

The Historicity of Psychological Attitudes:
Love Is Not Love Which Alters Not
When It Alteration Finds

AMELIE OKSENBERG RORTY

There is a set of psychological attitudes—love, joy, perhaps some sorts of desire—that are individuated by the character of the subject, the character of the object, and the relation between them. Of course, such attitudes can typically be identified without reference to their objects: Mr. Knightly, Raskolnikov, Swann, Humbert Humbert all love, though Emma, Sonia, Odette, and Lolita are quite different sorts of women. Still, the details of their loves—the dispositions and thoughts that are active in their loving—are radically different in these cases, so much so that each, looking at the others, might wonder whether they really love. When such psychological attitudes are directed to other people, those concerned characteristically want the attitude to be directed to *them*, rather than to this or that trait. “Do you love me for myself alone, or for my yellow hair?” asks one of Yeats’s beautiful ladies, and Yeats has a sage reply, truthfully and sadly: “Only God, my dear, could love you for yourself alone, and not for your yellow hair.” This concern about the proper object of the attitude is a way of expressing a concern about its constancy or endurance.

The individuation of such psychological attitudes might be thought a consequence of a general metaphysical fact, that relations are individuated by their subjects and objects. But these relational psychological attitudes are not states identified by the functional relation between the subject and some object: a person, a state of affairs, a propositional content. Although for some purposes it may be convenient to treat such attitudes as states, they arise from, and are shaped by, dynamic interactions between a subject and an object. (As slides of frozen cells stand to a living, working organism, so do psychological attitudes construed as *states* stand to phenomena of dynamic interaction.) It is this feature of such attitudes—what we might call their *historicity*—that generates a concern about their constancy and that can, as

I hope to show, also assuage that concern. (In calling psychological attitudes *activities*, and focusing on interactive attitudes, I do not intend to classify them with voluntary or responsible actions. Interactive attitudes are not necessarily caused by intentions or under voluntary control, even though they are certainly intentional, and sometimes voluntary.) These psychological attitudes are identified by the detail of the narrative of the interactions between the subject and the object, interactions that also individuate the persons involved. Not only are such relational psychological attitudes individuated by their objects, but also the trajectory of the subject's life—the subject's further individuation—is affected by this relational attitude, this activity.

For the moment, I want to set aside the question of whether this characterization defines only a very small class. Because I do not believe passions or emotions form a "natural class," as distinct from (say) desires or motives, or some sorts of beliefs and judgments, I shall not even try to determine whether those conditions we now roughly classify as *passions* or *emotions* are historical, dynamic, and interactive, and whether their rationality is thereby endangered. I want rather to trace one such interactive attitude through some of its ramifications, to give a sketch of its historicity, showing that far from threatening rationality, it is just this interactivity that shores, though it cannot possibly assure, the sane emendation and corrigibility we want when we try to account for the rationality of such attitudes. I shall take love, rather than joy, desire, indignation, or fear, as an example. We seem to know more about loving than we do about many other psychological attitudes, not because we are more adept at loving than we are at being joyful or indignant, but because, wanting to be loved, we have given thought to what we want, in wanting to be loved. The characteristics that such an examination uncovers are, as I hope to show, historically specific: they arise in particular social, political, and intellectual contexts. The conditions and criteria set on the identification of love reveal the preoccupations of the era.

Although I shall sketch the place of contemporary conceptions of the conditions of love in its historical context, I want for the moment to set aside the question of whether the contemporary forms provide the central and definitory example of love (if there can be such a thing). Though romantic and erotic love are primary examples, they are by no means the only, or even the clearest examples of this sort of attitude. The kind of love I have in mind is the love of friendship, and sometimes (though in our culture, rarely) the love of parents and children. The account I sketch does not assume that such friendship-love is symmetrically reciprocated or even that it is reciprocated at all. Nor does it assume that there is a strict economy of love, such that its expansion to others automatically constitutes a diminution or loss elsewhere. Nevertheless, although such love is by no means exclusive, it cannot include more people than the lover is able to attend closely. If there is an economy

involved, it is the economy of focused, interactively forming attention, one that not only wishes but acts to promote the thriving of the friend.

