

Love

Love is an irresistible desire to be irresistibly desired.

—Robert Frost

Love is a human emotional and behavioral experience that varies from culture to culture and individual to individual (even in the same culture) both in how it is experienced and how it is displayed (Martinez, 2005). Love is a complex concept that is very difficult to define. No single definition is sufficient enough to account for all the factors and perspectives connected with the concept of love. Love is a common term that is often used to refer to a variety of love such as parent-child love, romantic love, erotic love, fatuous love, consummate love, self-love, spiritual love, love of God, love of life, love of humanity, and so on. These types of love are distinctly different from one another, and they arouse different emotions and elicit different behaviors in individuals (Martinez, 2005).

Components of Love

According to Sternberg (1988b) there are three components or elements of love. They are:

Intimacy. Intimacy is the emotional element of love that leads to self-disclosure, connection, warmth, and trust between the partners.

Passion. Passion is the motivational element that leads to sexual desire and physiological arousal.

Commitment. Commitment is the cognitive element of love that determines whether to stay in love or quit it.

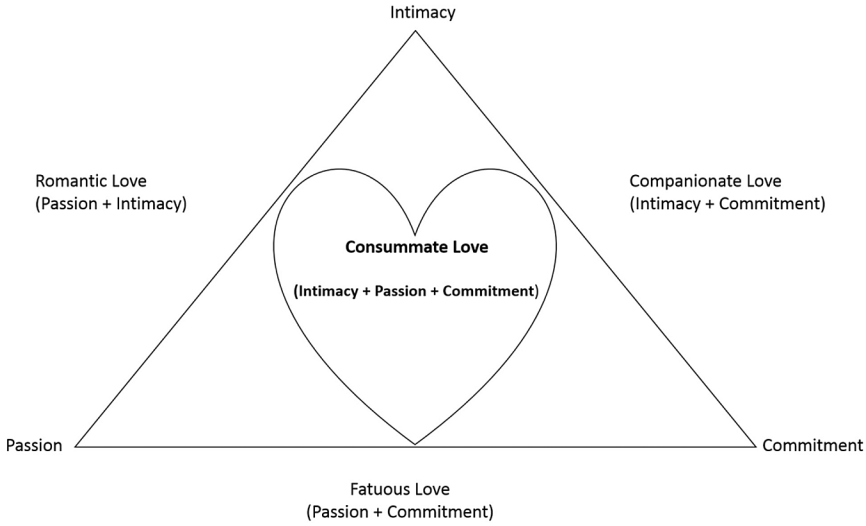


Figure 10.1 Sternberg's Triangular Theory of Love (Adapted from Sternberg, 1988b)

Sternberg (1988a) argues that what kind of love people will feel depends on the degree to which these three elements are present in love. Figure 10.1 displays Sternberg's triangular concept of love and how different combinations of these three elements can change the patterns of love.

Patterns of Love

Figure 10.1 shows different patterns of love as construed in the triangular theory of love. Different concepts displayed in the figure are briefly described in the following section.

Liking. Intimacy is the only component present in liking; neither passion nor commitment is present. Liking reflects a feeling of true friendship that is characterized by understanding, closeness, support, affection, and warmth without intense feeling of passion or a long-term commitment.

Infatuation. Passion is the only component present in infatuated love. This can be characterized as “love at the first sight” with strong physical attraction and sexual desire without intimacy and commitment. Infatuated love can appear suddenly and disappear as fast.

Empty love. This is love with commitment but without intimacy and passion. Empty love is often found in a long-term marital relationship, such as an arranged marriage, which continues for some social and practical reasons, even though there are no passion and intimacy in the relationship.

Romantic love. Two elements—intimacy and passion—are present in romantic love. Romantic lovers are attracted to each other physically and bonded emotionally without any sustaining commitment for enduring relationship. This kind of love is more common among younger adults than middle adults or older adults.

