

What variety have you found in the love poetry studied essay sample

[Profession](#), [Poet](#)



All of the love poetry I have studied offers the reader a different perspective on love, from true love in the Shakespearean sonnet 'Let me Not' to meaningless sex in 'The Seduction' by Eileen McAuley.

The poems 'The Flea' by John Donne, 'To His Mistress Going To Bed' by John Donne and 'To His Coy Mistress' by Andrew Marvell are all light-hearted and quite playful poems. All three of these poems have a rhyming pattern. This makes the tones of the poems seem less serious and adds a fast pace when you are reading them.

'The Flea' is all about a man trying to get a woman to sleep with him. He is saying that their blood is already mixed in the flea that bit them, so she may as well sleep with him. It is very tongue-in-cheek and uses a lot of hyperbole (exaggeration for affect). For example the lines:

'Oh stay, three lives in one flea spare,

Where wee almost, yea more that maryed are,

This flea is you and I'

are very exaggerated because they are not just as serious as being married just because their blood is mixed in the flea and if she kills the flea (which she wants to do), she will not take three lives (him, her and the flea).

'To his coy Mistress' by Andrew Marvell is also another poem about sex and seduction. In the first verse, he begins by announcing his intentions. He talks about how they would spend long hours walking side by side. He would place

her by Ganges, because she is so exotic, and himself by the Humber. Here he uses blatant flattery.

He then talks about how he would love her till the conversion of the Jews- basically for eternity, as the Jews are famed for their ability to survive persecution and exile. He talks about 'vegetable love.' He means here that his love will grow slowly over time, maturing gently, slowly growing to a size so big it is 'Vaster than Empires.' He says he will take ages to appreciate every part of her body, because, (flattery again,) he enthuses 'you deserve this state'.

The poems 'The Sunne Rising' by John Donne and 'Shall I compare thee...?' by William Shakespeare both talk about exaggerated and idealised love.

'Shall I compare thee...?' is a Shakespearean sonnet and is formed using three quatrains and one couplet. Each quatrain talks about a slightly different idea and then the couplet concludes the poem.

The first quatrain compares his love to a summer's day, but says she is so much better than a summer's day. It says that she is 'more lovely' and 'more temperate' and that summer is too short.

In the second quatrain, there is a metaphor calling the sun 'the eye of heaven' and then 'his gold complexion dim'd' meaning it is sometimes cloudy. I feel that this is a very clever way of saying it because it is like the sun is always watching everybody, like an eye.

The poem ends by saying

' When in eternall lines to time thour grow'st,

So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,

So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.'

This means that she will never die because her beauty will live on in the poem.

' The Sunne Rising' by John Donne is about his love being stronger than the sun. It uses the sarcastic and ironic lines

' Thy beames, so reverend, and strong,

Why shouldst thou thinke?'

to say that the suns beams or not as strong as love or as strong as anyone thinks. It uses a lot of imagery of royalty and the sun. These are both very powerful images to try and portray the depth of his love for her. For example:

' She is all States, and all Princes, I,

Nothing else is.'

He ends both the second and third verse by saying that when him and his love are together they have everything they will ever need.

' Aske for those Kings whom saw'st yesterday,

And thou shalt heare, All in one bed lay.'

' Shine here to us, and thou art everywhere;

This bed thy center is, these walls, they spheare.'

Another poem that used the idea that you have everything you need when you are with your love is ' The Good-Morrow' by John Donne. The line

' And makes one little roome, an every where.'

Says that the little room where his love is, is like the whole world. This is a very serious and romantic poem about how he feels being in love. It is my favourite of all the love poetry we have studied because it has an optimistic, celebratory feel and uses lots of clever geographical imagery, which you wouldn't think of using in a love poem. The images are to do with discovery, which could be thought as discovering love.

' Where can we finde two better hemispheres,

Without sharpe North, without declining West.'

There is also a chemical image of when you mix two colours, you get a third.

' What every dyes, was not mixt equally,

If our two loves be one.'

This gives the ideas that the two of them together makes something new and amazing and that he is complete now that he has found love.

I think that this poem has such an optimistic feel because it is about mutual love, unlike some of the other poems. Although he is describing his love for her, it is obvious she loves him back.

'Let Me Not' by William Shakespeare also has an optimistic feel about true love. Like 'Shall I compare thee...?' it is also a sonnet and has the same quatrain and couplet structure.

It starts by saying that nothing should stand in the way of true love and that if you really love somebody, you do not suddenly stop loving them if they do something you do not like or you find out something about them.

'Let me not to the marriage of true mindes,

Admit impediments, love is not love

Which alters when it alteration findes,

Or bends with the remover to remove.'

Shakespeare then used the metaphor of love being like a star that guides a lost ship at sea.

'O no, it is an ever fixed marke,

That looks on tempests and is never shaken;

It is the star to every wandering barke.'

The third quatrain talks about the affect of time on love. It says that over time love does not fade away. The words ' bending sickles compasses come' gives an image of death and the grim reaper, and compasses gives the image of direction. This could be meant to mean that death is the only thing that destroys love. The poem concludes with the lines

' If this be error and upon me proved,

I never writ, nor no man ever loved.'

