Kylie Gannon

**Introduction**

 In *Love, by All Accounts*, Stump introduces three accounts of love: the responsiveness account, the volitional account, and the relational account. These accounts are all flawed. I propose a different account that will help address the issues caused by the others. I propose a historical account: a love that is based upon a shared history between two people, and this love and shared history is caused by aspects of the responsiveness and relational accounts. These aspects include but are not limited to valuing someone’s characteristics, valuing one’s relationship with another, and having continuous interactions with someone. These aspects all influence one another, as well as shared history and love.

**Background**

According to the responsiveness account, the lover loves their beloved because of their characteristics. Based on this argument, however, people would be able to find the same characteristics in others, and thus love others in the exact same way (pg. 25). The volitional account argues that the value of love comes from lover’s love of the beloved and is dependent on it. Though this argument allows for love to be more unique, it does not give any reason for one to love a particular person (pg. 26). Finally, the relational account focuses on the continuing connection and interactions between the beloved and the lover. Love involves valuing someone and one’s relationship with that someone and seeing that relationship as a good reason for such valuing. In this account, one could love someone without having a relationship with them (pg. 26).

**Historical Account**

In the context of the proposed historical account, a shared history should be interpreted as a relationship between two people that stems from past interactions and experiences. This is not the same as the relational account because although these interactions are continuing in the present, there is also a focus on what occurred in the past as to what helps to make the relationship unique. The events in the past strengthen the bond between the beloved and the lover and help them love one another. For example, when people go on vacations, they make memories and new experiences together. Over the course of the actual vacation, the people were able to grow closer and learn more about one another because of what they were experiencing. This vacation eventually became something that occurred in the past. After the vacation, they were able to have a closer relationship by reflecting upon the event and having it as a part of their shared history; the vacation is something that ties them together. This shared history strengthened the relationship of these people and could lead to love.

One thing that causes love and a shared history between two people is when they enjoy the innate qualities of one another. In order to love someone, you must have some type of relationship with them first. Often, this relationship begins as a friendship. According to C.S. Lewis in *The Four Loves*, someone cannot be friends with one who does not have something in common with them that sets them both apart from everyone else in society (pg.110). That common trait or value can make it so people are likely to enjoy one another’s qualities and company. However, enjoying the traits of someone is not dependent on those traits belonging to both of the people in the relationship. A person who is serious can enjoy a person who is funny because the funny person is able to make them enjoy themselves and laugh, and the funny person can enjoy the serious person because they don’t feel like they constantly need to be making jokes in their presence. If they enjoy one another’s traits and being around each other, they may enter a relationship and eventually begin to love each other. Since they were friends or had some other previous relationship first, this love formed based off of their past and current interactions, or their shared history.

When someone values their relationship with another, it can often lead to a shared history and love between those people. This is logical; if one values their relationship with someone else, they would want to continue having interactions with them. This would cause a shared history between the people to form because they had experiences with one another. This relationship could become one of love.

By having continuous interactions with someone, a shared history is automatically made. Again, this isn’t the same as the relational account because the proposed historical account more so emphases past interactions. The interactions one has with another will eventually be considered to have occurred in the past and thus become a part of those people’s shared history. These interactions and shared history can lead to love because one would not wish to continually interact with someone if they did not care for them or desire some sort of relationship with them. Additionally, having continuous interactions with someone strengthens any relationship that may already exist or may allow a relationship to develop. Through these continuous interactions, a shared history and love may form.

It is important to realize that these arguments are not distinct from one another. Having continuous interactions with someone is influenced by valuing their characteristics, as well as valuing one’s relationship with them. Someone will not wish to continue interacting with someone else with whom they don’t like their characteristics, and if one does not value their relationship with another they will not seek to continue interacting with that person. Valuing one’s characteristics can be influenced by continuous interactions in which these characteristics are revealed. Valuing one’s relationship can be influenced by interactions and experiences with that person. One comes to care about their relationship with someone else because of the experiences they have had with that person. Due to these arguments being intertwined with each other and shared history to form the historical account, the problems caused by the other three accounts of love are countered.

The responsiveness problem of finding the same characteristics in others is solved by the shared history and valuing one’s relationship. Even if one sees the characteristics of their beloved in another, they will stay with their beloved because they value their relationship due to their experiences together. The idea of shared history, valuing traits, and continuous interaction gives reasoning for loving a particular person, which was not addressed in the volitional account. One loves a particular person because they love their values and all of their interactions with them, both past and present. Finally, putting an emphasis on past interactions and experiences between people addresses an issue of the relational account: the fact that one did not necessarily have to be in a relationship to love someone. By emphasizing shared experiences and interactions, people must have had past interactions or some type of relationship with someone in order to love them.

**Conclusion**

I propose a new account of love: the historical account. This account involves the responsiveness and relational accounts having an influence on the shared history between people in order to create love.