

Loves Passed

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For better or worse, love does not always last. In this chapter, I consider what various different accounts of romantic love could say about loves that have passed.¹ I look at theories that view love as a response to a person's qualities, their essence, a relationship, and as a way of seeing someone.² I argue that while all of these accounts capture something important, none of them on their own provides a complete account of love passing. I end by proposing a holistic account.

In doing so, I hope to better understand love passing, but also what love is. There is an ongoing discussion about the nature of romantic love. Typically, the literature focuses on falling in love, being in love, the concept of love, but less on love passing.³ Love does pass though, it both fades and ends. And exploring this can provide us with a new angle on the question of what love is. In this chapter, we shall see that thinking through love passing puts additional pressure on familiar problems that various accounts of love face, but also generates novel problems as well. I think this focus on love passing provides additional evidence to move us towards a holistic view of love.

Before we begin, I should say one quick thing about wording. Throughout the chapter, I talk about love and its passing 'making sense'. I take this to involve something normative. To say it makes sense that Betty left Don is not just to say that there is a causal explanation of why she left. To say that it makes sense, I take it, is closer to saying that there were good reasons

¹ I want to thank Natasha McKeever, Luke Brunning and Bob Stern for helpful and thought-provoking comments on drafts of this chapter. I also owe a big thanks to the ongoing love reading group at Leeds (Alison Toop, Sophie Goddard, Andrew Kirton, Robbie Arrell, Sarah Carter-Walshaw and Chris Megone) for feedback on an early version of this. And one final thanks to helpful audiences at the *Love, Etc.* conference in 2019 and the *Munich Centre for Ethics* (with a special thank you to André Grahle).

² For another way of dividing up different accounts of love, see Lopez-Cantero and Archer (2020, p.3).

³ For discussion of love ending, see Brogaard (2015, pp.193-222), Jollimore (2002), Kolodny (2003, pp. 164-68), Lopez Cantero (2018), Lopez Cantero and Archer (2020), and Protasi (2016, pp. 222-24).

for her to leave. However, I am not sure that it is quite right to talk about the normativity or value of love exclusively in terms of reasons, and so instead, talk about love and its passing making sense.⁴

Let's begin by thinking about theories that view love as a response to qualities or properties of a person.

1. Love as a response to someone's qualities

Ladybird (from the film *Ladybird*) wants a moody distant boyfriend. She meets Kyle Scheible (Timothy Chalamet's character) who fits this bill. And so, it makes sense for her to fall for him. And equally, it would make sense for this love to pass, if either he changes, becoming upbeat and intimate, or if she comes to want different things from a partner. In either case, Kyle would no longer fit the bill.

Quality accounts of love can easily make sense of loves passing, if either the qualities of the beloved change, or the qualities that the lover is interested in change. But perhaps this makes love passing make a little *too* much sense. After all, people change over time; sometimes they grow, and stay together, in love. Moreover, there seems something objectionable with immediately abandoning a partner if their qualities begin to change. These are familiar complaints about quality-views of love. The general worry is that these views struggle to capture the *tenacity* of romantic love,⁵ which can – and sometimes ought to – persist over time. I won't re-litigate this general complaint here.⁶

Instead, let us turn to another worry with these accounts. Sometimes, neither the qualities of beloved change, nor the qualities that the lover is interested in, but nevertheless love fades. There are many reasons why this might occur. For one, perhaps their *perceptions* of the qualities have changed, and they no longer see the good in each other. Or perhaps other

⁴ One issue is that that 'making sense' might involve *both* a causal explanation and something normative. To say that it makes sense that Betty left Don might refer to both the reasons for this, but also relevant causal factors, such as the particular proximate causes of their breakup, or the elements of their personalities that lead to it. This is a potential downside of using this locution, as it introduces some ambiguity. But then again, it is not clear that what is good about love is fully captured by talk of reasons. And that's not how non-philosophers talk about these things.