Companionate love. This type of love is characterized by the presence of intimacy and commitment without passion or physical attraction. Companionate love has stronger feelings of affection and attachment than romantic love or passionate love (Fisher, 2004). It is characterized by intimacy, warmth, affection, commitment, care, and concern for the well-being of the partner (Frijda, 2006; Hatfield, Rapson, & Martel, 2007). This type of love is found in long-lasting marriages, especially among older adults, where physical attraction has died down but a deep feeling of affection and a strong sense of commitment have remained alive.

Fatuous love. In this kind of love two elements—passion and commitment—are present without the third element—intimacy. Fatuous love is also called passionate love or “obsessive love” because it is characterized by an intense desire for union and sexuality with the loved one (Hatfield & Rapson, 2016). Fatuous love often leads to a whirlwind courtship and marriage, in which partners make a commitment on the basis of passion before developing intimacy. Fatuous love usually does not last long, despite the initial commitment of the partners.

Consummate love. This is an ideal type of love in which all three components—intimacy, passion, and commitment—are present. Consummate love is also called “complete” love. Many people strive for this ideal love but only few can achieve it, and it is harder to maintain than to achieve it (Sternberg, 1987). Thus, consummate love is not necessarily permanent because it can die if and when all three components are not present.

Love, regardless of the type, doesn't last permanently. This is more true for younger adults than for older adults. A study showed that college students who could explain satisfactorily why they fell in and out of love with their previous partners were more satisfied with their present partners than those whose earlier relationships were unresolved (Clark & Collins, 1993).

Individual Differences in Love

Personality

Love has different meanings for people with different personalities (Fehr & Broughton, 2001). In a review, Dion and Dion (1985) indicated that personality and gender are important for understanding love because they

are systematically associated with subjectively different experiences of love. Research evidence shows that there is association between individuals' personality traits and compatibility in romantic relationships (Ahmetoglu, Swami, & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2010). More detailed information regarding relationships between different personality traits and individuals' conception of love is reported in a study by Fehr and Broughton (2001). The researchers found that people tend to hold different views about love, depending on their personality traits. For example, people with high-nurturance traits (e.g., warm and agreeable) tend to conceptualize love in terms of its companionate characteristics including emotional stability, interdependence, commitment, trust, support, and nurturance. On the other hand, people with low-nurturance traits (e.g., low in warmth and agreeability) tend to conceptualize love in terms of its passionate characteristics including excitement, arousal, sexuality, fantasy, and emotional instability. Furthermore, people who are high in dominance tend to conceptualize love in terms of its romantic, passionate, and sexual characteristics. Whereas people who are submissive tend to conceptualize love in terms of its infatuation and commitment characteristics.

Findings of a number of studies indicate a positive relationship between extraversion and various dimensions of love (intimacy, passion, and commitment), because extroverts are better able to communicate love than introverts (e.g., Donnellan, Conger, & Bryant, 2004; Taraban, Hendrick, & Hendrick, 1998; Watson, Hubbard, & Wiese, 2000). Several studies have reported a negative relation between neuroticism and marital love quality, and a positive association between neuroticism and dissolution of the marital love relationship (e.g., Barelds, 2005; Davila et al., 2003; Heaven et al., 2006). In addition, two other personality traits—agreeableness and conscientiousness—are found to be related to different dimensions of love. For example, agreeableness is found to have a positive relationship with all three dimensions of love (intimacy, passion, and commitment); whereas conscientiousness is found to have a positive relationship associated only with intimacy and commitment (Ahmetoglu, Swami, & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2010). Moreover, agreeableness is found to have positive relations with marital satisfaction, partner interactions, and conflict resolution in romantic relationships (Donnellan, Conger, & Bryant, 2004).

Age

Does age matter in love? Yes it does. As people's attitudes and behaviors change with age, so do their patterns of love. Although love does not die in old age, its excitement, euphoria, and obsession diminish with aging.