I want to examine some characteristics of dynamic, interactive, historical psychological attitudes: (1) Their proper objects are a person, rather than this or that characteristic of a person.¹ (2) Such attitudes are permeable; that is, the lover is affected, changed not only by loving but by the details of the character of the person loved. (3) Because such attitudes affect the person, they affect the person's actions. Although some lovers do not act on behalf of the welfare of those whom they love, their not doing so raises a doubt about whether they do truly love. (Parallel: although someone who desires to learn does not necessarily forthwith set about learning, still, not doing so raises a doubt about the desire). (4) These attitudes are identified by a characteristic narrative history. Although there are pangs of love, stabs of fear, twinges of longing, and thrills of joy, these are identifiable as the feeling of love, fear, longing, or joy only within the complex narrative of the living attitude. These psychological attitudes often feature a particular feeling tone that so magnetizes our attention that we tend to confuse it with the dynamic attitude as a whole.² But it is the whole history, and not only the focused and highlighted affective aspect, that constitutes the attitude. In the case of love, there is a presumption of some nonaccidental continuity, assured either by the constancy of a particular relation between the lover and the friend or by the character of their interaction.

Let's begin by distinguishing different ways that the continuity of love can be assured, distinguishing its enduring constancy from its interactive historical continuity. When love is constant and enduring, it persists despite changes in the friend's traits, even changes in those traits that first awoke the love and that were its central focus. This kind of constancy is assured only at a very general level: it is directed to the same person, extensionally identified, and the attachment remains at roughly the same level of devotion.³ If Louis's love for Ella when he is 20 is radically different from his attitude at 60, has his love been constant? Presumably, constancy can be preserved by defining the object and the functional roles of his attitude in a sufficiently general manner. But such generality is unlikely to reassure those who wonder if they still love, when little they desire or do has remained the same.

When Louis and Ella are concerned about the continuity of their loves, they are not only interested in constancy, though perhaps some of their concerns could be rephrased in that way. What might concern Ella is whether *she* influences or affects the character of Louis's love and whether his delight in her ramifies to affect other things about him. When Ella does not want Louis to love her as Don Juan might have loved Elvira, her concern for his fidelity might be a way of expressing her concern for whether his delight focuses on her rather than on his dazzling gifts as a lover. She wants his speeches, his charming attentions and deftly winning ways to be not only

directed *at* and *to* her, but to take their tenor and form from his delighted recognition of what is central to her. It is not enough that he gets the color of her eyes right, when he gets to that part of the serenade describing their enchantment. Nor is Ella's worry laid to rest by being assured of his fidelity, assured that Louis is no Don Juan, ranging over variables for his joys as a connoisseur of the subtle and interesting differences between women and their ever so wonderful effects on him. For whatever good such assurance might do her, Ella could be convinced that if she were to die, or if they were to have an irreconcilable falling out, Louis would feel lost, mourn, and only gradually be healed enough to love someone else. But both she and her successor Gloria might be aggrieved that Louis always brings the same love, a love that is contained within *his* biography, to be given as a gift. Presumably Gloria does not want to inherit Louis's love for Ella: she wants Louis to love her in a wholly different way, defined by the two of them. This is a complex and compounded hope: that Louis's love will be formed by his perceiving—his accurately perceiving—the gradual changes in her, and in his responses being appropriately formed by those changes. If Ella and Gloria love *Louis*, they want the changes they effect in him to be consonant and suitable to him as well as to them, conducing to his flourishing as well as theirs. It is because they want their love to conduce to his flourishing that it is important that they see him accurately and that their interactive responses to him be appropriate.

There is a kind of love—and for some it may be the only kind that qualifies as true love—that is historical precisely because it does not (oh so wonderfully) rigidly designate its object. The details of such love change with every change in the lover and the friend. Such a love might be called *dynamically permeable*. It is *permeable* in that the lover is changed by loving and changed by truthful perception of the friend. Permeability rejects being obtuse to change as an easy way of assuring constancy. It is dynamic in that every change generates new changes, both in the lover and in interactions with the friend. Having been transformed by loving, the lover perceives the friend in a new way and loves in a new way. Dynamism rejects the regionalization of love as an easy way of assuring constancy: the changes produced by such love tend to ramify through a person's character, without being limited to the areas that first directly were the focus of the lover's attention.

