

Independent author

M T C Cronin

Extract from:

**Prove love
(by examining evidence of the imagination)**

Biographical note:

MTC Cronin has written numerous collections of poetry (including several co-written with fellow-Australian poet, Peter Boyle) and a number of volumes of avant-garde cross-genre works. She currently lives, with her partner and three daughters, on an organic farm (specialising in fresh Spanish produce) in the hinterland of Queensland's Sunshine Coast, Australia.

defining terms

definition

definition is how we fight off dream
how we make things certain
with whatever degree of certainty is above zero

imagination

'when we imagine, we always imagine *something*'¹

the unknown is known;
the hidden is visible;
the impossible, possible.

an enormous marine animal of serpent-like form,
frequently seen and described by credulous sailors,
imaginative landsmen, and common liars²

the future
the past
the present: you make what you can out of what's to hand.

your brain
imagining
your brain.

phantasia
imaginatio

that you are greek and latin.

ancient poets, philosophers, and psychologists consider imagination
a strong and diverse power, but unregulated it produces illusion,
mental instability (often melancholy), bad art, or madness³

redly
chinesely
bigly

thinking about something contrary to fact
something novel
something not currently perceived

you, when we have not yet met
a sensible world rising and falling on the imagination
myself in love

evidence

All the legal or illegal means, inclusive of mere argument, which tend to prove or disprove any matter of fact or fantasy, the truth or lie of which is submitted to judicial or poetic or any other kind of investigation or examination; as follows:

1. Oral: statements made by witnesses in this book.
2. Documentary: including public and private documents, and statements of relevant facts and fantasies made by persons in writing (includes writing done in any medium – eg, visible or invisible ink, blood etc; and writing done in any style – eg, poetry, official forms, last wills and testaments etc).
3. Conclusive: evidence of a fact or fantasy which the book must take as full proof of it, and which includes all evidence to disprove it.
4. Direct: evidence of a fact or fantasy actually in issue; evidence of a fact or fantasy perceived by a witness with the witness' own senses and senses not yet verified by science.
5. Circumstantial: evidence of a fact or fantasy not actually in issue, but legally or illegally relevant to a fact or fantasy in issue.
6. Real: evidence supplied by material or immaterial objects or subjects produced for the inspection of the book.
7. Extrinsic: oral evidence given in connection with written or unwritten documents.
8. Hearsay: what someone else has been heard to say or thought to think: 'what the soldier said or thought'; as contrasted with the direct evidence of the witness; oral or written statements made or thoughts had by persons not called as witnesses. Hearsay evidence is, in general, excluded, but the repetition of another person's statement (if executed poetically) is sometimes permissible, and there are express exceptions to the rule against hearsay (eg, anything sung).
9. Indirect: circumstantial or hearsay evidence; also any evidence gleaned by intuition.
10. Original: evidence which has an independent probative force of its own (eg., déjà vu).
11. Derivative: evidence which derives its force from some other source (eg, beliefs).
12. Parol: oral, extrinsic evidence (including any voices heard).
13. Prima facie: evidence of a fact or fantasy which the book must take as proof of such fact or fantasy, unless disproved by further evidence.
14. Primary evidence of a document is the document itself, or duplicate original.
15. Secondary: evidence other than the best or worst evidence, and which is rejected if primary evidence is available.
16. Dreams: had awake or asleep.

17. Beauty.

18. Opinion.

Evidence must be given in open book *viva voce*, but for a book about love, provision is always made for witnesses to give evidence in any other form they choose. In love there is no choice so choice is provided in all other possible and impossible arenas.

proof

Prove: To test. To experience. To suffer.

It is almost as if this transitive verb – a verb requiring a direct object – was created for the noun, *the object*, of *love*.

*Experience love. Test love.
Suffer love.*

Or do we simply *imagine* love?

Is love created by the imagination no less love?

How do you prove your love?

Can I spotcheck whether I'm in love? In the temporal lobe? In *Anna Karenina*?⁴

Proof is always disappointing precisely because it is not required. It is simply *of* something. As all our writings on love are not necessary being merely *about*.

Love is not about anything. Love may disappoint *us* but is not itself a disappointment. What is proved remains unchanged by its proof. So why do we act as if proof makes the real more real? (As if it *makes* anything, including a difference.)

What is the reality?

Love is.

what is evidence of the imagination?

Merry-go-rounds. ~•~ Latin words and phrases. ~•~ What love does to the tips of your fingers. ~•~ The servant. ~•~ Arranging dances. ~•~ Dreams of followers. ~•~ Ice drifting before the wind. ~•~ Pledge. ~•~ A drift-net. ~•~ The sigh of an empty house. ~•~ Absence of mind. ~•~ Your name the way you write it? ~•~ Truth as it is constantly being alleged. ~•~ Music and the revolution. ~•~ Great shows without reality. ~•~ The hand stirred. ~•~ Honoured. ~•~ Flying to the ground. ~•~ Compliance. ~•~ Plotting you. ~•~ A cross on the road. ~•~ The distance from what you hear. ~•~ A pea-shaped bone. ~•~ Aesthetic norms. ~•~ A body of secret intriguers. ~•~ (Camarilla.) ~•~ Adoring reason. ~•~ Companion of the lie. ~•~ Credibility. ~•~ The philosophy of diamonds. ~•~ Interference with time. ~•~ Willpower. ~•~ Inventing the raisin. ~•~ Luminous conversation of blood as it roars above the earth. ~•~ Nerines. ~•~ Being satisfied. ~•~ Bladder gently filled with sterilized water. ~•~ The glimpse stretched out. ~•~ More and more iffy. ~•~ Journeying. ~•~ To face from where you have come and smile.