Findings of a study, for example, show that as couples grow old, intimacy and commitment in love become more important for them than passion (Shallcross et al., 2013). The nature and characteristics of love change with aging, especially the psychological aspects of love—warmth, affection, care, and concern—become more important than the physical aspects of love—excitement, arousal, and sexual pleasure (Kalra, Subramanyam, & Pinto, 2011). A study by Tucker and Aaron (1993) reveals that satisfaction in marital love is typically highest in new marriages, especially in young age, followed by a downward trend during midlife, and improving again later in aging life. However, changes in attitudes and behaviors toward love and sex are not the same for every aging person. For some individuals, unlike others, age is nothing more than a number and has little effect on love and sex. Finally, in love: “Age is an issue of mind over matter. If you don’t mind, it does not matter.”—Mark Twain

Gender

Research evidence indicates that the way people experience love partially depends on their gender (Durik et al., 2006; Schmitt et al., 2009; Sprecher & Toro-Morn, 2002). For example, women tend to experience attraction and love for men who are intelligent, charming, and dominant; whereas men are more likely to experience attraction and love for women who are physically attractive (Fletcher et al., 2004; Lucas, Wendorf, & Imamoglu, 2004). Women are more likely to perceive love in terms of emotional commitment and security, but men tend to think of love in terms of sexual commitment and the physical pleasure of intercourse (Buss, 2000).

Similarities and differences between men’s and women’s attitudes and perceptions of love depend on the gender as well on the type of love (Fehr & Broughton, 2001). These researchers, for example, found that men consistently assigned higher ratings to passionate love than did women, but both men and women agreed that companionate love is more important than passionate love. Moreover, women more often than not tend to endorse friendship-based love style than do men (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1995). Thus gender difference is evident in passionate love, where men hold stronger romantic and sexual views of love than do women. Findings of a study showed that passion is the best predictor of men’s satisfaction in love, and commitment is the best predictor of women’s satisfaction in love (Sternberg, 2006, 2013). The difference between men and women in attitude toward love becomes more evident as women tend to give importance to love with or without sex, and men tend to give importance to sex with or without love. Similarly, women tend to have sex for love and men tend to

have love for sex (Sukel, 2013). Women intend to experience love before consenting to sexual intercourse (Schmitt, 2005), whereas men are more likely to consent to sex without love, such as sex with a friend or with a stranger (Voracek, Hofhansl, & Fisher, 2005). Women, on average, are likely to experience more intense emotional feelings in love than do men (Brody & Hall, 2010). Men often fall in love “at first sight” as they tend to enter into a romantic relationship more quickly than women (Galperin & Haselton, 2010). Unlike men, women do not like to rush in love. They are slow, cautious, and selective about picking an intimate partner, and they feel passion more slowly and steadily than do men (Li, Sing, & Jonason, 2012). Another area where men and women differ in intimate partner selection is the social status of partners. According to the sociocultural model, compared to men, women prefer partners with high social status, because of traditionally lower social status of women in many societies globally (Eagly & Wood, 2013).

Thus based on the previous discussion, it seems clear that there are similarities as well as differences between men’s and women’s perceptions of love. However, contrary to stereotyped belief, differences between men and women about the perception of love is rather small (Schmitt, 2008, 2016). It seems an overstatement that men and women perceive love completely differently (Fehr & Broughton, 2001).

Different Perspectives on Love

Although human love is universally based on individuals’ biological and emotional needs, as well as on evolutionary heritage of mate selection and survival, attitudes, feelings, and behaviors related to love are different in different cultures, and in different historical periods. Reviewing research literature on different perspectives on love, Karandashev (2015) viewed love as a universal emotion that has existed throughout human history and has been experienced by people regardless of differences in culture, gender, and geographical boundary. Moreover, people’s conceptions of love, and way they feel, think, and behave in romantic relationships are impacted by their historical, biological, psychological, and social contexts (Hatfield & Rapson, 2016). The following section focuses on different perspectives on love.

