

## A Typology of Styles of Loving

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**Abstract.** Constructed ideal types differentiating between several contrasting conceptions of intimate adult affiliation ("love") were derived from fictional and non-fictional literature. A new interview method was devised to enable individuals "in love" to reconstruct their experience in codeable form. The constructed types were tested and revised, producing a structured typology of readily distinguishable styles of loving. The salient characteristics of the six most significant styles are summarized.

Perhaps the reader will expect me to begin by defining my terms. What do I mean by "love" or "loving"? There's the rub! The fictional and non-fictional literature of the western world for twenty centuries is strewn with conflicting definitions of love. Numerous authors have recognized that there are different kinds of loving, but whenever an author departs from mere description of the kinds, to attempt a definition of "love", his own biases instantly creep in. Some of these biases are careless and obvious - for example those who have eliminated homosexual love entirely by defining love as an attraction between persons of opposite sex (cf. Goode, 1959; Blood, 1962).

Less obvious but hardly less excusable are definitions which subtly express the Puritan work ethic, implying that a "true" love must be productive, conducive to optimal development, or conferring survival benefits (cf. Fromm, 1956; Foote, 1953; Martinson, 1960). A religious ethic of altruism may be involved, as in the definitions of Sorokin, (1967), Kierkegaard (1963), or Nygren (1952). By contrast, a hard-headed empiricist bias may be involved, for those who distinguish sharply between "romantic love" (disapproved of) and "realistic love" (the preferred variety) (cf. Reiss, 1967; Gross, 1944). Again, there are those who celebrate love as an irrational ecstasy (cf. Ortega y Gasset, 1957).

My concern has been, not to define love, but to distinguish clearly the personal and social expression of the various conceptions of love, the various "styles of loving" or more conveniently, lovestyles. However, I am interested in only those forms of love involved in intimate adult affiliation (sometimes called mating love, marrying love, or "heterosexual love"). I am not concerned with love of God, love of children, or love of country, though these ideas of love are by no means unrelated to conceptualizations of intimate adult affiliation.

The first problem in attempting a differentiation of lovestyles is the paucity of our vocabulary of intimacy. How shall we name the various species of loving? In general conversation and popular publication I have resigned myself to colloquialisms ("playful love", "obsessive love", "dutiful love"), but in a scientific taxonomy of lovestyles I have preferred to use Latin and Greek terminology.

My method of analysis is that of "constructive typology" (cf. McKinney, 1966). The important caveat of typologizing is that "there is no such thing as a type independent of the purposes for which it was constructed" (McKinney, 1966, p. 217). An ideal typology does not ignore or deny overlap between differentiated species, but focuses on the clustering of the most distinctive

characteristics. As Cattell (1965, p. 256) points out, "the single measures may overlap, but the patterns or ratios among them do not".

The ideal types of lovestyles may be thought of as functioning at several levels of meaning. One may speak of an "erotic lover" or "erotic love ideas" or "erotic love behavior". That is, one may appear to speak of identity, ideology, or role performance. The first, "erotic lover", is actually an elipsis for "a person who, in the particular intimate relationship under observation, manifests attitudes and behaviour typical of an empirically distinguishable style of loving which, for purposes of comparison with other contrasting styles, has had its distinctive cluster of characteristics lumped together under the label eros." A bit of a mouthful, but an important reminder that a typology is about an empirically manifested social style, pre-existing the lover in question. It is about a style of relationship, not about a personality or identity. It is about a particular relationship, not necessarily all of the intimate adult affiliations in which this person engages.

A "lover" may engage at different times, or in some cases concurrently, in relationships characteristic of quite different lovestyles. Moreover, a given relationship may evolve, over a period of time, from attitudes and behaviour typical of one species of loving, to those of another species - from mania to storge, for example.

