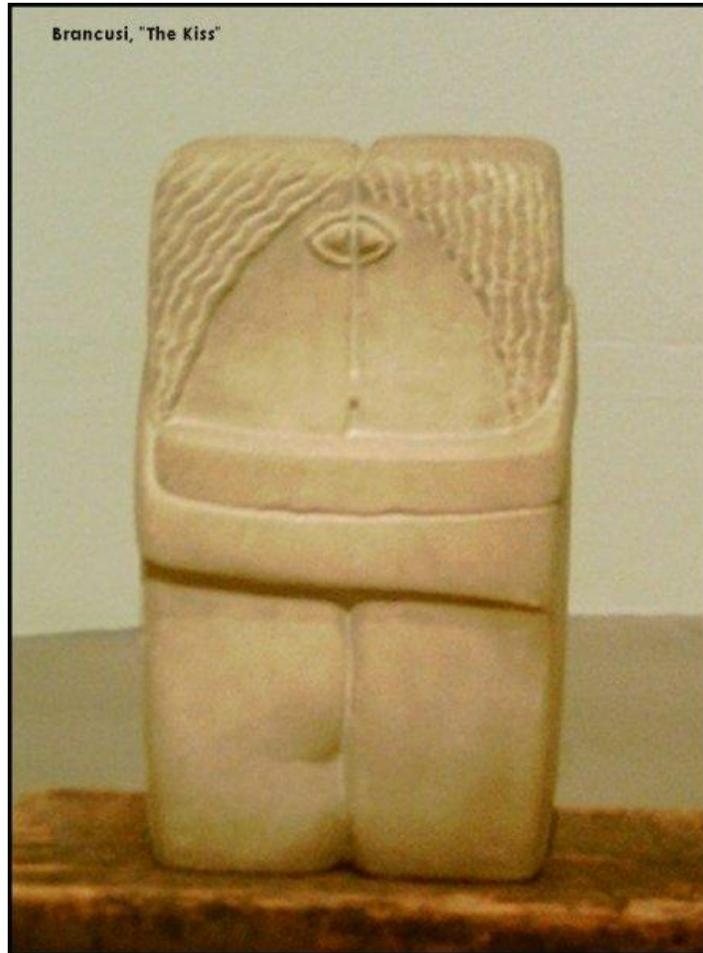


Reading Material for PHIL 255: *Philosophy of Sex and Love*

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# (1) A Conceptual Framework for Sexuality

## Six Evaluative Categories

1. **MORAL QUALITY**: morally good [morally right, morally permissible, morally obligatory, even morally supererogatory], vs. morally bad [immoral, morally wrong, impermissible]
2. **NONMORAL QUALITY**: nonmorally good [arousing, pleasurable, exciting], vs. nonmorally bad [boring, tedious]
3. **LEGALITY**: legal, legally permissible vs. illegal, legally prohibited
4. **PRAGMATICS**: safe, useful, effective vs. unsafe, counterproductive, not effective [psychologically, physically, financially, etc. -- this is a large category; think of all the possible uses/disadvantages of sexuality]
5. **NATURALNESS**: natural vs. unnatural (perverted)
6. **AESTHETICS**: beautiful sexual actions vs. repulsive sexual actions

**Note: These can also be seen as six different categories we can use to talk about (or describe) sexual activity or sexual behavior. This means that *none* of these categories can be used in defining "sexual activity," i.e., to distinguish sexual acts from other types of acts.**

\* \* \* \* \*

*Two tasks*: first, defining "sexual act" (vs. "having sex," perhaps).

Second, evaluating sexual acts (see the six categories, above).

### **Analogies:**

1. define "house"; then use different and independent criteria to assess houses (e.g., to buy)
2. define "eating"; then use different and independent criteria to assess eating (at all, or specific foods, or in certain circumstances)

During the Paula Jones deposition, (2) **President Clinton** was asked if he had sexual relations with Monica Lewinsky. But before the questioning began, the Jones' lawyers produced the following legal definition of sexual relations:

**"For the purposes of this deposition, a person engages in sexual relations when the person knowingly engages in or causes:**

- 1. Contact with the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or buttocks of any person with an intent to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of any person;**
  - 2. Contact between any part of the person's body or an object and the genitals or anus of another person; or**
  - 3. Contact between the genitals or anus of the person and any part of another person's body.**
- Contact means intentional touching, either directly or through clothing."**

A lengthy debate followed between the two teams of lawyers. It turned out points 2 and 3 were too broad: anyone accidentally brushing their hips against another person could be accused of having "sex." Judge Susan Webber Wright therefore eliminated points 2 and 3. However, notice that point 3 would have clearly included oral sex performed on Clinton. Its removal set the stage for the controversy to follow.

The Jones' lawyers then asked Clinton if he had sex with Monica Lewinsky based on the remaining definition. Unfortunately, the definition still contained ambiguities. Who are the "persons" mentioned in the definition? Clinton interpreted it this way:

**"For the purposes of this deposition, a person [the deponent, in this case, Clinton] engages in sexual relations when the person [Clinton] knowingly engages in or causes: 1. Contact with the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or buttocks of any person [that is, any *other* person, in this case, Monica Lewinsky] with an intent to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of any person [Lewinsky]; Contact means intentional touching, either directly or through clothing."**

Given that understanding, the definition clearly does not include oral sex performed on Clinton. Why? Because oral sex is performed with the mouth, and "mouth" is not listed among the other body parts in point 1. Furthermore, a man receiving oral sex is generally considered to be receiving pleasure rather than giving it, and so fails the criterion "to arouse or gratify the sexual desire" of Ms. Lewinsky. Which may make Clinton sexually selfish, but that is not illegal.

Some have argued that Clinton's interpretation of "person" is wrong, and that makes him guilty of perjury. But his interpretation is reasonable at most, and arguable at least. Even if Clinton did misinterpret the most obvious meaning, it is up to prosecutors to prove that he intended to lie about it rather than he was mistaken, something that is impossible to prove. And in any case, it is up to the prosecution to agree to definitions that are not ambiguous. The Jones' lawyers could have easily eliminated any confusion by replacing the term "person" with "deponent and any second party," but they did not. They could have also asked follow-up questions to clarify anything – indeed, they were invited to by Clinton's lawyers – but they did not. The whole incident is a classic case of prosecutorial incompetence.

