

DO WE LOVE FOR REASONS?

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(penultimate draft; please cite published version)

Are there normative reasons for love? That is, is it the sort of attitude that can be rendered fitting by reasons in the way that beliefs and emotions can? A prominent way of approaching this question is to tackle the puzzle posed by our *normative intuitions*. On the one hand, our normative intuitions seem to suggest that love is based on reasons. For instance, we often appeal to the beloved's likeable or admirable *qualities* in apparently justifying our loves, or in judging if some instance of love is fitting. But on the other hand, our normative intuitions also seem to suggest that love is oblivious to reasons. Having come to love someone, we don't usually seem unjustified in continuing to love them even after they lose their attractive properties.¹

In this paper, I will take a different tack. I'll look, not to our normative intuitions,² but instead to our everyday observations about how love is in fact *explained*. The question I'll ask is: do such observations suggest that we come to love for reasons?

This question similarly gives rise to a puzzle. On the one hand, it can seem as if we come to love for reasons. The best evidence for this, I'll follow some of my opponents in suggesting, arises with non-familial love. For most cases of non-familial love seem *selective*³ in that coming to love a non-family-member often begins with our being drawn to them for what they are like.⁴ But on the other hand, it can also seem as if we don't. Having come to love someone, we wouldn't tend to stop loving them when they lose the attractive properties that first drew us to them.

I'll argue, however, that the selectivity of non-familial love doesn't show that we come to love for reasons. Consequently, holding that there are no reasons for love will allow us to explain love's selectivity while accommodating the ways in which it's oblivious to reasons. I'll argue for this by offering an alternative explanation of this

¹E.g., Frankfurt (2004), 30-1.

²But see my "Love's Fittingness: A No-Reasons Guide" (2019) for Anti-Rationalist explanations of those normative intuitions that might seem to favor Rationalism.

³This construal of 'selectivity' differs from the more normative way in which quality theorists tend to invoke the term.

⁴Theorists who explicitly take this to be a challenge for those who hold that love isn't based on reasons include Soble (2005) and Stump (2010), 87. And theorists who take this to motivate the view that love is justified by the beloved's qualities include Kolodny (2003); Persson (2005), 330; Jollimore (2011); and Hurka (2016).

datum from the perspective of a simple desire-based view of love, one on which to love someone is to strongly desire their well-being (at least partly) for its own sake, and desires that are had (at least partly) for their own sake are not justified by reasons. My account holds that although the beloved's qualities explain love, they don't do so in virtue of *rationalizing* it—they don't explain love in the way that finding someone admirable explains admiration.⁵ For what explains our coming to desire the beloved's well-being for its own sake is our *associating* them with desired situations such as being around witty people; and these other desires of ours will tend to make us pleased by properties of the beloved's like their wittiness before we come to love them.

Now, the desire-based view I'm using may seem too crude. But my aim isn't so much to defend it, as to underscore the sparseness of the resources I'm invoking. For the point of offering these explanations isn't just to show that we can explain how non-familial love seems selective, even if we hold that love isn't justified by reasons. It's also to suggest that, insofar as doing so allows us to explain the datum more simply, that's how we *should* explain the datum. But given how the selectivity of non-familial love is the most plausible way in which love might seem to arise on the basis of reasons, that further suggests, as I'll argue at the end, that love isn't engendered by any sort of reason, whether qualities or something else altogether.

Although my discussion focuses on this debate about whether there are reasons for love, it also has implications, most saliently, for metanormative theorizing about reasons. One larger issue it bears on whether normative reasons should be capable of explanation. But it's significant, too, insofar as the question of whether love is reason-responsive is an instance of the classic question of whether our cares and concerns are reason-responsive:⁶ whether "Reason of itself is utterly impotent" with them.⁷

My discussion will proceed as follows. Section 1 introduces the debate between those who think there are reasons for love and those who don't, before arguing that the most plausible way in which we seem to come to love for reasons consists in how non-familial-love seems selective. Sections 2–4 then argue that such data doesn't show that there are reasons for love: Section 2 presents the simple desire-based view of love I'll deploy, while Sections 3–4 develop and defend my merely causal explanations. Finally, Section 5 tackles objections and Section 6 concludes.

⁵For more on explanation in virtue of rationalization, see Arpaly (2006), Wedgwood (2006), Arpaly and Schroeder (2014), 62–7; something like this idea is also invoked in Kelly (2002).

⁶See, e.g., Smith (1994).

⁷Hume (1738), Book III.

1 The theoretical landscape

First, I'll explain the sense of love and the sorts of reasons for love that are at stake here. Then I'll bring out the puzzle that arises when we ask whether we come to love for reasons, and explain why this question bears on whether there are reasons for love.

1.1 The sense of “love” I’m invoking

‘Love’ can be used to pick out all sorts of things. But the sense of ‘love’ I mean to invoke is that which moral philosophers are particularly interested in. This is the attitude,⁸ whether it be an emotion, final desire, belief, or something else altogether, that is (i) common to the varieties of love that people are said to have for their romantic partners, friends, and family members, and that (ii) we might gloss as *caring about the person for their sake*.⁹

1.2 Rationalism

Are there reasons for love (in my narrow sense)? Should we, that is, accept

RATIONALISM: Love can be made fitting by reasons, in the same way that beliefs and ‘belief-y’ emotions like admiration can be rendered fitting.

For instance, should we follow *the quality view* in holding that love is justified by the beloved’s qualities?¹⁰ Or should we hold that it’s instead our *relationship* with the beloved,¹¹ or their *personhood* (or whatever property it is that justifies respect)?¹²

⁸This is an attitude, rather than a *relationship*: it’s the sense in which a divorcing couple might love each other, despite not wanting to be with each other (Velleman 1999, 353; Hamlyn 1978, 13).

⁹This notion of love, though seemingly narrow, is one that my interlocutors are talking about. Some of my interlocutors, after all, explicitly invoke roughly the same sense of ‘love’ (e.g., Jollimore (2011), xiii, Kolodny (2003), 136-7). Furthermore, insofar as this narrow notion is what Harry Frankfurt (1999a, 2004) invokes, and insofar as Frankfurt’s position is what most of the Rationalists I’ve cited take themselves to be denying, they’re committed thereby to defending Rationalism for at least this narrow notion. Finally, my position and arguments also bear on quality views about more expansive notions of love (e.g., Protasi (2014)’s view of romantic love). For it’s hard to see how (e.g.) romantic love could be justified by attractive qualities of the beloved, if there weren’t *some* final desire that could be thus justified, be it the desire for the beloved’s well-being, or the desire to be in a romantic relationship with them.

¹⁰Theorists who defend some variant of the quality view include Jollimore (2011), Abramson and Leite (2011), Bagley (2015), Thomas Hurka (1997, 2011, 2016), and Howard (in press).

¹¹E.g., Kolodny (2003).

¹²E.g., Velleman (1999, 2008) and Setiya (2014).

Or should we deny Rationalism altogether—should we accept what I’ll call *Anti-Rationalism* or *Humeanism*?