Color (Lee, 1973, 1976) provides a useful analogy with lovestyles because my analysis seems most meaningful if we theorize a basic taxonomical structure of lovestyles, rather than merely identifying the varieties or species. The relationship between the various lovestyles can be understood as similar to the relationship between primary, secondary and tertiary colors. As in color "secondary" does not imply "inferior" but simply, "constructed out of a combination of primaries". Secondary lovestyles are those constructed typologically out of combinations of elements salient to pairs of primaries (for example, pragma is explained as a combination of certain elements of storge and ludus). This does not imply that persons actually act to combine lovestyles, any more than we make our table salt by combining sodium and chlorine but simply that my theory of lovestyles proposes an analysis of some styles into more fundamental styles, which, in turn, appear to be irreducible to any simpler level.

An explanation of the various lovestyles is in order. The most common are eros, storge, ludus, all primaries, and agape, pragma, and mania, the simplest secondaries, which are all we will have space for here. Professor Thomas Lasswell of the University of Southern California has validated the mutual exclusiveness of these six lovestyles on a Guttman-Lingoes Smallest Space Analysis procedure, using samples totaling several hundred persons, and a questionnaire based on my identification of each of these lovestyles. The other three secondaries, not dealt with here, are ludic eros, storgic eros and storgic ludus. The most common tertiaries are manic storge, manic ludus and manic eros (cf. Lee, 1973).

Eros is the lovestyle characterized by the search for a beloved whose physical presentation of self embodies an image already held in the mind of the lover. In popular language, it is the pursuit of the lover's "physical type" - his or her ideal image of the beautiful.

Ludus, Ovid's term for playful or game love, describes a style which is permissive and pluralistic (a less loaded word than promiscuous). The degree of "involvement" is carefully controlled, jealousy is eschewed, and relationships are often multiple and relatively short-lived.

Storge is a style based on slowly developing affection and companionship, a gradual disclosure of self, an avoidance of self-conscious passion, and an expectation of long-term commitment.

Mania is an obsessive, jealous, emotionally intense lovestyle characterised by preoccupation with the beloved and a need for repeated reassurance of being loved.

Agape is altruistic love, given because the lover sees it as his duty to love without expectation of reciprocity. It is gentle, caring, and guided by reason more than emotion.

Pragma is a style involving conscious consideration of "vital statistics" about a suitable beloved. Education, vocation, religion, age, and numerous other demographic characteristics of the potential beloved are taken into account in the search for a compatible match.

Mania is explained typologically as a combination of eros and ludus; agape, a combination of storge and eros; and pragma, a combination of ludus and storge. However, this structure is too complex to outline here, and not essential to our purpose of explaining the analysis of a given lover's style of loving (cf. Lee, 1973).

Each of the lovestyles may be considered as an ideology - that is, a systematic clustering of ideas used to justify specific social arrangements and institutions. Thus, the ideology of agape became the official lovestyle of the Christian church at least from the fourth century (cf. Nygren, 1952). It provided a rationale for Christian definitions of marriage, religious practice, and even economic behaviour. The ideology of agape is fundamentally opposed to that of ludus, whether the latter is represented by ancient authors (Ovid, 1939), or more modern exponents (Meister, 1963). The prevalence of one ideology or another in a given historical era requires a socio-historical explanation, as does the emergence of another ideology displacing the first (cf. Lee, 1975).

The lover's performance of a role characteristic of a given lovestyle, and likewise the alteration of performance to that of another lovestyle, requires a socio-psychological explanation. As a sociologist, my primary concern has been with the social conditions related to a given lovestyle, rather than with the emergence of a personality (identity) acting out a given lovestyle. However, my methods of developing the salient characteristics of each lovestyle are easily adaptable to the social psychologist's task of explaining why a particular person holds attitudes and enacts behaviour typical of one lovestyle or another. Professor Lasswell's adaptation of my typology to his "sample" profile (s-storge, a-agape, m-mania, p-pragma, l-ludus, and e-eros) moves even further in the direction of personality theory. (Lasswell, 1975)