Shakespeare is saying prove him wrong knowing he is right. It is his way of persuading his points about love. The last two statements (' I never writ' and ' nor no man ever loved') are obviously not true so he can't be proved wrong.

' What you Are' by Roger McGough is also a poem about true love. It includes lots of different images which are all supposed to be what his true love is. All of the images are nice images, which help to explain why he loves her. For example:

' You are the teddy bear (as good as new)

found beside a road accident.'

This conveys that she is perfect and innocent in any kind of chaotic situation. The poem doesn't rhyme which gives it a very serious feel. Consequently, it doesn't have any kind of rhythm which makes you read it slowly.

' Somewhere I have travelled' by E. E. Cummings is a very intense poem about a woman who he loves. Everything about her fascinates him and she has some kind of control over him. This control seems quite effortless on her part. For example:

' In you most frail gesture are things which enclose me'

There is lots of imagery about opening and closing, like a flower (a rose, the symbol of love). Flowers open up in the light and close in the dark. This could be that he opens up when she is near, she is the light.

' Your slightest look will easily uncloze me

Though I have closed myself as fingers,

You open always petal by petal myself as spring opens

(touching skilfully, mysteriously) her first rose.'

The third line is not written as a proper sentence. The way it is written emphasises the ' petal by petal' and again the imagery of flowers. In addition, there is lots of imagery of nature. This makes the love seem very natural and unforced.

She can seem to make him alive and then almost kill him

' or if your wish be to close me, I and

my life will shut very beautifully'

' death and forever'

With her power over him like this, gives a sense of his vulnerability.

Near to the end of the poem there is enormous exaggeration.

' nothing which we are to perceive in this world equals

the power of your intense fragility: whose texture

compels me with the colour of its countries,

rendering, death and forever, with each breathing.'

This just conveys just how extreme his emotions actually are.

Throughout the poem there is the use of some metaphors.

' your eyes have their silence'

This means she is calm, peaceful, reserved and her eyes don't give anything away.

' the voice of your eyes is deeper than all roses'

This means she is better than anything nature has made. He might have chosen to use metaphors using the eyes because they are supposed to be ' the window to your soul' and he feels like she can see right into him and dictate his feelings.

There are two poems; ' One Flesh' by Elizabeth Jennings and ' The Seduction' by Eileen McAuley that you could argue are not about love at all.

' One Flesh' is about a couple that used to be in love, but the passion has slowly disappeared over the years. They are still together but do not feel the same as they used to. The first line

' Lying apart now, each in a separate bed'

makes it obvious what the poem is going to be about. The words ' apart' and ' separate' add emphasis to the fact that they are not together as a couple anymore. It says that he is reading a book and her eyes are fixed on the shadows overhead. This gives the sense of silence and awkwardness and the fact that they are trying to concentrate on anything else but their relationship. The lines

' She like a girl dreaming of childhood,

All men elsewhere - it is as if they wait'

Make you think that their lives seem empty now. They both realise it is over and long for something different but are staying together because they have been for so long and it is what they are used to. You know they are an old, married couple because it is written from their son's/daughter's point of view. You are only told this in the last few lines of the poem

' Do they know they're old?

These two who are my father and my mother

Whose fire from which I came, has now grown cold?’

I think this is a really interesting perspective to write a poem from, because most of the other poetry I have studied is written from one person to their love.

‘The Seduction’ is not about love, but merely a poem about a one night stand. Underneath the title there is a caption ‘A clumsy poem of teenage angst!’ which I think describes the poem well.

The poem is about a teenage girl who has a glorified idea of love after reading a lot of teenage magazines. She meets a slightly older man, and thinking she was in love, slept with him. He did not feel the same way and left her. She then found out she was pregnant.

He took away her innocence. At first she was very naïve and then afterwards had no faith in love. The first verse starts showing this by talking about time and place. There are opposite environments and he is taking her from one place to another. The way the poet used ‘he led her’ and ‘he handed her the vodka’ makes it seem like he was persuading her.

The poem is written in colloquial language and talks about footballers that were famous at the time the poem was written. Both of these things place the poem in a particular time.

There is a lot of talk of teenage magazines in the poem, which just emphasizes how young she was. The line

' About O levels she'd be sitting in June'

also emphasises how young she was because she was a schoolgirl. The use of the word ' Iodine' could also be used to emphasise this because it is used in chemistry experiments at school.

The poem says:

' When she discovered she was three months gone

She sobbed in the cool, locked, darkness of her room,

And she ripped up all her ' My Guy' and ' Jackie' photo-comics

Until they were just like bright paper, like confetti, strewn'

This gives a sense of how she is such a hopeless romantic. Ripping up the magazines could symbolise her ripping up her childhood. The words ' confetti' and ' strewn' symbolise marriage which is what she hoped would happen.

Toward the end of the poem it asks lots of questions. This is saying that she feels stupid and thinks ' why her?' The poem then concludes with the lines

' And better, now, to turn away, move away, fade away,

Than to have they neighbours whisper that ' you always looked the type'

This says that she feels trapped and ashamed and that she worries what other people think about her.

However, this poem had a less serious feel because of its definite rhyming pattern. It also has a lot of commas which added rhythm when saying the poem.