To see what’s being disputed, we need to clarify the notion of normative reasons that’s in play. For, as has become familiar, normative reasons seem to ‘count in favor’ of attitudes in two different ways.¹³ One way is when the attitude is evaluated by standards *external* to it—when the attitude is, as theorists put it, ‘*desirable*’ (or ‘good’).¹⁴ For instance, perhaps it is prudentially good or desirable to (try to) have overly optimistic beliefs about one’s health problems. And it’s arguably morally inappropriate to be amused by a joke that ‘goes too far’ in mocking someone. In cases of this sort, the normative status of the attitude seems to depend on things that are external to it, such as its effects, or other psychological states of the agent’s.

Some attitudes, however, seem to come with standards that are *internal* to, or *constitutive* of, them; these attitudes can therefore also be evaluated in light of whether their objects satisfy their internal standards. This is clearest in the case of belief. My belief that there is a computer in front of me isn’t just desirable from the point of view of getting my work done: it is also fitting, given my perceptual evidence. Similarly, emotions like fear and amusement can be assessed, not just by external standards like those of prudence or morality, but also for whether these objects are genuinely fearsome or amusing.

Crucially, desirability and fittingness can come apart. We’ve in effect seen some ways in which they do so: e.g., whether the attitude in question intuitively seems “desirable” or “fitting”;¹⁵ or whether the standard we’re invoking seems internal to that attitude. But, as we’ll see in more detail shortly, another way turns on explanation: whereas fittingness reasons characteristically explain in virtue of rationalizing their attitudes, non-fittingness or desirability considerations don’t.¹⁶ We’d tend, for instance, to stop being afraid of something if we cease to find it dangerous; but we wouldn’t tend to do so if we come to think that it’d be prudentially better for us not to fear it.

This distinction helps bring out what is in dispute between Rationalists and Anti-Rationalists. Whether love admits of ‘desirability considerations’ isn’t controversial: both Rationalists and Anti-Rationalists agree that it can be desirable to (try to) love,

¹³D’Arms and Jacobson (2000). This distinction is also known as that between ‘the right and wrong kind of reasons’.

¹⁴Although I’ve deferred to popular opinion by framing desirability considerations as *reasons*, I disagree (*unofficially*) with this position. For, like Gibbard (1990), Kelly (2002), and Parfit (2011), I think that desirability or “wrong kind of” reasons aren’t reasons *for* the attitude, but rather, e.g., reasons why having the attitude would be good or desirable.

¹⁵Note, though, that the sort of fittingness at stake is a technical notion that needn’t map perfectly onto our ordinary uses of words like “fitting” or “desirable”. That some attitude sometimes *seems* “fitting” may suggest that it admits of fittingness standards; but that wouldn’t by itself settle the issue.

¹⁶E.g., Hieronymi (2010), Schroeder (2012), Nye (2018).

or stop loving, someone. What's contentious is whether love patterns like beliefs in admitting, not only of desirability considerations, but *also* of fittingness reasons: that is what Rationalists claim, and Anti-Rationalists deny.

1.3 Do we come to love for reasons?

Perhaps the most prominent way of investigating whether there are (fittingness) reasons for love, as noted earlier, is to look to our normative intuitions and practices. But that's not what I'll do in this paper. My focus will instead be on another datum that many Rationalists invoke: namely, that love seems *explained* in virtue of being rationalized by reasons.¹⁷ In particular, as Jollimore (2011) observes, we seem to come to love for reasons:¹⁸

the attractive and otherwise valuable properties of the beloved are the most important and most powerful sources of reasons for love; they are, moreover, what the beloved is most typically loved *for*. (13) ... One is attracted to and falls in love with certain people rather than others largely on the basis of what they are like, and the stories that lovers tell reflect this. (20)

Or as Hurka (2016) puts it:

As well as causes, does the beginning of love have justifying reasons? I believe there are ... while the start of love is partly guided by reasons ... it's also partly a realm where your desires can permissibly fix on neutral traits. Subjectivists like Frankfurt have rightly emphasized this second, non-rational side of love, though they've wrongly ignored the other, reason-guided one. (169–71)

Still, even if there are Rationalists who hold that love can be explained (in virtue of being rationalized) by reasons, one might wonder *why* we should think that. For one might wonder: isn't there supposed to be a difference between reasons that *justify* things and reasons that *explain why something is the case* — between normative and

¹⁷Which Rationalists think that love should be capable of being explained (in virtue of being rationalized) by reasons, if there are reasons for love? They include not only quality theorists like Jollimore (2011) and Hurka (2016), but also relational theorists like Kolodny (2003) (see, e.g., p. 162), as well as those who haven't committed to a specific variety of Rationalism (e.g. Ebels-Duggan (2019)). See also fn 4 for other references.

¹⁸I'll be discussing data about how we come to love that's at the folk psychological, qualitative level of explanation, rather than at, e.g., the neuroscientific level.

explanatory reasons? But if so, why should it matter whether normative reasons can, or tend, to explain love?

Here's why it matters. Even if normative reasons are distinct from explanatory reasons, there nevertheless tends to be an intimate connection between them—especially, as noted earlier, between *fittingness* reasons and explanatory ones. After all, if something seems to us to be true, or to be supported by the evidence, we'd tend to come to believe it. Or, to use an example of an emotion, suppose that Andrew comes to admire Candice because she gives generously to charity. What explains Andrew's coming to admire her is different from what justifies it: it's *facts* like Candice's generosity that justify it, whereas it's *mental states* of Andrew's like his beliefs about such generosity that explain his admiration. But it isn't as if there's no connection between these two sets of reasons. Some of the explanatory reasons for Andrew's coming to admire Candice, after all, are ones that *relate* him to the normative (fittingness) reasons for it.

Indeed, it's not just that attitudes that admit of fittingness reasons seem explained by, or responsive to, their rationalizing attitudes. It's also that they seem characteristically explained *in virtue of being rationalized* by their rationalizing attitudes—and *not* in virtue of, e.g., mere associations between contents or a glitch in neural wiring.¹⁹ For instance, it's not just that Andrew will tend to come to admire Candice if he thinks that she is extremely generous (and, e.g., he cares about relieving suffering). It's also that his belief about Candice's generosity and other relevant mental states will tend to bring about that episode of admiration *because they rationalize* it. This emotion, in short, will tend to be brought about *for* (fittingness) reasons. It's in this way that emotions and belief-y attitudes characteristically differ from arational states or events like compulsions,²⁰ tics, or crying.

So, if the best explanation of the data is that we don't come to love for reasons, that would suggest that there aren't reasons for love.²¹ And conversely, if we seem to come to love for reasons, that would suggest that there are reasons for love.²²

¹⁹In virtue of' should be understood in the same way that we understand its use in claims like "The electronic device didn't fit the computer port in virtue of the device's being longer than the port". See fn 5 for references that my discussion of explanation in virtue of rationalization draws upon.

²⁰For instance, guilt over having seriously injured a friend in an accident may lead someone to compulsively ruminate about the accident, and indeed even do so in virtue of its contents, without making such rumination reasonable.