Others have charged that Clinton lied because there was another form of sexual activity – namely, the infamous "Cigar incident." This was when Clinton allegedly inserted a cigar between Ms. Lewinsky's legs. But this fails the definition too. It defines "contact" as "touching, either directly or through clothing." "Direct"

means skin-on-skin. "Through clothing" means skin-on-clothing or clothing-on-clothing. The Cigar incident was cigar-on-skin, which fails the definition. Critics have yet another argument that they claim proves perjury. For Clinton's legalistic answers to be true, he would have had to remain "hands off" during the many intimate encounters he had with Ms. Lewinsky. This is extremely unlikely, especially since Lewinsky testified that Clinton frequently touched her breasts and genitals, which is within the legal definition. In fact, the reason why Starr included so much graphic detail of Lewinsky's testimony in his report was to show that Clinton did touch her sexually. The sheer volume of the testimony is damaging.

There are several defenses: Lewinsky may have exaggerated her testimony, or Starr may have coerced it. Another possibility, implied by Clinton himself, is that he did not touch her with "an intent to arouse or gratify." He may have been "hands on," but it might have been for his pleasure, not hers. In that case, his answers are still legally accurate. Again, this may make him sexually selfish, but that is not illegal. For critics to prove perjury, they must somehow enter Clinton's head and prove that he did not intend to sexually gratify Ms. Lewinsky. Which, of course, is clearly impossible. Clinton may have even made a mistake by interpreting the definition too narrowly, but that is not the same thing as lying.

The bottom line is that the definition crafted by the Jones' team was deeply flawed, and allowed Clinton to make legally accurate answers in spite of what actually happened. [<http://www.huppi.com/kangaroo/L-clintonjonesperjury.html>]

<http://www.usatoday.com/news/special/starr/starr080.htm> [edited]

## Clinton's testimony

### January 17, 1998

**Q.** So the record is completely clear, have you ever had sexual relations with Monica Lewinsky, as that term is defined ... by the court?

**A.** I have never had sexual relations with Monica Lewinsky. I've never had an affair with her.

**Q.** She says this, "I have never had a sexual relationship with the president, he did not propose that we have a sexual relationship, he did not offer me employment or other benefits in exchange for a sexual relationship, he did not deny me employment or other benefits for rejecting a sexual relationship." Is that a true and accurate statement as far as you know it?

**A.** That is absolutely true.

### August 17, 1998

Clinton said the two had "inappropriate intimate contact" but not sexual relations. He testified that "any person, reasonable person" would recognize that oral sex performed on the person being questioned "falls outside the definition" of sexual relations provided by lawyers for Clinton's testimony in the Paula Jones case. In addition, Clinton testified that the terms "sexual affair," "sexual relationship" and "sexual relations" necessarily require sexual intercourse and that he had not engaged in intercourse with Lewinsky and therefore he had not committed perjury Jan. 17.

**(3) Definition of "mental disorder" from American Psychiatric Association, Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders [DSM-IV, 1994]:**

A clinically significant behavioral or psychological **syndrome or pattern** that occurs **in an individual** and that is associated with present **distress** (e.g., a painful symptom) or disability (i.e., **impairment** in one or more important areas of functioning) or with a significantly increased **risk** of suffering death, pain, disability, or an important loss of freedom. . . . Whatever its original cause, it must currently be . . . a manifestation of a behavioral, psychological, or biological dysfunction **in the individual**. Neither deviant behavior (e.g., political, religious, or sexual) nor conflicts that are primarily between the individual and society are mental disorders unless the deviance or conflict is a symptom of a dysfunction in the individual. (xxii-xxiii).

*Paraphilias* (sexual mental disorder): are characterized by **recurrent**, intense sexual urges, fantasies, or behaviors that involve **unusual** [i.e., statistically deviant] objects, activities, or situations and cause clinically significant **distress or impairment** in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning (DSM-IV, 493).

Some examples listed by DSM-IV:

fetishism: partialism  
fetishism: objects  
fetishism: transvestic  
pedophilia  
sadism, masochism  
voyeurism  
exhibitionism  
frotteurism  
necrophilia  
zoophilia (bestiality)

***What is missing? Why?***

**Sexual Disorders Not Otherwise Specified [SDNOS]**

“Distress about a pattern of repeated sexual relationships involving a succession of lovers who are experienced by the individual only as things to be used.” (DSM-IV, p. 538; no change in DSM-IV-TR)

“Distress about a pattern of repeated sexual conquests with a succession of individuals who exist only as things to be used.” (DSM-III, p. 283)

The American Psychiatric Association publishes and periodically updates the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), a widely recognized compendium of acknowledged mental disorders and their diagnostic criteria.

The version published in **1987** (DSM-III-R), referred to "distress about a pattern of repeated sexual conquests **or other forms of nonparaphilic sexual addiction**, involving a succession of people who exist only as things to be used." The reference to sexual addiction was subsequently removed. The current version, published in 2000 (DSM-IV-TR), no longer mention sexual addiction as a mental disorder. The DSM-IV-TR still includes a miscellaneous diagnosis called *Sexual Disorders Not Otherwise Specified*, which now includes: "distress about a pattern of repeated sexual relationships involving a succession of lovers who are experienced by the individual only as things to be used." (Other examples include: compulsive fixation on an unattainable partner, compulsive masturbation, compulsive love relationships, and compulsive sexuality in a relationship.)

Hypersexuality, by itself, is a symptom of hypomania and mania in bipolar disorder and schizoaffective disorder, as defined in the DSM-IV-R.

Some authors continue to express that sexual addiction should be re-introduced into the DSM system; however, sexual addiction rejected for inclusion in the DSM-5, expected out in 2013. Darrel Regier, vice-chair of the DSM-5 task force, said that "[A]lthough 'hypersexuality' is a proposed new addition...[the phenomenon] was not at the point where we were ready to call it an addiction."

Coming in future editions of this packet: notes on DSM-V.