To see how this works out, let's gossip a bit about Ella, Louis, and Gloria. Louis's love for Ella began with his enchantment at her crisp way of playing Scarlatti, the unsentimental lyricism of her interpretation of Schubert, her appreciation of Orwell's journalism. After a while, he found that he was enchanted by traits he'd never noticed or admired in anyone else: the sequence of her moods, the particular way she had of sitting still, head bent when she listened to music. He came to love those traits in her, or her in those traits—he could hardly tell which. He came to appreciate such traits

in others because her having them had delighted him. And he changed too, not necessarily in imitation of her, but because of her. An acute observer could discern changes in Louis that had their origins and explanation in his love of Ella, changes that were deeper than those that arose from his desire to please her. Some of these changes might conflict with, and threaten, other long-standing traits. If Louis's interest in Ella brings an interest in medieval music, it brings him into new company as well. The ramified consequences of his new interests are likely to interfere with his Friday night jam sessions with his old friends in the hard rock group. Either his responses to Ella ramify, and he acquires a new taste in companions, or he attempts to regionalize the changes that Ella effects on him. Both alternatives have significant consequences on them, and on him. If his dynamic interactions do not ramify, there will be conflicts between his pre-Ella and his post-Ella self. But if they do ramify, his psychological continuity is loosened by his being formed and reformed by each new friendship. (Of course, such problems are often solved by Louis and Ella sharing important parts of their lives, partners in common enterprises. Sharing their lives and activities assures their both being formed by a common world as well as by each other.) If Louis and Ella are wise, they are careful to avoid the extremes of both regionalization and ramification. Fortunately, this is not wholly a matter of insight and foresight: a person's previous traits resist transformation. If Louis *interacts* with Ella, he cannot become a person formed by and designed to suit her fantasies.

We shall return to the difficulties of regionalization and ramification, the difficulties of abstract constancy and hypersensitivity. For the moment, let us suppose that in this idyllic fairy tale, Louis came to realize that he would continue to love Ella even if she were to lose those traits that first drew him to her and that were still the focus of his joy in her. Even if someone else played Scarlatti more brilliantly, Schubert more discerningly, and had even more trenchant views on the relation between Orwell and Brecht, he would not transfer his love. This does not mean that he would see or love her *de re*, whatever that might mean. Nor does it mean that the character of his devotion would remain unchanged by whatever changes might occur in her. He'd be lunatic to love her at 60 in just exactly the same way as he had at 20; and he'd be cruel to love her way of playing Scarlatti if her hands had been mangled in an accident. Nor can his love be analyzed by a set of counterfactuals.⁴ If she became Rampal's accompanist, he would If her mother moved next door, he would If she became paralyzed, he would If she declared herself impassioned of a punk-rock-shlock electronic guitar player, he would If Glorious Gloria, the Paragon of his Dreams, invited him to join her in a trip to Acapulco, he would If this kind of love could be analyzed in a set of counterfactuals, that set would have to be indefinitely large. For there are an indefinite number of changes that will occur and that will affect Louis if he loves Ella.

This explains why even a true historical love might end in dissolution and separation. That it did end would not prove that it had not existed, or that either its permeability or its dynamism were defective. On the contrary, it might be just these that establish—if it is at all sensible to speak of demonstration in this area—that it was indeed Ella that Louis loved, and that he did indeed love rather than swoon. But we have come to a strange outcome. The internal momentum of their interaction—for instance, the consequences of its ramification or its regionalization—might lead to its dissolution. And this might comfort them both: if they parted, it was because they had truly affected one another, and not because Louis's love had accidentally lost its rigidity or acquired a new direction, however slowly or grievously. In such cases, what marks theirs as a historical love that could not endure (though it might have remained constant over appropriate counterfactuals) is not that it was a love *de re* that got transferred to another *rem*, or that their resistance to transference or substitution was expressed by a suitable period of mourning. What marked it as historical was that they had both been permanently transformed by having loved just *that* person. In short, such love is not only individuated by its objects; more significantly, the lovers are individuated by their love. Louis's subsequent history, his new loves, joys, indignations, the details of his continuing individuation—even his love of Gloria—are affected by his loving interaction with Ella. Both the continuity of their love, and its eventual rupture, arose from their interaction.

