

A Love Story

This is a review of Hannah Arendt, Martin Heidegger—a book by Elzbieta Ettinger

She was 18; he was 35. She was a Jew in Germany in the 1920's; he would become a Nazi. She showed him "how to love ardently and not feel it a sin"; he showed her his mind—the mind of a philosopher whom she would later call "the uncrowned king of the empire of thought". She was Hannah Arendt and he was Martin Heidegger, and the story of what she called their "star-crossed" love is as appalling as any that Shakespeare ever recounted.

Ms. Ettinger, a professor of humanities at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has reconstructed this tortured history from the letters the two philosopher-lovers exchanged for over half a century. Their acquaintance began in 1924 as a classic professor-student affair, with Heidegger thrilled by the sex and secrecy of the liaison and Arendt overwhelmed by the honor of his desiring to befriend and teach her outside of class. Though Arendt became a world-famous philosopher and managed her life with great independence, her relationship to Heidegger was premised from start to finish on this master-student inequality.

Four years after Heidegger first lured Arendt in, he decided that she should leave Marburg and him. When she complied, vowing never again to love a man, he began writing her lyrical letters "bordering on kitsch, the lines trembling with passion". He suggested that she could marry another man but still love him, described his desire for her but forbade her to answer unless he specifically asked for a response, neglected to correspond for long periods and then wrote love poems to her. When another, more docile woman took his fancy, he recycled some of these phrases, and later insisted that Arendt and his wife, Elfride, shake hands and call each other "du".

By the early 1930's, Arendt knew that Heidegger was a Nazi, and when he became rector—Fuehrer—of the University of Freiburg in 1933, he had ample opportunity to act on his beliefs. He blocked the promotions and ended the careers of many of his colleagues suspected of being anti-Nazi, among them Karl Jaspers, and Max Mueller. He personally signed the document

dismissing his old teacher, the Jewish Edmund Husserl, an act that Arendt felt hastened Husserl's death. As a result, she considered Heidegger "a potential murderer". Compounding these actions was a callousness that was almost as chilling. When Jaspers confided that his Jewish wife had cried at newspaper reports of anti-Semitism, Heidegger answered that "it makes one feel better to cry sometimes". After the war, when Heidegger was banned from teaching and publishing for five years, he presented himself as an innocent victim of Nazism.

Likewise, while Arendt was promoting Heidegger's writings and whitewashing his reputation, she was working for the Commission on Jewish Cultural Reconstruction and writing the much proclaimed "Origins of Totalitarianism". She hid her growing honors from her old lover, though, because "he finds it unbearable that my name appears in public, that I write books, etc. Always, I have been virtually lying to him about myself, pretending the books, the name, did not exist, and I couldn't, so to speak, count to three, unless it concerned the interpretations of his works."

Ms. Ettinger is appalled that this brilliant woman allowed herself to be so compromised. Of course, Arendt was very young when she first fell in love with Heidegger, and had no defenses against him. Moreover, everyone else seems to have been equally susceptible to his spell. Despite her acuity, she embraced the most extraordinary contradictions in his name.

She explained Heidegger's Nazism as merely a "déformation professionnelle" common to most great thinkers: "In such a view, genius excuses everything—male chauvinism, hypocrisy, anti-Semitism, totalitarianism." Since the separation of intellect from responsibility has recently had a sinister history, one might read the love story of Arendt and Heidegger as a warning about the dangers of elevating men into gods.

Wendy Steiner, The New York Times Book Review, September 24th, 1995

- 1 What is the reviewer's general impression of Hannah Arendt's and Martin Heidegger's love affair?**
- A It was passionate and tragic
 - B It was joyless from the start
 - C It was a drama with a happy ending
 - D It was typical of two great personalities
- 2 How is the relationship between Hannah Arendt and Martin Heidegger described?**
- A They showed great respect for each other
 - B They were attracted to each other because they were so similar
 - C Hannah Arendt let Martin Heidegger dominate her
 - D Hannah Arendt was often remote and indifferent
- 3 How is Martin Heidegger characterized?**
- A As generous and sensitive
 - B As hard and ruthless
 - C As compassionate and understanding
 - D As violent and quarrelsome
- 4 What observation does the writer make when discussing Hannah Arendt's career?**
- A She did not want to tell Martin Heidegger how successful she had become
 - B She was sorry she could never become Martin Heidegger's equal
 - C She was held back because of Martin Heidegger's envy and intrigues
 - D She owed her professional success to Martin Heidegger's remarkable personality
- 5 How did Hannah Arendt regard Martin Heidegger's Nazism in the end?**
- A She never forgave him for the evil things he did as a Nazi
 - B She blamed his colleagues for persuading him to become a Nazi
 - C She excused him because he never put his ideas into practice
 - D She excused him because he was a great man she admired

Wave Energy

The one consistent characteristic of wave energy, ever since its launch in the 1970s, has been the way in which its prospects have risen and fallen and then, when all seemed lost, risen again—just like the waves. It has always been the most controversial and challenging of the alternatives to pollution. Perhaps unexpectedly, leaders in wave-power technology, who gathered in Lisbon at the end of last year for an international conference, exuded confidence, despite the fact that the latest wave venture, Osprey, had foundered within weeks of its launch last August from a shipyard in Clydebank.

