

Why do people fall in love?

Business



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Since the dawn of humanity, people have fallen in love with each other.

But why? Why do people do this phenomenon? Is it just another feeling, like sadness or anger? Or is it essential to humanity? Would human beings cease to exist if LOVE did not? These are all questions answered in this paper.

Chapter 1: Why Love? Why do People Fall in Love? Throughout human history, people have fallen in love. Romantic love has been a central theme in “ thousands of romantic poems, songs, and stories across the centuries from ancestral Europe, as well as the Middle East, Japan, China, India, and every other society that has left written records” (Fisher 3). It is apparent worldwide. Even so, countless deny the universality of romance.

Some believe that it is simply a feeling. However, love is more than just another emotion. The “ capacity for romantic love is woven firmly into the fabric of the human brain.” (Fisher 3). While a majority may believe that love is a sensation, recent studies have proven that it is an essential part of the lives of human beings, integrated into the brain chemically, emotionally, and psychologically. Love is truly an incontrollable, instinctual drive.

Love triggers different reactions in human beings but they are all caused by the same brain chemicals. The signs of people who first fall in love include “ a racing heart, flushed skin and sweaty palms. Researchers say” this is due to the release of dopamine and norepinephrine (Obringer 7). Hormones play a significant role in romantic love. They are what cause people to feel and react when in love.

Love is a drive. A human drive is a basic need for human survival. Love is one of those needs. Dopamine is one of the most important brain chemicals

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involved in the drive of love. The British Broadcasting Company (BBC), has done many studies on the subject of love and has stated that dopamine is a hormone that is also activated by the use of cocaine and nicotine.

Some say that love is an addiction since “ major addictions are associated with elevated levels of dopamine” (Fisher 53). When someone is in love, his or her dopamine levels rise above the average. A dopamine level in the blood “ higher than 30 pictogram per milliliter is considered high, according to laboratory standards published by Cigna” (Pickut). Dopamine is a natural chemical release, which means that falling in love is also natural.

Norepinephrine, also known as adrenaline, works in harmony with dopamine when a person is in love. This hormone causes sweating and a racing heart, a symptom that is associated with being in love.

Dopamine is not the only hormone that causes beloveds to feel addicted to each other. People in love are found to have lower serotonin levels than people who are not. This brain chemical is an explanation to a “ lover’s persistent, involuntary, irresistible ruminations about a sweetheart” (Fisher 54). The decreased serotonin levels in a person in love “ are the same as those found in people with obsessive-compulsive disorders, possibly explaining why those in love ‘ obsess’ about their partner” (Obringer 7).

Romantic love cannot simply be an emotion. It depends upon too many parts of the brain for it to only be a feeling.

Attachment hormones also play an integral role in the process of love. Lee Ann Obringer, an author for “ How Love Works”, a commercial edutainment website, states that oxytocin and vasopressin are the hormones that create

the attachment to that special someone. These hormones are released simply by the physical act of touching (Obringer). Oxytocin and vasopressin are the reason that romantic love is thought to be a physical relationship as well as an emotional one (Obringer). When two people love each other, romantically or not, human nature is to want to touch, and be touched by, that person.

Oxytocin is known as the “cuddle hormone” for this reason. One “can get oxytocin release by shaking someone’s hand or hugging a loved one” (Abrams). This explains why people who love each other always have to be near one another. Oxytocin is the same hormone involved “to help cement the strong bond between mum and baby and is released during childbirth” (Your Amazing Brain). The mother and baby are touching for a long period so a large quantity of oxytocin is released between the two of them.

They have a special bond. The stereotype that men are afraid of commitment relates back to the release of vasopressin, because “men with weak vasopressin receptors were much less likely to be married and more likely to report a crisis in their relationship” (Butler 1). These attachment hormones are important for couples to maintain a relationship. Without these hormones, romantic relationships would not be an intimate experience. The increase and decrease of these different brain chemicals cause those in love to experience heightened physiological reactions. Lovers “often lose [the] ability to think rationally” (Obringer 5).

People will go above and beyond to please their significant other whether or not the attempt is rational. This loss of rationality comes from the natural

hormonal high that being in love causes. Darice Britt states her opinion on the matter saying, “ It seems rather inaccurate to say ‘ falling in love’ because experiencing love is more of a high that puts people on cloud nine.” People in love can be set in a state of bliss (Britt). Their mind is temporarily fixed on the idea that nothing can go wrong in their lives. Love, in its entirety, can be physically and emotionally beneficial.