That dynamic permeability can lead to dissolution should not impel lovers to assure the continuity of their love by preferring constancy assured by rigid nonpermeability. If historical love runs the danger of phasing itself out, constant, rigid, nonpermeable love also has its dangers. If Louis's love is fixed only by his own character, its active expression may not respond to Ella's needs, even though he may be, in an abstract way, supportive. When Ella worries about the constancy of Louis' love, she may be expressing her sense of her vulnerability in the world, the ways that she has come to need and to depend on him for her thriving.⁵ Besides expressing a fear of being harmed, a desire for constancy can itself sometimes be harmful: Ella's fears about Louis's constancy might betray a self-fulfilling sense of dependency. She may have come to be so dependent on the responsive sensitivity of Louis's attunement to her, as a supporting force in her thriving, that she has diminished herself, perhaps even muted the very things that Louis originally admired in her. And Louis, initially charmed by Ella's need of him, may for his part have colluded in her dependency. On the one hand, constancy assured by dynamic permeability does not always automatically work to the benefit of lovers: insight and foresight (of a sort that is, unfortunately, acquired only through experience, and even then, only rarely) is required to direct and to prune the modifications that dynamic permeability fosters. Without the tempering of sound good sense, dynamic permeability might

simply produce a severe case of *folie a deux*. If Ella knows herself to be affected by the ways Louis perceives her, if her sense of herself—and, so, in a way, the self she becomes—is in part constituted by the way Louis sees her, she wants more than that Louis's love be historical and dynamically permeable. On the other hand, if she hopes to assure continuity by constant rigidity, she may find Louis's love to be a conserving, conservative prison, binding her to continue as the person Louis originally loved or chooses to see in her. Both those who want the sort of sensitivity assured by dynamic permeability and those who want the sort of security assured by a rather more rigid constancy want their friends to be wise, wiser than either a rock or a sensitive chameleon with a skin of litmus paper can be.⁶

It might be useful to ask *why* we want all this from our loves. There are two reasons, both obvious, both also sobering. Those who are concerned about the constancy and historicity of love are not necessarily self-important or self-obsessed; they suffer the diseases of the time. It is after all rather remarkable that an attitude and an activity that begins in delight, that carries a desire to share the activities of life, and that brings an active wish for well-being should so quickly move to a concern about continuity. The first reason that contemporary love focuses on constancy is that we sense ourselves fragile, vulnerable in the world. In being aware of our vulnerability, we recognize that among the harms that can befall us are those that endanger or erode just those traits for which we are loved. Because those who delight in us seem to vanquish our sense of vulnerability, we think of them as among our strongest protections in the world. And because lovers characteristically want the flourishing of their friends, they often are actively and objectively central to their thriving. Because the continuity of protective devotion is not automatically assured by the permanent individuating effects of interaction, we want to be loved "for ourselves alone" rather for our most lovable traits, traits we realize we may lose. Not surprisingly, the idea of individuality and the sense of vulnerability are closely associated. Those who concentrate on the sense of invulnerability that loving delight can sometimes bring, and on the objective protections that devoted lovers often assure, might want constancy and think of nonpermeable rigidity instead of historicity as the best way to achieve it. (The pathological form of this attitude is an attempt to control and to bind the friend.)

The second reason we want continuity is that we are aware of being constituted by the perceptions of others, particularly by the perceptions of those who love or hate us, rejoice in us, fear or admire us. We come to think of ourselves, as we perceive they see us. For that reason, it is important to us that our enemies and lovers—the objects of psychological attitudes—perceive us aright, sensitive to the changes in us. Because we crystallize around what they focus, it is important that they continue to love or hate us for what we are—for what conduces to our thriving—rather than for what

we were or what they need us to be. (The pathological form of this attitude is failure of integrity, the readiness to abandon parts of oneself.)⁷

This baroque description of the desire for constancy or continuity of historical psychological attitudes might be thought well replaced by a rather more streamlined Bauhaus approach, a functionalist account of psychological attitudes. They are, we might say, identified by their causal roles, by their etiologies and their effects: that is all that is needed to make sense of the different effects of a preference for rigid constancy or for dynamic permeability. But if we favor Bauhaus functionalism about psychological attitudes we must accept functionalism everywhere. Not only Louis's love but also his beliefs, his perceptions, hopes, and desires are identified by their functional roles. But the functionalist account will not itself explain *why* Louis's attitudes play their various typical functional roles. There is, in a way, nothing wrong with functionalism except that it is radically incomplete: it cannot by itself explain why psychological attitudes have their typical—and typically interactive and clustering—roles. (Bauhaus architecture reveals a great deal about how architects solve heating problems; but it does not thereby provide a clear understanding of the needs or even the constitutions of the people who live or work in those buildings.)