⁵ See Jollimore (2011, pp.17-8; 2021), Kolodny (2003, p. 140), Nozick (1989, pp.75-6), and Protasi (2014, pp. 222-24).

⁶ For a discussion of some of the ways in which recent and future technological developments might provide new challenges to love's tenacity, see Natasha McKeever's chapter in this collection.

qualities that were relatively hidden have revealed themselves. I want to leave these occurrences aside though to focus on a particular case, where the qualities all remain the same (as well as the lovers' perception of these qualities) but nevertheless, the lovers no longer *feel* the same way about each other.⁷ They still see the good in each other, but something is missing.

This seems like a problem for quality-views. After all, the qualities all remain the same, but something else appears missing, something that makes sense of love passing. So let's think about this case a little. Can it make sense for love to pass, if a certain spark is gone? My guess is: sometimes, yes. After all, if you really don't feel the same way about someone anymore, that can provide reason to end a relationship. But we should be careful to not overstate this. As just noted, romantic love often is – and ought to be – tenacious over time. We shouldn't always run the first time we feel it wane. Moreover, love is not infatuation or fleeting attraction. And so, while the butterflies might leave your stomach, that doesn't mean that love should end; it might instead be the signal the move from infatuation to love, or from one stage of romantic love to another.⁸

Think of Good Vibrations. The song begins with, well, good vibrations, “the colorful clothes she wears”, and “the way the sunlight plays upon her hair”. But those good vibrations die down, and the song comes to a standstill. What next?

Gotta keep those lovin' good vibrations a-happenin' with her
Gotta keep those lovin' good vibrations a-happenin' with her
Gotta keep those lovin' good vibrations a-happenin'

And when we work on this:

(Ahh)
Good, good, good, good vibrations

Moving from the Beach Boys to drugs, Earp and Savulescu (2020, pp.71-81) consider what they call *good-enough*, or *grey* marriages: relationships that are by no means bad, but not quite full of the excitement or spark that they once were. They suggest that certain drugs such as MDMA, taken in the right circumstances, might be able to re-kindle this romance. What's the significance of this here? The thought is that we can acknowledge that a certain spark, or more broadly the way one feels about one's beloved is important. But nevertheless, if it

⁷ See Nehamas (2016, p. 111; 135) for discussion of a similar phenomenon in friendships.

⁸ See Kolodny (2003, pp. 166-7) for a brief discussion about love, attraction, and concern.

begins to wane, this does not straightforwardly mean that love ought to pass. Sometimes it will, but sometimes it won't – it might just call upon the lovers to keep working on the relationship, individually and together.

To bring this section to close, quality views of love can easily make sense of love passing, at least in cases where the qualities involved or desired change. But they struggle to capture the tenacity of romantic love over time, and to make sense of love passing when the qualities involved do not change.

2. Love as a response to someone's essence.

Instead of viewing love as a response to someone's qualities, we might think of it as a response to their *essence*. This could help capture the tenacity of love, as while our qualities might change over time, our essences presumably remain fairly stable.

What then is our essence, and how might love be a response to it? There are a couple of basic options here. The first is that love is a response to a *general* essence, someone's humanity, dignity, agency, or soul, something that we all have. This helps capture the thought that everyone deserves love, and also gives love's tenacity something to latch onto. However, it does make it hard to make sense of love passing. What reason could one give for no longer being in love with someone? "Sorry, I don't like your soul anymore."⁹ If love is a response to someone's property-less general essence, then it is hard to see why love could stop being an appropriate response to this.¹⁰

According to some such views, the particular features of people – their distinguishing characteristics – are helpful in that they enable us to see a person's inherent dignity or humanity, something that all of us have.¹¹ But after one has come to recognise a person's dignity or humanity, what reason could there be to stop? Of course, one might as a matter of

⁹ Full credit to Gerald Lang for this joke. It was funnier when he said it.

