garden is only distinct from the wilderness in that there is someone to care for it. The fact that it needs to be taken care of does not lessen the value of the garden; on the contrary, that fact only adds to the true glory of the garden: "The very fact that it needs constant weeding and pruning bears witness to that glory. It teems with life. It glows with colour and smells like heaven and puts forward at every hour of a summer day beauties which man could never have created and could not even, on his own resources, have imagined" (Four Loves 164). Man's love for one another, then, is only distinct from "commonplace" love if it has someone to tend to it. For Lewis, that "someone" is God.

Lewis notes that the difference between the natural loves and those loves that have Charity is that loves with Charity can conquer death by remaining important during the afterlife. But how strong does love have to be in order to endure beyond death? Lewis states that,

Natural loves can hope for eternity only in so far as they have allowed themselves to be taken into the eternity of Charity; have at least allowed the process to begin here on earth before the night comes when no man can work. And the process will always involve a kind of death. There is no escape. In my love for wife or friend the only eternal element is the transforming presence of Love Himself... For, surely, to meet in the eternal world someone for whom your love in this, however strong, had been merely natural, would not be (on that ground) even interesting (*Four Loves* 188).

Therefore in order to achieve *Agape*, or love that can be considered the Charity of God, the natural love that one feels on earth needs to have elements of the divine in it already – which means that the natural element of love must have submitted itself to transmutation. Indeed, the very term “nature” implies the transitory – but there must be a conscious effort on the part of the lovers to take their love to a level beyond the mere physical. There must be a conscious effort to love in the name of God. This effort must also take into consideration the will of God (*Four Loves* 187). In this way lovers are choosing their eternal fate when they love.

Serendipitously, *Arcadia* is also written under the framework of a garden. The context under which the love of Thomasina and Septimus is described is clearly metaphysical bordering on Biblical. The title of the play, *Arcadia*, references the Garden of Eden as it can be understood to be a Utopian land. The metaphor of the Garden is used in *Arcadia* in order to illustrate chaos theory: In terms of landscape design, the popular style of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century evolved from pristine Classical order to Gothic-Romantic *disorder* (to a point where people were purposefully imposing rocky and dangerous terrain on their estates). Similarly, the universe (according to Chaos theory) is moving toward disorder with each passing year (Gleick 4). In this world of



disorder, then, love becomes a byproduct that perpetuates disorder. Love often lacks definitive order, and therefore requires a “gardener” if it is going to flourish into anything useful.

The difference between Lewis’s theory and Stoppard’s illustration of *Agape* lies then in the identity of the gardener. To Lewis, that gardener is clearly God, without whom the natural love could never progress to a point where it is worthy of adulation. To Stoppard that gardener is the lover himself. Stoppard’s *Arcadia* demonstrates how man, by loving another, defies death and exercises the God within him. In exercising love not only does man act like God but he also exercises his free will and alters the expected course of his life and humanity as a whole. By altering the course of humanity the lover is also altering the laws of science which man has been bound to ever since its discovery, taking natural love to a divine level.

For Stoppard, that which is most divine is knowledge. The two main lovers in *Arcadia* are Septimus and Thomasina, who experience each one of the natural loves: They are affectionate toward one another. They have common interests and respect each other at an intellectual level. Slowly but surely they begin to feel an attraction for and preoccupation with one another.

Newton’s laws state, however, that the world can be broken down scientifically into very specific and predictable rules of behavior. Reduced to simple bits of matter and atoms, human beings are nothing more than animals that should behave according to basic rules of instinct and rational intellect. If man were nothing more than these simple bits of matter, everything would have an equation that could be predicted given the proper formula: one’s worldview would be decidedly deterministic. However within the realm of scientific discovery it soon becomes clear that there are certain equations that only work one-way – that cannot be reversed.

Thomasina notes that “when you stir your rice pudding... the spoonful of jam spreads itself round making red trails like the picture of a meteor in my astronomical atlas. But if you stir backward, the jam will not come together again. Indeed the pudding does not notice and continues to turn pink just as before” (*Arcadia* 8). This image nearly perfectly illustrates the creation of the universe as it is understood scientifically. There is a “big bang” and matter comes together to form little galaxies “making red trails”.