²¹The *locus classicus* for how reasons should be capable of explaining the things they rationalize is Williams (1981). This thought is also implicit in the objections Frankfurt (2004) raises, and is emphasized by Aaron Smuts (2013, 2014a, 2014b).

²²Still, even bracketing qualms about the relationship between normative and explanatory reasons, one might wonder whether this emphasis on *coming* to love makes dialectical contact with Rationalists. As a helpful referee puts it: Might they be interested in what justifies, not our coming to love someone, but rather our *continuing* to do so?

1.4 This question is puzzling

The question of whether we come to love for reasons, however, can seem puzzling. I'll suggest that the most promising Rationalist proposal for this is to appeal to qualities, before rehearsing the ways in which such a proposal is nevertheless problematic.

1.4.1 On the one hand, it can seem as if we come to love for reasons...

To begin with, the data can seem to suggest that we come to love for reasons. This isn't to say, however, that the data non-controversially supports *every* Rationalist view. For while we can seem to come to love on the basis of qualities, we *don't*, at least at a first glance, seem to come to love on the basis of the beloved's personhood or our relationship with them.

It doesn't seem as if we come to love for the beloved's personhood (or whatever property it is that justifies respect), since, familiarly, we don't tend to come to love someone merely upon seeing them as a person or human.²³ Consider a teacher who, in virtue of trying not to be paternalistic while advising a student, is vividly seeing that student as a person,²⁴ and indeed, vividly sees how much the student wants to do that which the teacher thinks would be bad for them. We still wouldn't expect the teacher to come to care about that student (in the way that they would their friends, partners, and family members).

It also doesn't seem as if we come to love on the basis of our relationship with the beloved. Either the notion of a relationship involves our history of interactions with the person, or it doesn't. If it doesn't—if, for instance, it's a purely biological relationship—then it doesn't seem as if relationships engender love. Children who were adopted at birth don't come to care about their biological parents without substantial interaction with them. And while it's more plausible that relationships, construed as including a history of positive interactions, bring about love, it seems like an option of last resort to hold that such history does so in virtue of *rationalizing* love. After all, we wouldn't hold that someone who cares about the Chicago Bulls because they grew up in Chicago does so on the basis of *reasons*.

Three replies are in order. First, as noted on pg 5, there are Rationalists who explicitly argue that we come to love for reasons; they include not only the quality theorists quoted on pg 5, but also relational theorists like Kolodny (2003) (see also fn 4 for other references). Second, regardless of whether Rationalists argue for this, there is pressure for them to do so, given how the attitudes that admit of fittingness reasons are ones that we can, and typically do, come to have for reasons. Third, even if Rationalists are only interested in what justifies the cessation or persistence of love, we can ask the analogous explanatory question: do we continue, or cease, to love for reasons? And as we'll see in Section 5.2, considerations analogous to those I'll raise for coming to love suggest a negative answer.

²³See Kolodny (2003), 175-8, Harcourt (2009), and Bagley (2015) for worries in this vein.

²⁴More precisely, such a teacher would count as seeing their student as a person *by the lights of these theories*.

By contrast, we can seem to come to love for qualities. Consider what I'll call

Attraction (to Properties) Precedes Love: Coming to love someone, especially if they aren't a close family member, often begins with our being drawn to, or being interested in them, for their attractive properties.

What explains this sort of selectivity, quality theorists might argue, if not that love *is* characteristically engendered in virtue of being rationalized by the beloved's qualities? Again, as Jollimore (2011) puts it:

Responsiveness to properties is a salient feature of many of our love-related experiences and behaviors. *One is attracted to and falls in love with certain people rather than others largely on the basis of what they are like*, and the stories that lovers tell reflect this. (20; emphasis mine)

I'll illustrate Attraction Precedes Love shortly. But before doing so, let me stress that these brief arguments I've mustered aren't meant to be decisive. They are only meant to motivate my emphasis on the quality view—to suggest that, in figuring out whether we come to love for reasons, the quality theorist is the main Rationalist alternative to Anti-Rationalism.

Since the quality theorist argument from Attraction Precedes Love is the focus of what follows, it's worth fleshing things out with an example. Consider how Elena Greco, the fictional writer of Elena Ferrante's Neapolitan novels, and whose deep friendship with Lila Cerullo is the main concern of the novels, comes to love Lila. Elena is first drawn to Lila because of the latter's non-conformity, resolute determination, and brilliant mind (Ferrante 2012):

Lila appeared in my life in first grade and immediately impressed me because she was very bad.

Lila ... had, from a young age ... the characteristic of absolute determination. Whether she was gripping the tricolor shaft of [a] pen or a stone or the handrail on the dark stairs, she communicated the idea that whatever came next ... she would do without hesitation.

Elena's love for Lila, furthermore, seems to develop in the wake of her interest in Lila's qualities. She appreciates, for instance, how Lila similarly seems to be a budding intellectual and writer, and enjoys engaging in intellectual pursuits with her. And she comes to see "breathtaking opportunities" in Lila's non-conformist actions—opportunities to expand her horizons, to escape their impoverished neighborhood.

Before long, she comes to see Lila as an indispensable soulmate, someone whom she doesn't just like and enjoy spending time with, but whom she genuinely loves.

The way Elena's love blossoms in the wake of her interest in certain qualities of Lila's seems to suggest that we come to love for reasons. For Rationalists have a straightforward explanation of this: Elena is attracted to Lila for her qualities before coming to love her, because love is a response to Lila's 'lovable' qualities. By contrast, it's not obvious what explanation Anti-Rationalists might offer.

1.4.2 On the other hand, it can also seem as if we *don't* come to love for reasons...

We've just seen how the most *prima facie* promising Rationalist proposal for how we come to love for reasons is the quality view's. But there are also reasons to think that even this most promising of the accounts doesn't work, and hence, that we don't after all come to love for reasons.

First, it's not clear in the first place that someone's attractive or admirable qualities justifies caring about their well-being.²⁵ That they have attractive (or admirable) qualities, of course, may make it fitting to *like* (or *admire*) them. But why should it make it fitting to *care about their well-being for their sake*?

Furthermore, qualities don't seem to be fittingness reasons for love, insofar as they don't seem any better than paradigmatic non-fittingness or desirability considerations at explaining (in virtue of rationalizing) love.²⁶ One way in which fittingness reasons for attitudes differ from non-fittingness or desirability considerations, recall, is that the former characteristically explain in virtue of rationalizing their attitudes in a way that the latter don't. But this sort of asymmetry in 'motivational-normative efficacy' doesn't seem to obtain between qualities and paradigmatic desirability considerations. It's not uncommon, after all, for us to come to care about people we don't think highly of—or at least, for us to come to care about Andrea rather than Betsy, even though we admire Betsy more. And even when we do come to care about someone in the wake of noticing their admirable or attractive properties, it doesn't seem as if the love is *based* upon these properties. We wouldn't tend, in the short term, to stop loving them if we stopped liking or started disliking them—or at least, we wouldn't do so *any more* than we would if it became, e.g., *prudentially* desirable to stop loving them.

²⁵Hurka (2016) raises this as a "puzzle" for the quality view.

