

## PRIORITY OF ROMANTIC LOVE AS HUMAN NATURE PREDATING EVOLUTION OF HOMO SAPIENS

ZULFIKAR MOINUDDIN AHMED

In this note I will examine priority for the idea that romantic love existed before evolution of homo sapiens and other primate ancestors before 8-7 million years ago. I will be interested in examining Helen Fisher's paper [1]. She hypothesizes an *attraction system* for all mammals in this paper of 1998. I want to quote the relevant section, because this is quite important to for preciseness.

"Implicit in Darwin's model of sexual selection and subsequent discussions of mate choice is an understanding that some type of emotion system is activated when individual mammals focus their energy and mating effort on preferred partners. So it is proposed on this paper that mate preference has two fundamental aspects: factors that *trigger* mate preference ... and the emotion system that *facilitates* this mate preference.

Since myriad species-specific anatomical, chemical, and behavioral phenomena have evolved in mammalian species expressly to stimulate attraction from conspecifics, it is parsimonious to suggest that these sexually selected stimuli activate a specific emotion system in *all* mammals." (p. 30)

In this paper, Helen Fisher is hypothesizing a mammalian attraction system, whose triggering is the the experience of romantic love in the human context. Now this hypothesis is from 1998, and to the extent that an attraction system is isolated clearly then it would be a logical consequence from her hypothesis that romantic love predates the evolution of homo sapiens 8-7 million years ago.

In this sense priority belongs to Helen Fisher for one of my key interests, which is to establish that romantic love existed from before the evolution of homo sapiens as a species. But her focus has been exclusively of course on human attraction system, so at least in the 1998 paper there is no direct evidence presented for the general mammalian attraction system that is activated for all mammals.

This is a very interesting point of view, and her hypothesis is very good and likely to lead to further understanding. My interest is to understand how the experience of human romantic love differs substantially as well from other mammals. This part is also significant, because those differences are extremely central to our self-understanding as well. My thought is of course that there are many levels of nuances introduced to the particular human experiences of an 'activated attraction system' by the Helen Fisher Hypothesis here to the attraction system of chimpanzees and cats. In the case of chimpanzees, the hypothetical discrete attraction system does not lead to paternal investment in care for progeny, and that is very important for human romantic love. Just to be technical, I do consider the paternal investment in childrearing to be an important part of romantic love, and so can make a distinction from a hypothetical attraction system for all mammals to human romantic love.

This allows me priority for a specific sort of romantic love having existed for 8-7 million years before evolution of homo sapiens.

This is not just a mere technicality. My concept of romantic love is extremely important for the evolution of larger brained primates. And here I have priority for this more restricted concept.

#### 1. PRIORITY CLAIM FOR PATERNAL INVESTMENT ROMANTIC LOVE

I was trained as a Mathematician at Princeton as an undergraduate, and I appreciate the Helen Fisher Hypothesis of Mammalian Attraction system. This hypothesis, in my view, is good and will bear fruit in our understanding of mammalian biology and psychology.

However, at least in the 1998 paper [1], the viewpoint of Romantic Love is not specific to features of human romantic love that I think are extremely different from those in chimpanzees, and I would like priority in the scientific community and in the annals of intellectual history for my hypothesis, that it was the Paternal Investment Romantic Love, that predates the evolution of Homo Sapiens, at some period between 8-7 million years ago and 2.3 million years ago, when Homo Habilis evolved. This is very important to one of my major theses, that this Paternal Investment Romantic Love was *necessary* for the growth of the brain. I want priority for the evolutionary history of this particular form of Romantic Love that is not a minor deviation from more general mammalian attraction system. Then I want to consider Human Romantic Love to be a specification of this notion of Romantic Love. In vernacular love preceded and sparked the intellect in human history. And that love is properly human romantic love and differs from dog-love and cat-love and elephant-love.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Helen Fisher, *Lust, Attraction, and Attachment in Mammalian Reproduction*, Human Nature, 9(1), pp. 23–52.