

# Raymond carver's idea of personal views of love

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## **What We Talk About When We Talk About Love**

The dinner check comes and the man reaches for it, as he does a thought runs through his head. He is distracted so he only catches the last word, Love. He thinks about everyone he has loved and considers how love can be different. The idea of personal views of love is the main topic of Raymond Carver's short story "What We Talk About When We Talk About Love". In the story there are four main characters that make up two couples. The first couple is made up of cardiologist Mel McGinnis, and his wife Teresa, or Terri. The second couple is made up of Nick the narrator and Laura his wife of about a year. The story starts with them sitting around a table drinking gin and then they "somehow got on the subject of love." There are then two stories of different love told. The story ends with them sitting there not moving, "even when the room went dark". Raymond Carver is displaying how everyone will have a definition of love for their own.

Terri has her own view of how love can be defined. The characters are sitting drinking gin and they start talking about love. "Terri said the man she lived with before she lived with Mel loved her so much he tried to kill her." Terri thinks that love can be expressed violently. She assumes that he loved her so much the only way he could think to express it is physically. Terri has her own definition for love.

Laura has a view of how love is defined by the individual. Mel and Terri had just finished the tale of Terri's abusive ex-husband when Laura input her thoughts on love. "'Well Nick and I know what love is', Laura said. 'For us I mean,' Laura said." Laura thinks that every couple can have a different form

of love. She said that she and Nick had their own love further expressing Carver's idea that everyone has their own definition of love.

The third example of love being expressed differently is the story of the old couple. Mel has started telling the story of how the old couple had gotten in a severe accident. Mel told them that the old man was depressed not because of the accident, " but it was because he couldn't see her through his eye-holes." Mel goes on to say, " I'm telling you, the man's heart was breaking because he couldn't turn his head and see his wife." In this instance the old man is so in love with his wife that if he doesn't see her he might die. Some people might argue that no one could ever die from heartbreak, but that is further proof of everyone having a different view on love.

In the process of reading " What We Talk About When We Talk About Love" the reader can see how Raymond Carver works to show different people can think about love differently. For example Terri thinks that love can be expressed violently, Laura directly acknowledges that everyone defines love differently, and the old man feels like love is worth dying for. Everyone in our lives will have a different view on love. In the earlier example of the man reaching for the check, he is defining his love as his actions. Another example would be someone who compliments his significant other all the time, he defines his love by what he says. I would say I am more like the former or these two. I try to define my love by the way I act more then by what I say.