

## Gush

Ann Montgomery

Whenever members of what is sometimes referred to in a facetious tone as the fairer sex gather, one can hear "gush," the elaborate adjectives, the often repeated cliches, the meaningless affectionate words flow as freely from the feminine lips on such occasions as oil does from a "gusher." Funk and Wagnalls state in most simple terms that gush is "the extravagant display of sentiment," which is a very direct, clear way to describe something that is never direct or clear.

By the time a young woman has reached college age, she is an experienced gusher and has not learned, in many cases, to temper her flow with common sense as her mamma has, so her gush stands out in syrupy ribbons. During her college career, she uses it on many occasions: rush, open house, parties, dances, dinners, showers, weddings, and many other.

Rush week is the first occasion on which the college freshman meets and uses gush. (The rime of rush and gush is probably merely coincidental.) The rushee invariably is greeted somewhere on her journey from house to house by a beaming, long-lost-friend smile (a characteristic of all gushers) and the words ooze: "So you're Sally Stoop! I've been dying to meet you (mainly because she was assigned by the rush chairman to meet her). You're from Hicktown, Kentucky, aren't you? It's such a charming town (hastily found on a Gulf road map the night before). I bet you had such a lovely home there!" The innocent child drinks all of this in if she has not learned to see through most brands of gush and leaves the house convinced that that sorority is ready to pin ribbons on her while in reality the rusher was merely repeating a well-used speech knowing that this was not one of the girls that her group had planned two months before to pledge but one whom they planned to cut the next day.

Parties of all kinds call for gush. At open houses, one hears "What beautiful new draperies!" and can often realize that under the comment is the thought: "Only \$14.98 a pair. Hmm, they're cutting corners this year!" Party refreshments and dance decorations are also the subjects of gush. The main difference between this kind of gush and the brand cited above is that this kind is usually received by people experienced enough to see through it; and if it were believed, no one's happiness would be involved.

There is much gush over weddings and the events preceding them. The ring, whether it be an over-elaborate, two-carat-plus-

minor-attractions affair or a one-fourth-carat-with-interestingly-cut setting, is exclaimed over. The bride-to-be gushes over the nineteenth set of glasses as she did over the first, even while she is wondering which restaurant in town is needing new equipment. Every wedding from the one in which "the bride appeared in a beige suit" to the one in which she "wore a Dior gown of antique lace" is the most beautiful anyone has ever seen. Of course, it can be argued that this use of gush is mere politeness, but are there not limits?

Where are these techniques learned? Maybe a child who naturally is thrilled by all the things around her thinks that even after most things begin to be boring, she still must exclaim over them. Maybe mamma tells daughter that it is impolite not to appreciate the things of which other people want to be proud. Maybe a young girl watches her contemporaries and decides that the girls who seem to go the furthest are the ones who most diligently practice the art of gushing.

Without gush, possibly the social world would be harsher, but it would be a far more honest world. The lubricant that oozes at most social gatherings would be gone, but the air would be crisper, cleaner, and more healthy.

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## The Art of Writing Poetry

Joan Myers

**B**efore you attempt to write a poem you must feel the need and the desire to create. A poem is usually a highly subjective piece of art; you must feel genuine emotion so strongly that it is easy to communicate your mood to the reader through the medium of poetry. Yet you must not let emotion overbalance the design of the poem. Design should have order and beauty, qualities which are achieved through the use of meter and form.

As a creator you should approach the writing with a feeling of being in tune with the elements. A cold, grey twilight brings somber, grey-hued thoughts; a sun-filled morning creates a golden, sunlit mood. A sense of foreboding is best produced