²⁶This worry generalizes also to other purported fittingness reasons for love. At the core of this worry, of course, are more familiar observations about how the beloved isn't substitutable, or how love tends to (and should) persist through changes in the beloved's properties (e.g., Frankfurt (1999b), 166–7). But invoking the causal-normative asymmetry between fittingness reasons and desirability considerations helps forestall some common replies (e.g., by Abramson and Leite (2011), Naar (2015), Howard (in press)) to those familiar observations—though I lack the space to explain why.

To be sure, we can sometimes seem to stop loving the beloved. In thinking about these cases, it'll help to distinguish between those that happen in the short, as opposed to long, term: cases that seem especially to support the Rationalist, I take it, are those where our love might seem to evaporate, almost right away, upon our seeming to see 'the reasons for not loving the person.' Suppose we discover that our beloved has been secretly active in some despicable circles—say, running some white supremacist groups. We feel angry and disgusted; we are sure we're done loving that person.²⁷

Such short-term cases, however, don't ultimately seem like ones where the love is actually lost (I'll defer the long-term cases to Section 5.2).²⁸ For if we'd really lost the love, we'd presumably need to 'come to love' the beloved all over again, before manifesting the dispositions characteristic of love. But this doesn't seem to be the case. For suppose that a few months later, our ostensible supremacist announces, just as in a bad movie, that he had been "infiltrating" the racist groups as part of his job at the FBI, and it's only now that he's allowed to tell us. In a case like that it's easy to imagine that we'd feel love coming back. But to the extent that that happens, we wouldn't need to 'come to love' this person all over again. The love will seem to come right back.

So, it doesn't seem as if we'd lose the love in short-term cases, any more than an exasperated parent who lashes out at their children has, in the heat of that moment, lost theirs; or any more than we might lose our 'standing' cares and concerns when inebriated. We might, in the short run fail to manifest the dispositions characteristic of these loves and cares; but we wouldn't usually lose the *underlying* loves and cares.

1.4.3 Summing up and looking ahead

Whether we come to love for reasons, then, seems puzzling. In what follows, I'll offer a way out of this conundrum by advancing an Anti-Rationalist explanation of Attraction Precedes Love. With such an account, we'd be able to vindicate love's selectivity, while staying true to the ways in which love doesn't seem based on reasons. I'll present in Section 2 the desire-based view that my account deploys, before developing my account in Sections 3 and 4.

²⁷Thanks to [redacted] for the example, and [redacted] for discussion of this point.

²⁸Two other reasons are worth noting. First, there seem to be analogous cases involving 'circumstantial properties' — properties that most Rationalists wouldn't countenance as reasons. Suppose both you and your friend are gunning for places in a competitive profession; you end up faring poorly, while your friend does extremely well. Your initial happiness for your friend gives way to an all-consuming envy: your love for your friend, it might seem, has been driven out by your change in fortunes.

Second, the empirical literature on what is known as 'extinction' suggests that we can't lose final desires in the short run, though I lack the space to elaborate (see, e.g., Bouton (2004)).

2 Desire-based theories of love

On desire-based theories like the one my exposition invokes, love is most fundamentally not an emotion or evaluative attitude. It's instead some sort of *desire* (or set thereof).²⁹ The view I'll deploy, and which I'll call *Humean Love*, is perhaps the simplest of such views;³⁰ it is the conjunction of these two claims:

LOVE AS DESIRE: To love someone is to strongly desire their well-being (at least partly) for their sake—that is, to have a strong *final* desire for their well-being (and where the desire is a *standing*³¹ one).³²

HUMEAN DESIRE: Final desires are not the sorts of states which admit of fittingness reasons.

2.1 Final vs. non-final desires

The rest of this section explicates the aspects of Humean Love that will be important for my explanations.

Though simple, Humean Love already seems to capture some key facets of love. To see why, let's start by clarifying the type of desire that Humean Love says love is.³³ If one wants something (at least partially) for its own sake, call that an *final* desire.³⁴ If one wants it merely as a means to, or specific realization of,³⁵ some finally desired end, call that a *non-final* desire.

The difference between desiring something merely as a means and merely as a realization of some finally desired situation—between what I'll call an *instrumental*

²⁹There are also Anti-Rationalist views that do not hold that love is a desire (e.g., Zangwill (2013)).

³⁰This view is simpler than Frankfurt's (1999b, 1999a): Frankfurt requires not only that one desire the beloved's well-being for its own sake, but also that one has, and identifies with, a further (higher-order) desire for persistence of the first-order desire.

³¹The sort of desire that Humean Love invokes is a *standing*, rather than *occurrent*, desire. It's the sort that we get at when we say that someone cares about civil rights, even though they are, at that moment, fast asleep or occupied with other things. It's the sort that *isn't* actively shaping our behavior in the moment, and that influences our behavior *only* when certain conditions are met (Schroeder (2015)).

³²See Velleman (1999) and Bagley (2015) for the objection that love doesn't consist in a desire to promote the beloved's well-being, and Arpaly and Schroeder (2014), 94-100 for a reply. See also Ebels-Duggan (2008) for a more recent objection that love aims, not merely at the beloved's well-being, but also at "sharing in their ends".

³³This discussion is meant to be terminological rather than substantive.

³⁴As Schroeder (2015) notes, one can also non-finally desire that which one finally desires. I may desire my friend's well-being, not just finally, but also because I would be miserable if she were to suffer, and I desire not to be miserable.

³⁵Schmidtz (1994), 227; Schroeder (2004); Arpaly and Schroeder (2014), 6.

and a *realizer* desire—is worth illustrating.³⁶ If Nurul wants to get a coffee from that new coffee shop merely to increase her productivity, her desire is instrumental. By contrast, if she wants to get a coffee because she has a final desire for drinking coffee and sees drinking that shop’s coffee as a way of drinking coffee, it’s a realizer desire.

By holding that love is a final desire, then, Humean Love codifies the way love seems *disinterested* or *selfless*. It captures how spouses, friends, and family members don’t care about the beloved’s well-being merely for the sake of other ends.

2.2 Desires’ effects

Furthermore, Humean Love captures, not only the *motivational*, but also the *emotional* and *cognitive* dispositions characteristic of lovers. For final desires aren’t just brute impulses or urges—they have not only motivational, but also emotional and cognitive effects.³⁷ The motivational effects are perhaps the most familiar: we are disposed, other things being equal, to bring about situations that which seem to us to make those situations we finally desire more likely to obtain. But final desires also have emotional effects. We are disposed to be pleased when our final desires seem to us to be satisfied (e.g., the elation of winning a sought-after prize), and displeased when they are frustrated (e.g., the displeasure of losing to a rival). And, least familiarly, our final desires usually make us better at noticing, learning, and recalling things related to their objects.

So, if one finally desires some entity’s good, one will be disposed, *inter alia*, to act to promote their good, to be pleased when they fare well and displeased when they don’t, and to be better at noticing, learning, and recalling things related to with them and their interests than people who don’t love them. But these are just the sorts of dispositions we expect of lovers.

2.3 Objections

Although I cannot tackle all the worries for Humean Love, there are complications that would be good to clarify.