¹⁰ Protasi (2016, p. 223) argues that: "it *should not* be the case that we love unconditionally, since we may have reason to fall out of love. This is a straightforward consequence of the claim that love has reasons; if we believe that falling in love has reasons, and remaining in love has reasons, then also falling out of love must have reasons." I agree with Protasi's conclusion here, that there can be reasons to fall out of love. However, I am not quite sure about the inference; I suspect it's possible to maintain that falling in and maintain love have reasons, but that there are *not* reasons to fall out of love. Indeed, I think some general essence views of love (perhaps McTaggart's) consistently hold these three views.

¹¹ See Velleman (1999) for a powerful statement of such a view.

fact, stop. But on these accounts that seems like a mistake, as one is now failing to appreciate something of value.

What can be said in defence of general essence views here? One possible response involves invoking something like Scheffler's (2011) distinction between *believing* something to be valuable and *valuing* it, where valuing also involves being emotionally vulnerable to something, and treating it as offering reasons for action.¹² In this case, we could retain the belief that someone we once loved is valuable, but no longer value them in this fuller sense (as we are not emotionally vulnerable to them in the same way, and we don't treat their value as reasons for action in the same way).¹³ Indeed, we could believe that everyone is valuable, but not value everyone in this fuller way. This seems plausible. For better or worse, we do say things like "I love you, but I'm no longer in love with you."¹⁴

However, this still doesn't answer the question as to what reason there could be for no longer valuing someone in this way. The qualities view can provide reasons, if/when the relevant qualities change. But if love is fundamentally a response to the general essence of someone, what would count in favour of no longer fully engaging with this value?

One option is that you might have latched on to a different essence. Betty believes that both Don and Henry are valuable, but moves from valuing Don to valuing Henry. If love is a response to something that both Don and Henry have, then they both deserve love, and Betty is merely switching from valuing one general essence to another. This soul-hopping though does not quite capture the tenacity of love.¹⁵ It also does not seem to capture the way in which love is a response to distinctive people. As Kolodny (2003, p. 179) notes:

What kind of "appreciation" of one's beloved as "special and irreplaceable" could be compatible with the "judgment" that one has just as much reason to appreciate anyone in that way?

¹² Thanks to Luke Brunning for this suggestion. See Kolodny (2003, p.150) for a similar account of valuing someone.

¹³ Of course, that's not to say that people don't have deep concern for their ex-partners; see Kolodny (2003, p.167).

¹⁴ One worry here is that it is not clear how believing someone to be valuable is related to loving someone. This ties into additional concern I have with Velleman's (1999, p.366) account, where he conceives of respect and love as similar: "The Kantian view is that respect is a mode of valuation that the very capacity for valuation must pay to instances of itself. My view is that love is a mode of valuation that this capacity may also pay to instances of itself. I regard respect and love as the required minimum and optional maximum responses to one and the same value."

¹⁵ See also Kolodny (2003, p.178): "[...] on Velleman's view we face the actuality of billions of substitutes. One has just as much reason to love a stranger as one has to love one's child or lifelong friend."

It seems natural to appeal to features of particular individuals here. Don failed to open up to Betty about his past, repeatedly cheated on, and neglected her. It was this that led to Betty leaving him for Henry. But these are not features of Don's general essence, they are his particular qualities, and features of his relationship with Betty. It thus seems that, in providing reasons for why this love passed, we are pushed beyond a general essence view.

Moving away from the thought that love is a response to a general essence, we might instead think that it is a response to a *specific* essence, a bare 'thisness' of an individual person. Let's say you love Brian, but not for his voice, warmth, creativity, or hair, you just love his 'Brian-ness', where this doesn't refer to any of his qualities. Once again though, if that is what we love, it is hard to see how it could make any sense for love to pass (or begin or continue). What reason could one have for no longer loving him? "I don't like your Brian-ness anymore". His sheer Brian-ness is independent of his qualities, so presumably it remains fairly stable. This helps overcome some of the difficulties that we saw with quality views of love, as it can make sense of your love for Brian persisting as his properties change over time. But it makes it hard to account for there being reasons to be in love, or fall out of love, with Brian.