#### **(4) St. Thomas Aquinas's [c. 1225-75] Constellation:**

1. no nonmarital sexual activity
2. marriage is lifelong (remarriage after spouse's death?)
3. marriage is monogamous
4. no contraception (RC vs. Protestants; slightly unclear in Aquinas)
5. no "kinky" sex even in heterosexual marriage

#### **Aquinas's Principle:**

“The emission of semen ought to be so ordered that it will result in both the production of . . . offspring and in the upbringing of this offspring.”

(*Summa contra gentiles*, bk. 3)

#### **Aquinas's Unnatural (mortal) Sins of Lechery [affront to God]:**

1. bestiality
2. homosexuality
3. heterosexual variants ("monstrous techniques")
4. masturbation
- [5. adultery if already married and have children]

#### **Aquinas's (lesser) Sins of Lechery [affront to other people]:**

1. rape (heterosexual)
2. incest (heterosexual)
3. seduction of a female virgin who lives in her father's house
4. adultery [if married but no children]

#### **Christine E. Gudorf [another version of Natural Law sexual ethics]**

*Body, Sex, and Pleasure: Reconstructing Christian Sexual Ethics*

The Pilgrim Press, 1994, p. 65:

“[T]he failure to examine embodied female sexuality combined with the [Christian] tradition's fear and suspicion of sexual pleasure led to the tradition's ignoring the existence and significance of the female clitoris. A contemporary physicalist approach to natural law on sexuality must take into account that the female clitoris has no function save sexual pleasure--it has no reproductive, urological, or other function in the body. But the clitoris is the organ most sensitive to sexual pleasure. Within the twentieth century some commentators have suggested that the role of the clitoris is to provide pleasure to women as a reward for sex, as a way of ensuring the willingness of women to reproduce the species. But contemporary science has demonstrated that this attempt to link the sexual pleasure function of the clitoris to procreation is a failure. . . . [B]etween 56 and 70 percent of women do not receive sufficient clitoral stimulation in coitus to reach the sexual satisfaction of orgasm; the majority require direct stimulation of the clitoris. That is, the procreative act does not itself stimulate pleasure sufficient to act as a reinforcement for engaging in sex for the majority of women. If the placement of the clitoris in the female body reflects the divine will, then God wills that sex is not just oriented to procreation, but is at least as, if not more, oriented to pleasure as to procreation.”

## (5) Immanuel Kant, Second Formulation of the Categorical Imperative

Called: Principle of Humanity, Principle of Respect, Formula of the End in Itself

"Act in such a way that you treat humanity, whether [in] your own person or in the person of another, always at the same time as an end and never simply as a means." [Ellington]

Mandatory: treat as an end

Prohibited: treat as a means (only)

Permitted : treat both as an end and as a means (at the same time, not alternately)

Kant's ontology: humans [persons] vs. everything else, via **rational autonomy**. Behave toward items in the world as befits their ontological status, especially treat persons as persons, not as objects. INCLUDES THE SELF (direct duties to self in Kant, and not merely because hurting oneself hurts others, which would be indirect).

Objectification: reduce to object from higher, personhood, status.

Reification or personification: raise from object to a higher status (worshiping objects; fetishistic partialism?).

Compare persons and objects (RA vs. not R or not A)

Children (underdeveloped): goal is to bring them to RA, still do not use as means because of their potential RA..

[Animals? Bestiality? Duty to animals (direct) vs. duties to other persons (indirect).]

*Humanity Ain@ = that which is distinctive of the human: rational autonomy (ability to deliberate about goals and choose them). The humanity in, not the person, is the crucial item (if they can be distinguished). The rational autonomy of a person should be treated as an END and never only as a MEANS.*

Treat a person as an end (or as a person) = as having intrinsic value, acknowledge the intrinsic value or worth of persons and their rational autonomy.

Treat a person as a means = as having only instrumental value, use/manipulate/take advantage of as would use a thing or object (ignore rational autonomy).

## (6) ALAN GOLDMAN

### Kantian Sexual Ethics

It may appear from [a] . . . Kantian viewpoint that sexual acts must be at least prima facie wrong in themselves. This is because they invariably involve at different stages the manipulation of one's partner for one's own pleasure, which might appear to be prohibited on the formulation of Kant's principle which holds that one ought not to treat another as a means to such private ends. A more realistic rendering of this formulation, however, . . . admits no such absolute prohibition. Many human relations, most economic transactions for example, involve using other individuals for personal benefit. These relations are immoral only when they are one-sided, when the benefits are not mutual, or when the transactions are not freely and rationally endorsed by all parties. The same holds true of sexual acts. The central principle governing them is the Kantian demand for reciprocity in sexual relations. In order to comply with the second formulation of the categorical imperative, one must recognize the subjectivity of one's partner. . . . Even in an act which by its nature 'objectifies' the other, one recognizes a partner as a subject with demands and desires by yielding to those desires, by allowing oneself to be a sexual object as well, by giving pleasure or ensuring that the pleasures of the act are mutual. It is this kind of reciprocity which forms the basis for morality in sex, which distinguishes rights acts from wrong in this area as in others.

From Alan Goldman, "Plain Sex," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 6:3 (1977): 267-87; reprinted in Alan Soble and Nicholas Power, eds., [\*The Philosophy of Sex\*](#), 5th edition, p. 68.

