

# Inquiry

An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy

ISSN: (Print) (Online) Journal homepage: <https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/sinq20>

---

## Beauvoir on how we can love authentically

Matthew Robson

To cite this article: Matthew Robson (18 Jan 2023): Beauvoir on how we can love authentically, Inquiry, DOI: [10.1080/0020174X.2023.2168300](https://doi.org/10.1080/0020174X.2023.2168300)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/0020174X.2023.2168300>



© 2023 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group



Published online: 18 Jan 2023.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 1195




View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

# Beauvoir on how we can love authentically

Matthew Robson 

Philosophy Department, Durham University, Durham, UK



## ABSTRACT

Reading Beauvoir's descriptions of love in *The Second Sex* (TSS), one would be forgiven for being pessimistic about the possibility of authentic love. What I will do in this paper is, using Beauvoir's diagnosis of inauthentic love under patriarchy, construct a set of conditions that an authentic love would be guided by and strive to manifest. I will then defend the importance of Beauvoir's views by demonstrating its explanatory power. Firstly, I will show how Beauvoir's account can deal with two common contemporary problems that are often raised as objections against accounts of love that include a moral element. Then, in the third section, I will also show the value of this account by demonstrating its ability to explain why different kinds of love feel differently. The kind I will focus on will be unrequited love; this will be in dialogue with vision-based accounts to highlight Beauvoir's unique contribution.

**ARTICLE HISTORY** Received 14 October 2022; Accepted 9 January 2023

**KEYWORDS** Beauvoir; ethics; love

Reading Beauvoir's description of love in *The Second Sex* (TSS), one would be forgiven for being pessimistic about the prospects of genuine and valuable intimate relationships. Indeed, the few remarks she does make with respect to authentic relations can, in the context of the book, appear vague and possible only on the grounds of a substantial effort and change. And while no doubt the kind of relationships based on mutual respect and recognition of the other she talks of will require hard work, by paying attention to exactly how it is that love goes wrong and is used as an inauthentic escape from one's situation, we can begin to spell out what an authentic love would look like. For this paper, in keeping with most of the analysis in TSS, I will mainly be

**CONTACT** Matthew Robson  matthew.robson@durham.ac.uk  Philosophy Department, Durham University, 51 Old Elvet, Durham DH1 3LE, UK

© 2023 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way.

attending to authenticity within romantic love. It may be that some of the conditions will be useful in understanding other kinds of love (friendship, parental), but without the time to carefully analyse this, it would be too rash to assume that they would hold across different types of relationships without revision or adjustment. In section 1, I will discuss Beauvoir's analysis of inauthentic love and use it as the foundation from which to build up a list of conditions that would make a love authentic. It should be noted that I will largely be working within Beauvoir's broader philosophical framework, and as such will be taking for granted most of her analysis of woman's situation. While section 1 will spell out in more detail what I take authenticity in love to involve, it is useful to give a brief definition of what authenticity means for Beauvoir. For Beauvoir, authenticity is about embracing the reality of our existential condition; specifically, recognising the ambiguity of subjectivity – our simultaneous desires for being and for the disclosure of being (Lundgren-Gothlin 1997, 39). Furthermore, authenticity requires that we recognise our freedom and take responsibility for it and its moral implications which, for Beauvoir, means recognising how our freedom and that of others around us are linked, and being committed to realising both. Therefore, authenticity in intersubjective relationships involves grasping ourselves and others as the free subjects we are with all the respect and recognition that that freedom morally requires. By extension, then, authenticity in love matters because, for Beauvoir, authenticity and morality are deeply linked (authentically taking up our freedom and respecting that of the other requires an authentic grasp of our condition); indeed, authentic love becomes an expression of moral freedom itself (Pettersen 2017, 166).

Instead of defending the more fundamental basis of her existentialism, I will try to motivate acceptance of her account of love in two related ways. Firstly, in section 2, I will show the explanatory power of Beauvoir's account by applying her analysis to two problems commonly found in the contemporary literature on the philosophy of love; namely, how do theories of love concerned with the morality of love deal with negative evaluations of the beloved and the partiality of love. These objections will be motivated by appeal to the existing literature, as well as by appeal to our ordinary lived experience of love. Secondly, I will show how Beauvoir's love, rooted as it is in existential phenomenology, can enhance our understanding of the wide varieties of love that we experience in our lives and, importantly, why they might be experienced as different. This will be done by considering the example of unrequited love. Here, in section 3, Beauvoir's account will be contrasted with a vision-based theory to

demonstrate how her analysis can pick up on experiential differences that might be overlooked by other theories. Section 1 will therefore show the ability of Beauvoir to provide a positive account of authentic love, while sections 2 and 3 will provide examples of how it can be productively applied to contemporary topics in the philosophy of love. This paper will demonstrate that her ideas are best placed to make sense of our actual experience of love, and of the important and valuable role it often plays in our lives.