Historical Perspectives

For centuries, love, especially romantic love, has been explored by philosophers, anthropologists, psychologists, and sociologists, who have described its various aspects in different ways. For examples, Aristotle

described love as “Love is composed of a single soul inhabiting two bodies,” and Robert Heinlein described it as “Love is that condition in which the happiness of another person is essential to your own.” The term *romantic love* was first coined by Gaston Paris, a 19th-century literary critic, to describe a specific constellation of attitudes and behavior patterns to characterize a body of literature on courtly love (Paris, 1883). Although romantic love was originally considered a uniquely European affair, researchers have found its existence in other world cultures, including Arabian, Chinese, Greek, and Indian cultures, and literatures (Hsu, 1985; Karandashev, 2015; Stone, 1989). History reveals that romantic love has always existed regardless of times, cultures, and geographical boundaries. Yet attitudes and behaviors related to romantic love varied dramatically from culture to culture and place to place throughout human history (Hatfield & Rapson, 2005).

For examples, people in ancient China would consider love and sexual pleasure positively as they would think love and sex two great joys of life (Ruan, 1991). But at the time of the Neo-Confucianists (approximately 1,000 years ago), Chinese attitudes toward love and sexuality gradually changed and became more repressive. Erotic literature and art were banned. Their primary goal of marriage was to procreate. But a husband could seek sexual satisfaction with a variety of women. Extramarital sex was typically allowed for wealthy married men but not for women. A woman's major function was to give birth to children, and she was expected to be faithful to her husband (Murstein, 1974, p. 469). The Chinese considered sex to be a natural biological need, so if a husband would feel the need, he could take a concubine. But it was unacceptable for a wife to have sex with any male other than her husband. The status of concubines would vary. A concubine would typically be a maidservant, who would do most of the menial works of the family and would fulfill the husband's sexual needs when he would desire. However, public displays of nonmarital love were restricted (Murstein, 1974). Later on during 1950s and 1960s, the government of communist China considered love and sexual activity beyond marriage as “inappropriate” and imposed strict controls on premarital and extramarital love and sexual activity. In keeping with communist ideology, China gives more importance to collective welfare than individual pleasure and happiness. So romantic love has not been a major focus in people's life in China during 1950s and 1960s. In an official booklet of the Chinese government, love was described as “psychosomatic activity that consumes energy and wastes time” (as quoted in Murstein, 1974, p. 482). In the 1990s, when China opened its door to Western countries for political and economic interests, a rapid change occurred in attitudes of the Chinese government and the people, especially young people, toward

love and sexuality. Due to the effects of globalization of mass media, availability of international cinema, and accessibility of the Internet, romantic love is no longer a taboo in modern China. Nowadays, Chinese young people are enjoying increasingly more freedom in choosing their romantic partners and expressing their sexual desire without any restriction from their government and society (Hatfield, Rapson, & Martel, 2007).

Europe is another example of variations in the patterns of love at different historical eras. In medieval England, love was greatly influenced by Christianity. In 12th-century England, love was mainly perceived as a self-sacrificing, compassionate, and benevolent relationship between individuals rather than passionate relationships. Sexual attraction was not necessarily considered a part of love, but rather friendship was considered to be closely related to love (Kalyuga, 2012). The meaning of love started changing in England during the 13th century, when the meaning of love was gradually expanding to include passion and sexual attraction toward the opposite sex. During the 13th and 14th centuries, English literature was gradually shifting its focus from religious topics to courtly love. The concept of courtly love came to English literature from French literature in which courtly love was depicted as a sort of idealization of women as an object of devotional and romantic love (Lewis, 2013). Love was described, during the 16th and 17th centuries (Shakespeare's era), as a consuming passion and irresistible force. In the Victorian era (the period of Queen Victoria's reign from 1837 to 1901), romantic love was considered to be a delicate spiritual feeling—a puritan view of love, which does not encourage a crude lust. The concept of courtly love gradually gained ground in many parts of Northern and Western Europe. This concept, however, was unfamiliar to some other parts of Europe including Russia. The concept of love in Russia, until the 18th century, was strongly influenced by Christianity. The concept of romantic love was not a focus of Russian literature during that time. The topic of romantic love gained popularity in Russian literature after the reforms of Peter the Great in the 18th and 19th centuries (Kalyuga, 2012). A major factor that influenced the understanding of romantic love in Europe during the 20th century was the liberalization of sexual values and the sexual revolution in 1960s and 1970s.