#### Methodology

The constructed typification of each lovestyle began with an extensive search of the fictional and nonfictional literature of love ranging from Plato and Ovid to Augustine and Capellanus to Burton and Stendhal to modern authors. A modified version of Llewelyn Gross' forty-item scale of romanticism-realism in love was developed (Gross, 1944). With the aid of a panel of judges, reliable descriptions were developed for six different lovestyles which appeared mutually exclusive and at the same time sufficiently exhaustive of the literature. The criteria of typification included physical symptoms involved in the lover's experience of love (e.g. loss of appetite, sleep), sexual attraction, emotional pain, compulsive attention to the beloved, willingness to abase or alter the self to please the beloved, jealousy, self-disclosure, consciously manipulative behaviour, the need for reciprocity, and

other criteria totalling twenty in all (cf. Lee, 1973, p. 232).

After testing these criteria on pilot samples, a Likert scale of opinions about the nature of "true love" was developed. This scale involved thirty statements such as "No one expects a lover to mean sincerely everything, he or she says", "Two people who would never make good friends could still be truly in love with each other", and "It's more important to find someone you'll always enjoy being with than to find someone good-looking and exciting".

Although Professor Lasswell has had success with a larger scale of similar but more personal statements, my early findings did not suggest a reliable coherence around definite clusters of statements. Instead, I found a puzzling contradiction between the opinions which subjects said they held about "true love" and the behaviour they reported enacting when actually in a love relationship.

Frustration in identifying species of loving which could clearly represent the divergent clusters of opinions contained within a Likert scale, has led different researchers to different reactions. Gross, it seems, published nothing further on this topic. Reiss (1967, p. 77) resolved the problem by disqualifying some statements in his scale. I chose to develop a "new" interview instrument hopefully capable of more sensitive, and at the same time systematically codeable, investigation of the experience of various love styles. This was the "Love Story Card Sort".

The card-sort consists of about 1500 cards organized in sets. Each card contains a brief description of an event, idea, or emotion which might possibly occur in a love relationship. Thus, the whole sort comprises an omnibus love story, from which a respondent can select the relevant cards to tell his or her own story. Despite the fact that every individual's experience of love is unique, it is ultimately composed of a variety of social facts already provided by the lover's culture. The total number of combinations of these facts is very great, but the components themselves are remarkably limited in number, as any novelist, searching for a really "different" love story, soon discovers.

Each question in the card sort is presented together with a set of cards on each of which is typed a possible "answer". For example:

"On our first date, the closest we got to being intimate was a) just being together, we never actually touched. b) holding hands. c) one good-night or parting kiss. d) kissing several times. e) cuddling, holding each other close, embracing while clothed. f) close body contact unclothed, without sexual intercourse. g) we spent the night in the same bed but did not make love. h) making love "all the way". i) other (specify)."

The response cards in each set are shuffled before presentation of the set to the respondent, so that no response appeared to be preferred to the others. The respondent simply selects the appropriate card to "tell" this point in his story, and the code is recorded. In the rare case where the "other" response is used, an answer is written into the code report form.

The example cited is sexual in subject matter, but only a very small number of the 170 sets in the love story card sort referred to sexual events. Most dealt with the expression of feelings, the expectations about a love relationship, the estimate of the beloved's feelings and reciprocity, the forms and degrees of preoccupation with the beloved, the felt anxieties and anticipated troubles, the frequency and topics of conflict with the beloved, the frequency of contact with the beloved, and so forth. From the selections in the card sort it was possible to construct (reconstruct) a love relationship ranging from the most blissful to the most tragic, the most relaxed to the most hectic.

Development of the items for the sort required many months of content analysis of love fiction and fact, then the testing on pilot samples, development of appropriate coding, and, of course, the construction of parallel sets for respondents of each sex. The sort begins at the beginning: "At the time my story begins, just before X and I started going out together (dating), I was a) on vacation (choose another card for regular work). b) a student. c) working in a factory. d) working in an office..."