## 1. The conditions of authentic love

In this first section, I will lay out the key features and conditions that are necessary for love to be authentic, in Beauvoir's sense. While the vast majority of the discussion of love in TSS is a description of romantic love under patriarchy, and is therefore presented as inauthentic, paradoxical, and oppressive, there are a few hints at what a positive account would look like. By paradoxical here, I don't mean to imply that within authentic love all problems and contradictions would be solved. Rather, the paradoxes in inauthentic love are largely as a result of attempting to escape the realities of our human condition (and for woman, trying to justify her inessential status); whereas, in authentic love, the ambiguity of our condition would be embraced. Moreover, I believe that by paying close attention to her diagnosis of inauthentic love, and the pitfalls of woman's situation more generally, we can identify what authentic love would have to avoid, and inversely, what it would have to involve.

The first place where we can see Beauvoir's description of inauthentic love is in her account of the married woman. It should be noted that, as with all the analyses in TSS, it's an archetype. What I mean by this, is that the descriptions of these people in TSS don't have to be read in a strict literal sense as particular individuals who actually exist. Rather, they are better understood as possible inauthentic approaches to woman's situation that have been magnified and separated for the purpose of analysis. Thus, they become paradigmatic descriptions of inauthenticity in marriage, love, and so on. Indeed, the state of marriage, and especially the status of women in marriage, has changed dramatically from when Beauvoir was writing. Nevertheless, her diagnosis of the problem, and what we learn about authentic love from it, is still important to relationships beyond early twentieth century married couples.

Marriage can deny the freedom of both parties, particularly the woman. Beauvoir says in particular reference to eroticism within marriage

that 'marriage is obscene in principle insofar as it transforms into rights and duties those mutual relations which should be founded on a spontaneous urge' (1997, 463). Marriage viewed like this becomes an institution that binds people together, and as such frustrates the potential exercise of freedom; especially when bearing in mind the historical context of marriage as being the only respectable way for women to enter into society. Beauvoir also argues that 'marriage is intended to deny her a man's liberty; but there is neither love nor individuality without liberty' (1997, 454). One way of looking at this, albeit pessimistically, would be to see marriage as one attempt to ensure that one continues to be loved, or to be loved necessarily. By necessarily here, we mean not contingent. That is, in marriage, the parties see their union as a kind of inevitability. As a legally binding agreement, with allusions to the union being everlasting, marriage suppresses the freedom and therefore contingency (the possibility of it not being the case) of love, presenting it instead as absolute and guaranteed. Embracing the free and contingent nature of love can be uncomfortable and unsettling, yet it's necessary if we are to engage in projects authentically, which is to say, engage in them with the full consciousness of our freedom and responsibility. Here we have our first condition of authentic love: *it must be freely given*.

Now, when we say that love must be freely given, and be continuously given only through free choice, that is not the same as saying that love must be given capriciously. Skye Cleary, for example, has argued that Beauvoir's heavy stress on freedom in loving might lead to some unintuitive conclusions: 'authentic loving insists on the freedom to transcend in ways that potentially lead away from being in a relationship because people are free to break up and choose other lovers and projects'. (Cleary 2015, 151) However, choosing something freely and being committed to it are not mutually exclusive. As we'll see when we discuss the partiality of love below, Beauvoir herself gives great value to commitment. The question is: is that commitment given freely, i.e. chosen instead of other available projects and renewed continuously, or is it committed to out of desperation, because of a lack of suitable alternatives as seems to be the case with the married woman Beauvoir describes. A freely chosen love could be extremely difficult to leave because of one's attachment to the beloved, that would not necessarily make it inauthentic.

If love is not freely given, for instance, entered into as the only legitimate entry into society open to women, then it not only intrinsically undermines that project's authenticity, but also affects how that project

can be realised. In her discussion of the Mystic, for instance, Beauvoir makes a distinction between 'masculine' and 'feminine' forms of devotion, where the latter is often characterised by bodily imagery and of a devotion of her very self as a body, as an object, rather than devotion expressed through concrete projects (de Beauvoir 1997, 682–683). Of course, this leads to a frustration of one's freedom by attempting to give over one's self, and by extension responsibility and freedom, to another.