Reflecting on *why* our contemporaries seem to want love to take these forms—why they want their loves to be appropriately interactive and to be enduring—suggests yet another, quite different way that such psychological attitudes are historical. Because the roles that loving friendship play in a person's life vary historically, conceptions of their proper causes and objects and of the behavior that is appropriate to them also change historically. The standard narratives of such attitudes (the usual tales of their dynamic permeability) vary culturally. The story of a dynamic permeable love that I sketched tends to appear quite late and regionally: it arises after Romanticism, after the Industrial Revolution, in a context in which the sense of vulnerability takes quite specific forms. Vulnerable we are, and vulnerable we have always been. But the particular conditions that constitute our sense of our vulnerability varies historically. It takes a particular conception of the course of the life of an isolated individual as some thing fashioned by that person alone to produce the sense of vulnerability that might seem to make a particular form of love—which after all begins in attentive rejoicing—a protection and a mode of development.

The functional identification of psychological attitudes characterizes their typical causes and effects: to understand *why* such attitudes as love, indignation, and respect have just those characteristic etiologies and consequences, we need to understand the conceptions of individuality, needs, and vulnerabilities that constitute a typical life. (It is not always *needs* and *concerns* that identify the functional roles of psychological attitudes. But because needs and concerns seem to be the primary focus of current theoretical and

practical preoccupations, I'll concentrate on them, without being committed to the general view that the functions of psychological attitudes are always defined by needs.) The vicissitudes from which we need protection vary historically: they vary with the sorts of dangers and fortunes that typically arise, with a person's class and condition, with conceptions of individuality.⁸ As our conceptions of individuality change, our vulnerabilities change; as our vulnerabilities change, our needs change; as our needs change, our activities take distinctively different forms; as our activities take characteristically different forms, so do our psychological attitudes.

A short and absurdly superficial sketch of the history of changes in the conception of love may help to make this more plausible. Platonic *eros* is a cosmological as well as a psychological force: it has one proper cause and one proper object—the Beautiful Good—that draws us to it. Acting within us as well as on us, it provides the energy and direction of all we do. Although *eros* has nothing to do with individuality or vulnerability—and indeed is meant to transcend particular individuals—it is the principle that assures our real well-being. Aristotle's account of *philia* as a relation among the virtuous, sharing the activities of life together, each actively wishing the other well and seeing his own virtues mirrored in his friend, is hardly recognizable as the ancestor of our notion of loving friendship. The role of loving friendship in that world was radically different from its role for us. Perhaps because family rather than friends provided the primary protections against vulnerability, the philosophical problems concerning *philia* were, for the Greeks, questions about whether friends are primarily like-minded or complementary and whether it is better (more beneficial) to love than to receive love. Christian preoccupations with *eros*, *philia*, *caritas*, and *agape* reflect still different conceptions of individuality. When it is God rather than kin who determines and secures the shape of a life, the primary questions about the fidelity of love are whether it conforms to divine intention, whether it is modeled after Christ's love. Renaissance *amor* brings yet other transformation: it is the descendant of Platonic *eros*, the active energy that moves a person to the realization of excellence. The love of Glory, of the City, of a Lady or Muse are simultaneously passions and the very springs of action. Because the object draws the person towards it, *amor* is classified as a passion, a passive condition. Yet the lover's nature is perfected and fulfilled by *amor* and by the active desires that it engenders. The central question becomes: what is the relation between this one primary motivational force and the many various desires that follow from it and that are its expression? Hobbes transforms *eros* and *amor* into particular desires: the desire for the realization of the Good becomes a desire for the objects and actions that promote self-preservation and self-interest. Following Hobbes, but echoing a secularized version of Platonic Christianity, Rousseau makes an individual's self-love the source of all that person's desires. But self-love has a proper and a

corrupt form. *Amour de soi* is an unselfconscious, noncomparative sense of one's own well-being in healthful activity; by contrast, *amour propre* is comparative and depends on a perception of the estimation of others. (Rousseau would regard the story of Louis and Ella as a story of the fallen condition, generated by *amour propre* rather than healthful *amour de soi*.) Against this historical background, Freud's account of libidinal *eros* as the basic energetic principle, whose social formation and direction provide the vicissitudes of an individual's psychological history, no longer seems startling.