The respondent proceeds by a main track, (with various side tracks if a married partner or third party is involved) until a major switching station, set 96: "In the rest of this story what happens is... a) X and I fell in love with each other about the same time, and we have been in love ever since. b) X and I fell in love with each other about the same time, but things did not work out and we finally broke up. c) X fell in love with me but I never fell in love with X; we finally broke up. d) I fell in love with X but X never fell in love with me; we finally broke up. e) X fell in love with me first, and hung on for a while, and I finally fell in love with X too. f) I fell in love with X first and after I hung on for a while, X finally fell in love with me too..."

Selection in set 96 determines which sequence of subsequent sets are administered, leading to breaking off and recovery, or to continuing relationship of some form. During these subsequent sets the respondent also looks back over the relationship and evaluates it.

This method proved - and continues to prove - eminently suitable for enabling a respondent to disclose numerous details of experiences usually coloured with strong emotions, while at the same time enabling the interviewer to code and conveniently record the bulk of the data provided. Respondents learn how to use the sort within the first ten sets (where self-disclosure is at a minimum) then proceed to become actively involved in retelling their stories. Indeed, it is common for respondents to experience re-invoked emotions - to laugh, cry, feel nostalgia, celebrate or regret the events recollected.

The love story card sort proves much more flexible than a questionnaire (compare Lynch, 1963), but also more systematic than a depth interview (compare Bolton, 1959). Each set is basically a small stage along the way of a possible love experience, but can easily be omitted if it does not apply, or moved to a point in the story where it does apply. The stages are selected to emphasize what Goode (1956) calls "strain points". The responses are sufficiently varied (and always supplemented by an "other" card) to avoid putting words (or more important, feelings and events) into the mouths of the respondents.

Complex experience is broken into discrete, recordable parts through consecutive sets. For example, Set 77 asks the lover to recall the frequency of his discussion of his feelings with the beloved. Set 78 asks for amplification of whichever response is chosen in Set 77. When the coded responses are entered on cards for data processing, it is possible to measure the frequency of given responses, in relation to other responses. For example, it was ultimately found that both erotic and ludic lovestyles involve frequent discussions about feelings of involvement, while storge does not. However, erotic lovers discuss to magnify, ludic lovers, to minimize, feelings of involvement.

Since each card is prepared so as to appear much like any other as a print stimulus, the respondent's selections are merely placed on the table, not spoken. The responses are pulled from a visibly shuffled set. Thus the embarrassment of self-disclosure is reduced and any implicit moral judgements

largely eliminated. It requires the same concrete action (pulling a card) to admit that you slept with your beloved the night you met, or to admit that after three years of weekly dating, you have not yet slept together.

Of course, the respondent is undoubtedly influenced by some estimate of the interviewer's expectations, but this effect was further minimized by the method of recruitment of samples. The author arranged interviews with complete strangers, who came to the author's office, and were never required to reveal any data affecting their identity. They knew they would never see the interviewer again. The beloved was always referred to as "X". Only in a minority of cases was an interview also arranged with the beloved, who was sent by the lover. More frequently, the respondent co-operated because he or she wanted the opportunity to "discuss" a love relationship with me, without the knowledge of the beloved.

In any event, no respondent's reconstruction could be considered a factual description of what "really happened" in the relationship. If the descriptions by both partners generally agreed, it was interesting, but if they disagreed, there was no way of determining which, if either, was more "correct". The card sort is a measure of the perceived experience of love, not the actual events.

After nearly 100,000 items of data were collected from 120 respondents, data processing began. About an equal number of data have been collected since, for further processing. The methods used are described in detail elsewhere, (Lee, 1973, 1976) and involved the construction of Guttman-type scales following a simplified form of factor analysis. Thirty-two factors were ultimately found most useful to distinguish the various species of love. The six most sharply identifiable species are now described, using the most salient factors in each case.

Eros The typical erotic relationship involves a lover who considers his childhood was a happy one, and recalls a warm relationship with parents and siblings. He is content with his life and work at the time of the eros experience, and is ready for love, but not anxiously looking for it. The typical "erotic lover" (recalling that this is an ellipsis) can clearly describe the physical type which attracts him most, either by verbal means, or through rapid selection of his type from among a wide variety of photographs (Lee, 1973, p. 248) The more erotic the relationship, the more demanding and specific the ideal image sought, and the closer the beloved's conformity to that image.