The next place where we can find hints at what authentic love would look like is in Beauvoir's discussion of the narcissist. For Beauvoir, narcissism is a response some women take to finding themselves prohibited from realising concrete projects in the world. As a result, they find their reality and justification through their own immanence – their own ego (de Beauvoir 1997, 641). This means that all of her actions are aimed at gaining recognition of the value of her ego. However, in order to do this, she needs the eyes of the other, but the relation she establishes, because her ego has supreme value, cannot involve reciprocity: 'This tie that binds her to others implies no reciprocity of exchange, for she would cease to be a narcissist if she sought to obtain recognition in the free estimate of others' (de Beauvoir 1997, 652). It is clear that, for Beauvoir, generosity in love requires reciprocity, lest it turn into a relationship of dominance and submission (Bergoffen 1997, 29). From this we can infer two more conditions of authentic love: (a) *it involves a concrete grasp of reality beyond oneself*, (b) *it involves the possibility of reciprocation*. The former condition is necessary because, in order to be in mutual authentic relations, we must be engaged in a shared world with the other. This could also be framed in terms of Beauvoir's idea of the 'situation' (Keefe 1996, 153), where the narcissist fails to properly grasp, and take responsibility in the face of, her situation and instead retreats inwards. The narcissist, therefore, lives in a world that she must see as valueless (since she is the supreme value), and so a joint commitment to projects with the other in the world is not possible. We also see further evidence of the importance of moving outside oneself into the world beyond in the mystic. There Beauvoir charges the mystic with either

[putting] herself into relation with an unreality: her double, or God; or she creates an unreal relation with a real being. In both cases she lacks any grasp on the world [...] There is only one way to employ her liberty authentically, and that is to project it through positive action into human society. (1997, 687)

Finally, we come to the woman in love. The woman in love is the clearest example of what inauthentic love looks like. Inauthentic love is lived as a paradox, internally inconsistent, plagued by incompatible demands, and doomed to failure. The situation of woman is one that sets man up as the only being that is permitted to act in the world, thus it's man that creates value, meaning, and so on, whereas woman's attempts to transcend her situation and to create are frustrated. One way to cope with this is to accept the superior position of the male; to give oneself to man in order to be justified by the other's values. In raising the project of loving man itself over and above all else, the woman in love suppresses her own freedom to try and give romance itself the appearance of absolute value that it needs to have to justify her existence (Pettersen 2008, 58). Moreover, in order to be justified by another, you must give up your own claims to create a world, to create values, and so on; as a result, the woman in love identifies wholly with her lover, he grounds her entire reality (de Beauvoir 1997, 661). She becomes what Kathryn Morgan calls an 'identity parasite' (1986, 126), her lover becomes her entire world. As Beauvoir says: 'the woman in love tries to see with his eyes; she reads the books he reads [...] she is another incarnation of her loved one, his reflection, his double: she is he'. (1997, 663) We can see from these descriptions how different this kind of inauthentic love is from the changes to our world that might occur through a mutual relationship. This is not an alteration of perspective that is brought about through individuals working generously and collaboratively to disclose new meanings of the world to each other; rather, it is a one-sided complete abdication of individuality which, under patriarchal romantic myths, is offered to women as the 'proper' form of feminine love.

While Beauvoir focuses on the collapse of the woman's world into her male lover's, it's also the case that a mutual totalising melding of both worlds into one joint world would be undesirable. For what authentic love demands is not the sameness of worlds, but the embrace of the strangeness of the other's (Walker 2010, 339). It is the strangeness and alterity of the loved one that allows us in generosity, exemplified in the erotic encounter, to give recognition to the other and understand our need of and relation to one another (Bergoffen 1997, 99). This denial of the dream of a complete melding of two worlds is necessary for two reasons. Firstly, the dream itself is a denial of our existential condition: that we are individual subjects that, despite our deep integration with the other, are nevertheless different from them, and as such, cannot become a unified whole. Secondly, this dream of unity can become

possessive. Skye Cleary argues that this dream of unity leads into the desire to possess each other to sustain that unity, and as such they become seen as an object to be held onto, not a free subject to engage with generously (2015, 135).

In swearing off this dream of existential unity, however, we are not swearing off the ability to intimately attempt to understand the world of our lover. As we'll see with unrequited love below, the relation we enter into with a loved one puts us in a unique position to engage with, empathise, and learn about, their world. However, it would be arrogant and possessive to assume that one could ever know the other's world completely. Instead, Beauvoir might suggest that learning about our lover's world is a project that, even though they will necessarily escape our complete knowing, we can continuously re-commit ourselves to in order to ever deepen and improve our empathetic understanding of them. Given all this, we can sum up another condition of authentic love related to the view one has of oneself whilst in love: *authentic love requires that one keeps one's sense of self, sense of individuality, one's alterity and otherness.*

It should be noted that by 'one's sense of self', I do not mean that one's self understanding, or that certain particulars of one's character, are not able to be affected by love. Indeed, given how Beauvoir talks about the potential of generous love to transform our understanding of our existential condition, we might even expect this to happen. Instead, this is intended to guard against a specific, and quite literal, demand of self-sacrifice by women under patriarchal romantic myths (Pettersen 2017, 163). Under these myths, feminine devotion is often expected to involve a literal giving over of one's individual sense of self in order to be incorporated into her male lover's being and world.