The Journal of Health and Social Behavior says “ a recent study found that subjects who were recently married scored an average of 3. 42 points lower on the 84-point depression scale than unmarried subjects” (qtd. by Wolfe). People, of course, do not fall in love for the health benefits; they are another advantage to the entire situation. Jennifer Wolfe of “ How Stuff Works” explains that romantic love has been “ proven to lower blood pressure and decrease stress levels” and “ can also reduce your risk of mental health issues.

” She also states “ couples in love have less frequent annual visits to the doctor than those without love in their life” and “ both married men and women have drastically lower rates of serious diseases.” Wolfe believes that being in love is not only good for one’s soul, but for one’s body. Studies have shown that when a person is in love, he or she is healthier on average than someone who is not. Human beings are very advanced when it comes to choosing a partner. Humans are unique in this aspect considering “ only three percent of mammals (aside from the human species) form ‘ family’ relationships like [people] do” (Obringer 10). It is natural that humans would want the best for themselves and for their future generations.

People are selective when choosing a mate because they want the finest set of genes for their children. Humans want healthy, well-balanced offspring. Helen Fisher, one of the world's most renowned anthropologists, states that people “ will not fall in love with everyone that comes along: [people] have preferences, and those have to do, in part, with the way that [the mind of human beings] is built” (qtd. by Butler). The stereotype that “ women are picky” when it comes to relationships is, for this psychological reason, very true. It is in human nature to be meticulous when it comes to finding a mate.

Women all over the globe “ are more attracted to partners with education, ambition, wealth, respect, status, and position” (Fisher 114). People, especially women, look for a lover who will be the best genetic match with them, but will also result in the “ best” children. “ Best” in this sense refers to the person's preference, however, generally it means attractive and healthy. When someone is attracted “ to a healthy person, [that] gives [the] best chance to have babies and pass [his or her] genes to the next generation” (Fischman). It is impossible to “ ‘ talk about beauty without talking about health,’ says psychologist Devendra Singh of the University of Texas-Austin” (qtd. by Fischman).

Preferences for love are subconsciously based on the drive to reproduce. Human beings fall in love as a form of a “ screening process” so that they can find the best-fit mate for themselves. Human beings tend to fall in love with people who they are most like. Helen Fisher states that most people around the world love strangers who have the same ethnic, social, spiritual background and also those “ who have a similar amount of physical attractiveness, a comparable intelligence, and similar attitudes,

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expectations, values, interests, and social and communication skills” (Fisher 103). Two people can be complete strangers, however, if they have a few or all of those similarities, they may have chemistry towards each other.

The popular phrase “ love at first sight” is not nearly as common as most people think. Statistics show that most human beings fall for someone they have known for a long time. People are comfortable with being around people they already know. Personality is an important quality for falling in love, as well. In general, studies have shown that “ kindness and intelligence are extremely important in the process of falling in love” (Aron).

Humans are naturally pulled towards people that are similar to them. This is why when signing up for room assignments in college, the college administration attempts to put the new student with someone who does the same activities as them. Although people are taught that it is what is on the inside that counts, physical appearance matters more than one would think when it comes to attracting a potential partner. Aaron Ben-Zeev, Ph. D., plainly states, “ The way you cut your hair determines how people evaluate what is inside your head.

” Unfortunately, the truth is that people can be shallow and will often “ judge a book by its cover.” The way one looks “ significantly influences ratings of intelligence, sociality, and morality” in the eyes of other people. Human beings assume that someone is a certain way even before they get the chance to meet them. It is in human nature to do so. Physical attractiveness is an important aspect to romantic love. People are drawn to those they find most attractive.

For both sexes, “bodily symmetry can help to trigger romantic love” (Fisher 104). The human form is symmetrical. The ideal body in a human’s mind is one perfectly symmetrical and without blemishes. That is why “[women] mold their forms to create the symmetrical proportions men prefer” (Fisher 106). Women use make-up to cover up flaws on their faces.

Flaws are considered unattractive because they take away from the symmetry of the human face. As people age they “become more and more lopsided,” taking away from “attractive” symmetry (Fisher 106). Having to do with physical symmetry, “on average, men around the world marry women who are three years younger than themselves” (Fisher 109). When humans are younger, they are more symmetrical. Symmetry is a sign of attractiveness, men prefer younger women for this reason.

This is why people strive to look young in this world because that is what is considered psychologically and societally attractive. Human beings are drawn to those they find most attractive because they subconsciously want someone who will provide the genes for attractive children. Romantic love is the backbone of the reproduction process for human beings. Without love, people would cease to exist because they would most likely not want to reproduce and nurture their progeny. Women and men look for different qualities in each other regarding attraction. Gender plays a role in sexual and romantic attraction.