There is instant appreciation of the extent to which the beloved fulfills the ideal image; a "sudden sensation of recognition and hope", Stendhal called it. The erotic lover is eager for rapid disclosure of the self and the beloved, including sexual intimacy. He wants to see the beloved frequently (usually daily) from the beginning, and seeks to establish an extensive and profound rapport. At the same time he enjoys intensity without demanding or obsessive possession; he is self-confident in love, rather than anxious.

Ludus The typical ludic lover considers his childhood "average" and finds his present life satisfactory, but is rarely enthusiastic about it. He is not ready to commit himself ("settle down"). He likes a variety of physical types and can switch easily from one to another. He does not "fall in love" but goes on with life as usual, expecting love relationships to fit into his existing schedule of activities. He carefully avoids future commitment to the relationship (never planning a summer vacation with the partner the previous January!). He avoids seeing too much of the beloved, to prevent over-involvement on either side. Ludus can be played as an open game, with fair warning to the partner, or with deception, leading the partner on. The fair player is



likely to continue enjoying ludus from one relationship to the next, while the "cheat" often accumulates guilt which eventually spoils the game.

The ludic lover feels little jealousy or rivalry, and expects the partner not to feel jealous, or at least, not to show it. Sexual intimacy is enjoyed as fun, rather than as evidence of serious emotional rapport. When the relationship ceases to be pleasant and diverting, the ludic lover feels justified in ending it. Often he will already have found an alternative partner. Indeed, the optimum ludic situation is one where there are two or three beloveds separated by different nights of the week and different activities, but not by ignorance of each other's existence. The knowledge that the lover has "other irons in the fire" is used to prevent any particular beloved from becoming overly involved.

Storge The typical storgic lover comes from a secure family background, often with several siblings. He feels that life is good, and that he can depend on his friends. He expects that love will be an extension of deep friendship to eventual sexual intimacy and commitment. He has no conscious definition of a favourite physical type; it's more important that the beloved be someone companionable and affectionate.

A sharing of common interests and activities joins the partners much more than attraction to each other. There is a very low level of mental preoccupation with the partner. Storgic lovers can endure long spells of absence of the beloved without anxiety about the security of the relationship. There is an avoidance of extreme emotions and of conscious deliberation about each other's feelings. Sexual self-disclosure comes only very gradually and late in the development of a storgic relationship, usually after a feeling of mutual commitment.

Mania The typical manic lover shows the same intensity and preoccupation as the erotic lover, yet the same desire to hold back feelings and manipulate the relationship, as the ludic lover. The contradiction results in ambivalence and tension, first expressed by Catullus: "I hate and I love. And if you ask me how, I do not know. I only feel it, and I'm torn in two". Aldous Huxley described the same experience in Point Counterpoint: "And he wanted her against all reason, against all his ideals and principles, madly, against his wishes, even against his own feelings, for he didn't like Lucy, he really hated her" (Huxley, 1955, p. 11)

The manic lover considers that his childhood was unhappy (whether that is objectively so, by comparison with the childhood of others, is irrelevant). He is usually lonely and lacks friends or enjoyable work. He is anxious to fall in love, but quite uncertain as to which physical type attracts him. He often falls for someone to whom the first reaction is one of dislike.

The manic lover is obsessively preoccupied with the beloved, imagines all manner of rivals and disasters, and ignores any warning signs of difficulty in the relationship until too late. Yet he "knows all along".

Pragma The "pragmatic lover" combines the control and manipulation of ludus with the companionship of storge. Not having grown up with, or discovered in his everyday activities, a beloved with similar interests and background with whom a friendship can bloom into love, he sets out more or less consciously to find someone who, had fate decreed otherwise, would have been a friend, and now might be. Pragma is like wine aged by chemical means instead of waiting for nature. Over a period of time the lover constructs a mental shopping list of desired qualities, and proceeds to search for a partner in the places considered most likely to produce a "sensible" choice. Pragma is a lovestyle long practiced in the "arranged marriage" (with the

parents rather than the lover demonstrating the pragmatic lovestyle). Today it is eminently suited to computer match-making.