Why the confidence? With Osprey's launch, wave power re-entered the public awareness, but public sympathy was unshaken. It was not another space shuttle, not another Comet jetliner, not a Chernobyl, not a Three Mile Island, not a Windscale fire and not a Piper Alpha. There were no casualties. Osprey was lost because of bad luck and an accident of timing, not from some inherent design flaw. The insurer, Lloyd's, has given it a clean bill of health and is footing the bill for its replacement, Osprey Two!

Osprey (the name is a rather strained acronym for Ocean Swell-Powered Renewable Energy) is a 28-metre-high structure, with a central, cowl-shaped housing containing four turbines and two splayed feet containing ballast tanks, which, when it was in position 300 metres off Dounreay in northern Scotland, would have been ballasted with sand so that it sat firmly on the sea floor. The rise and fall of the waves forces air through the turbines, which in turn drive electricity generators with a total capacity of 2MW, enough to power 2,000 electric fires. It was designed by Professor Alan Wells of Belfast University, after whom the turbines,

which always turn the same way irrespective of the direction of the air currents, are named.

Osprey was lost because of the empty Coke-tin syndrome: it was hit by unseasonally heavy seas before the ballast tanks had been filled with sand. They crumpled, like an empty tin can. The sand, weighing 7,000 tonnes, was to have been pumped in hard, so that the loaded tanks would be almost like stone and would resist any weather. But pumping had to stop when the storm hit the area and there was nothing but air behind the steel when the sea rose to five-metre-high waves and smashed in two of the compartments.

It would not have happened if the Osprey had not been delayed on the Clyde because of damage sustained on the launch. Two tanks were damaged. They were repaired and certified seaworthy. But they were the two that cracked when the seas rose. Lloyd's has accepted that the cause of the mishap was "the peril of the sea" and will pay "the reinstatement value". The amount has not been disclosed but it is probably around £1 million. This is, for Allan Thomson, who built Osprey, the most favourable outcome possible. It avoids any time-wasting and expensive wrangling as to who was at fault and he can get on with building Osprey Two, which he intends to launch next summer. Much of the electrical and mechanical equipment, including the turbines, wasn't damaged and can be re-used.

David Ross, New Statesman & Society, January 12th, 1996

6 According to the text, the Lisbon conference was characterized by . . .

- A conflict
- B pessimism
- C optimism
- D uncertainty

7 What happened to Osprey?

- A It collapsed in the shipyard
- B It was badly damaged off the Scottish coast
- C It broke adrift and went aground
- D It exploded when the generators started

8 What was the reason for the accident?

- A Osprey had not been properly designed
- B Osprey was not yet ready to face rough weather
- C Osprey had too much sand in its ballast tanks
- D Osprey was too heavy and too high

9 How did people react to the event, according to the text?

- A Since the construction was satisfactory and no one was killed, they did not lose faith in wave energy
- B Since wave energy has always been controversial, no one was really surprised that things went wrong
- C Since Osprey was an attempt to test wave energy, they were truly disappointed
- D Since wave energy experiments interest only a limited group of experts, there was hardly any reaction at all

10 What are we told about Osprey's constructor?

- A He has now been replaced
- B He has been accused of causing the accident
- C He is waiting for the insurance company to make a decision
- D He is building a new Osprey to replace the old one

And here are some shorter texts:

William Blake

William Blake, the great poet, depended all his life on the capricious generosity of patrons. Since it was difficult to be unremittingly grateful to rich friends, he often bit the hand that fed him, thwarting their good intentions by delivering work late or picking quarrels with well-wishers who seemed too interfering. Blake seems to have come into conflict with moral authority in his childhood. He minded not being the most loved son, and was beaten by his mother for lying, as she put it, when he said he had seen angels.

11 What was Blake like?

- A He told lies to people he was afraid of
- B He disliked those who loved him most
- C He rebelled against people in a superior position
- D He acted impulsively and then regretted what he had done

Personality Psychology

Basic research on personality differences and their longterm behavioral expression is shedding light on important public health issues such as drug abuse and depression. One prospective longitudinal study, for example, suggests that some adolescent drug abusers exhibit a distinctive personality pattern often identifiable in early childhood.