Heterosexual “women tend to look at men’s eyes, whereas [heterosexual] men initially look at women’s bodies. While the body is of central importance for sexual attraction, the eyes are perceived as the best indicators of one’s

character” (Ben-Zeev). This is not to say that men are shallow and do not consider any other aspects of a woman when selecting a potential partner. Men simply look towards the sexual attraction before anything else. Women inspect a person’s character first before moving onto the sexual attraction. Men and women are wired differently.

Ben-Zeev explains it as “ men love the women they are attracted to, whereas women are attracted to the men they love” (Ben-Zeev). It seems almost unfathomable, however that “ most [men] chose women whose waist circumference was about 70 percent of their hips” (Fisher 107). The acceptable waist-to-hip ratio for women is 0. 8, or 80%, this means that the circumference of their waist divided by the circumference of their hips was 0. 8 or lower. If it is any higher, the woman is considered overweight.

According to Fisher, and other studies, most men prefer women with a 0. 7 waist-to-hip ratio. They do this subconsciously because women with this waist-to-hip ratio are more likely to be fertile. “ Women also prefer men with distinctive cheekbones and a strong jaw [because they] are built with testosterone [which] suppresses the immune system. Only exceedingly healthy teenage boys can tolerate the effects of this and build a rugged face” (Fisher 115). A sharp face on a male signifies a healthy man.

This is why, subconsciously, women are more attracted to guys with well-defined faces. Men and women look for their mates differently, but their goal is the same; each of them wants to find a suitable partner. Romantic love is emotionally controlling. When people “ are truly love-struck [they] can think of little else” (Your Amazing Brain). Their beloveds take over their minds.

People believe that their lovers can do no wrong. People place their beloveds on a pedestal. It is like looking through life in “ rose-colored glasses, what psychologists call the ‘ pink-lens effect'” (Fisher 8). This effect is the concept of a person in love viewing their significant other with such love and passion that they almost have a kind of tunnel vision. The person in love believes that their partner is completely immaculate and can do nothing wrong.

People in love can sometimes be utterly blind of everything else around them. Their love lives engulf them. This effect usually lasts about the first 18 months of a relationship. After a while, the idea of a flawless mate fades. However, in the beginning of a relationship, Geoffrey Chaucer was right when he said, “ Love is blynd.

” Romantic love is not all fun and games. The feelings associated with love fluctuate drastically. These feelings include: “ compassion, ecstasy, desire, fear, suspicion, jealousy, doubt, awkwardness, embarrassment [and] at any moment this kaleidoscope of feelings can shift, then shift again” (Fisher 25). When one’s love is not returned, it can seem like the end of the world. Those in love sometimes fall into deep depression over such circumstances.

Lovers can also suffer from a terrible separation anxiety when not together because of their dependence on one another (Fisher 15). This is why a small number of long distance relationships can last. The separation anxiety can be too much for one person or both people in the party to handle. Charles Dickens even said, “ love often attains its most luxuriant growth in separation and under circumstances of the utmost difficulty” (qtd. by Fisher).

Some couples can last and prove the saying, “ distance makes the heart grow fonder.

” Those that do last grow and learn from the experience and the bond with their partner strengthens. Contrary to what various people believe, jealousy, to a moderate degree, can be beneficial. It is perfectly normal for either person in a relationship to get jealous. It shows that the person cares and wants him or her to himself or herself. The beloved wants their lover to be their own.

However, too much of a good thing can be bad. John Milton, author of Paradise Lost, ties together the mind of a couple in love through the words: We are one, / One flesh; to lose thee were to lose myself.” Paradise Lost is an epic poem about the story of Adam and Eve, the first love story known to humankind. A couple in love is considered “ one flesh” because of their unbelievable bond and attachment towards each other. When people are in love, they are emotionally and physically attached to one another. Romantic love is an experience that almost each human being goes through in his or her life.

While many think that love is just an emotion, current statistics show that it is a fundamental part of the lives of human beings, incorporated into the brain chemically and psychologically. It is natural and common but at the same time something extremely one of a kind. Each relationship is unique. When in love, every single part of the human body and mind is integrated into romantic love. Romantic love is psychological, physical, and emotional.

Helen Fisher concludes “ complexity, thy name is love.” It is difficult for any one person to understand the true concept of love. However, it is certain that romantic love has been and forever will be a fundamental part of the lives of human beings. Men and women fall in love as a “ screening process” to find the right life partner. Romantic love is an important aspect of human life for this reason. Without love integrated into the lives of people, human beings would cease to exist.