Now what does all this mean about the *rationality* of such psychological attitudes?⁹ Those who would like to make emotional and psychological attitudes respectable as appropriate sources of action want to assure that their corrigibility and redirection take the same form as the corrigibility of beliefs. To rescue such attitudes from the Seething Cauldron of the Irrational, they attempt to show that psychological attitudes can be rationally reconstructed on the model of the structure of propositional or intellectual attitudes. But this philosophical reconstruction cannot—nor was it ever intended to—assure that the corrigibility of the propositional content of a psychological attitude is sufficient to secure its psychological appropriateness. Presumably we want psychological attitudes to be corrigible because we want them to serve us well, to conduce to our thriving. Certainly psychological attitudes that can be propositionalized are at least in principle corrigible insofar as the truth value of their intentional content can be determined. But although the corrigibility or emendation of the beliefs and perceptions associated with psychological attitudes conduces to their appropriateness, an account of the ability of such attitudes to be propositionalized need not provide the most perspicuous account of either their appropriateness or their functional roles in thriving.

It might be helpful to take an indirect approach to the analysis of the connection between the ability of psychological attitudes to be rationalized and their being well formed to conduce to thriving. In principle at any rate, propositional attitudes differ from psychological attitudes in being affected only by changes in a person's relation to evidence and other epistemically relevant factors. They are not (or should not be) affected by changes in one's character—by whether, for example, one is depressed or elated, angry or affectionate. But some intellectual or propositional attitudes may be historical in the same way that love and hate, fear and admiration can be.

Classes of psychological and propositional attitudes cannot be so sharply and neatly distinguished from one another. The distinction between dynamically permeable activities and epistemically oriented activities does not serve to distinguish between psychological and propositional attitudes just like that, *überhaupt*. There are some people who love constantly and rigidly, nonhistorically. The functional character of their love is assimilable to that of propositional attitudes that are not dynamically permeable to the objects

or contents of their attitudes. The psychological attitudes of such people might be said to be intellectualized. But there are others who believe, doubt, and think in a dynamically permeable way. It would be true of them that their cognitive propositional attitudes are psychologized: their thinking, doubting, believing is affected by their character traits, by their irascibility, melancholy, cheerfulness. Their propositional attitudes are dynamically responsive to nonepistemic features of the contents of their propositional attitudes. Psychological associations (puns, visual associations, memories) connected with the cognitive or propositional content of their attitudes affect their propositional attitudes. They do not stand in the same epistemic relation to someone they dislike as they stand to those whom they like: they cannot hear what that person says in the same way that they would hear just those words from someone they like. They cannot think about what they fear with the same epistemically sensitive attitude as they take to what does not frighten them. It is more difficult for them to evaluate a core belief about what they fear than it is for them to determine the truth of a belief about what brings them pride, and both are more difficult for them to evaluate than a belief about what does not directly affect them. Not only the system of beliefs, but *they* are changed by their doubts, distrusts, loves. For such people, thinking is, as one might say, psychological, affected by moods, by likes and dislikes.

Still, one might object that this sort of Proustian differentiation of types of believers and lovers does not affect the basic point, that at least *knowledge* is not psychologically dynamically permeable. If our propositional attitude is formed by associations rather than by our epistemic relation to its propositional content, then our propositional attitude does not qualify as *knowledge*. And if our beliefs about our acquaintances is affected by our likes and dislikes, then those beliefs are not rational, however true or appropriate they may otherwise be. Still, even if the conditions for knowledge guarantee its immunity to epistemically irrelevant psychological attitudes, the beneficial functioning of such attitudes is not thereby necessarily best assured by their rational corrigibility. Though a propositional attitude becomes epistemically suspect when it is formed by a person's psychological condition (fears, elation, or melancholy), propositionalizing or intellectualizing psychological attitudes need not be the best way to assure sanity and soundness.

