



Love: A Very Short Introduction (Very Short Introductions)

By Ronald de Sousa

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Although there are many kinds of love, erotic love has been celebrated in art and poetry as life's most rewarding and exalting experience, worth living and dying for and bringing out the best in ourselves. And yet it has excused, and even been thought to justify, the most reprehensible crimes. Why should this be? This Very Short Introduction explores this and other puzzling questions. Do we love someone for their virtue, their beauty, or their moral or other qualities? Are love's characteristic desires altruistic or selfish? Are there duties of love? What do the sciences - neuroscience, evolutionary and social psychology, and anthropology - tell us about love?

Many of the answers we give to such questions are determined not so much by the facts of human nature as by the ideology of love. Ronald de Sousa considers some of the many paradoxes raised by love, looking at the different kinds of love - affections, affiliation, philia, storage, agape, but focusses on eros, or romantic love. He considers whether our conventional beliefs about love and sex are deeply irrational and argues that alternative conceptions of love and sex, although hard to formulate and live by, may be worth striving for.

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- Sales Rank: #232595 in eBooks
- Published on: 2015-01-08
- Released on: 2015-01-08
- Format: Kindle eBook

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Ronald de Sousa is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. He has taught at University of Toronto, Canada since 1966. He is the author of *The Rationality of Emotion* (MIT 1987), *Why Think? Evolution and the Rational Mind* (OUP 2007, 2011), and *Emotional Truth* (OUP 2011). He has also published over a hundred articles and book chapters, and taught and lectured in some twenty countries. His research interests have been mainly in areas of philosophy that seek to understand the mind: emotion, evolutionary theory, cognitive science, aesthetics, ethics, and sex.

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