2.3.1 Why think love is a desire, rather than an emotion?

Reply: There are grounds, even independent of whether one thinks there are reasons for love, for thinking that love (in my sense) isn’t an emotion.³⁸ To begin with, love

³⁶The “realizer” terminology is Arpaly and Schroeder (2014)’s.

³⁷See Arpaly and Schroeder (2014), Schroeder (2004), and Sinhababu (2009) for discussions of desire’s effects.

³⁸Thanks to the referee for pressing me here. See also, e.g., Taylor (1976), 161, Smuts (2013), Deonna and Teroni (2012) for discussions of ways love does not seem like an emotion.

typically gives rise to other emotions; indeed, it gives rise to a variety of different emotions. As noted earlier, we commonly take someone's love to be what explains why (e.g.) they might be happy when their beloved fares well, sad when the beloved fares badly, even angry when the beloved is wronged by someone. This is what we'd expect if love were a final desire. For final desires, as we've seen, can have varied emotional effects: the athlete who fervently wants athletic success will, e.g., be despondent if they don't perform as well as they had hoped, envious if their rival does better, and ebullient if their performance exceeds expectations.

By contrast, we wouldn't expect this if love were an emotion. One reason has to do with the sheer *variety* of the emotions that love explains: emotions like anger or fear don't typically give rise to such a wide variety of other emotions.³⁹ But another, and more fundamental, reason has to do with the *explanatory relationship* itself: with the way that love explains emotions. Emotions, after all, don't tend, in the first place, to explain other emotions like this. We say things like "They got worked up because they care about you"; we don't say things like "They became afraid because they were angry."

2.3.2 Humean Love yields too impoverished a view of love

Reply: The usual way in which desire-based views seem too threadbare is via not seeming capable of explaining the emotional phenomenology associated with love. But we've seen how even a view like Humean Love has some hope of doing that, given the emotional effects of final desires. Such emotional effects, indeed, are stressed by contemporary (Neo-)Humean accounts of final desire. For instance, Arpaly and Schroeder (2014)'s discussion of Humean Love emphasize that the desire for the beloved's well-being can make us "emotional hostages to fortune" (96).⁴⁰ And Sinhababu (2017) similarly observes that the motivational, hedonic, and attentional dispositions associated with emotions stem from the effects of final desires (65).

Finally, it's also worth emphasizing that such sparseness is a virtue in this context.⁴¹ For my aim isn't to robustly defend either Humean Love or Anti-Rationalists against every objection.⁴² It's instead to argue that even the simplest desire-based theory of love can account for Attraction Precedes Love.

³⁹See Deonna and Teroni (2012), 8-9 for related discussion.

⁴⁰See also their discussion of how "on any plausible theory of the emotions, emotions will be tied in some way to desires through the connection between desires and pleasure" (210).

⁴¹It's also worth reminding the reader that I'm discussing a notion of love that is more narrow than our everyday usage of the word (see fn 9).

⁴²Though I do unofficially think that Humean Love can explain a lot more than one might at first think.

2.3.3 Some final desires seem reason responsive

Let me conclude this section by tackling a datum that's related to *Attraction Precedes Love*.⁴³ Consider, to use Darwall (1983)'s example, Roberta, who has grown up in a small town, and "is aware in a vague way that there is poverty and suffering somewhere, but sees no relation between it and her own life" (39). But upon watching a film that vividly depicts the suffering of oppressed textile workers in the Southern United States, she becomes "shocked and dismayed"; she comes to want to help these workers—in particular, to join other students in boycotting these oppressive companies.

Roberta's example may suggest, *contra* Humean Desire, that (at least some) final desires are reason responsive: it's this sort of vivid awareness of the reasons for helping these workers, the thought goes, that leads Roberta to form the final desire to help them. But that would be the wrong conclusion to draw.⁴⁴ For Roberta's desire to help these workers is more plausibly understood as a *non-final* desire. It's a realizer desire that's brought about, and causally sustained, by the interaction of her final desire to relieve suffering and her new belief, thanks to watching the film, that these workers are suffering.⁴⁵ After all, Roberta wouldn't have become shocked and dismayed by the film, if she didn't have something like that desire. Furthermore, on this proposal, were this belief to vanish—were she to gain strong evidence, say, that the workers are doing fine—this desire to help the workers should also disappear. And that's precisely what we'd expect.

By contrast, final desires are more resistant to changes in our relevant beliefs and desires. For example, the final desire most of us have for the approval of those we esteem will tend to survive changes in our other desires and beliefs. It wouldn't vanish upon our becoming convinced that it's undesirable to crave such approval; or at least, it wouldn't tend to do so *in the way that* our admiration might were we to come to find the person unadmirable.

3 Introducing the Anti-Rationalist account

To see what an Anti-Rationalist explanation might look like, it's helpful to consider an observation that desire-based theorists Nomy Arpaly and Timothy Schroeder ((2014)) make while discussing *Attraction Precedes Love* in another context: they observe, in effect, that other sorts of desires can seem selective in the way love does.

⁴³E.g., Smith (1994).

⁴⁴See Sinhababu (2009), 484-5 for a more detailed analysis of the case.

⁴⁵See Arpaly and Schroeder (2014), 8-9 for more on the relationship between final and non-final desires.

I'll discuss this observation, before developing an Anti-Rationalist explanation of desire's selectivity and applying that to love.

3.1 Observation: other sorts of desires can also seem selective

But first, some context. Unlike me, Arpaly and Schroeder (2014) are not concerned with defending Anti-Rationalism: their concern is instead with showing that *Love As Desire* can explain Attraction Precedes Love. They argue that Attraction Precedes Love isn't worrying for desire-based theories of love, because similar phenomena seem to crop up with other sorts of desires. That is, even with other sorts of desires, coming to want something for its own sake often begins with our wanting it merely for the sake of other ends. To illustrate:

As a child, Fran first starts wanting to read fiction because reading and discussing fiction is one of the things that her friends often did. But the more fiction she reads, the more she relishes the way reading fiction gives her insight into the human condition (though, of course, she wouldn't have put it that way back then). Before long, she comes to be interested in appreciating fiction for its own sake. For instance, she continues wanting to read fiction and think about it, even when she no longer has opportunities to talk about books with her friends.

Fran's example seems analogous to Elena's. Just as Elena's coming to love Lila begins with her being interested in Lila's properties, so Fran's coming to want to read fiction for its own sake begins with her being interested in it for its properties: its enabling her to spend time with friends, and its affording her humanistic insights. But just as, having come to love Lila, Elena will continue loving her even when Lila seems to her to no longer be interested in intellectual pursuits, so, having come to want to read fiction for its own sake, Fran continues wanting to do so even when she no longer gets to have book discussions with her friends.

This sort of transition from having an initial interest in something (merely) for its properties to desiring it for its own sake, it's worth emphasizing, is familiar. Yannis first starts wanting to do yoga because he thinks it'll help with his back injury. But the more he does it, the more he likes how it helps him relieve stress and keep his body limber; and soon, he comes to want to practice yoga, even after his back no longer needs it. Or consider how we might start off wanting to celebrate the new year only in order to spend time with family and friends.⁴⁶ But, after years of such festivities, we often come to want to ring in the new year for its own sake.