However it becomes apparent that it is impossible to un-stir the universe. Septimus accounts for this by saying that, “time must needs run backward, and since it will not, we must stir our way on mixing as we go, disorder out of disorder into disorder until pink is complete, unchanging and unchangeable, and we are done with it for ever. This is known as free will or self-determination” (*Arcadia* 8). Septimus’s tongue-in-cheek response is demonstrative of what many in the modern world see as free will: The inevitable march of time until death, making various choices along the way but with the same unchanging result.

The scientific theory that Septimus is rendering, though, is an illustration of chaos theory. Thomasina’s illustration of chaos theory is taken a step further in the equation for heat – the only one of Newton’s laws that does not function both ways, like an equation should: The second law of thermodynamics. Left to its own devices, anything hot will, eventually, become cold: “Heat goes to cold. It’s a one-way street. Your tea will end up at room temperature. What’s happening to your tea is happening to everything everywhere. The sun and the stars. It’ll take a while but we’re all going to end up at room temperature” (*Arcadia* 106). In other words, heat must be caused while the inevitable chill is simply a result. Based on this world view it appears as though there is no way back. When something is set in motion there is no way to correct it and one can only wait for the heat to slow to room temperature.

At the creation of mankind, Lewis would argue, man was a victim of the inevitable cooling process. Indeed, the perfection Eden, the respective order of pudding and jam, as an image, is disrupted by the fall into temptation. Eating the apple from the tree of knowledge began to stir the jam into the pudding and set in motion what looked like irreparable damage for mankind. However in order to combat this disorder, God promises a Messiah; He promises to enter the world in human form and suffer and die for the sins of Eve and the inevitable sins of her descendants. This is what Lewis views as Charity or gift-love; God has given a man a gift in the form of Jesus Christ.

This messianic promise does not make sense in the rational world of justice – particularly in the context of divine justice which tends to be harsh and absolute. One would imagine that a necessary consequence of disobeying direct orders from God demands eternal punishment or eternal nonexistence. But God loved man and so offered him hope in the form a messiah, laying down His own life for the sake of His children. This model of parental love also models the way in which all other types of love work: love, essentially, has the power to undercut the disorder of the world and to set it on a new path.

Similarly, knowledge has the power to set the world on a new path. Adam and Eve are tempted to eat from the Tree of Knowledge and, consequently, their paradise is taken from them. Because they have God-like knowledge, they are no longer able to live in their previous ignorance. They become aware that they are naked. They become aware of their own sex. Whether for better or for worse, obtaining that knowledge is a clear act of free will that God had given to Adam and Eve: Though he was explicitly told not to, Adam disobeyed God.

Gus, a character in *Arcadia* who is mentally disabled, is representative of man's free will. Because he is so simple, no real judgment can be placed upon his actions. He simply is.

Whether his actions are painful, significant, insignificant or profound are irrelevant because within the grand scheme of the universe, he is largely unaware of the impact his actions have. He becomes, then, the purest character. While other characters are convinced of the divine significance of their actions, Gus is a reminder that knowledge, in the end, changes nothing about one's human actions. Humans will always be imperfect, and will always have attractions that go against their rational mind and unknowingly set their world on a new path.

Gus's first significant action within the play is handing Hannah, for whom he has endless affection, an apple. The stage direction reads, "Gus has an apple, just picked, with a leaf or two still attached. He offers the apple to Hannah" (*Arcadia* 48). Hannah nonchalantly accepts the apple, and the play moves on. The apple, though, is a clear reference to the apple eaten by Adam from the Tree of Knowledge. The fact that the apple is "just picked", rather than just picked up at the market, implies this comparison. The fact that the apple is given by Gus implies that the act of disobeying God was really quite innocent. In other words, Adam was like a child, and could not understand the farther reaching consequences of his actions.

Man spends his life obtaining knowledge without the thought of what that knowledge will bring him in the long run. In this way the world continues to move toward chaos: In the metaphor of the jam in the rice pudding man cannot see the "red trails", man is the red trail. He continues to obtain knowledge without knowing whether that knowledge is real or imagined. He has not the scope of sight. Stoppard makes this apparent ignorance clear in the very structure of *Arcadia*: the comedy of the play comes from the fact that Hannah and Bernard and Valentine continue to obtain knowledge about Sidley Park that is, in no uncertain terms, false. And yet they base their research on this knowledge. They thrive on this knowledge. They need to continue on the search for knowledge, regardless of whether or not it is correct.