Accounts that view love as a response to a specific essence also often view love as *arational*. And there is something to this, after all, people sometimes do just fall in love. But if we view love as arational, it is hard to give reasons for why we fall in love with particular people; after all, if it's arational, then presumably anyone will do. Leaving aside falling in love, and returning to our focus in this chapter, it does seem like there can be reasons to fall out of love with a particular person: the relationship might have become unhealthy; they might have changed for the worse; you might have changed for the worse; you might no longer feel the same way; and so on. These seem like reasons that could count in favour of love passing, which pulls against the thought that love is just an arational response to the specific essence of someone.

In response, one could argue that love itself is arational, but not everything is, and there are other reasons that could count against any particular case of love. As an example, you might just happen to be in love with someone, but if continuing to love this person would cause many other people harm, then that could provide reasons for the love to pass, even though the love itself is arational. I think there is something to this response, but worry that it doesn't quite work. After all, the considerations listed above – how you feel about someone, who

they are, and how healthy your relationship is with them – do seem related to the nature of love, and not merely external reasons.

One good thing about essence accounts of love is that they do not think of love as just a response to the qualities of the beloved, and so seem better placed to capture love's tenacity, as people's qualities change over time. In addition, at least for general essence views, everyone seems to deserve to be loved, regardless of their properties. There is something beautiful to this. But it does not really adequately allow us to make sense of love passing. It seems to either allow us to hop from one soul to another, or instead implies that love passing is always regrettable. And that doesn't quite sound right. After all, there are bad (toxic, abusive) relationships that ought to end.¹⁶ There are also relationships that aren't bad, but are no longer fulfilling enough for the people in them. And, at least in some of these cases, it is okay for love to pass.

3. Love as valuing a relationship

A natural thought at this point, is that we've been too focused on the lover and the beloved in isolation, and have not paid enough attention to their *relationship*. In Kolodny's colossal (2003) paper, he makes the case that love *is* valuing a relationship.¹⁷ He thinks that this helps explain its tenacity:

[...] love, insofar as it is responsive to its reasons, does not alter as alteration (in qualities) it finds. The relationship remains, even as qualities change. (Kolodny 2003, p.147)

What can such an account say about love passing? Love passing would make sense if we no longer value a relationship. This raises the question of *why* we might no longer value it, and what would count as reasons for or against valuing a relationship. One easy answer is that we no longer value a relationship because one of us has changed, but that seems to move us away from a relationship view of love back to something like a quality view, where the emphasis is on the qualities or properties of the beloved, and whether they have changed, or are no longer desired.

¹⁶ See Protasi (2016, p.224) for a brief discussion of some of the sorts of changes that would make falling out of love appropriate.

¹⁷ For more detail on this, see Kolodny (2003, pp. 150-53).

Another answer is that we no longer value the relationship, because the relationship has changed. This invites further questions about what are good and bad relationship changes, and which of these could warrant ending a relationship. This strikes me as a plausible avenue to go down. After all, if a relationship is no longer good for the people involved, that provides a reason for it to end.

And Kolodny does provide an account of love passing on his relationship view. He (2003, pp.164-67) notes that one can appropriately fall out of love with someone, if:

- 1) They do not have concern for you.
- 2) They fail to act on the reasons that the relationship provides
- 3) They no longer deserve respect (perhaps due to them committing some moral atrocity)
- 4) You no longer identify with them
- 5) You are no longer attracted to them

These are plausible candidates for reasons to fall out of love with someone. But they do seem to invoke the qualities of the beloved. As Kolodny (2003, p. 140) himself notes earlier in his paper:

My love [towards my wife] should alter if it finds that she has become cruel and unfeeling toward me, or monstrously evil toward others.