The same study shows that the personalities of boys and girls who became severely depressed in late adolescence differed considerably in childhood. The boys were described as undercontrolled, unsocialized, and aggressive. The girls, in contrast, were seen as overcontrolled, oversocialized, shy, and introspective. Findings such as these suggest not only that depression has deep roots in early life, but that early personality patterns associated with later depression differ in important ways for males and females.

12 What does the text tell us about depression?

- A Depressed people have the same kind of personality as drug abusers
- B Many depressed adults have suffered from depression since their early childhood
- C Changes in personality caused by depression are different in men and in women
- D Depressed men and women show different types of personality traits in their early childhood

Longevity

Contrary to their expectations, American psychologists have found that longevity is inversely related to cheerfulness in childhood, which often goes hand in hand with impulsivity, egocentrism, and arrogance. These are, in turn, linked to smoking, drinking, and general risk-taking.

“These findings have already shaken people up a bit,” says a psychologist, “because they show no particular health benefits from cheerfulness.” “Nevertheless, in terms of the rush towards death, the encouraging news may be that prudent, conscientious guys finish last.”

13 What is the writer’s *main* conclusion?

- A A cheerful temperament generally makes for good health
- B Cautious, hard-working people may die a premature death
- C Easy-going children may have shorter lives than more serious-minded ones
- D Children should be taught not to take unnecessary risks

Mozart Biographies

In his newly published biography of Mozart, Maynard Solomon claims that earlier works are typical of “a partial, one-sided and reductionist” approach which has bedevilled the study of Mozart. He is determined to see the composer as wholly human, neither “an aloof Olympian” nor “a crude buffoon or *idiot savant*”. Yet, try as Mr Solomon may to escape the age, his own Mozart emerges as a typical mid-to-late 20th-century man, racked by conflicts, doubt and anxiety.

14 What is the writer’s *main* point?

- A Mr Solomon presents a convincing analysis of Mozart’s personality
- B Each biographer contributes to our understanding of Mozart
- C It should be possible to give a correct picture of Mozart’s complex personality
- D Mr Solomon’s biography is not as objective as he thinks it is

In the following text there are gaps which indicate that something has been left out. Study the four alternatives that correspond to each gap and decide which one best fits the gap. Then mark your choice on your answer sheet.

Why doctors?

The future of doctors looks bleak. To improve efficiency, health-care managers are interfering more in decisions, such as the choice of operations or drugs, that were once the preserve of the**15**..... . Much diagnosis and even some surgical procedures are being automated. Although doctors still control these things, they may not do so for much longer if cheaper alternatives can be found. And although demand for health care is**16**..... relentlessly, especially in rich countries with ageing populations, a few doctors are beginning to ask themselves whether they will have much of a role in the next century.

It is a radical thought. To the extent that it is plausible, doctors have themselves to blame. Taught to minister to the sick, most have chosen to interpret that task narrowly. The doctor's job, most would say, is to sift through symptoms, decide what is wrong, prescribe a treatment and then determine the medical prospects of the**17**..... . But this mechanistic view reduces patients to their component parts. It is an approach that lends itself to automation,**18**..... no good doctor would claim that this was all there was to the job. If you take an inhumanly mechanistic view of doctoring, the job becomes much easier to mechanise.

This may be one reason why so many medical people are taking a new interest in redefining what doctors should do. Thomas Inui, a professor of medicine at the Harvard Medical School in Boston, is one of the foremost academic proponents of what he calls "social healing", and what ordinary folk have long called tender loving care. Dr Inui believes that the days of doctors as mere diagnosticians, and as prescribers of sophisticated drugs, are numbered. Those will increasingly be the jobs of technicians or automatic systems, whereas doctors will be sought for their counsel and social**19**..... , returning to their roots as healers. He tells how as a young doctor he was asked what he did by the Navajo people of New Mexico. Not knowing quite what to say he retorted, "I give out pills." "Ah," his questioner commented, "you are the low sort of medicine man. We have two sorts. The high sort we go to for counselling and**20**..... ."

- 15** A natural process
B old approach
C political establishment
D medical profession

- 16** A growing
B decreasing
C examined
D disputed

- 17** A hospital
B system
C patient
D effect

- 18** A although
B because
C as if
D so that

- 19** A security
B wisdom
C life
D diagnosis

- 20** A survival
B drugs
C diseases
D care

The Economist, December 10th, 1994

That is the end of the test. If you have time left, go back and check your answers.

Correct answers

1 A

2 C

3 B

4 A

5 D

6 C

7 B

8 B

9 A

10 D

11 C

12 D

13 C

14 D

15 D

16 A

17 C

18 A

19 B

20 D