

## HISTORY OF ROMANTIC LOVE

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With few exception most available history of Romantic Love published in the West are deeply confused and flawed. There is an enormous amount of confusion about the intellectual history. I would like this situation resolved for the world in the future. Around the world today roughly 53% of the extant marriages are arranged. This implies that 47% of the marriages are not arranged but a product of autonomous choices. And in America around 88% of the marriages cite 'love' as the top reason for marriage. These facts immediately tell us something about the vastness of the importance of romantic love. Romantic love, in my view, will become important for 100% of the marriages in the future; this is not a subjective prediction but a deduction from a clear understanding rationally that romantic love is part of human nature.

The entire Western Intellectual Tradition has been confused about romantic love. From Plato's *Symposium* where Socrates derided romantic love as animal, when two are sick for intercourse for each other and then they are concerned with nurture of the young, to the Medieval Times and Christian moral norms where there was various notions of sin in sexuality and romantic love. The great error of Western Intellectual Tradition had been to consider morality to have been sourced upon Reason, and so the consideration of romantic love as having a low status continued. The greatest light in the entire intellectual history of romantic love is Avicenna (980-1037) who introduced the idea of the ennobling influence of romantic love. His works were translated and available in Europe, and directly influenced the troubadours of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, which led to the rise of Courtly Love among Aristocratic circles in Provence, Burgundy, Champagne, Aquitaine, and eventually over centuries the Romantics 1780-1820 into the modern concepts that are prevalent in the United States of America and Europe.

This rough outline of intellectual history of romantic love does not resolve the issues that are misunderstood about romantic love at all. Since the 1960s there has been interest in America among psychologists to produce scientific accounts that illuminate this. And I have been interested in recent years in elucidating romantic love. One of my primary concerns has been strong basis for *universal human nature*, based on the clear and well established fact that since the genetic code in common,  $G_c$ , is 99.9% of all human beings, a highly nontrivial human nature affects all people everywhere on Earth, and that remains extremely mysterious still. I have pushed back the evolutionary history of romantic love to before the evolution of homo sapiens, to 8-7 million years ago already. This was not novel, for Dr. Helen Fisher had stated the same, and had hypothesized a separate *Attraction* system in addition to *Lust* and *Attachment* system in a 1998 paper and had since promoted the evolutionary history of romantic love [1].

We can be sure, then, that romantic love has existed as human nature, as potential for all human beings for 4.5 million years. We can be sure that we are all born with the potential for and the evolutionary adaptations required for romantic love. The clarity and certainty of this knowledge is relatively recent. And it is central to any account of history of romantic love. We must be clear, then, that the phenomenon of romantic love has existed for 4.5 million years but the way in which we have conceptualised it and thought and written about the phenomenon has a separate history. In particular we have to reject all notions that there was any moment in human history that any particular culture *invented* some notion that then became romantic love.

This is extremely important to understand. There are evolutionary adaptations and a separate affective system for *Attraction*. That system could be activated in all sorts of circumstances. How a culture or society produces thoughts about the phenomenon, conceptualises it, provides rituals for its expression, these things might have a separate history. So the explicit behaviour and appropriate or inappropriate expression for it is of interest. And those have been quite variable throughout the world. I am personally interested in understanding canonical rituals and variations of understanding that are universal as well. The goal is not to dictate what people ought to do but to appreciate that evolutionary adaptations that we all share require some theorising to assist all people with leading more fulfilling lives and higher well-being and life satisfaction.

At the outset, I will reveal my prejudices that are strong. I believe in Virtue Ethics, and stand on empirical results vindicating Aristotle's Virtue-Eudaimonia theory for non-sex related moral virtues, after showing Universal Human Moral Nature. And therefore I expect that there ought to exist a set of Virtues that are Romantic Love related that complete Aristotelian theory so that Virtue-Eudaimonia theory is universal truth for human nature.

#### 1. DIGRESSION: THOMAS AQUINAS TOOK HIS THEOLOGY FROM AVICENNA

In the West Thomas Aquinas is thought a great original genius who proposed the merging of Aristotelian Virtue theory with Christian theology. In fact, he just took Avicenna's merging of Aristotle's Virtues with Islamic theology with some cosmetic changes and West conveniently erased Avicenna, and suddenly Thomas Aquinas became the great original genius with plagiarised theology. Avicenna's genius and originality is astounding. He rebelled against both Islamic and Christian thought and saw clearly the great *difference* between sexual attraction and romantic love and then theorised about the ennobling influence of romantic love for the soul in various ways. Before Helen Fisher's hypothesis of an Attraction system in 1998, this has been a matter of speculation. And all post-Avicenna European thought about romantic love suffered from speculations about it that were controversial. In fact one could consider the Helen Fisher's hypothesis, when fully validated as a vindication of original insight from Avicenna.