Part of the worry here is that (1) his wife no longer has concern for him, but that isn't the whole picture. If his wife changes from being tolerant and understanding towards others to being a white supremacist, that is a change in her qualities, and one that provides reasons for love to pass. This change in qualities might also mean that one no longer (4) identifies with her, (5) is no longer attracted to her, and (3) perhaps no longer respects her either. These seem like reasons for love to pass, but reasons that are grounded in a change in her qualities. In sum, Kolodny's account helps draw our attention to the importance of relationships for love, but I think he overstates his case. For the quality view has something right too: changes in the qualities of one's beloved can provide reasons for love to pass.

What more can we say about relationship views of love and loves passing in general? One thing worth noting is that relationships and love do not always co-exist.¹⁸ After all, there is a difference between *love* ending and a *relationship* ending. For, love can end without a relationship ending, and a relationship can end without love ending. One can love someone, but not want to be in a relationship with them, and vice versa.

¹⁸ I am grateful for Allison Toop for reminding me of this.

A related challenge to relationship views concerns unrequited love. And if there can be good reasons for unrequited love to begin or persist,¹⁹ then there might also be good reasons for it to end. And if that's the case, it seems like there could be good reasons for love to end, independently of a relationship.

Relationship views of love, unsurprisingly, help illustrate the importance of relationships for love. But they are incomplete, as we still need an account of who we love in a relationship, and what it is that we love about them.²⁰ In a relationship, do we love someone for their qualities, or essence? I will return to this shortly in section 5. But before then, let turn to one final account of love.

4. Love as vision

In this section, I consider vision views, focussing on Jollimore's account. For Jollimore, "love is a unique and very particular way of seeing" (2011, p.46). In a little more detail, he writes that:

One does not see one's beloved [...] in the flat, distracted manner in which one tends to see most strangers. She occupies a special place at or near the center of one's attention [...] The lover notices things about his beloved – tiny, easily overlooked, but meaningful attributes – that would escape the notice of others. [...] He appreciates, fully and generously, her better qualities and ignores, refuses to acknowledge, or at the very least deemphasizes her less-than-ideal attributes (2011, p.4)

To my ears, this captures an important part of what it feels like to love someone, and also part of what feels amiss when love passes.

However, if we view love as vision, or a commitment to viewing someone in a particular light, this raises the following questions: Why do we come to stop viewing people in this light, and when might that be appropriate? Moreover, why could it be appropriate to no longer view someone in this way? This is a general challenge for Jollimore, where at times,

¹⁹ See Protasi (2016, p.218) for a convincing case of unrequited love that is "neither unruly nor immoderate nor futile." Cf. Kolodny's (2003, pp. 170-1) treatment of unrequited love.

²⁰ Protasi (2016, p. 222) makes a similar point against Kolodny's relationship view: "[...] properties that ground my love are [...] affected by how those properties have been experienced in, and changed by, our relationship. Nevertheless, it is necessary to appeal to those properties to show that my love for that specific individual is justified. The relationship itself is not the ground of my justification: the person and her properties are. A loving relationship just happens to be the context in which most lovers experience the beloved's properties." Kolodny (2003, pp.154-57) tries to address such issues by invoking a distinction between the *focus* of one's love (an individual) and the *grounds* of one's love (the relationship), but this seems a little ad-hoc.

he seems to suggest that it would be good if we viewed everyone this way. For instance, he writes that:²¹

[...] a perfect epistemic agent would approach every situation with the kind of open-minded, full, and generous attention that we, on the whole, reserve for our friends (2011, p. 58)

I'm sympathetic to this. As with the essence views we looked at in section 2, it's nice to think that everyone deserves generous charitable attention, and love. But once again, this might make it hard to make sense of love passing.

The key question seems to be: what would make it appropriate to stop viewing someone in this way? Perhaps they no longer warrant it. But why would that be? I think the previous 3 sections provide a variety of helpful answers. It can be no longer appropriate to view someone in this loving way because: they might have changed, you could have changed, and the relationship or circumstances might have changed too. And all of these things can provide reasons to no longer view someone in a loving and generous manner.

