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# Avoid holiday clichés in candles, chocolates

STAFF REPORT

How tired are we of clichés? Let us count the ways. William Shakespeare had the right romantic idea when he penned the line "my mistresses' eyes are nothing like the sun ..."

So, follow Bill's modus operandi. The tried-and-true staples are nothing but tired.

Although the traditional wooing process might merit mention in some circles, it's nothing but empty "aww" fodder.

Thanks to Hallmark, Hollywood and the career of Freddy Prinze Jr., old-fashioned love simply won't do anymore. Kudos to innovators — to prevent a Valentine's Day Massacre, avoid the following clichés.

Although roses are fragrant and used to cure some rashes in some folk remedies, they have a place — the garden. Possibly even a vase.

Hey, someone says, let's put the petals on a bed. Stop sign, Cassanova. The "Serendipity" scenario's about as fresh as the song

"I Ran." Avoid that one, too.

Flowers are the crutch of the romantically impaired and unimaginative. Determining one's romantic future by petal-plucking can be overlooked, but deal with flowers on your own time. Why hurt the ones you love?

Another blunder in the classic vein — candles. Sixteen, dozens, hundreds — a bad idea. Numerous are the times when a carefully constructed candlelight serenade has gone haywire.

A room chock-full of tea lights would not only give off an overpowering odor, but be a fire hazard, mind you. The hits keep coming.

Theodore Roosevelt, an all-around agreeable president, had two faults — the Bull Moose Party and lending his namesake to the most dreaded of cuddly, fuzzy Valentine's Day gifts. Why give a bear when there are more practical ways to waste your closet space?

The Build-a-Bear Workshop franchise is no better — a place where someone can not only create a silly gift, but customize it, effectively shifting all the blame for the terrible present onto the giver.

As thoughtful as it seems to give a heart-shaped box of choco-

lates with your "I Love You" bear, the effect is often lost.

The end, regardless of the means, is simply chocolate, so be a thrifty Machiavellian and opt for a Hershey bar. Or two.

And kisses aren't cute, they're just small. When dealing in chocolate, romance equals net weight.

While on the subject of food, proposing with a ring hidden in food won't fly.

Carats aren't meant to be ingested, so use a box, preferably of the small, velvety variety. If you have to resort to the pinnacle of cheap sentiment — proposing on Valentine's Day — mix it up, but not in batter.

This Valentine's Day thing is a tricky situation. It's tough to stand out in a sea of card-shop clichés, but there's a way — don't listen.


Everybody likes something different — from John Cusack's mix tapes to Homer Simpson's erotic cakes.

Don't rest easy in your copy of "Simply Irresistible" and some Whitman's. Thin ice.

Remember what the Bard says, "The fool doth think himself wise."

Contact the A&E Editor at [artsdesk@unc.edu](mailto:artsdesk@unc.edu).

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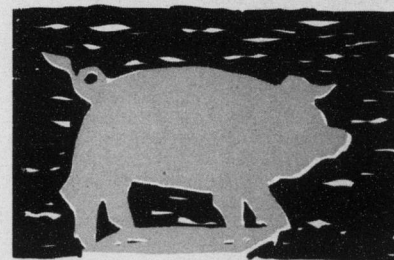
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