⁴⁶This may be even clearer with occasions such as Thanksgiving, Lunar New Year, or Eid al-Fitr or Hari Raya Aidilfitri.

3.2 Explaining desire's selectivity

Now, it's not enough for my purposes merely to observe that other sorts of desires also seem to exhibit similar phenomena: I also need to explain *why* they would do so *even if* final desires are not reason-responsive. But examples like Fran's make salient one way of explaining this, insofar as they make salient a potential Anti-Rationalist explanation. For it's natural to think that part of what explains Fran's being initially drawn to fiction-appreciation is her *having other final desires that are satisfied by the thing*. But the presence of these other final desires, I'll argue, is plausibly *also* part of what explains Fran's coming to want to appreciate fiction for its own sake.

To see why Fran's initial interest is explained by her other final desires, recall how her initial interest amounts to a set of *non-final* desires to appreciate fiction: she begins by wanting to read merely in order to spend time with her friends and to obtain humanistic insights. But as the example (and our discussion earlier of the difference between non-final and final desires) suggests, these non-final desires were in turn causally generated by other final desires and representational states she had: e.g., by her believing that reading and discussing fiction is a way in which she and her friends spend time and her finally desiring to spend time with them.⁴⁷

Such final desires, furthermore, are also plausibly also implicated in Fran's coming to want to appreciate fiction for its own sake. For what plausibly explains why Fran goes on to desire to appreciate fiction for its own sake is her continuing to *associate* fiction appreciation with these finally desired situations—with situations such as spending time with her friends or understanding the human condition.⁴⁸

This sort of associative explanation, it's worth noting, isn't as foreign as it may sound. For instance, what seems to explain Yannis' developing a final desire to practice yoga is his associating it with situations he desires, such as a limber body. Similarly, what seems to explain why we might come to finally want to celebrate the new year is our associating celebrating the new year with desired situations such as the company of friends and family. In general, we come to acquire the final desire that *p* via appropriately associating *p* (or things related to it) with other finally desired situations.⁴⁹

We thus have an Anti-Rationalist explanation of why coming to want something for its own sake begins with our being interested in it only for its properties. It isn't that final desires are reason-responsive in the way that beliefs and emotions

⁴⁷It doesn't matter whether it's a realizer or instrumental desire that the agent has at the start. All that matters is that it's *some* sort of non-final desire: that the thing's properties are relevant in some way, never mind which exactly, to the agent's other ends.

⁴⁸Mill (1863), 26; Schroeder (2004), 147. See also Berridge (2001), 236-52 for a survey of relevant (mostly animal) studies: e.g., that rats and pigeons who were exposed to a light cue before being given food would start pecking or biting the light, as if also trying to eat that.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*

are. Rather, it's that final desires are formed by the non-reason-responsive process of association with other desired situations. And the things that are required for such association—namely, our having other final desires and representations about how the thing satisfies those other desires—would also tend to cause us to first take an interest in the thing. These 'desirable' properties, in short, may explain our coming to want the thing for its own sake, but they don't do so in virtue of *rationalizing* it.

3.3 But why not go for a Rationalist explanation?

I've presented a merely causal account of why Fran's coming to want to appreciate fiction for its own sake begins with her wanting to do so for its properties. But why shouldn't we go for a Rationalist explanation: why not say that her desire to appreciate fiction grows in the wake of liking it, because it's explained in virtue of being justified by her recognition of fiction-appreciation's qualities?⁵⁰

The answer is two-fold. First, the sorts of reasons brought out earlier for why it's not clear that qualities engender in virtue of rationalizing love also apply here. For instance, it doesn't seem as if Fran's passion for fiction appreciation is explained in virtue of being rationalized by its qualities. After all, Fran continues wanting to read fiction even when she no longer gets to talk about it with her friends.

Second, and more importantly, we should prefer my account because it's *simpler*. For Rationalists also need the sorts of resources that Humean Love invokes. Rationalists, after all, should agree that *some* final desires are acquired via mere psychological causes, rather than via appreciation of reasons. Consider coming to want to celebrate the new year: that the arrival of a new year allows one to spend time with friends and family has to do with contingent facts about one's society, rather than anything intrinsic to the coming of a new year. So, Rationalists must hold that it's a merely causal account like mine in some cases, but reasons in others. But insofar as my account can *also* explain those cases where Rationalists appeal to reasons, my account makes for a simpler, and hence better, explanation of the data.⁵¹

⁵⁰Thanks to [redacted] for pressing this objection.

⁵¹Rationalists might worry that properties like the way fiction affords humanistic insights must be reasons. In particular, they might object that Fran couldn't have associated fiction appreciation with obtaining humanistic insights, because (i) such properties seem intrinsic or essential to fiction appreciation, and (ii) association is limited to extrinsic or circumstantial properties. (Thanks to [redacted] for pressing this sort of objection!)

Reply: we should deny (ii). To be sure, we typically use 'associate' in ordinary English to get at extrinsic or circumstantial properties (e.g., associating the new year with spending time with loved ones). But there doesn't seem to be any principled reason to think that the *psychological process* at work in my examples must conform to the vagaries of English usage. Indeed, what psychologists and neuroscientists have to say about association (in the literature on 'reward learning') suggests that this process *isn't* limited to circumstantial or extrinsic properties—that, if anything, there should be

4 Applying this account to love

Suppose we take love, as Humean Love has it, to be a strong, final desire for the beloved's well-being. We can extend the Anti-Rationalist explanation that we've developed of desire's selectivity to *love's* selectivity as follows. What explains Attraction Precedes Love isn't that Elena's perception of Lila's 'lovable' properties explains in virtue of rationalizing Elena's love, in the way that our finding someone admirable might explain in virtue of rationalizing our admiring them. Instead, as with Fran, it's that Elena has final desires that are satisfied by being around people like Lila,⁵² such as the desire to be around fellow intellectuals, as well as representations of Lila's properties. For these final desires are what interact with Elena's representations of Lila's properties to generate, e.g., the non-final desires to be around Lila. And it's plausibly continued association with these, as well as other, finally desired situations—it's associating Lila with, e.g., intellectual pursuits, or with opportunities to expand her horizons—that causes Elena to acquire a strong, final desire for Lila's well-being.⁵³

Since it may seem not seem as plausible that association can bring about the desire for someone's well-being, it's worth considering more examples. One salient sort of example, of course, comes from 'circumstantial loves': it's not uncommon for strangers united by nothing more than a shared dormitory, platoon, or sports team to care about each other after associating each other with mutual support and solidarity through emotionally intense periods. But it's worth reflecting, too, on how we might find ourselves coming to care about someone after not just enjoying their company, but also coming to confide in and rely on, and being relied in turn by, them—after, in effect, associating them with desired situations such as the company of witty people or emotional support. That associative processes can result in our coming to desire some particular person's well-being for their own sake, then, is more familiar than it might seem.