Where does this leave us? We have now looked at four different accounts of romantic love, and thought through how they might make sense of love passing. We've seen that each of these accounts captures something important, but that none of them, on their own, provides a full account of love passing. In response to this, I am going to attempt to offer a holistic account of love, and its passing. Here goes.

5. A Holistic Account

Let's begin with quality and essence views. Is there a way in which we can bring these together, and capture both of their insights? For this, I want to attempt a small amount of metaphysics. A basic metaphysical question is: what is an *individual*? And in thinking through what an individual is, we face a similar conundrum to the one we encountered earlier in this chapter.

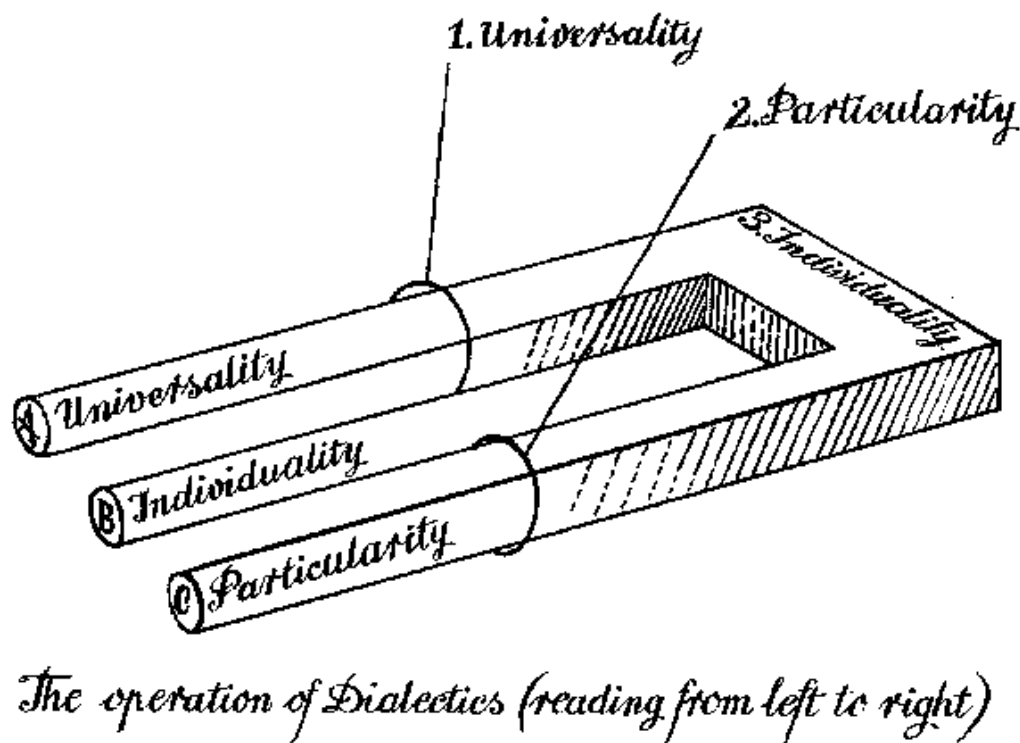
Let's take LeBron James. Who is he? Is he just a bundle of properties? Intelligent, perceptive, knowledgeable, athletic, and so on. That doesn't quite seem to capture the unique person he is, as plenty of other people possess those properties. And moreover, his properties change – he's less athletic than he was 10 years ago, but his knowledge of the game has increased. We

²¹ See Jollimore (2011, pp. 46-73) for a full account of this.

might also think of him as a bare essence instead, a sheer LeBron-ness. This attempts to capture what is unique about him, after all no one else has a sheer LeBron-ness. But it is also mysterious; after all, who is LeBron, stripped of all of his qualities?

One solution to this puzzle is to introduce a new account of what an individual is. On this account an individual is not a bunch of abstract properties (intelligent, perceptive, knowledgeable, athletic), nor just a bare essence (a sheer LeBron-ness). So what are they? Well, on the account I want to sketch here, an individual and their properties are related, in an almost circular way. Let's go back to LeBron as an example. He's intelligent, but in his own way. What is LeBron's way of being intelligent? Well, it's a perceptive, incredibly knowledgeable, and athletic kind of intelligence; he has a ridiculously good memory, knows exactly how the defence is going to react, is able to see this, control his body, and fire a one-handed pinpoint pass across the floor.