#### 2. HUMAN ROMANTIC LOVE WITH PATERNAL INVESTMENT

Helen Fisher's great hypothesis of 1998 is existence of a mammalian *Attraction* system for romantic love [1]. For me, there is a specificity to human romantic love that is not present in most mammals, and that is paternal investment that tied to romantic love. Human romantic is not identical to the activation of the attraction

system of any mammal. Indeed paternal investment is evident in only 5% of all mammals.

I am extremely keen to be the pioneer with credit for this particular form of romantic love having existed from before the evolution of Homo Sapiens roughly within past 4.5 million years.

### 3. FISHER SYSTEMS AND LEE STYLES MUST MERGE IN A SINGLE SCIENTIFIC THEORY

John Alan Lee, the Canadian psychologist produced in *The Colours of Love* various styles of loving within romantic relationships in 1973 that is quite influential. He divides primary types to Eros, Ludos, and Storge. Then he considers secondary and tertiary styles that are mixtures. He derives these from analysis of questionnaire responses.

I like this approach of Lee's. This reminds me of the way in which people attempted to classify emotions in the past. In the case of emotions, finer understanding came from discovery and precise verification in Neuroscience of seven basic emotion systems shared by all mammals by Jaak Panksepp in 1998 text *Affective Neuroscience*. It remains an interesting question whether Lee's Love Styles can be put in such a canonical footing in the future. The most obvious thing to do is to map Lee's Love Styles to activation levels of Helen Fisher's Lust, Attraction, and Attachment systems. Just in case this has not been done before, this is simply a matter of linear algebra, since there are three systems and three primary styles, there exists a non-singular  $3 \times 3$  matrix that will associate Lee's Love Styles to activation levels of Helen Fisher Systems.

John Alan Lee produced his three primary love styles using factor analysis of questionnaire data in the early 1970s. Helen Fisher hypothesized the existence of three biological systems Lust, Attraction, and Attachment, in 1998. The natural hypothesis is the following, and it is simple so I don't want to claim much credit for it and call this the Fisher-Lee Theory of relationships.

We assume that levels of activations of Fisher systems are quantified as a triplet

$$F(t) = (l(t), a_1(t), a_2(t))$$

where  $t$  is a temporal variable. Now let  $\bar{F}$  be some mean level for the variable. The hypothesis would be that there is a constant  $3 \times 3$  matrix  $M$  and a classifier  $L : \mathbf{R}^3 \rightarrow G$  where

$$G = \{\text{Eros, Ludos, Storge}\}$$

There are obvious variations possible. The significant aspect of this hypothesis is the constancy of the matrix  $M$ . Such a Fisher-Lee theory could then simultaneously be able to support the Helen Fisher biological systems as well as John Alan Lee Love Styles and establish itself as a basic theory of romantic relationship that is *complete*. In other words, humanity will have some certainty regarding the biological systems involved in determining romantic relationship styles and their effects. This is not a theory proposed by Fisher and Lee but myself, but I think they deserve the credit for success of such a theory. It will be a great advance in our knowledge of human nature when this sort of basic quantitative theory is thoroughly tested. The conclusion would be that exactly three and known systems are the dominant contributors to all romantic relationships. The conclusion will be a gigantic advance in human understanding of romantic relationships.

It is worth examining why this matters. There is no clear understanding from Helen Fisher's work what are the full relationship outcomes from the activation levels of Lust, Attraction and Attachment Systems. On the other hand there is much variety in actual human romantic relationships that Lee examined but uses factor analysis and therefore does not tell us what is the biological basis of his Love Styles; it remains a phenomenological theory. My proposal above would give biological basis to Lee's Styles and give expressive basis for Fisher Systems. Then we will have a clearer understanding of the phenomena of romantic love in their variety in relationships.