But one might wonder: How does Elena get from wanting to be around Lila because she's intellectual, to (even non-finally) wanting Lila's well-being? Why, that is, does Elena not simply come to want to be around Lila—why does she also come to want, of all things, Lila's *good*?⁵⁴

Here's a proposal for one (though not necessarily the only) way it could happen. Just as Fran begins by non-finally desiring to read fiction, so Elena begins by

greater association with intrinsic properties. See, e.g., Bouton (2007) for a helpful textbook overview.

⁵²Those who think we can come to care about someone even if we have never been around them can go for this more general formulation: final desires that are satisfied *in the contextually relevant way* by the beloved.

⁵³This also yields, *contra*, e.g., Bagley (2015) and Ebels-Duggan (2019b), a Humean explanation of why whom Elena comes to love (or not love) reflects what else she cares (or doesn't care) about.

⁵⁴I owe this way of putting the problem to [redacted].

non-finally desiring Lila's good—and in particular, by acquiring a *realizer* desire for Lila's good. And she begins with this realizer desire, because (i) she begins by being pleased by Lila (and with it seeming to her that that's the case)⁵⁵ and (ii) Elena, like most of us, has a general final desire that the things or people we like (are pleased by) do well. (I'll argue momentarily that most of us have this general final desire; narcissists don't, but that's because narcissists don't care about anyone but themselves.) So, in the same way that the general desire most of us have to relieve others' suffering will generate the realizer desire to relieve a specific person's good when we see that they are suffering, Elena's general desire for the good of that which she's pleased by will generate the realizer desire for Lila's good when (it seems to her that) she's pleased by Lila.

As with any other final desire, we can ascertain whether we have this general desire by investigating whether we have the dispositions that we would expect it to ground. Because these dispositions are the same in kind as those that love gives rise to, it'll simplify matters to consider only entities we don't already love. If, among such entities, we are more disposed to help, be pleased or displeased by the fortunes or misfortunes of, or notice things associated with, those entities we like rather than those we don't like as much, that'd suggest that we have this general desire.

This seems to be the case. Even among those colleagues for whose well-being we don't already have a final desire, we tend to worry and look out more for those we like than those we don't like. Similarly, we're more greatly pleased by the flourishing of those sports teams we like than by those we don't, even if we aren't already fans of any one of them. A natural explanation of this systematic difference in dispositions, is that we finally desire the good of that which we are pleased by.

This general desire, furthermore, can seem to generate the realizer desire for a particular person's good when we are pleased by them. Think, for instance, about acquaintances we have enjoyed interacting with but don't love, such as long lost schoolmates. It's natural, when we recollect the fun we've had together, for us to then come to manifest the dispositions characteristic of the desire for their well-being: to find ourselves wondering, say, how they are doing, and to hope that they are flourishing; or to become motivated to help them, if we can greatly benefit them. It's not uncommon, indeed, for this to happen even with people we've only just met: we might, after being regaled with travel stories by someone at a party, worry about them, when we hear that they are being dispatched to a war-stricken country for work (and in particular, worry more than we ordinarily would about someone we'd only just met).⁵⁶

⁵⁵Those final desires of Elena's that are satisfied by being around Lila will tend to cause Elena to feel pleasure when they seem satisfied, as when it seems to her that she is around a fellow intellectual.

⁵⁶This is meant to be different from (though inspired by) Parfit (1984), 494's example of feeling sympathy for a stranger with a fatal disease, in that sympathy doesn't seem to be what's doing the work in these examples.

What seems to explain such data is that we have the final desire for the good of those we are pleased by, *and* that desire can (though it needn't always) generate the realizer desire for the good of that person when it seems to us that we're pleased by them.

We've seen how our Humean explanation of desire's selectivity can be extended to yield an Anti-Rationalist explanation of Attraction Precedes Love. The beloved's qualities may explain the love, but they don't do so *in virtue of justifying* it. Consequently, my account can accommodate the ways in which love seems oblivious to reasons. As much as the beloved's properties may be causally relevant at the start of our coming to love them, that will largely cease to be the case once our desire for their good becomes final. That's why we continue loving the beloved, even after they lose their attractive qualities. We continue loving them in the same way that Fran continues wanting to read fiction, even after she no longer gets to have book discussions with her friends.

Finally, this account allows Anti-Rationalists to go on the offensive. One criticism this account allows us to make of Rationalists, of course, is that they can't explain love's selectivity *while* accommodating the ways in which it's oblivious to reasons, whereas Anti-Rationalists can. But this account also seems threatening in that it undermines even the support that love's selectivity seemed to lend Rationalism. For, again, we should prefer such Anti-Rationalist accounts because they can explain data like Attraction Precedes Love more *simply* — because they invoke only resources that Rationalists also need. After all, Rationalists also need to posit the presence of a final desire for the good of that we've been pleased by, in order to explain the data I've just adduced. And they need my Humean account, in order to explain how mere causes can engender final desires. It's just that they think that we need *additional* resources—reasons for love—to explain how we sometimes come to love someone.

5 Objections

5.1 From how finding good can precede love

Still, one might worry that Rationalist resources are also needed, because

Finding Good (De Dicto) Precedes Love: Coming to love or care about some entity sometimes seems to begin with our *appreciating their value*, or finding them *good 'de dicto'* or *worthy* of love.⁵⁷

⁵⁷See, in addition to the quotes below, Adams (2002), 164; Wolf (2002), 236; Darwall (2004), 90-7 (among others).

For consider the following Rationalist observations about what coming to love someone is like:

our early acquaintance with a poem or a novel or a painting—like our early acquaintance with a person—has the character of a discovery of something valuable in itself ... For many of this essay’s readers, I suspect, the introduction to philosophy felt the same way: Here were questions and problems, or ways of looking at the world which you (and I) found challenging and worth exploring further. We were drawn to them ... *as problems and ideas that were worthy of study and contemplation*. (Wolf (2011), 55; emphasis mine)

One normally comes to love someone through experience of him, experience in which one *appreciates directly the value that one affirms in loving him* ... To love someone ... is, in part, to be aware, and deeply convicted, of his value. (Ebels-Duggan (2019a), 3-4; emphasis mine)

What explains such observations, Rationalists might say, is that appreciating the beloved’s value *de dicto* sometimes causes in virtue of justifying our coming to love them. That’s why we need Rationalist resources.

This worry can be unpacked in various ways, depending on how “appreciating value” is cashed out. Part of what Rationalists would presumably take that to involve is believing or seeing it as good or valuable *de dicto*, where this is meant to be an abstractly or thinly representational state that doesn’t involve any affect. Call this component *representing as good*. But appreciating value, most Rationalists agree, doesn’t just involve this affectless representation; it also involves feeling *pleasure*.⁵⁸

One way of unpacking the worry is therefore that this second component, pleasure, sometimes causes in virtue of rationalizing our coming to (strongly and) finally desire the beloved’s well-being. But this precisification of the worry is one to which my discussion already provides a response. As we saw in the previous section, all that pleasure can causally contribute to is the acquisition of the *non-final* desire for the beloved’s well-being. If pleasure seems to have additional explanatory relevance, that’s because it’s an *indicator* of, or tends to correlate with, that which is doing the actual explanatory work: namely, the presence of certain final desires (recall that final desires have emotional effects: we are pleased when it seems to us that our final desires are satisfied).