Scientific research on romantic love began in the mid-20th century when scholars from various disciplines including anthropology, sociology, and psychology started exploring romantic love from different perspectives (Karandashev, 2015). Around the same time scholars started developing major constructs and theories of love.

Thus, throughout human history, people have perceived and interpreted love conceptually, attitudinally, and behaviorally from different

perspectives including anthropological, evolutionary, biogenetic, cultural, and psychosocial perspectives. Historically, the crucial question was whether romantic love was only a Western cultural construct, or if it also existed in other world cultures including ancient Greek, Indian, and the Islamic cultures. Scholars agreed that love is a universal emotion experienced by most humans in all cultures throughout various historical eras, although due to cultural differences people's conceptions of love and the way they feel, think, and behave in romantic relationships have never been the same. In a review of the literature on love, Karandashev (2015) has extensively documented contributions of a large number of anthropologists, sociologists, and psychologists in expanding our understanding of cross-cultural variations of love worldwide.

Anthropological and Evolutionary Perspectives

Several anthropologists and social psychologists reported that despite cultural differences, love is universal and not limited to certain cultures (de Munck et al., 2011; Vangelisti & Perlman, 2006). Evolutionary psychologists think that passionate love is based on human biological processes and is innate and universal, which existed in most people of all cultures globally during all historical eras (Hatfield & Rapson, 2016). Since Darwin, evolutionary psychologists have argued that mate selection for fulfillment of biological and emotional needs including love and sexual activity is crucially important for human evolution and development (Hatfield, Rapson, & Martel, 2007). The evolutionary psychologists also suggested that passionate and companionate love evolved to solve different problems in human pair bonding (Fisher, 2004). Passionate love is characterized by an intense desire for union and sexuality with the loved one, which helps the continuation of the human reproductive process. Companionate love is characterized by intimacy, warmth, affection, commitment, care, and concern for the well-being of loved ones, which helps make the mating relationship endure so that children can be nurtured until they are able to survive on their own.

In a global study, Jankowiak and Fischer (1992) explored romantic love in 166 cultures all over the world. They found that romantic love was present in about 89 percent of cultures in the world. Thus the findings showed that romantic love is almost universal, except for having some cultural differences. The researchers observed that despite the universal nature of love, people's love-related attitudes and behaviors are substantially influenced by their cultural values and beliefs. For instance, people fall in love less frequently in societies where romantic love, particularly premarital and

extramarital romantic love, is not approved. In a review of anthropological research on love, Jankowiak (1995) has shown that anthropologists have studied folk conceptions of love in many diverse cultures including China, Indonesia, Morocco, Nigeria, Trinidad, Turkey, the Fulbe of North Cameroun, the Mangaia in the Cook Islands, the Mangrove (an aboriginal Australian community), Palau in Micronesia, and the Taita of Kenya. Results showed that in all these studies, people's conceptions of passionate love are surprisingly similar. There is also clear evidence that culture has a profound impact on people's perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors concerning romantic love (Hatfield, Rapson, & Martel, 2007). The authors have concluded that passion is universal because it is based on biogenetic and evolutionary basics of mate selection, which is important for human survival; whereas romance is culture specific as it is based on historical traditions and cultural norms.

Genetic and Biological Perspectives

Neuroscience research indicates that passionate love has a strong biological basis (Hatfield & Rapson, 2016). Bartels and Zeki (2000, 2004), for instance, conducted functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to explore the neural basis of passionate love. They found that passionate love leads to increased levels of activity in the brain areas connected with euphoria and reward, and decreased levels of activity in the brain areas connected with distress and depression. They also found that passionate love suppresses the activity in the areas of the brain associated with critical thinking. Evidence of deactivations were also found in other parts of the brain including posterior, prefrontal, parietal, and middle temporal cortices. An analysis of the chemistry of passionate love reveals that a variety of neurochemical elements stimulate passionate love and sexual desire. In a study, for example, Fisher (2004) found that passionate love is connected with the natural stimulant dopamine and serotonin. The author also indicated that the lust for sexual activity is mainly stimulated by the hormone testosterone, and the feeling of emotion connected with love and sexual activity is produced by the hormones oxytocin and vasopressin. In addition, companionate love also has physiological and neurochemical bases.