#### 4. WHY THERE MUST EXIST SCIENTIFIC THEORIES OF ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

Romantic Love relationships are such a complex phenomena with such enormous variety that at first it seems almost impossible to understand if there could be any laws that operate for them or how one could consider understanding them scientifically. Let me return to the general idea that allows me to make sense of them. All human genome has  $G_c$  the genetic code in common accounting for 99.9% of the individual genome. We will consider only heterosexual cases because they account for 97% of the romantic relationships on Earth. We can assume that romantic relationships are processes  $R(g_m, g_f)$  between a man with genome  $g_m$  and a woman with genome  $g_f$ . We are seeking scientific theories for all possible such processes. There might be dependence on further unknown variables  $u$  and so the phenomena of interest might be denoted  $R(g_m, g_f, u)$ . We expect there to be some universal laws for the phenomena because  $G_c \subset g_m$  and  $G_c \subset g_f$ . In other words, since  $G_c$  is *constant* and part of the complex phenomena are functions of the genetic codes  $g_m$  and  $g_f$  we might expect some regularity and expect some laws that give us sharper understanding of  $R(g_m, g_f, u)$ . This is the general argument that suggest that romantic relations are feasible subjects of scientific investigation. This argument has been implicitly made by many psychologists over the past century but I make it here because I am promoting this  $G_c$  as the foundation of human nature. And this argument shows how romantic love fits into a general human nature framework.

Not long ago, someone quite intelligent asked me what is relationship science, and was concerned precisely about the difficulty in dealing with the sheer complexity of romantic relationships in life. The above explanation is a relatively nontrivial answer to this question. We would like to discover universal laws for  $R(g_m, g_f, u)$ . I like to keep open the issue of what concepts, metrics, and variables and their relationships constitute scientific theories of romantic relationships.

#### 5. OUR INTEREST IS VIRTUE-EUDAIMONIA FOR ROMANTIC LOVE

In the last section, we gave an argument for laws governing Romantic Relationships. Unlike natural science theories that do not include human beings, such as chemistry, there are some new elements when social sciences are involved. In social sciences, the aim is often not just to produce a scientific theory of the phenomena, such as  $R(g_m, g_f, u)$ , but do so with the specific aim of improvement of social life. Almost all social sciences have much weaker fit of models to data compared to the so called 'exact natural sciences'. One reason for this is that the complexity of the phenomena; and we have a direct sense for this complexity because we know that

$g_m$  and  $g_f$  have around six billion DNA letters, and  $G_c \subset g_m, g_c$  does not lose order of magnitude. Since  $G_c$  is still shrouded in darkness and mystery in our meager understanding, just the genetic variable is enormous. In one of my previous works I have given an estimate for the total unique human genomes possible, and it is in the order of 5 trillion. Given this intrinsic complexity of the phenomena, we have the problem that a direct approach would have astronomical number of variables and measurements required. For this reason, social sciences have an arbitrary quality, as there always needs to be a *choice of variables* that are small enough to be tractable and a pragmatic constraint on the sample size of measurements.

## 6. DELICATE BALANCE ON NATURE AND OUR DEMANDS

I am a strong mystic regarding Nature. Having worked on theoretical physics for many years, I have come to understand that Nature is silent and we are on our own regarding her ways. Our theories about natural phenomena, including human social phenomena, have as variables those chosen arbitrarily. History of Science is littered with theories that did not stand the test of time for various reasons. Furthermore, when the subjects of our theories are human beings, there are even more variables because the consciousness of the participants play a role as well. One of the ways I will handle this issue is simply by positing that there is for all social theories some target variables that will guide theories, the main among them Life Satisfaction of the participants. This particular choice might seem arbitrary to some, but since I have established the monotonic increase of Life Satisfaction with moral values and established Aristotle's theory of Virtue-Eudaimonia for non-sex related morals clearly in the past years, I consider this choice to be valuable. It also fits with my general aim of seeking *Virtues associated with Romantic Love*. Thus I can restate my interest by the questions: what variables exist and what statements involving those exist such that they describe Virtues associated with Romantic Love? Then I want to ensure that higher such – as yet unknown Virtues – will improve Life Satisfaction for the lovers.

## 7. FATHER AND MOTHER'S EFFECTS

For men in romantic relationships, passionate romantic love is affected by *Closeness to father* +0.29, and for women trust in father. Roughly father is the main factor in passionate romantic love. I would hypothesize then that for children growing up without father, we expect degeneration of Eros in their future love lives, whether girl or boy.

Avoidance of game-playing Ludos, for men requires closeness to mother -0.28. This is most interesting as the natural hypothesis is that maternal attachment does lead men to avoid emotional distance in their romantic love lives.

Storge or friendship love for *women only* are strongly repelled by closeness to mother (-0.34) or father (-0.29). This is an interesting area for further understanding. Storge does not have any strong parental effects for men.

Pragma for *women only* is negatively affected by closeness and trust of father, -0.30 and -0.23; it is positively affected by communication with father +0.35. This is another way in which paternal involvement in girl's life strongly affects her future romantic love life.