**Contrast with Thomas Hobbes's analysis of "sexual desire" and his resulting ethical judgments. See "Hobbes," in *From Plato to Paglia*.**

### (7) Humor?

1. "My girlfriend always laughs during sex, no matter what she's reading." ~ Steve Jobs
2. "Having sex is like playing bridge. If you don't have a good partner, you'd better have a good hand." ~ Woody Allen
3. "Women need a reason to have sex. Men just need a place." ~ Billy Crystal
4. "I believe that sex is one of the most beautiful, natural, wholesome things that money can buy." ~ Tom Clancy
5. "See, the problem is that God gave men a brain and a penis, but only enough blood to run one at a time." ~ Robin Williams

<http://www.funnyandjokes.com/top-10-most-famous-sex-quotes.html>

## (8) Philosophy of Love Vocabulary

1. Constancy
2. Exclusivity
3. Reciprocity
4. Irreplaceable
5. Substitutable
6. Particularity
7. Uniqueness
8. Haecceity
9. Intentionality
10. Desire
11. Friendship
12. Benevolence
13. Identification
14. Bestowal
15. Appraisal
16. Fungibility
17. Love *De Re* / Love *De Dicto*

Consider the sentence "Jana wants to marry the tallest man in California." There are two ways to interpret this sentence. One interpretation is that Jana wants to marry the tallest man in California, whoever he might be. On this interpretation, what the statement tells us is that Jana has a certain unspecific desire; what she desires is that a certain situation should obtain, namely, *Jana's marrying the tallest man in California*. The desire is directed at that situation, regardless of how it is to be achieved. The other interpretation is that Jana wants to marry a certain man, who in fact happens to be the tallest man in California. Her desire is for *that man*, and she desires herself to marry *him*. The first interpretation, "Jana desires that she marry the tallest man in California," is the *de dicto* interpretation. The second interpretation, "Of the tallest man in California, Jana desires that she marry him," is the *de re* interpretation. Another way to understand the distinction is to ask what Jana would want if the man who was the tallest man in California at the time the original statement was made were to lose his legs, such that he was no longer the tallest man in California. If she continued to want to marry that man – and, importantly, perceived this as representing no change in her desires – then she could be taken to have meant the original statement in a *de re* sense. If she no longer wanted to marry that man but instead wanted to marry the *new* tallest man in California, and saw this as a continuation of her earlier desire, then she meant the original statement in a *de dicto* sense.

## **(9) The Speech of Aristophanes [from Plato's *Symposium*]**

[189c] Aristophanes professed to open another vein of discourse; he had a mind to praise Love in another way, unlike that either of Pausanias or Eryximachus. Mankind, he said, judging by their neglect of him, have never, as I think, at all understood the power of Love. For if they had understood him they would surely have built noble temples and altars, and offered solemn sacrifices in his honour; but this is not done, and most certainly ought to be done: [189d] since of all the gods he is the best friend of men, the helper and the healer of the ills which are the great impediment to the happiness of the race. I will try to describe his power to you, and you shall teach the rest of the world what I am teaching you. In the first place, let me treat of the nature of man and what has happened to it; for the original human nature was not like the present, but different. [189e] The sexes were not two as they are now, but originally three in number; there was man, woman, and the union of the two, having a name corresponding to this double nature, which had once a real existence, but is now lost, and the word "Androgynous" is only preserved as a term of reproach. In the second place, the primeval man was round, his back and sides forming a circle; and he had four hands and four feet, one head with two faces, looking opposite ways, [190a] set on a round neck and precisely alike; also four ears, two privy members, and the remainder to correspond. He could walk upright as men now do, backwards or forwards as he pleased, and he could also roll over and over at a great pace, turning on his four hands and four feet, eight in all, like tumblers going over and over with their legs in the air; this was when he wanted [190b] to run fast. Now the sexes were three, and such as I have described them; because the sun, moon, and earth are three; and the man was originally the child of the sun, the woman of the earth, and the man-woman of the moon, which is made up of sun and earth, and they were all round and moved round and round like their parents. Terrible was their might and strength, and the thoughts of their hearts were great, and they made an attack upon the gods; of them is told the tale of [190c] Otys and Ephialtes who, as Homer says, dared to scale heaven, and would have laid hands upon the gods. Doubt reigned in the celestial councils. Should they kill them and annihilate the race with thunderbolts, as they had done the giants, then there would be an end of the sacrifices and worship which men offered to them; but, on the other hand, the gods could not suffer their insolence to be unrestrained. At last, after a good deal of reflection, Zeus discovered a way. He said: "Methinks I have a plan which will humble their pride and improve their manners; men shall continue to exist, [190d] but I will cut them in two and then they will be diminished in strength and increased in numbers; this will have the advantage of making them more profitable to us. They shall walk upright on two legs, and if they continue insolent and will not be quiet, I will split them again and they shall hop about on a single leg." He spoke and cut men in two, like a sorb-apple which is halved for pickling, or as you might divide an egg with a hair; [190e] and as he cut them one after another, he bade Apollo give the face and the half of the neck a turn in order that the man might contemplate the section of himself: he would thus learn a lesson of humility. Apollo was also bidden to heal their wounds and compose their forms. So he gave a turn to the face and pulled the skin from the sides all over that which in our language is called the belly, like the purses which draw in, and he made one mouth at the centre, which he fastened in a knot (the same which is called the navel); [191a] he also moulded the breast and took out most of the wrinkles, much as a shoemaker might smooth leather upon a last; he left a few, however, in the region of the belly and navel, as a memorial of the primeval state. After the division the two parts of man, each desiring his other half, came together, and throwing their arms about one another, entwined in mutual embraces, [191b] longing to grow into one, they