How are these things related, and how are they circular? Believe it or not, the following image helps illustrate this:²²



²² Unattributed image, found online. The 3-pronged image is known as The Impossible Trident, and an anonymous person has added in the metaphysical captions.

Here, we have three prongs: individuality, universality and particularity.²³ The image attempts to convey that they are all interconnected. So LeBron is an *individual*. But what makes him the individual that he is? Well, the *particular* way he embodies a bunch of *universal* properties. Again, he's intelligent (a universal property, for there are many intelligent people, and many ways of being intelligent), but LeBron is intelligent in a *particular* way (he's perceptive, incredibly knowledgeable and athletic). What makes these things particular? Well, they are in turn LeBron's (individual) ways of being intelligent (a universal property). And around the three prongs we go.

Hopefully this makes some sense. The basic idea is that metaphysics can help the philosophy of love, through providing an account of what it means to be an individual. After all, when we talk about love, we're often talking about loving an individual, and for that we will need some idea of what an individual is. If we think of an individual as just a bundle of qualities or just an essence, we run into problems, both in metaphysics, but also as we have seen in the first two sections of this chapter, in thinking about love and its passing. The account I've sketched above attempts to offer a better account of what an individual is, such that we can make better sense of what it means to love an individual.²⁴

Returning to our earlier example, let's say you love Brian. But you don't just love him for his properties (his voice, warmth, creativity and hair), nor do you just love him for his essence, independently of his properties. So why do you love him? For the sake of the example, let's say that, one reason is that you love his voice. This raises questions. For one, why love someone's voice? And secondly, being able to sing seems like a universal quality – Brian is not the only person in the world who can sing! Is it there a specific Brian-ness to his voice? Yes. It's his own individual voice. But if we conceive of this as a property-less sheer Brian-ness, the love seems arbitrary. On the account that I sketched above, the thought is that Brian's individuality is not unrelated to his properties as we can see by moving around the three prongs on the diagram. So you love Brian's voice, some *universal* quality (after all, many people can sing). But you love his *particular* voice. But this is not just a bare this-ness, because it is part of what makes Brian the *individual* he is, that he is warm (for example); so when you say that you love his particular voice, you're saying that you love *his* warm way of singing. We can continue to ask questions here, and answer them by moving around the three

²³ For more on this metaphysics, see Stern's (2009, pp.153-58) work on the concrete universal in Hegel, and if you are feeling brave, Hegel's *Science of Logic*.

²⁴ For a fuller picture of what this account is, and how it helps to think about love, see Saunders and Stern (draft).

prongs. For instance, what makes Brian's way of being warm distinctive? Well, again that would involve appealing to other features of Brian, such as his creativity and voice. And so on.

The hope here is that this account of the metaphysics of an individual allows us to do justice to some of the key insights of both quality views and essence views. With quality views, we can accept that love is, in part, responsive to people's qualities, and so love passing can make sense if these qualities change. But love is not just a response to universal qualities, and so we can capture something of the uniqueness of individuals in the way that specific essence views do.²⁵

How does this account of what it means to love an individual relate to the other two accounts that we considered, vision and relationship views? I think these views capture other important elements of love.

The metaphysical account offered above explains the object of our love, individuals, with their own distinct ways of embodying various properties. But there is more to love than just the objects of love. Vision views provide an important account of both what love is, and how it feels. In love, you see someone in a distinctive way, and are generously attentive to who they are (the particular way they embody various universal properties). Vision views also capture some of the things we ought to do in love; Love provides reasons, and maybe even obligations, to continue to view the beloved in a generous attentive manner.²⁶

Relationships are also a key part of love. After all, love typically does not operate at a distance. It often involves living together, or more broadly sharing lives. And this requires work, and a healthy relationship. Such a relationship, like vision, often plays (amongst other things) an epistemic role, allowing you to really get to know someone, in their full particularity/individuality.