These are findings from an extremely important work [2].

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Table 3. Standardized betas and proportion explained variance for the regression analyses of LAS on IPPA as predictors in males and females

	Eros		Ludus		Storge		Pragma		Mania		Agape	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Trust father	.08	.18	-.17	.10	.05	<b>-.29*</b>	-.01	<b>-.30**</b>	-.03	.11	.16	.11
Communication f.	-.01	.13	-.08	.13	-.02	.15	.17	<b>.35**</b>	.02	.13	.06	.03
Closeness f.	<b>.29*</b>	-.06	-.05	-.16	.04	-.16	.02	<b>-.23*</b>	-.04	<b>-.33**</b>	-.01	-.10
Trust mother	.01	-.16	-.04	.04	.01	<b>-.34**</b>	-.01	-.16	-.05	-.11	-.08	-.07
Communication m.	.07	.07	.18	-.06	.04	-.21	-.09	.09	<b>.30**</b>	-.09	-.07	.07
Closeness m.	-.01	-.08	<b>-.28**</b>	-.10	-.14	.06	-.22	.03	<b>-.23*</b>	-.08	.15	.00
R <sup>2</sup>	<b>.14**</b>	.07	<b>.18**</b>	.04	.01	<b>.11**</b>	.06	<b>.21**</b>	<b>.09*</b>	<b>.13**</b>	.05	.01

\*\*\*p < .001. \*\*p < .01. \*p < .05 Significant differences are noted in bold.

## 8. HENDRICK-HENDRICK STYLE CORRELATIONS

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Interrelations Among Love Scale Sum Scores

Scale	Ludus	Storge	Pragma	Mania	Agape
<b>Study I</b>					
Eros	.00	-.05	-.05	.07	.27*
Ludus	—	.03	.12*	-.05	-.28*
Storge		—	.23*	.06	.13*
Pragma			—	.11*	.05
Mania				—	.30*
<b>Study II</b>					
Eros	-.22*	-.04	-.04	.13*	.32*
Ludus	—	-.05	.09*	-.03	-.42*
Storge		—	.25*	.01	.15*
Pragma			—	.13*	.04
Mania				—	.23*

Note. N = 567 in Study II; N = 807 in Study I.

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This is from the extremely important study of Clyde Hendrick and Susan Hendrick who quantified John Alan Lee's 1973 Love Styles [3].

There are many valuable insights here about human nature. I will give you my particular views. You see, I think of Agape as a sort of secondary outcome of a relationship that is good rather than a primary. I personally would not want to be the person who will want to sacrifice unselfishly for someone who is not in some sense my soul mate.

Is my natural intuition normal?

So this happens roughly for two other types, Eros (0.30) and Mania (0.27). That makes a great deal of sense for me. I don't think it is reasonable at all for the other

two. For Ludus, it is spectacularly negative (-0.35) and for Storge it is mild (0.15). Agape is not a primary effect.

Now Pragma has no passionate love, and that is very serious as well, as the correlations are roughly -0.05. Pragma and Storge are strongly correlated (0.25). Storge also has not much passionate love. A good question to ask is whether Storge and Pragma are actually difficult to distinguish.

## 9. ZULF'S HYPOTHESES ON LOVE STYLES

I will hypothesize some relationships to expect between Life Satisfaction and Romantic Love Styles. I expect Ludus to have the lowest Life Satisfaction; I expect both Storge and Pragma to have medium Life Satisfaction; I expect Mania to have lower LS than Eros. I expect Agape to be generally correlated with Life Satisfaction.

In these I see Virtues leading to Eros+Agape combination. This is the next step towards search for the right Virtues to extend past Aristotelian Virtue-Eudaimonia theory.

I do believe that Father-Mother attachment effects are good but not determining. In other words I expect Virtues are more fundamental once found.

## 10. FELIX NETO'S WORK

Table 3. *Correlations Between Compassionate Love Scale Scores and Other Variables*

Variables	Compassionate Love Scale
Eros	.38***
Ludus	-.30***
Storge	.04
Pragma	-.21**
Mania	.04
Agape	.38***
Satisfaction with life	.31***
Satisfaction with love life	.38***
Satisfaction with sex life	.26***
Positive affect	.46***
Negative affect	-.10

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

I won't go into details of Felix Neto's Compassionate Love analysis. I am interested in the ranking of the Lee Love Styles to Life Satisfaction. I will just consider Neto's Compassionate Love as a proxy for Life Satisfaction here to check my conjecture. The issue of the Virtues I seek I will push into the future for now.