were on the point of dying from hunger and self-neglect, because they did not like to do anything apart; and when one of the halves died and the other survived, the survivor sought another mate, man or woman as we call them, -- being the sections of entire men or women, -- and clung to that. They were being destroyed, when Zeus in pity of them invented a new plan: he turned the parts of generation round to the front, for this had not been always their position, and they sowed the seed no longer as hitherto like grasshoppers in the ground, but in one another; [191c] and after the transposition the male generated in the female in order that by the mutual embraces of man and woman they might breed, and the race might continue; or if man came to man they might be satisfied, and rest, and go their ways to the business of life: so ancient is the desire of one another which is implanted [191d] in us, reuniting our original nature, making one of two, and healing the state of man. Each of us when separated, having one side only, like a flat fish, is but the indenture of a man, and he is always looking for his other half. Men who are a section of that double nature which was once called Androgynous are lovers of women; adulterers are generally of this breed, [191e] and also adulterous women who lust after men: the women who are a section of the woman do not care for men, but have female attachments; the female companions are of this sort. But they who are a section of the male follow the male, and while they are young, being slices of the original man, [192a] they hang about men and embrace them, and they are themselves the best of boys and youths, because they have the most manly nature. Some indeed assert that they are shameless, but this is not true; for they do not act thus from any want of shame, but because they are valiant and manly, and have a manly countenance, and they embrace that which is like them. And these when they grow up become our statesmen, [192b] and these only, which is a great proof of the truth of what I am saying. When they reach manhood they are lovers of youth, and are not naturally inclined to marry or beget children, -- if at all, they do so only in obedience to the law; but they are satisfied if they may be allowed to live with one another unwedded; and such a nature is prone to love and ready to return love, always embracing that which is akin to him. And when one of them [192c] meets with his other half, the actual half of himself, whether he be a lover of youth or a lover of another sort, the pair are lost in an amazement of love and friendship and intimacy, and will not be out of the other's sight, as I may say, even for a moment: these are the people who pass their whole lives together; yet they could not explain what they desire of one another. For the intense yearning which each of them has towards the other does not appear to be the desire of lover's intercourse, but of something else which the soul of either evidently desires and cannot tell, [192d] and of which she has only a dark and doubtful presentiment. Suppose Hephaestus, with his instruments, to come to the pair who are lying side by side and to say to them, "What do you people want of one another?" they would be unable to explain. And suppose further, that when he saw their perplexity he said: "Do you desire to be wholly one; always day and night to be [192e] in one another's company? for if this is what you desire, I am ready to melt you into one and let you grow together, so that being two you shall become one, and while you live a common life as if you were a single man, and after your death in the world below still be one departed soul instead of two -- I ask whether this is what you lovingly desire, and whether you are satisfied to attain this?" -- there is not a man of them who when he heard the proposal would deny or would not acknowledge that this meeting and melting into one another, this becoming one instead of two, was the very expression of his ancient need. [193a] And the reason is that human nature was originally one and we were a whole, and the desire and pursuit of the whole is called love. There was a time, I say, when we were one, but now because of the wickedness of mankind God has dispersed us, as the Arcadians were dispersed into villages by the Lacedaemonians. And if we

are not obedient to the gods, there is a danger that we shall be split up again and go about in basso-relievo, like the profile figures having only half a nose which are sculptured on monuments, and that we shall be like tallies. Wherefore let us exhort all men to piety, that we may avoid evil, [193b] and obtain the good, of which Love is to us the lord and minister; and let no one oppose him -- he is the enemy of the gods who oppose him. For if we are friends of the God and at peace with him we shall find our own true loves, which rarely happens in this world at present. I am serious, and therefore I must beg Eryximachus not to make fun or to find any allusion [193c] in what I am saying to Pausanias and Agathon, who, as I suspect, are both of the manly nature, and belong to the class which I have been describing. But my words have a wider application -- they include men and women everywhere; and I believe that if our loves were perfectly accomplished, and each one returning to his primeval nature had his original true love, then our race would be happy. And if this would be best of all, the best in the next degree and under present circumstances must be the nearest approach to such a union; [193d] and that will be the attainment of a congenial love. Wherefore, if we would praise him who has given to us the benefit, we must praise the god Love, who is our greatest benefactor, both leading us in this life back to our own nature, and giving us high hopes for the future, for he promises that if we are pious, he will restore us to our original state, and heal us and make us happy and blessed.

## (10) NOTES ON ARISTOPHANES

I. Compare Freud [same starting stuff, a natural, innate polysexuality in all people, but different "cuts," different socializations (contrast the Oedipal and Electra complexes), producing different types of sexual orientation] and Aristophanes [different starting stuffs, the three different kinds of original human being, but the same "cut" (the bolt of lightning), producing, again, different types of sexual orientation]. Two different explanations of heterosexuality and homosexuality. ["Cuts": see the castrating sentiment of [Matthew 5:27-30](#). If a part of your body commits an immorality, chop it off. See also *Symposium* 205e, below.] But where is an explanation for bisexuality in Aristophanes? (One exists in Freud's model; but see Section VI, below.) That this explanation is missing is strange. After all, we have just heard, in the *Symposium*, Pausanias discussing two kinds of love, the vulgar and the heavenly. The vulgar lover, who is equally attracted to both boys and girls, is *common* (in both senses: frequent and low). So why does Aristophanes ignore this possibility, dividing up people into pure gay and pure straight?

II. Love vs. sexual desire in Aristophanes: Love is the desire to regain wholeness, the desire to merge with one's other half. Sexuality is a substitute for that, because regaining wholeness with one's other half cannot be attained -- literally, it can *no longer* be attained; we, many generations later, do not have, never have had, "other halves."

Diotima, later in the *Symposium*, modifies Aristophanes' account that love is the desire for wholeness, to possess something one does not have. In Aristophanes, the desire to possess what one does not have is a desire to possess what one once had but lost; this aspect is missing from Diotima's account. In Diotima, the desire for the good/beautiful is a desire to be whole, but in a different sense: to be all that we can be, to fulfill our own potentials, to become whole persons. See *Symposium*, 205e, in which Diotima says to the young Socrates: "You hear people say that lovers are seeking for their other half; but I say that they are seeking neither for the half of themselves, nor for the whole, unless the half or the whole be also a good; men will cut off their own hands and feet and cast them away, if they think them evil."

III. There are five propositions in Aristophanes' speech:

1. x and y were severed from the original xy whole (4 arms, etc.)
2. y has the property "is x's other half"
3. y is x's ideal mate, i.e., the one and only one for x (no one else will do)
4. x desires to (re)join with y into the whole they once were
5. x's joining with y makes x happy

Proposition (1) yields everything else, and Aristophanic love would be perfect in the romantic sense: altogether constant, entirely exclusive, and necessarily reciprocal. (The illusions of romantic love? Maybe the fact that so many of our [genuine] loves are not very constant or exclusive means that, even disregarding Aristophanes' myth, the idea of "Mr." or "Ms." Right is untenable.)