What is it then that we want, when we want psychological attitudes to be rational? There is often no one whose inferences are more logical, more formally impeccable, and often there is no one more truthful, than the local lunatic. It is because his impeccable and exemplary truth-preserving inferences do not serve him in the right way that the local lunatic is in trouble. No particular additional truth or inference can help him. His problem is that his rationality cannot guide or form what he does because it is not appropriately rooted in his character. Because we want to avoid the lunatic's troubles,

we want more than that our attitudes be corrigible by considerations of truth and validity. We also want them to be appropriately formed to serve our thriving.

The direction we take in assuring the correctness and appropriateness of psychological attitudes may vary, as we focus primarily on their correction or on their formation. If we concentrate on avoiding the harms of malformation, we emphasize rational corrigibility. We are then likely to favor propositionalizing the contents of our psychological attitudes. On the assumption that we at least attempt to free ourselves of attitudes clustered around false beliefs, we attempt to secure the appropriateness of psychological attitudes by assimilating them as closely as we can to propositional attitudes oriented to truth. If, however, we concentrate on developing and forming appropriate psychological attitudes, we emphasize their historicity, attempting to discover the conditions under which dynamic permeability conduces to flourishing.

Rather than assimilating appropriateness and thriving to rationality, construed as preserving truth through inferential sequences, we might construe rationality as itself partially constituted by what serves us well. If the difference between the lunatic and the wise person is a difference in their rationality, then rationality has acquired a substantive as well as a formal condition. If rationality is understood to serve thriving, the rationality of a person of practical wisdom is as much a function of her character—her having appropriate habits arising from well-formed perceptions and desires—as it is from her drawing the right inferences from the right premises. It is what the wise person knows, and the role that knowledge plays in the fine attunement of action, as well as the logically impeccable character of reasoning, that makes the person rational. It is by doing the right thing at the right time in the right way that rationality serves the wise person; it is this that keeps her truth-telling and valid inferences from being inconsequential, inappropriate, blind, stubborn, or silly.

How does any of this help Louis and Ella determine what they require from their psychological attitudes, if those attitudes are to conduce to their thriving? Certainly, if their interactions are to be beneficial, they had better perceive one another accurately. To avoid their responses being formed by mere perceptions of the moment, to avoid the *folie a deux* problem, it is also important that their attunement be appropriate. But how is that to be determined? As we saw, what conduces to the continuity of their love might serve neither of them well, and what conduces to Louis's developing and thriving need not serve the interactive harmony between him and Ella. Although the historicity of their attitudes—their attunement—initially seemed to promise the appropriateness of their responses, there can be difficulties in that promise being fulfilled. The beneficial functions of psychological attitudes seem no more assured by their historicity than by their ability to be rationalized.

Standardly, but not necessarily, rationality, appropriateness, and thriving

ing are interwoven. It is the dream of rational social politics that in the long run these converge even if they cannot coincide. Of course these three conditions can vary independently: the lunatic shows that rationality does not assure appropriateness; the dangers of *folie a deux* show that adaptability and attunement do not assure thriving. Still, such counterexamples do not undermine the presumptive interconnections: rationality (as defined by truthfulness supported by validity) is a central guide to appropriateness, and appropriateness a central guide to flourishing. That the separation of rationality from appropriateness produces the lunatic, and the separation of appropriateness from thriving produces the unhappiness of those who suffer *folie a deux*, proves the point.

Still, how have we spoken to Louis and Ella? It would be a mistake to think we've left them in a sound as well as a safe place. Even if they are assured of the connection between rationality, appropriateness, and thriving, they have yet to discover just what these require of them in particular situations. How dynamically permeable should Louis be without endangering his integrity or joining Ella in a case of *folie a deux*? How ramified or regionalized should his responses be? What *does* rationality require? What *would* constitute thriving? How are the thriving of Louis, Ella, Louis-and-Ella to be appropriately weighted when they seem to go in different directions?