We see the ranking here of the following from lowest to highest: Ludus, Pragma, Storge, Mania, Eros. I set Agape aside as a secondary effect. I am a bit surprised to see Mania as having significantly lower LS than Eros because their Agape effects are similar; also Pragma much lower than Storge. These differences would need explanation.

Compassionate Love used by Neto might have partial answer to our search but I would like to keep the question broadly open.

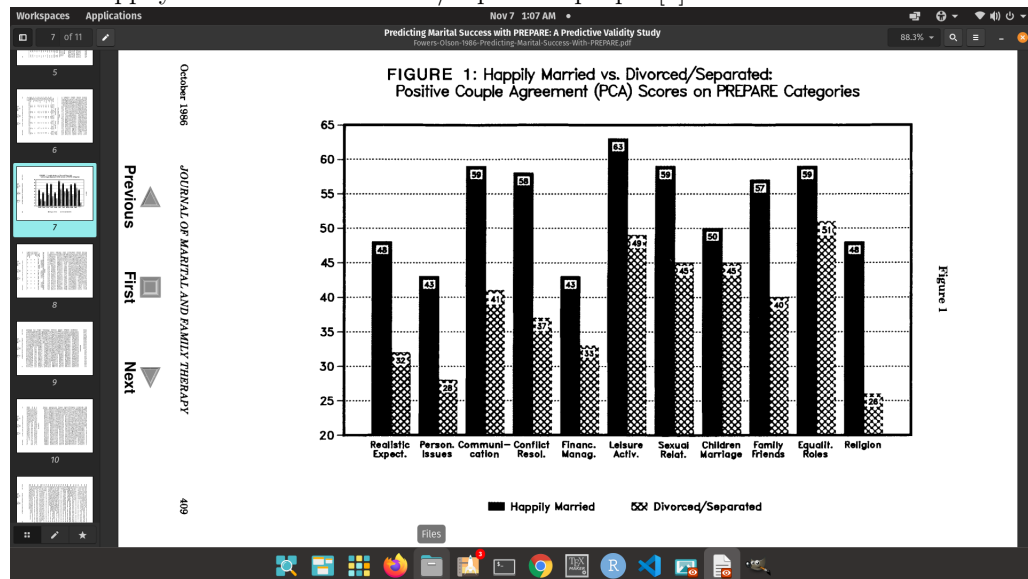
## 11. VIRTUE ETHICS IS SUBTLE AND DEEP

We are born with genetic material that has a *hidden potential* for Life Satisfaction that has not been understood. This is our *natural inheritance*. Every person born on Earth has natural genetic inheritance that is our birthright in the strongest possible manner. The entire approach of Virtue Ethics leads to *inner transformations* by habituation and not primarily by reasoning, Aristotle's *phronesis* that changes our psyche with habituation. It is useless to seek normative rational ethics for the birthright in our genetic code for highest life satisfaction. There exist unknown Virtues that come from habituation that prepare and guide us towards that component of Life Satisfaction that come from Romantic Love with another person. Normative theories are useless here because it is *wrong* that one ought to do such and such a thing with any given partner. There is, if not uniqueness, certainly *specificity* for the beloved or romantic partner. It matters quite strongly who we love if we are to unlock our genetic inheritance. I am absolutely certain that Romantic Love Virtue Ethics is the right path and also that it is quite difficult to understand because we are not in an Age where it is normal for people to pick good romantic partners or reach the potential level of Life Satisfaction.

I strongly advocate returning to Aristotelian Virtue Ethics on the matter of autonomous mutual choices, and it is significant that those who have lower restrictions on casual sex and divorce and sex before marriage have *higher* Life Satisfaction. Those are not the right variables. They simply indicate something that is not understood by the current Age of Man about the right variables, and when understood, we will have *canonical Virtue Ethics* that will significantly improve the human condition for eight billion people.

## 12. BLAINE FOWERS ON HAPPILY MARRIED VS. DIVORCED/SEPARATED PEOPLE

Blaine Fowers has done great work telling us the difference in some metrics between Happily Married and Divorced/Separated people [5].





These ought to give us some sense of the implied virtues associated to romantic relationships we seek.

### 13. DESERVINGNESS OF LOVE, ADMIRATION, AND RESPECT

Rereading "A Vision of Romantic Love" by Nathaniel Branden we find his view that we need to believe we are deserving of Love, Admiration and Respect generally in order to be prepared for romantic love. This is most intriguing and this is something that I think needs to be cultivated in K-12 education.

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