But (1) is false for *later* generations, and Aristophanes acknowledges this. So he advises that we find someone with whom we can be happy (a "congenial" partner). And: love, as the desire to be whole, must now go unsatisfied. We get only ersatz love (sex). We can never join with another person, our "other half," in that blissful state of union that we seek, for no such person exists. To think we can find such a person and be abundantly happy is an illusion (wishful thinking). Compare this with Augustine's interpretation of the history of humankind: the relationship between prelapsarian Adam and Eve was a friendship (*amicitia* or *philia*), and passionate sexuality was absent; after the Fall, postlapsarian Adam and Eve, and all humans after them, were plagued by passionate sexuality (*eros*), and friendship between a man and a woman became difficult, if not impossible. See below, Section V.

IV. Roland Barthes on Aristophanes ("Union," in *A Lover's Discourse: Fragments*, New York: Hill and Wang, 1978, pp. 226-27):

"*En sa moitié, ma moitié je recolle* -- to her half, I rejoin my own half. I leave a (mediocre) film in which a character evokes Plato and the theory of the Hermaphrodites. Apparently, everyone knows the story of the two halves trying to join themselves back together (desire is to lack what one has -- and to give what one does not have; a matter of supplements, not complements).

I spend an afternoon trying to draw what Aristophanes' hermaphrodite would look like: globular, with four hands, four legs, four ears, just one head, one neck. Are the halves back to back or face to face? Belly to belly, no doubt, since Apollo was to sew them up again there, drawing the skin together and creating the navel: yet their faces are facing away from each other, since Apollo was to turn them toward the side where he had divided them; and the genital organs are behind. I persist, but get nowhere, being a poor draughtsman or an even poorer utopianist. [The cubist Picasso or the surrealist Magritte would have to draw it for us. – Dr. S.] The hermaphrodite, or the androgyne, figure of that 'ancient unity of which the desire and the pursuit constitute what we call love' [*Symposium*], is beyond my figuration; or at least all I could achieve is a monstrous, grotesque, improbable body. Out of dreams emerges a farce figure: thus, out of the mad couple is born the obscenity of the *household* (one cooks, for life, for the other)."

V. Worth thinking about are the parallels between Aristophanes' cosmology and creation myth (as well as the variant proposed by Plato in the *Timaeus*) and the beginning chapters of *Genesis*. In *Genesis*, Adam and Eve are originally one (bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh: Eve is taken from Adam's body, or from the originally united xy body); God separates them (Adam needed a companion; why? see Augustine, *City of God*, [book 14](#)); and they are reunited in marriage. (A man leaves his family and cleaves unto his wife, and they become one flesh; and every future human begins life in intimate physical union with his or her mother, until expelled.) And the Fall: the original whole humans in Aristophanes' myth exhibited pride; they were so self-sufficient and happy that they had no use for the gods, in the way that Eve, and

then Adam, disobeyed the Lord. Aristophanes' original humans were punished by being split in half, losing their completeness; Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden, that paradise-place-of-plenty, and thrust into the real world of work, sickness, death – and corrupt sexuality.

VI. Some bits of [Freud](#) are relevant here.

"Man is an animal organism with (like others) an unmistakably bisexual disposition. The individual corresponds to a fusion of two symmetrical halves, of which, according to some investigators, one is purely male and the other female. It is equally possible that each half was originally hermaphrodite. Sex is a biological fact which, although it is of extraordinary importance in mental life, is hard to grasp psychologically. We are accustomed to say that every human being displays both male and female instinctual impulses, needs and attributes; but though anatomy, it is true, can point out the characteristic of maleness and femaleness, psychology cannot. For psychology the contrast between the sexes fades away into one between activity and passivity, in which we far too readily identify activity with maleness and passivity with femaleness, a view which is by no means universally confirmed in the animal kingdom. The theory of bisexuality is still surrounded by many obscurities and we cannot but feel it as a serious impediment in psychoanalysis that it has not yet found any link with the theory of the instincts." [Civilization and Its Discontents, New York: Norton, 1961, p. 52n3.]

Also, about Freud from Jerome Neu ("Freud and Perversion," in Earl Shelp, ed., *Sexuality and Medicine, Vol. 1: Conceptual Roots* [Reidel, 1987], 177n1): "Whatever the causes of homosexuality and homosexual desires they must be of the same *type* as the cause of heterosexuality and heterosexual desires. This point is reflected in Aristophanes' myth in Plato's *Symposium*. [Note that I argued, above, for an important asymmetry between Aristophanes and Freud.] Incidentally, one might note that if Freud had this myth in mind in his discussion at the start of the *Three Essays [on Sexuality]*, his account there is somewhat misleading. Freud speaks as if the 'poetic fable' is supposed to explain only heterosexuality, and as if the existence of homosexuality and lesbianism therefore comes as a surprise. In fact, Aristophanes' story of the division of the original human beings into two halves, and their subsequent quest to reunite in love, allows for all three alternatives: Aristophanes starts with three original sexes. Thus the myth offers an explanation (the same explanation) of homosexuality and lesbianism as well as heterosexuality. . . . From the point of view of psychoanalytic theory, heterosexual object-choice and homosexual object-choice are equally problematic, equally in need of explanation." [This last point is correct about Freud.]

– Alan Soble, written and rewritten over a decade.

## (11) Analyzing Love

[Preliminary: Definitions vs. Descriptions, see "Conceptual Framework," Item #1, above]

**Harry Frankfurt, *The Reasons of Love* (2004), pp. 79-80.**

The four necessary conditions of love:

[I] First, it consists most basically in a disinterested concern for the well-being or flourishing of the person who is loved. It is not driven by any ulterior purpose but seeks the good of the beloved as something that is desired for its own sake.

[II] Second, love is . . . ineluctably personal. The lover cannot coherently consider some other individual to be an adequate substitute for his beloved, regardless of how similar that individual may be to the one he loves. The person who is loved is loved for himself or for herself as such, and not as an instance of a type.

[III] Third, the lover identifies with his beloved: that is, he takes the interests of his beloved as his own. Consequently, he benefits or suffers depending upon whether those interests are or are not adequately served.

[IV] Finally, loving entails constraints upon the will. It is not simply up to us what we love and what we do not love. Love is not a matter of choice but is determined by conditions that are outside our immediate voluntary control.