Moreover, if the above metaphysical story is right, it might also help us understand what an individual relationship is.²⁷ What makes a relationship unique on this account is not just some *universal* quality, for instance that the relationship embodies humour, but instead a particular

²⁵ For an alternative holistic account of love, see Clausen (2019). On Clausen's (2019, pp. 358-66) account, the proper object of love are persons *as organic unities*, rather than their qualities considered independently. This seems right to me, and also helps with the issue at hand. For further discussion of how Clausen's account relates to the one I am putting forward here, see Saunders and Stern (draft).

²⁶ Gotta keep those lovin' good vibrations a-happenin'

²⁷ Thanks to Robbie Arrell for this suggestion.

sense of humour. Again, this particular sense of humour is not just some bare thisness – a sheer Brangelina – but is connected to other properties of the relationship.

Here I have sketched a holistic picture of what love is love. Love involves a response to the particularity of individuals, requires you to view them a certain way, and (typically) to sustain a healthy relationship with them. Each of these things can go wrong, and when they do, this can provide reasons for love to pass.

How does this help with love passing? To begin with, it avoids the problems associated with general essence accounts, as on this account you love people as distinct individuals.

Nevertheless, people's individuality is connected to their properties, and so it can make sense for love to pass when someone's properties change. But loving people for their properties can be tenacious on this view, as people's properties are often inter-connected. You love Brian for his voice, and that means that you love Brian's voice, which is warm and creative, like Brian. Now perhaps his voice fades, but on this view, part of the reason why you loved his voice was that it was an expression of his warmth and creativity, which could still remain, and perhaps find a different outlet (with Brian now painting in a warm and creative way). But if these properties all went, and Brian became cold and mean, then perhaps it would make sense for your love of him to pass.

It is worth adding that the reasons that makes sense of love passing need not be symmetrical with the reasons that you fell in love with someone for, nor the reasons that sustained that love. One might fall in love with someone because of who they were (the individual they were, with their particular properties), but fall out of love with them because it is hard to sustain a relationship with that person. Or one might fall in love with someone because you viewed them in a generous and attentive manner, stay with them for the relationship, but fall out of love with them when they changed for the worse. One could also still acknowledge and appreciate someone's qualities but no longer view them in a generous attentive manner, perhaps capturing the cases we discussed in section 1 where something like a spark fades.

If this is true, then how tight are the connections between the various aspects of love that we are considering? Honestly, I don't know. I suspect that love can exist without a relationship, without generous vision, and perhaps even without appreciation of an individual's particular qualities (although maybe love cannot exist without there being at least one of these things). This might push us away from a holistic account of love, where there are inter-dependent

parts of love, to something more like a pluralistic account, where there are different independent things that love can be.

A pluralistic account could help with other non-romantic cases of love. For instance, one might love one's new-born child for their bare essence, go on to love them for their qualities when they're a sweet toddler, back to their essence when they're a moody teenager, and then perhaps for the relationship one has with them as an adult.²⁸

But a pluralistic account doesn't seem to quite capture the cases of romantic love that we have considered in this chapter. After all, loving someone as an individual, and loving their properties do seem tightly connected. And in thinking through what it means to love such an individual, vision and relationship views seem important: we ought to view them in an attentive and generous manner, and sustain a healthy relationship with them. I do not think that any one of these elements is a necessary condition for being in love, but they are important, and related, parts of being in love. And so, I opt for a holistic account.

Love changes over time. And for better or worse, it sometimes fades, and sometimes ends. With the holistic account I've offered here, I hope to have done justice to some of these changes. In doing so, I have attempted to make sense of love passing, but also to learn something about love in general.

²⁸ I am grateful to Luke Brunning for this example. Christine Overall provides a similar example of how parental and grandparental love can work in her chapter in this collection.

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