

ELEMENTARY ERRORS ABOUT ROMANTIC LOVE AND THEIR FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS

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I am reading Nathaniel Branden's "A Vision of Romantic Love" which is worth reading and examining with care. Today I am quite interested in the erroneous beliefs about romantic Love. Branden points out in his essay some things he does not agree with.

I do not, for example, share the assumption of some champions of romantic love that reason and passion are antithetical. I do not believe that "true love conquers all". Nor that there is one soul mate for each person on earth. Nor that love necessarily entails marriage or that marriage entails children.

I want to spend some time thinking about these issues afresh, as I feel that each of these false beliefs have some substance and are still erroneous. First of all I do agree with Nathaniel Branden but I am curious about the substance in the errors.

I will simply ruminate a bit about each of these a bit and not attempt to produce sharp new understanding in this note. Instead I will simply attempt to open up the issues a bit more.

1. WHAT DOES LOVE CONQUER IF ANYTHING AT ALL?

I won't attempt to be precise here and speak, rather, from experience. Love provides a validation for our greater self-concepts and that is the fundamental power of love. For me the love of an intelligent and beautiful woman gives me wings in a way and allows me to have vaster ambitions and courage than when I am not in that situation. Now whether this 'conquers all' is a matter of interpretation because 'all' have to be specified. Love does not obviously conquer the laws of heavenly bodies and their trajectories. But certainly love conquers some nontrivial difficulties in life.

2. REASON AND PASSION ARE NOT ANTITHETICAL

There are multiple ideas of what 'reason' means. The way in which reason and passion are thought to be antithetical by some are, I think, the following. Arbitrary assumptions about the world have some consequences that could be considered efforts of reason. Passion defies those consequences. There is nothing surprising in this. Passion produces motivation that is more primary, and reason based on primary new assumptions will produce harmony between passion and reason.

3. THERE IS A LIMITED NUMBER OF POSSIBLE SOUL MATES FOR EACH PERSON

Here I have some substantial answers. There is not a single soul mate on Earth for each of us. But there is a limited number of possible soul mates for each. This is a consequence of statistical models based on thousands of personality types I had worked on in the past several years. The summary of my work is that given any person of a given type, a small number of other types are compatible and the coverage is around 80%-85% of each type. The metric is future expected marriage and sexual satisfaction with personality type as independent variables.

4. MARRIAGE IS SECONDARY

I do strongly support marriage for lovers who want to raise children, but it is secondary. Love relationships have independent substance. Children are optional in a way but in evolutionary history, romantic love in males is associated with paternal care. Nathaniel Branden's claim is on the other hand true, that love does not entail marriage and marriage does not entail children. That's not only true, but there is need for greater awareness because a great many relationship problems begin when these issues are not resolved before nontrivial relationships are initiated.