Carter (2014), for example, indicated that since the presence of neuropeptide oxytocin in the bloodstream reduces stress and tension and promotes relaxation and a soothing sense of well-being, it may have effects on companionate love because there is less euphoria and excitement, and strong feelings of relaxation, stability, and long-term commitment and well-being in companionate love. People with higher levels of oxytocin in their

blood have been found to have a tendency to behave more warmly with their spouses, and behave more pleasantly during disagreement with partners (Floyd, 2006).

Psychological Perspectives

Love can't be comprehensively understood without understanding its psychological perspectives (Sternberg & Weis, 2006). In any definition or description of love a number of important psychological concepts, including emotion, attachment, feeling, attitudes, motivation, behavior, personality, etc., are frequently used. Although love is an abstract concept, a large number of psychologists from different countries have been doing empirical research on love, and eventually several theories have been developed to explain emotion, feeling, experience, and behaviors related with love in the contexts of personality, gender, and culture. Four important theories in connection with the psychology of love are Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory, Abraham Maslow's need hierarchy theory, John Bowlby's attachment theory, and Ronald Rohner's interpersonal acceptance-rejection theory. One can't discuss psychological perspectives on love without discussing these theories. As these theories are discussed in more detail in Chapters 4 and 5, only the relevant portions of these theories are discussed here.

Freud viewed that how people pick up their mates largely depends on their childhood experiences and relationships with their parents. He argued that many aspects of an individual's personality development originate in response to childhood sexual instincts. He also proposed that as individuals attain puberty and maturation of sex organs, they seek gratification of psychosexual pleasure through actual sexual activities. Freud believed that sexual urges and pleasures are the primary determinants of behavior. He suggested that during the phallic stage, boys develop the Oedipus complex (sexual attraction for the mother and envy against the father), and girls develop the Electra complex (sexual attraction for the father and envy against the mother). These complexes are resolved by boys through the identification with their fathers and by girls through the identification with their mothers, thus developing their beliefs, values, and behaviors in socially desirable ways.

Maslow (1967) proposed that people are innately motivated to satisfy their needs in a hierarchical order. Physiological needs are at the bottom of the hierarchical order, followed by safety needs and psychological needs such as belonging and love needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs. Maslow considered belonging and love needs (i.e., the need to love

and to be loved, and to share one's life with attachment figures and significant others) as very important psychological needs. Maslow suggested that physiological needs are more basic and more similar with the needs of animals, and that the psychological needs are more distinctly human. Once the physiological needs are reasonably fulfilled, feelings about the psychological needs and efforts to realize them increase in intensity.

Attachment theory focuses on intimate relationships over an individual's lifespan (Ainsworth & Bowlby, 1991; Bowlby, 1969/1982; Cassidy & Shaver, 1999; Colin, 1996). The theory provides important concepts and constructs for explaining intimate relationships in childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. Ainsworth and Bowlby (1991) defined attachment as an enduring tie with a partner who is an important and unique person, and interchangeable with no other person. Although attachment researchers were originally involved in studying emotional bonds between infants and their caregivers, Bowlby (1994) considered attachment an important element of experience extending over the individual lifespan—childhood through aging life. Ainsworth and Bowlby (1991) classified attachment into different types such as secure attachment, insecure attachment, avoidant attachment, anxious attachment, and ambivalent attachment. They suggested that children and adults with secure attachment tend to develop positive psychosocial characteristics, and they tend to develop negative psychological characteristics with insecure attachment. Research evidence shows that people with secure attachment enjoy greater intimacy with their partners than do people with insecure attachment (Mikluincer & Shave, 2013). On the other hand, people with avoidant attachment tend to be suspicious with their partners (Sprecher & Fehr, 2011), and people with anxious attachment tend to be apprehensive and nervous in intimate relationships more than people with secure attachment (Davila & Kashy, 2009).