**W. Newton-Smith (*Eros, Agape, and Philia*, p. 204)**

The four necessary conditions of love:

[I] A knows B (or at least knows something of B)

[II] A cares (is concerned) about B

A likes B

[III] A respects B

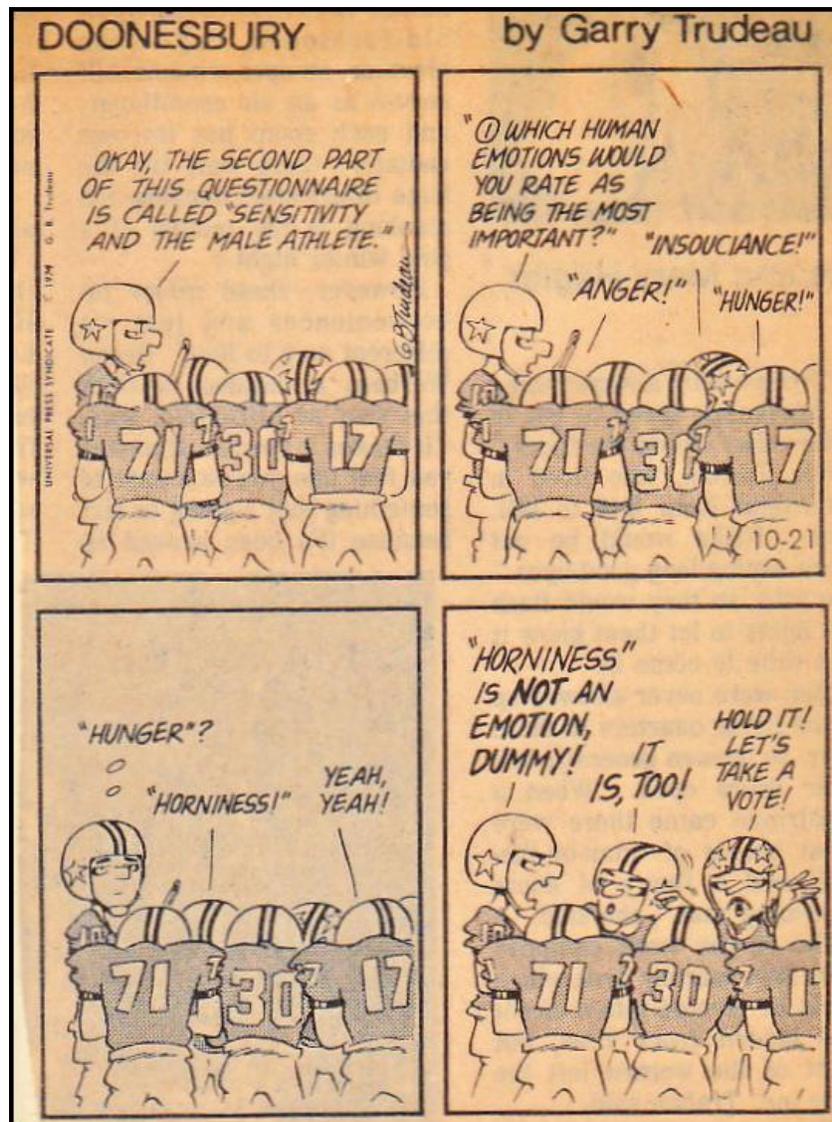
A is attracted to B

A feels affection for B

[IV] A is committed to B

A wishes to see B's welfare promoted

## (12) LOVE as an EMOTION



**Question:** Is tiredness an emotion, and if not, why not? [from <http://www.askphilosophers.org>]

**Alan Soble:** On a currently popular model of emotion (see Daniel Farrell and O. Harvey Green, for starters), emotions are composed of three elements: a belief (the cognitive feature), a desire (the conative), and a feeling (the affective). I believe that the animal is a hyena and that it is about to strike; I desire not to have my limbs torn off; I experience the feeling of fright. In addition, emotions have behavioral correlates: I run, or I draw my pistol (or, being stunned, frozen like a deer in headlights, I am mauled). Emotions are *about* something; they are directed at an object (the ontology of which is a matter of some dispute); or they have "intentionality," at least in the sense of depending on beliefs and being eliminable in response to changes in belief. If I come to believe that the hyena is really my daughter in her Halloween costume, my fear

dissipates. (I had better be right.)

More about "intentionality": I am angry *that* something happened. But I cannot be tired *that*. . . . The thing *about which* I am angry is the "intentional object" of the emotion. Tiredness has no intentional object. There is nothing "about which" I am tired. I am just tired.

Being tired does not exhibit intentionality because my being exhausted is not about something, a state of affairs. Furthermore, it seems not to depend on any beliefs which, if altered, would eliminate my being tired (getting sleep does that, with or without sweet dreams). Being tired seems to be only a feeling or sensation, or have only an affective dimension, brought on primarily by the biochemical state of our bodies (lactates, and so forth). It is not rich enough a phenomenon to rise to the level of an emotion.

Can animals have emotions? They can be tired, as we can, and from similar causes. But, as in humans, there is no intentionality in animal exhaustion. This is not to deny that some animals might have sufficient cognition and conation to exhibit emotions. A dog, for example, might show pride in having accomplished a task set for it; dogs certainly seem to get angry.

One question in the theory of emotions is whether each emotion has its own distinctive or constitutive beliefs, desires, affects, and behaviors and, if so, what they are. We can, for example, distinguish fear from jealousy in terms of their respective beliefs, desires, and so forth. The model works well in many cases. Does it always? (See below, on hate versus love.) What would be the constitutive belief of being tired, such that without that belief one would not be tired?

Another question has to do with completing the taxonomy. There are feelings, attitudes, sentiments, moods, and emotions, all of which apparently have some things in common but also differ in various ways. For example, is being depressed a mood or an emotion? Some say it is a mood, when or because it lacks "aboutness." We cannot pin down the belief on which it is grounded, or the beliefs are too amorphous, or there are no beliefs at all involved, but only disturbed serotonin distributions. Does this mean that for a phenomenon to be an emotion, the beliefs must be conscious? Couldn't we have unconscious emotions? (Freud thought so.) Being tired might well put us in a bad mood or cause us to have an emotion (frustration-anger), but having this causal power doesn't make it an emotion. Further, being tired is sometimes phenomenologically indistinguishable from being depressed. But this should not make us think that being tired is either a mood or an emotion.

