

FOR THE LADIES

SUGAR RIDDY

THE RIGHT IDEA ABOUT LOVE

By Bonita Armstrong

Older people and babies have the right idea about love. I like to call those types of love winter love and springtime love.

Babies love unconditionally. You've seen a baby's face light up when he looks up and sees his mother. A big, broad, toothless, smile covers his face. He gets excited and starts kicking and fanning his arms and gurgling happily.

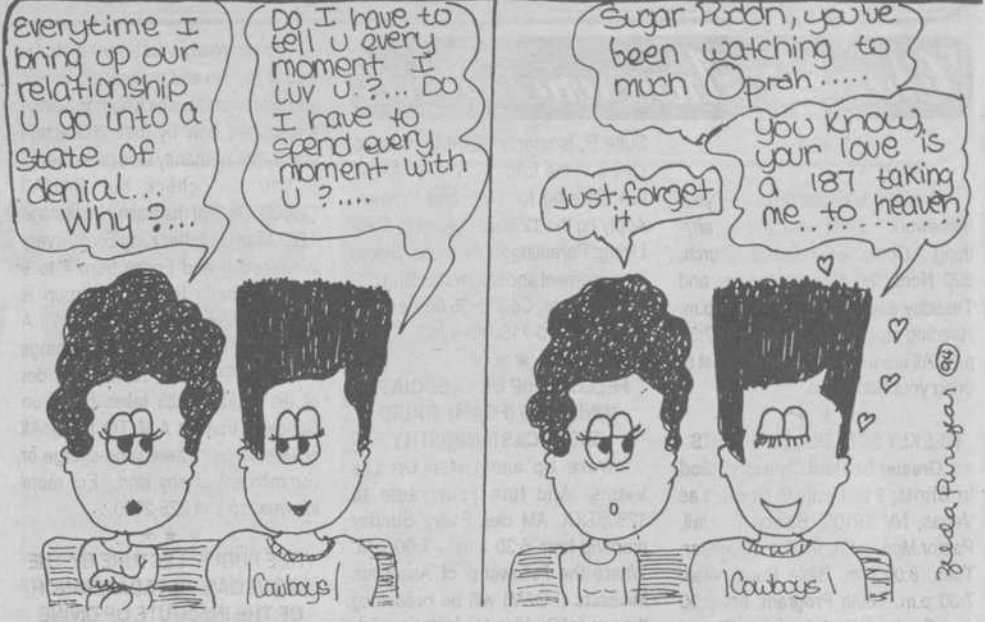
I can remember getting up early in the morning in a foul mood when my daughter was an infant. I would walk through the house grumbling and



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complaining, until I walked into my daughter's room. She would be lying there in her crib, looking

up and quietly playing. When she saw me looking down on her, she would begin smiling and giggling. Her apparent joy at seeing me made me feel 100 percent better. I hadn't done anything special to deserve this warm welcome, except be her mother and the object of her unconditional love. I didn't have to buy her any \$100 sneakers or make a fancy breakfast. I didn't have to do any favors for her or invite her to the right party. I didn't even have to drive the right kind of car or live in the right zip code. She loved me and for (See For the Ladies, Page 22)



AHA TO HOLD AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMEN'S CONFERENCE ON HEART DISEASE IN WASHINGTON, SEPT. 17

"There is a critical need for greater awareness about the risk and recognition of heart disease among African-American women," says Anne L. Taylor, M.D., chair of the American Heart Association's national conference, "Saving Our Lives: Black Women Fighting Heart Disease." This conference is to be held Sept. 17 in Washington, D.C., is the AHA's second nationwide effort focused on reaching women with life-saving information.

Launched in October 1989, the AHA's "women's initiative" has focused national attention on a health problem that continues to claim the lives of about 480,000 women each year, almost twice as many deaths as caused annually by cancer. One in seven women, ages 45-64, has some form of heart disease or stroke, and the ratio climbs to one in three age 65 and older, according to data from the National Center for Health Statistics.

This year's conference focuses on women for whom the disease is even more serious. "African-American women have a higher rate of heart disease than white women, and they also develop the condition earlier in life. That puts them at a very high risk," says Taylor, who is associate professor of medicine at Case Western Reserve University and chief of cardiology

at the Cleveland VA Medical Center.

Most people — even physicians and women themselves — still think that the typical heart disease patient is a middle-aged white male who suffers a heart attack on a Monday morning. Yet almost as many women die of heart disease as men although women tend to develop the disease 10 years later in life. Women's symptoms are often not recognized as cardiac in origin because they do not always follow the male pattern, and women may require diagnostic tests and treatment regimens that are specific to their sex.

Black women carry a double burden — first, because they are women, and second, because they are black. "There are three factors that may contribute to this vulnerability," Taylor says. "Differences in risk factor profiles, access to care and responses to treatment. It is not clear which of these factors is most important." Despite the recent decline in American coronary heart disease death rates — due largely to prevention and treatment advances — statistics on women and heart disease remain startlingly high, and the figures for African-American women are worse.

* Between ages 35 and 74, (See AHA, Page 22)

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