But we can also run the worry with the other component, the affectless representation as of value. What explains Finding Good Precedes Love, this more threatening

⁵⁸See, e.g., Darwall (2004), Wolf (2010), Ebels-Duggan (2019a).

version of the worry might go, is that such affectless representations as of goodness *de dicto* sometimes causes in virtue of rationalizing love.

My reply, however, is that such representations don't do that, because they don't at all contribute to love's coming about. To begin with, and as many Rationalists would agree, we don't normally come to love those people whom we affectlessly represent as good *de dicto*, but whose company doesn't satisfy other final desires of ours regularly enough, or to a large enough degree (as would be evinced by our not being sufficiently or regularly pleased by them). Yes, we might say, so-and-so is really smart and would make for a good partner or friend, but we're "just not into them."⁵⁹ Affectless representations of *de dicto* goodness don't seem enough to bring about love, absent the relevant final desires.

To be sure, this response leaves open the possibility that representing as good can, *in tandem with* such desires, cause in virtue of rationalizing love's coming about. But this weaker claim also seems problematic. For it's not clear that representing the entity as good *de dicto* (or valuable, or worthy of love) makes a difference, either to whether we come to love them or to the strength of that love.⁶⁰

Suppose, for instance, that we come to love someone in the wake, not just of liking them for their wittiness and erudition, but also of finding them worthy of love (they are a moral saint). It seems as if we would still come to care about them, and just as much, in relevantly similar scenarios where we don't find them worthy of love, but where their company satisfies our desires to the same extent. For instance, we'd still do so in scenarios where we don't care about being around morally virtuous people as much, or where they have other qualities that make up for their only average level of virtue.

It isn't clear, then, that cases where coming to love someone begins with representing them as good *de dicto* show that such representations explain in virtue of rationalizing our coming to love someone. For it isn't clear that such representations causally contribute to our coming to love the person. So, it wouldn't be enough for Rationalists to adduce such data against Anti-Rationalists.

5.2 Ceasing to love in the long term

So much for coming to love. But what, one might wonder, about *ceasing* to love? We've seen how, at least in the short term, it's unlikely that we'd really lose our con-

⁵⁹Indeed, finding something desirable or good *de dicto* doesn't in general seem sufficient for us to come to (strongly) desire it for its own sake. One wouldn't come to be as passionate about studying philosophy if one thought it valuable, but didn't have (strong) final desires that would be satisfied by one's studying it (as would be evinced by one's not sufficiently enjoying its study).

⁶⁰A common test for whether something is a cause is to see if it makes a difference to the effect; see discussions like Kment (2010)'s for the deeper theory.

cern for the beloved. But it seems more plausible that love can be lost in the longer term. Consider, again, how we might become repulsed by someone we'd recently befriended (and come to love) when we find out that they are a virulent racist. Even if, as I've argued, we wouldn't usually stop caring about them right away, this can seem possible in the long run (assuming we continue thinking they're bigoted).⁶¹ Can Anti-Rationalists accommodate this?

I think we can. After all, there are similar cases that don't seem to involve reasons. Think, for instance, of Sabra, a former professional soldier who starts drifting apart from her former colleague and friend, Ani, after becoming disillusioned with the army and all it stands for. It's perfectly clear to Sabra that none of this has anything to do with Ani; and yet, she can't bear to be around any reminders of her time in the service, not even the colleague she was closest to. Over time, Sabra seems, for all intents and purposes, to have stopped loving Ani.

This case presumably isn't one that we'd explain with reasons, given how circumstantial the relevant properties are—it's the sort of case that seems most naturally explained by *arational* association. To be sure, it might not be clear exactly *what* sort of associative explanation to go for. Perhaps it's that Sabra no longer associates Ani with desired situations.⁶² Or perhaps, as recent psychological research suggests, it's because she's come to form associations between Ani and either aversive situations or a dearth of desired situations, and these new associations have overridden the old, positive ones. Or perhaps it's a combination of these factors. *That* we don't need reasons, however, is clear enough.

But if we don't need reasons to explain circumstantial cases, then we similarly needn't appeal to reasons to explain the ostensibly reason-requiring cases. For the sorts of arational processes required to explain the circumstantial cases would suffice to explain the non-circumstantial ones too (see also fn 51).

6 Conclusion

Let's take stock. We began by isolating and developing a neglected challenge for Anti-Rationalists from how we can seem to love for reasons—in particular, from the selectivity of non-familial love, or how love can seem to develop in the wake of our being drawn to the person for their qualities. We then saw how Humean Love can offer a merely causal explanation of love's selectivity. Indeed, love's selectivity, I further

⁶¹I don't want to take a stand on whether we can lose desires even in the long run (some in the empirical literature on extinction seem to think not); it's enough for our purposes that we can come very close to that.

⁶²This sort of theory has fallen out of fashion with psychologists (Bouton (2004) and Dunsmoor et al. (2015)), though see Gershman et al. (2013) for cases for which this provides a more plausible explanation.

argued, favors Anti-Rationalist views like Humean Love *over* Rationalism, because the Humean explanation is simpler. The upshot, then, is that although beloved's qualities may bring about love, they don't do so in virtue of *rationalizing* it.⁶³

This upshot, however, gives us direct reason to reject Rationalism. For recall that the quality view was the only major Rationalist theory whose posited reason seemed to engender in virtue of rationalizing love. So, if we don't come to love for qualities, that suggests that we don't come to love for *any* kind of reason. And so, that suggests that there aren't reasons for love in the way that there are fittingness reasons for belief and emotion.

Crucially, the worry here isn't (just) that Rationalism can't explain certain data as well as Anti-Rationalism. That is, this isn't the sort of cost that can be weighed against other benefits of the view. It is instead a worry that *undercuts* the motivations for Rationalism. Regardless of what (e.g.) our normative intuitions might suggest, if the reasons that Rationalists posit don't engender in virtue of rationalizing love, then they *can't* be fittingness reasons for love.⁶⁴ Compare: suppose we're arguing over whether some distant object is a tree. I say that it looks like one; you disagree, and argue that my vision isn't trustworthy. So long as the reliability of my vision remains in doubt, no amount of visual evidence that I cite will give you reason to think that I'm right.

As much as love's selectivity may have seemed embarrassing for Anti-Rationalists, then, it turns out to in fact support Anti-Rationalism—to provide not only reason to accept it, but also reason to be unfazed by Rationalist worries from other sorts of data.

⁶³This sort of argument can be generalized as well to *non-quality* types of Rationalism. We've already seen that love doesn't seem explained in virtue of being rationalized by reasons in cases where the love is selective. But we also don't seem to need reasons of any stripe to explain how love comes about in cases where it *isn't* selective: associative explanations of the sort I've sketched seem to suffice. Parents, for instance, plausibly come to love their children via associating them with desired situations such as being on the receiving end of smiles and other affectionate behavior, or seeing them develop in the wake of one's guidance.

⁶⁴The distinction between rebutting and undercutting reasons originates with Pollock (1970).

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