Yet another fascinating question about the emotions has to do with the expression "answerable to reason." Some think that emotion is not the kind of thing that can be judged as being rational or irrational, or that reason has little to do with passion. But emotions may be judged in terms of rationality at least in the sense that the beliefs underlying the emotion can be judged as being rational or irrational. If I believe irrationally (on the basis of poor evidence) that John is out to get me, then my fear of John is irrational. Whether emotions can be irrational also in virtue of a defect in the conative element is unclear. Might certain desires be irrational? In jealousy, I believe that a third party is drawing the attention of my lover away from me, and I desire my lover's exclusive attention. If my belief that the interloper is or might be successful is irrational, then so is my jealousy; and it should go away upon my finding out the truth. But could my jealousy be irrational, instead, because my desire for my lover's exclusive attention is irrational? Might someone talk me out of that desire and dispel my jealousy?

Finally: hate and love. In paradigmatic cases of hatred, it is an emotion, having cognitive,

conative, and affective features. Even if the cognitive feature is difficult to state precisely, hate seems to be distinguished from other emotions by the sort of belief it involves, a negative judgment about the person hated, a dislike about certain characteristics of the person hated. We might say that hatred is reason- or property-dependent: *something about* the person hated instigates the hate or, better, *something we believe about* the person hated does so. That property we perceive or believe exists is or provides the reason we hate the person, and the hate can be judged rational (or not) depending on the accuracy of the perception or belief. Rational hate, on this view, should dissipate were the truth to be revealed.

Is love the same? If it is an emotion, and if the belief-desire-affect model is correct, then we should be able to say quite similar things about love: that it is instigated by the properties of the beloved, or at least by our believing he or she has those properties, and that love can be judged rational (or not) on the basis of the rationality of its underlying beliefs.

Many philosophers raise serious questions about this account of love. For one thing, they argue that it gets things backwards: I do not love Jane because (I believe) Jane is gorgeous and smart (as in Platonic *eros*); rather, I judge her gorgeous and smart (or attribute other values to her) because I love her. Second (as a corollary?), they claim that just because my beliefs about my beloved change, that does not mean (or should not mean) that my love should disappear. Quite the contrary. If I genuinely love you, I will continue to do so no matter what you are (or no matter what I believe about you). Love is constant: A love that changes in response to changes in the beloved was not love to begin with. (See one of Shakespeare's sonnets.) However, is it not possible that my new beliefs about you show me who you really are, so that I never loved the "real" you in the first place? Third, it makes no sense (in contrast to hate) to speak of love as rational or irrational. If it is not grounded in beliefs, then it cannot be faulted for being cognitively irrational.

Whether we should conclude that love shows that the belief-desire-affect model of emotions is wrong, or that love is not an emotion at all (but a mood, like depression), or that love is an emotion about which we believe many silly things, I will leave to others to ponder.

***To think about:***

1. What is an emotion? How can we tell whether something is an emotion?
2. Try to decide whether (*or to what extent*) love is an emotion by identifying these things: (a) the beliefs that are characteristic of love, (2) the desires that are essential to love, (3) the affects (feelings) that are part of love, and (4) the behaviors that typically accompany love. What do you conclude about love as an emotion?

## (13) DORIS LESSING

from "How I Finally Lost My Heart"

(In *A Man and Two Women*)

My lunch partner I had lived with for (more or less) four and seven-twelfths years. When he left me for new pastures, I spent two years, or was it three, half dead, and my heart was a stone, impossible to carry about, considering all the things weighing on one. Then I slowly, and with difficulty, got free, because my heart cherished a thousand adhesions to my first love - though from another point of view he could be legitimately described as either my second *real* love (my father being the first) or my third (my brother intervening). . . . But if one were going to look at the thing from outside, without insight, he could be seen as (perhaps, I forget) the thirteenth, but to do that means disregarding the inner emotional truth. For we all know that those affairs or entanglements one has between *serious* loves, though they may number dozens and stretch over years, *don't really count*. . . . This way of looking at things creates a number of unhappy people, for it is well known that what doesn't really count for me might very well count for you. But there is no way of getting over this difficulty, for a *serious* love is the most important business in life, or nearly so. At any rate, most of us are engaged in looking for it. Even when we are in fact being very serious indeed with one person we still have an eighth of an eye cocked in case some stranger unexpectedly encountered might turn out to be even more serious. We are all entirely in agreement that we are in the right to taste, test, sip and sample a thousand people on our way to the *real* one. It is not too much to say that in our circles tasting and sampling is probably the second most important activity, the first being earning money. Or to put it another way, "If you are serious about this thing, you go about laying everybody that offers until something clicks and you're all set to go." . . . I have digressed from an earlier point: that I regarded this man I had lunch with . . . as my first love . . . despite . . . those who might ask: What about your two husbands and all those affairs? . . . What about them? I did not *really* love them.

## (14) SAPPHO on LOVE



### (1) "To Anaktoria in Lydia"

Some [men?] prefer a glory of horsemen; warships,  
some; a phalanx, some -- as the dark horizon's  
finest sight. No -- listen to me! -- the best is  
what you're in love with.

Easy truth to prove to you one and all. Just  
think of this: how Helen, the most delightful

girl of girls and queen to a hero, chose to  
break with that husband,  
sailing off for Troy on the salty water.

Mother, father, daughter a darling -- these she  
stood to lose, but -- irresistible impulse [. . .]  
That's why Anaktoria mostly I remember  
-- she's gone away now.

Seeing her walk and the glow it gave, her  
breathing cheek, alive in its light -- I'd sooner  
far see these. Your chariot show indeed! Your  
metal men bleeding!

## **(2) [from] Fragment 31**

When I see you, my voice fails,  
My tongue is paralyzed,  
a fiery fever runs through my whole body,  
my eyes are swimming,  
and can see nothing.  
My ears are filled with a throbbing dim,  
I am shivering all over.

**Is this small fragment really about love? Read it again carefully, use your imagination, try to read it in a new way, and see what happens.**