Interpersonal acceptance and rejection theory (IPARTheory) postulates that acceptance or love by attachment figures has consistent positive effects, and rejection or lack of love by them has consistent negative effects, on the psychological adjustment and behavioral functioning of both children and adults worldwide (Rohner & Khaleque, 2015a). IPARTheory's personality subtheory assumes that the emotional need for positive response from attachment figures is a powerful motivator in children and adults. The personality subtheory postulates that when this need is adequately met by attachment figures, children and adults have the phylogenetically acquired tendency to develop positive personality dispositions. When this need is not adequately met by attachment figures, children and adults tend to develop negative personality dispositions. In addition, two other

psychologists, Skinner (1953) and Watson (1913), have explained how people's love-related behaviors are influenced by reward and reinforcement.

Social and Cultural Perspectives

The concept of love can be different in different social contexts. Cohen (2016), reviewing findings of several cross-cultural studies, suggested that there are clear conceptual differences in love between collectivistic and individualistic societies. In collectivistic societies, such as socialist countries including China and Russia, love is expected to grow with marriage over time. In such societies, more emphasis is on practical aspects of love such as income, relationship with extended family members, and less emphasis is on romantic aspect of love. On the other hand, people in individualistic societies, for example, Western European and North American countries, emphasize passionate aspects of love such as emotion, feelings, attraction, and excitement. Some scholars view romantic love as a Western phenomenon not found in non-Western countries, except for the elite of those countries who have the time and money to cultivate romantic love (e.g., de Munck et al., 2011; Karandashev, 2015). Several authors indicated a different perspective with a belief that romantic love is a universal phenomenon as they found the evidence of its occurrences in many cultures (Kitayama, Markus, & Kurokawa, 2000; Scollon et al., 2005). As noted earlier, in a global study, Jankowiak and Fischer (1992) found that romantic love was present in about 89 percent of cultures (in 147 out of 166 cultures) in the world. Thus the findings showed that romantic love is almost universal, except having some cultural differences.

However, there is enough evidence of influences of cultural values and beliefs on individuals' attitudes, experiences, and behaviors in romantic love globally (Kitayama, Markus, & Kurokawa, 2000; Scollon et al., 2005; Shiota et al., 2010). Culture accounts for about 38 to 59 percent of variability in love (Buss, 1994). Culture may have a powerful influence on how people link passionate love and sexual desire. Many men, for example, are taught to separate sex and love, while many women are taught not to separate the two (Hatfield & Rapson, 2005). In a study on cultural aspects of intimacy, passion and commitment on 90 Chinese and 77 American couples showed that ratings on passion were higher among American than Chinese couples, but there were no differences in ratings of intimacy and commitment between these two groups (Gao, 2001). In another study in China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, and Taiwan, young people were found to insist that their mate should be "chaste," while young adults in Finland,

France, Germany, Norway, the Netherlands, and Sweden did not consider chastity as an important factor in mate selection (Wallen, 1989). To explore some cultural differences in love in individualistic and collectivistic societies, de Munck and colleagues (2011) conducted a study in the United States, Lithuania, and Russia. They found that people from all three countries agreed on the following characteristics as the “core” concepts of romantic love, and there was agreement across all cultures that love is a strong feeling that unites the partners in close relationships. But altruism was considered more important in the United States than in Lithuania and Russia. Several differences between individualism (United States) and collectivism (Lithuania and Russia) were found. However, as expected, there were more similarities between Lithuanian and Russian samples than between the U.S. sample and the Russian or Lithuanian samples. In another study, cross-cultural differences were found in the experience of love progression over the years. Ingersoll-Dayton and colleagues (1996), for example, compared progression of marriage in the United States versus Japan. They found that the U.S. marriages start with a relatively high level of intimacy, and in Japan the intimacy develops later in life after marriage. In another cross-cultural study, it was found that young adults in the United States make their marital decisions independently of their parents, but young adults in China ask advice and support from their parents in making marital decisions (Zhang & Kline, 2009). Thus it appears that the cultural influences are very powerful in mate selection and love (Karandashev, 2015).