Agape This lovestyle exists more as an ideal than an achievement in affiliative relationships; it appears most likely to reach its full expression of absolute selflessness in celibacy. The agapic lover is generally older and more emotionally mature than is typical of any other type of love relationship. He feels that love is a duty, governed by the will, not a feeling or an attraction. Everyone is worthy of love, whatever his or her qualities or appearance, and whatever his or her merits. Agape is never deserved or earned love, but gift love. It has never been better defined than in the words of St. Paul to the Corinthians. (I Cor. 13; 4-7)

Needless to say, the use of the male pronoun in the above typifications of lovestyles is only a matter of grammatical convenience; my samples have included an equal number of women. In addition, my recent samples have focussed on homosexual relationships, where the lovestyles, (not surprisingly, since homosexuals share the same general culture as heterosexuals), have also provided a useful system of analysis (cf. Lee, 1976a).

Since my samples are not, nor are they intended to be, representative of the general population or any part of it, the proportions of various lovestyles found in the samples cannot be considered indicative of their distribution in the population. However, my method of data processing did make possible a comparison of frequency of individual responses, and of factors (built up out of clusters of responses) according to variables such as sex of respondent, age, education, and socio-economic status. There was very little variance by sex, or by educational level. The results do not support the existing literature's apparent consensus of variance in the experience of love according to social class (cf. Slater and Woodside, 1951; Henriques, 1959; Cavan, 1953). The more intense or "romantic" styles of loving were found among the working class as among the middle class.

As noted earlier, my concern has been more with sociological than psychological aspects of the experience of lovestyle, though I have elsewhere (Lee, 1973, 1976) considered some of the psychological dimensions of specific styles. For example, successful role performance of the ludic style requires considerable self-esteem, to the point of vanity, while a notable lack of self-esteem predisposes the lover to mania. My typology can be fairly easily correlated with more socio-psychological studies of the personality of the lover, such as the work of Bolton (1959). However, most of the psychological dimensions remain topics for future research by my colleagues in personality theory.

Studies of the relationship between lovestyles, and other clusters of attitudes are also possible. Ms. Virginia Young (1974) compared attitudes to women's liberation, war/peace issues, and elements of four major lovestyles (storge, eros, ludus and mania). Scores on a scale of compassion-compulsion (Eckhardt, 1972) were shown to be associated with preferred lovestyles; high compulsion scores with a manic definition of "true love" and high compassion scores with a storgic definition.

With very few exceptions (cf. Kolb, 1965; Hazo, 1967) all previous analyses of intimate adult affiliation have imposed the author's own biases about the nature of "true love" on the data. In addition, too many studies have relied on those favorite captive samples, college students and clients of therapy. The present research avoids any moral or philosophical judgments about preferred lovestyles. It has been tested on samples of everyday, literally pedestrian love relationships, recruited from among strangers on



the streets. While no extrapolations to the population in general are possible, the samples are now large and diverse enough to suggest that all the major styles of loving found in "western" culture, have been identified. No claims are made concerning styles which may occur in other cultures, such as the Japanese (cf. Morsback, 1975).

The methods used to identify and characterize these lovestyles are readily replicated. Research in other cultures could proceed on the same basis as used in the present studies. In addition, the identification of preferred lovestyles in any individuals could easily be coupled with other personality tests to facilitate research into the formation of individual preferences in lovestyles. The same methods may also be used on historical materials, to analyse the behavioural patterns associated with lovestyles in the past (cf. Lee, 1975). The author will be happy to cooperate with any researcher interested in using the typology of lovestyles to expand our sociological and psychological understanding of the most beautiful, varied and enriching experience which it is the privilege of men and women to enjoy.

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