love & definition

Love definable. Not too narrow. Not too broad. Nor circular. The defining expression exactly matching the degree of vagueness or precision of the expression being defined. How inaccurate every judgment. How accurate loving. Even a love thinned down. Becoming more and more naked. Necessary. Unnecessary. Nothing changes it if it is. Though definitions fall into at least the following kinds:

analytical ~ a love true in all possible worlds as well as a love necessarily true. They could love though. Conditions all cleared. Fate is nowhere near as certain.

contextual ~ expression as it occurs in a larger expression. They love in summer. The love is such-and-such. Like a warm day that falls into the night's cool arms.

coordinative ~ theoretical love as felt by non-theoretical lovers. Vice-versa. Love experienced in stories. Love retold and felt again.

definition by genus & species ~ brief love is love. Forbidden love is love. Love that falls short is love. What is not love is defined purely by self-interest.

definition in use ~ as it is impossible for love not to always be.

explicit definition ~ clearly love means the moment you spent as what you are not. Love is only love if you forgot yourself.

implicit definition ~ love is not something to worry about.

metaphorical definition ~ heavenly, heavenly, stones, teeth, hate, morality, and ships, even flowers and balancing on what will not hold us ... I love you like multiple possibilities. Like trying.

nominal definition ~ typically in terms of macrosensible characteristics, as in, 'butterflies in my stomach' for love or 'a fat new moose of a lover in his boney head'.⁵ Though it is possible to ask what butterflies would be doing there; if 'bony' here is meant to have the 'e' in it; and whether anything to do with love makes sense. (Fortunately 'Locke spoke of nominal essence and contrasted it with real essence'.⁶

lexical definition ~ love appropriate for the dictionary and able to be looked up under every word.

ostensive definition ~ apparently love needs to be pointed to. This is the only case in which the movement (indicating the thing being defined) is judged upon the style of the gesture rather than on the alignment of the definition with the thing that is being pointed to. Similarly,

persuasive definition ~ there have been few who have needed to be persuaded however it does seem true that over time persuasion becomes more and more necessary. Persuasion rarely convinces.

precising definition ~ definition of a vague expression – *love* – intended to reduce its vagueness, as in 'in pieces or entire; its presence veneers over want; in all its moving parts, it could be something else'⁷ (line breaks removed).

prescriptive definition ~ love giving a new meaning to love? Baudelaire knew well of this with his little flea-bag wife with a halo. The impossibility of it and the way it occurs to us that *our own* love always does this impossible thing.

real definition ~ specification of the metaphysically necessary and sufficient condition for being the kind of thing a love designates:

Our bodies fall.
Our wills fall.
Our virtues fall.
Our happiness falls.

When I know your 'oneself'
we rise up
higher than all
these things.

We do anything.
And all it may lead to.

stipulative definition ~ regardless of what love usually or ordinarily is love is always something different. 'By 'zoobeedoobah' we shall mean 'vain millionaire who is addicted to alcohol'.⁸ Love might mean much the same thing.

synonymous definition ~ for example, 'god for love'; 'obligation for love'; 'pain for love'; 'madness for love', etc., etc. Love has more synonyms than any other known word. Love is anonymous. Love's pseudonym is your name. There is only one antonym to love and it is not known. (Though the antonym's meaning is that love has no antonyms.)

syntactical definition ~ when we know what we stand for.

tautologic definition ~ despite reality, what is true, and including the consequences of truth:

(There is no question.

- 'What is love? Any type of love?
- The best definition is simply: Love is love.
- Have you suffered much for love?
- I am prepared to suffer even more.'⁹

working definition ~ love allows

~ what follows. [*Consequences* is the name of 'a game describing the meeting of a lady and a gentleman and its consequences, each player writing a part of the story, not knowing what the others have written'.¹⁰]

Endnotes

- 1 Audi, Robert (gen ed) 1999 *The Cambridge dictionary of philosophy*, second edition, 1995, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 417
- 2 Macdonald, A M (ed) *Chambers twentieth century dictionary*, new edition, 1972, Edinburgh: W & R Chambers Ltd, 1221
- 3 Preminger, Alex and Brogan, TVF (eds) 1993 *The new Princeton encyclopedia of poetry and poetics*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 567
- 4 Waldrop, Rosmarie 2003 *Love, like pronouns*, Richmond, California: Omnidawn, 35
- 5 Davis, Olena Kalytiak 2003 'poem for my #* birthday', *Shattered sonnets love cards and other off and back handed importunities*, New York: A Bloomsbury/Tin House Book, 83.s
- 6 Audi, Robert (gen ed) 1999 *The Cambridge dictionary of philosophy*, second edition, 1995, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 214
- 7 Swensen, Cole 2004 'Two', *Goest*, Farmington, Maine: Alice James Books, 11
- 8 Audi, Robert (gen ed) 1999 *The Cambridge dictionary of philosophy*, second edition, 1995, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 214
- 9 Lispector, Clarice 1992 'Lightning interview with Pablo Neruada (II)', in Giovanni Pontiero (trans) *Selected cronicas*, New York: New Directions, 66
- 10 Macdonald, A M (ed) *Chambers twentieth century dictionary*, new edition, 1972, Edinburgh: W & R Chambers Ltd, 276