How Long Does Love Last?

There are several factors that are related to the durability and stability of love. An important factor associated with the durability of love is the type of love. For example, some researchers argued that in general passionate love is less stable than companionate love (Hatfield & Rapson, 2016), because time has different impacts on passionate versus companionate love. Passionate love fades with time more quickly than does companionate love. A study shows that within two years of marriage couples in romantic love express 50 percent less affection for each other than they would do when they were newly married (Huston & Chorost, 1994). Researchers suggest that romantic love diminishes fairly quickly with time because fantasy, novelty, and “idealized glorifications” of partners in romantic love decline and passion slowly subsides with the harsh reality of life as the relationship continues (Ahmetoglu, Swami, & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2010). So enduring passion or romance in a long-term relationship is quite uncommon (Mitchell, 2002). Nonetheless, romantic love is increasingly

viewed as an essential component of a marriage. A study reported that 91 percent of American women and 86 percent of men would not marry someone with whom they were not in a romantic relationship (Gregoire, 2014). In a long-term intimate relationship, however, passion and preoccupation with romantic love tend to fade into companionship love (Acevedo & Aron, 2009). Several researchers, however, reported that corrosive effects of time are almost equally strong for all types of love including passionate love as well as companionate love (O'Leary et al., 2012). Contrarily, a number of studies have shown that people married for several years can still enjoy passionate and companionate love with their partners. For example, O'Leary et al. (2012) found that 40 percent of couples who had been married for a decade said that they were very intensely in love with their partners, and 40 percent of women and 35 percent of men who had been married over three decades or more said that they were very intensely in love. To find the answer to the question concerning why some couples enjoy enduring romantic love and others don't, Zentner (2005) reviewed about 500 studies on love but couldn't identify any combination of two personality traits in a love relationship that predicted long-term romantic love, except for one—the ability to idealize and maintain positive illusions about the partner.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter 10 focuses on components of love; patterns of love; individual differences in love; different perspectives on love, including historical, genetic, biological, anthropological, evolutionary, psychological, social, and cultural perspectives; and how long love lasts.

Love. Love is an emotional feeling and a behavioral experience that varies from culture to culture and individual to individual even in the same culture.

Components of love. Love has three components: intimacy—emotional component, passion—motivational component, and commitment—cognitive component.

Patterns of love. Patterns of love people experience depend on the combinations of these three components.

Infatuation. Passion is the only component present in infatuated love. This kind of love is characterized by strong physical attraction and sexual desire without intimacy and commitment. Infatuated love can appear suddenly and disappear as fast.

Empty love. This is love with commitment but without intimacy and passion. Empty love is often found in a long-term marital relationship.

Romantic love. Intimacy and passion are present in romantic love. Romantic love is without any sustaining commitment for enduring relationship. This kind of love is more common among younger adults than in middle adults or older adults.

Companionate love. This type of love is characterized by the presence of intimacy and commitment without passion or physical attraction.

Consummate love. This is an ideal type of love in which all three components—intimacy, passion, and commitment—are present.

Differences in love. Love has different meanings for people of different gender, personality, and culture.

Different perspectives on love. Although love is universal, attitudes, feelings, and behaviors related to love are different in different cultures, and in different historical periods.

How long does love last? The durability of love depends on the type of love. In general, romantic love is less stable than companionate love.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

1. What is love? What are the components of love?
2. Discuss Sternberg’s triangular concept of love. How can different combinations of elements of love change the patterns of love?
3. Discuss personality, gender, and cultural differences in love.
4. Briefly discuss different perspectives on love.
5. How long does love last? Discuss different factors that are related to the stability of love.