


# A General Theory of Love

*By Thomas Lewis, Fari Amini, Richard Lannon*

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This original and lucid account of the complexities of love and its essential role in human well-being draws on the latest scientific research. Three eminent psychiatrists tackle the difficult task of reconciling what artists and thinkers have known for thousands of years about the human heart with what has only recently been learned about the primitive functions of the human brain.

*A General Theory of Love* demonstrates that our nervous systems are not self-contained: from earliest childhood, our brains actually link with those of the people close to us, in a silent rhythm that alters the very structure of our brains, establishes life-long emotional patterns, and makes us, in large part, who we are. Explaining how relationships function, how parents shape their child's developing self, how psychotherapy really works, and how our society dangerously flouts essential emotional laws, this is a work of rare passion and eloquence that will forever change the way you think about human intimacy.

*From the Trade Paperback edition.*

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## Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review
Poor, poor science--it gets blamed for everything. While it might be true that some of our alienation and unhappiness stem from a too-rational misunderstanding of emotion, it's also true that science is its own remedy. *A General Theory of Love*, by San Francisco psychiatrists Thomas Lewis, Fari Amini, and Richard Lannon, is a powerfully humanistic look at the natural history of our deepest feelings, and why a simple hug is often more important than a portfolio full of stock options. Their grasp of neural science is topnotch, but the book is more about humans as social animals and how we relate to others--for once, the brain plays second fiddle to the heart.

Though some of their social analysis is less than fully thought out--surely e-mail isn't a truly unique form of communication, as they suggest--the work as a whole is strong and merits attention. Science, it turns out, does have much to say about our messy feelings and relationships. While much of it could be filed under "common sense," it's nice to know that common sense is replicable. Hard-science types will probably be exasperated with the constant shifts between data and appeals to emotional truths, but the rest of us will see in *A General Theory of Love* a new synthesis of research and poetry. *--Rob Lightner*

From Publishers Weekly
The Beatles may have sounded naive when they assured us that "all you need is love," but they may not have been far off the mark. New research in brain function has proven that love is a human necessity; its absence damages not only individuals, but our whole society. In this stimulating work, psychiatrists Lewis, Amini and Lannon explain how and why our brains have evolved to require consistent bonding and nurturing. They contend that close emotional connections actually change neural patterns in those who engage in them, affecting our sense of self and making empathy and socialization possible. Indeed, the authors insist, "in some important ways, people cannot be stable on their own." Yet American society is structured to frustrate emotional health, they contend: self-sufficiency and materialistic goals are seen as great virtues, while emotional dependence is considered a weakness. Because our culture does not sufficiently value interpersonal relationships, we are plagued by anxiety and depression, narcissism and superficiality, which can lead to violence and self-destructive behaviors. It is futile to try to think our way out of such behaviors, the authors believe, because emotions are not within the intellect's domain. What is needed is healthy bonding from infancy; when this does not occur, the therapist must model it. The authors' utopian vision of emotional health may strike some as vague or conservative to a fault, and the clarity of their thesis is marred by indirect and precious writing. Yet their claim that "what we do inside relationships matters more than any other aspect of human life" is a powerful one. Agent, Carol Mann. 9-city author tour.
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From Library Journal
A traditional subject of poetry and pop psychology is treated here as a scientific construct. Three psychiatry professors (Univ. of California, San Francisco) cover an impressive vista of research and clinical insights from Freud to contemporary neuroscience. They focus on the limbic brain as the source and conduit of emotions like love. The link between the development of the limbic brain and the development of personality are described here in confident prose. Society is castigated for failing to encourage full-time parenting and other policies that support limbic development and the human need for love. Although the authors sometimes substitute metaphor for empirical support and easily dismiss other perspectives, the book is well written and provides a credible introduction to the neuroscience of emotions. Recommended for academic and larger

public libraries.
*-Antoinette Brinkman, Southwest Indiana Mental Health Ctr. Lib., Evansville*
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## Users Review

**From reader reviews:**

**Malcolm Khan:**

Do you have favorite book? In case you have, what is your favorite's book? Reserve is very important thing for us to be aware of everything in the world. Each book has different aim or maybe goal; it means that book has different type. Some people sense enjoy to spend their a chance to read a book. They may be reading whatever they consider because their hobby is definitely reading a book. How about the person who don't like reading through a book? Sometime, man feel need book whenever they found difficult problem as well as exercise. Well, probably you will want this A General Theory of Love.

**Kevin Caputo:**

Nowadays reading books are more than want or need but also turn into a life style. This reading behavior give you lot of advantages. The huge benefits you got of course the knowledge the rest of the information inside the book that improve your knowledge and information. The information you get based on what kind of publication you read, if you want have more knowledge just go with education books but if you want truly feel happy read one along with theme for entertaining including comic or novel. The actual A General Theory of Love is kind of e-book which is giving the reader unstable experience.

**Debra Espiritu:**

The reason why? Because this A General Theory of Love is an unordinary book that the inside of the book waiting for you to snap it but latter it will zap you with the secret the item inside. Reading this book alongside it was fantastic author who write the book in such awesome way makes the content inside easier to understand, entertaining method but still convey the meaning totally. So , it is good for you for not hesitating having this ever again or you going to regret it. This phenomenal book will give you a lot of positive aspects than the other book have such as help improving your ability and your critical thinking approach. So , still want to hesitate having that book? If I were being you I will go to the publication store hurriedly.

**Ana Smith:**

As a university student exactly feel bored to be able to reading. If their teacher asked them to go to the library as well as to make summary for some reserve, they are complained. Just very little students that has reading's soul or real their interest. They just do what the professor want, like asked to the library. They go to presently there but nothing reading very seriously. Any students feel that reading is not important, boring and also can't see colorful photos on there. Yeah, it is for being complicated. Book is very important to suit your needs. As we know that on this time, many ways to get whatever we would like. Likewise word says, ways to reach Chinese's country. Therefore , this A General Theory of Love can make you truly feel more

interested to read.


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