We've left them just where they were: in the continuous, delicate, and delicious balancing acts of their lives. But that is just exactly where we should leave them. It is only the details of their particular situation that can determine what would be rational, what would be appropriate, what would constitute (whose?) thriving. No general philosophical conclusion about the presumptive connections between rationality, appropriateness, and thriving can possibly help them determine just what corrections rationality recommends or requires as appropriate to their condition. It can't even help them determine whether their sensitivities are sound or pathological, insufficient or excessive, let alone whether they should ramify or regionalize their responses to one another, to balance integrity with continuity in such a way as to conduce to thriving. The confluence of rationality, appropriateness, and thriving cannot help them to determine the directions in which rationality or appropriateness or even thriving—taken singly or coordinately—lie. And that is as it should be. Our task cannot be to resolve but only to understand the quandaries of Louis and Ella. Since their condition and its problems are historical, that is, particular, their solutions must be particular.

Notes

1. An earlier, shorter version of this paper was presented as a commentary to Robert Kraut's "Love *De Re*" (chap. 18 of this volume) at a meeting of the Eastern Division of the American Philosophical Association. In that paper, Kraut examined an account of love as a *de*

re, rather than a *de dicto* attitude; he also analyzed it on the model of naming, as a rigidly designating relation. In a later paper, he proposed an account of love as defined by a series of specific counterfactuals: if the beloved were to die, the lover would grieve . . . etc.

2. This "feeling" or "affective" tone of psychological attitudes is, as Stocker has argued, a central feature of their motivating force. Often the effects of psychological attitudes are a consequence of what it feels like to have them.

3. The analysis of the constancy of love rests on an account of the criteria for personal identity, as well as the criterion for the identity of psychological attitudes whose functional roles change over time.

4. Cf. Robert Kraut, "Love *De Re*."

5. Cf. L. Tov-Ruach, "Jealousy, Attention and Loss," *Explaining Emotions*, edited by A. O. Rorty (Berkeley, Calif., 1980).

6. But friends who are not equally wise also have special problems. Perhaps this is why Aristotle thought true friendship could only exist among *phronimoi*.

7. Not all lovers want all this Proustian-Jamesian sensibility from their loves. If Ella is strongly autonomous, so that the details of Louis's love for her do not affect the person she becomes, if his perceptions of her do not further individuate her, she may not care whether Louis's love is historical: appropriate, not-too-rigid constancy may be all she wants, and indeed all she prefers. Ella might be the sort of person who finds an acutely historical love too demanding and time-consuming, preventing her from getting on with other things to which she wants to attend. It is just this sort of difference about preferences for historicity or for mere decent, not-too-rigid general constancy that leads lovers to be baffled by one another's disappointments in what seems to each of them a perfectly adequate fidelity.

A set of observations of prudence seems to follow from this analysis. (1) A friendship between a person who hopes that the constancy of love comes from its historicity and one for whom constancy is a matter of rigidity is likely to lead to deep misunderstanding. But such friends might reach an agreement about asymmetry: one of the friends might want to receive, but be disinclined to give, historical sensitivity; the other might have the appropriate corresponding desire, to give a historical sensitivity but be reassured by a rigid constancy rather than a dynamic permeability. Such a love might be very stable, even though there was considerable asymmetry of understanding between the pair. (2) Although a friendship between two constant, nonhistorical lovers is not likely to lead to misunderstanding, it is also likely not to assure very deep understanding. But both people might prefer to get on with other things in their lives. (3) A friendship between two strongly historical types might phase itself out. It is a difficult empirical question, one which we are not now in any position to answer, whether such differences—differences between a desire for dynamic permeability and a desire for rigidity—are associated with gender or with socioeconomic dependency.

8. See my "Literary Post-script: Characters, Persons, Selves, Individuals," *The Identities of Persons*, edited by A. O. Rorty (Berkeley, Calif., 1976).

9. The early version of this paper was expanded and presented to a colloquium on the emotions sponsored by La Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 23-25, March 1984. Because organizers of that conference asked participants to address issues concerning the rationality of the emotions, I argued that evaluating psychological attitudes for their rationality is not a particularly perspicuous way of evaluating their appropriateness, their utility, or their soundness. Cf. "Varieties of Rationality, Varieties of Emotions" *Social Science Information*, 1985.