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## **A Treatise Of Human Nature**

Being An Attempt to introduce the experimental Method of Reasoning Into  
Moral Subjects

Of The Passions

**Hume, David**

**London, 1739**

Sect. XI. Of the amorous passion, or love betwixt the sexes.

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PART too it proceeds, that any great *difference* in  
 II. the degrees of any quality is call'd a *distance*  
 by a common metaphor, which, however  
*Of love* trivial it may appear, is founded on natural  
*and ha-* principles of the imagination. A great dif-  
*tered.* ference inclines us to produce a distance.  
 The ideas of distance and difference are,  
 therefore, connected together. Connected  
 ideas are readily taken for each other; and  
 this is in general the source of the metaphor,  
 as we shall have occasion to observe after-  
 wards.

## S E C T. XI.

*Of the amorous passion, or love be-  
 twixt the sexes.*

O F all the compound passions, which  
 proceed from a mixture of love and  
 hatred with other affections, no one better de-  
 serves our attention, than that love, which  
 arises betwixt the sexes, as well on account  
 of its force and violence, as those curious  
 principles of philosophy, for which it af-  
 fords us an uncontestable argument. 'Tis  
 plain, that this affection, in its most natu-  
 ral



ral state, is deriv'd from the conjunction SECT.  
of three different impreffions or passions, XI.  
*viz.* The pleasing sensation arising from Of the a-  
beauty; the bodily appetite for generation; morous pas-  
and a generous kindness or good-will. The sion, &c.  
origin of kindness from beauty may be  
explain'd from the foregoing reasoning.  
The question is how the bodily appetite is  
excited by it.

THE appetite of generation, when con-  
fin'd to a certain degree, is evidently of the  
pleasant kind, and has a strong connexion  
with all the agreeable emotions. Joy, mirth,  
vanity, and kindness are all incentives to this  
desire; as well as music, dancing, wine, and  
good cheer. On the other hand, sorrow,  
melancholy, poverty, humility are destruc-  
tive of it. From this quality 'tis easily con-  
ceiv'd why it shou'd be connected with the  
sense of beauty.


BUT there is another principle that con-  
tributes to the same effect. I have observ'd  
that the parallel direction of the desires is a  
real relation, and no less than a resemblance  
in their sensation, produces a connexion  
among them. That we may fully com-  
prehend the extent of this relation, we must  
consider, that any principal desire may be





PART attended with subordinate ones, which are connected with it, and to which if other desires are parallel, they are by that means related to the principal one. Thus hunger may oft be consider'd as the primary inclination of the soul, and the desire of approaching the meat as the secondary one; since 'tis absolutely necessary to the satisfying that appetite. If an object, therefore, by any separate qualities, inclines us to approach the meat, it naturally encreases our appetite; as on the contrary, whatever inclines us to set our victuals at a distance, is contradictory to hunger, and diminishes our inclination to them. Now 'tis plain that beauty has the first effect, and deformity the second: Which is the reason why the former gives us a keener appetite for our victuals, and the latter is sufficient to disgust us at the most savoury dish, that cookery has invented. All this is easily applicable to the appetite for generation.

FROM these two relations, *viz.* resemblance and a parallel desire, there arises such a connexion betwixt the sense of beauty, the bodily appetite, and benevolence, that they become in a manner inseparable: And we find from experience, that 'tis indifferent

II.  
  
*Of love  
 and hatred.*

different which of them advances first; since any of them is almost sure to be attended with the related affections. One, who is inflam'd with lust, feels at least a momentary kindness towards the object of it, and at the same time fancies her more beautiful than ordinary; as there are many, who begin with kindness and esteem for the wit and merit of the person, and advance from that to the other passions. But the most common species of love is that which first arises from beauty, and afterwards diffuses itself into kindness and into the bodily appetite. Kindness or esteem, and the appetite to generation, are too remote to unite easily together. The one is, perhaps, the most refin'd passion of the soul; the other the most gross and vulgar. The love of beauty is plac'd in a just medium betwixt them, and partakes of both their natures: From whence it proceeds, that 'tis so singularly fitted to produce both.

THIS account of love is not peculiar to my system, but is unavoidable on any hypothesis. The three affections, which compose this passion, are evidently distinct, and has each of them its distinct object. 'Tis certain, therefore, that 'tis only by their re-

SECT.  
XI.

*Of the  
amorous  
passion, &c.*





PART lation they produce each other. But the  
 II. relation of passions is not alone sufficient.  
 Of love 'Tis likewise necessary, there shou'd be a  
 and ha- relation of ideas. The beauty of one per-  
 tred. son never inspires us with love for another.  
 This then is a sensible proof of the double  
 relation of impressions and ideas. From one  
 instance so evident as this we may form a  
 judgment of the rest.

THIS may also serve in another view to  
 illustrate what I have insisted on concern-  
 ing the origin of pride and humility, love  
 and hatred. I have observ'd, that tho' self  
 be the object of the first set of passions, and  
 some other person of the second, yet these  
 objects cannot alone be the causes of the  
 passions; as having each of them a relation  
 to two contrary affections, which must from  
 the very first moment destroy each other.  
 Here then is the situation of the mind, as  
 I have already describ'd it. It has certain  
 organs naturally fitted to produce a passion;  
 that passion, when produc'd, naturally turns  
 the view to a certain object. But this not  
 being sufficient to produce the passion, there  
 is requir'd some other emotion, which by  
 a double relation of impressions and ideas  
 may set these principles in action, and be-  
 stow