The quest for knowledge, Stoppard argues, is the very fabric of what it means to be human. Septimus argues, “We shed [knowledge] as we pick up, like travelers who must carry everything in their arms, and what we let fall will be picked up by those left behind. The procession is very long and life is very short. We die on the march. But there is nothing outside the march so nothing can be lost to it” (*Arcadia* 53). Hannah comes to the same conclusion a hundred years later by saying, “Comparing what we’re looking for misses the point. It’s wanting to know that makes us matter. Otherwise we’re going out the way we came in... If the answers are in the back of the book I can wait, but what a drag. Better to struggle on knowing that failure is final” (*Arcadia* 103). The fact that these same conclusions are drawn decades apart and that parallels can be made with Genesis, the very beginning of man, proves the man’s quest for knowledge is engrained in the very fiber of his bones. It is completely natural. The temptation felt by man to obtain God-like knowledge is part of his humanity. However, without the God-like vision, man’s knowledge will continue to spiral humanity into the unknown, creating more and more chaos.

In a world that is moving closer and closer to chaos, then, love seems to be an insignificant byproduct of life. The situation in Sidley Park is far from orderly and the passions of love – or “carnal embrace” as Thomasina innocently recounts (*Arcadia* 5) are rarely predictable; Love can be unbridled, it can be wonderful, it can be unrequited, inappropriate, amazing or wonderful but rarely does it turn out the way that it was intended to come out. The love stories in *Arcadia* prove this: Thomasina and Septimus, Lady Croom and her many lovers, everyone else’s love for Lord Byron – also Bernard and Hannah’s love, Hannah and Valentine’s almost-love and Gus’s love for Hannah. Gus’s love in particular demonstrates how there is no

rational function that governs love. Rather, falling in love is as innocent as eating from the Tree of Knowledge – action is taken even though the full consequences are yet unknown.

All of the loves in *Arcadia* demonstrate precisely how the “order” of science can be undone by love. It is the variable that does not fit itself into an equation. It is “the attraction that Newton left out” (*Arcadia* 100). One would imagine that love would function the same way as knowledge, then; man aspires to be in love, but without vast vision he is blind to the consequences of his love.

Love, however, functions differently than knowledge. Luckily it is in loving one another that we act like God. Recall that God’s reaction to the disobedience of Adam and Eve is to send out his love in the form of a messiah. Man’s reaction to the disorder of his life is to love and it is this love that undermines the disorder that man continuously spirals into. Dorothy Sayers insists that to create is to be most like God (Sayers 22). In what way does man come closest to creating than in loving another?

The ability of a man and a woman to come together and create a new life is the ability to recreate the order and innocence that they have lost over the course of their lives. Their world is still doomed, “but if this is how it started, perhaps it’s how the next one will come” (*Arcadia* 106). In other words, love perpetually gives man a second chance at a pure life. If heat goes to cold, and all life will eventually cool to nothing, loving one another through the Charity of God, the ability to create new life through that love, is man’s way of restarting the cooling process in hopes of making it better the second time.

### **Conclusion**

Love ultimately becomes the force that bridges Christianity and science because it follows the natural law. It is natural for there to be affection between a parent and a child. It is

natural for lovers to also be friends. It is natural for love to be emotional, irrational and all-consuming. It is natural that love transcends the rational powers of the mind and brings the lover closer to God.

Again, as theorized by Lewis, there needs to be a conscious decision in order to turn love from mere emotion into an action that alters the fate of the world. The affection taught by parents and imitated in love leads lovers to be friends with one another. Soon that friendship sparks into Eros and love burns like a flame. However, in order to keep that flame from eventually extinguishing itself, lovers must make the conscious decision to create new life and participate in the gift-love from God – or to contribute to the collection of mankind's knowledge by creating a new generation to continue on the march. The fact that Tom Stoppard and C.S. Lewis both came to these conclusions about love in their works even though they come from opposing philosophical viewpoints suggests that their descriptions of love are universal, natural, and applicable for all mankind.

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