It's not just the woman's sense of self that is distorted when in love, but also her sense of man. In order for man to provide the justification and attribution of value she desires, he must, necessarily, be the creator of absolute values; he must be akin to God.<sup>1</sup> However, it's not enough to be loved by a god. The woman in love, in her narcissism, needs to be loved as a necessary and supreme love object. She cannot merely be one love object among many, she must be the ultimate object through which her lover's world gains the rest of its meaning.<sup>2</sup> One of the

---

<sup>1</sup>This idea of man being used to justify and ground woman's value has been expressed in a more general (and less gendered) sense as using the other to make up our lack (Vintges 1996, 61).

<sup>2</sup>This is not too dissimilar to Sartre's discussions of being loved as being valued in a qualitatively different way to all other objects (2003, 389–390).



reasons why the loss of love is so deeply feared, according to Beauvoir, is because it represents the possibility of her position as the supreme love object being usurped, and, along with that, the justification for her very existence (de Beauvoir 1997, 674). And of course, such an exaltation of her unique value as a love object can only be achieved through a distorted vision of man. If she is to escape the limitations of her self (a woman in a patriarchal society) then she must give up her self and gain transcendence through a superior subjectivity (i.e. the masculine subject) (Björk 2010, 56). For if he is a free and contingent subject like she is, then his values are revealed as dependent upon his freely choosing them, and as such, lose their absolute status. 'She offers him incense, she bows down, but she is not a friend to him since she does not realise that he is in danger in the world, that his projects and his aims are as fragile as he is' (de Beauvoir 1997, 665). Irene McMullin, in her discussion of jealousy in Beauvoir, points out how the jealous lover seeks to guarantee the evaluations they feel entitled to by enslaving the gaze of their lover to the service of their admiration exclusively, thus denying the freedom of their beloved (2011, 108). Such a project is, of course, inauthentic, and moreover, paradoxical, as the freedom of the beloved is precisely what allows them to value anything in the first place. Therefore: *authentic love requires the grasping of the other's situation, including their freedom and contingency.*

Linda Hansen, drawing on these kinds of comments, emphasises the need to grasp the other as they are, in both their objectivity as well as their subjectivity (1979, 665). One way of reading 'objectivity' here would be to draw on Sartre's idea that a positive idea of love would require us to grasp the Other in their object-ness – their body as looked at (Simont 1992, 194). However, while it is probable that objectivity for Beauvoir would involve grasping the other in their bodily dimension, it is also probable that objectivity implies more than that as well. We should perhaps understand this idea of loving people not as loving their subjectivity and their objectivity, as if these were two distinct aspects of one person, but rather of loving someone in their ambiguous totality; that is, as a person that is both, *simultaneously*, subjective and objective. This ambiguous understanding of grasping someone in both subjectivity and objectivity is exemplified, for Bergoffen, in the erotic encounter, where we are disclosed by the other at the same time as we disclose them (1997, 181).

To summarise then, through examining the features of inauthentic love via Beauvoir's descriptions and analyses of the married woman,

the narcissist, the mystic, and the woman in love, we have sketched a positive list of criteria that authentic love must adhere to according to Beauvoir. These are, in brief: (1) it must be freely given and recognised as such; (2) it must include a grasp of reality beyond oneself; (3) it must have the possibility of reciprocation; (4) one must retain one's sense of individuality; and (5) one must grasp the other as a concrete and engaged individual, as well as a free subjectivity.

Reading these conditions, however, one might wonder where the fact that we live and love under patriarchal conditions fits into the possible authenticity of the love we attempt to engage in while within this social, political, and historical situation. Woman's subjugated position in society is the focal point of the analyses in TSS, including those of love. Indeed, love is seen as not only a possible inauthentic escape from patriarchy that women might take up, but also as a method that sustains that very subjugation. Given this, we might think that all that talk of authentic love above is all very well and good in theory, but in practice we need to work on the politics of resisting patriarchy first; only in a post-patriarchy landscape could we talk of the possibility of loving each other authentically. Here, I wish to consider some pessimistic views about the possibility of loving authentically under patriarchy, and then offer two reasons we might have to resist such pessimism, and allow for the possibility of (a more) authentic love within patriarchy.

There are certainly some thinkers who, at least if not explicitly, read Beauvoir in ways that seem to suggest the pessimistic conclusion that any talk of authentic love under patriarchy is almost oxymoronic. Bergoffen argues that 'generous' love under patriarchal conditions becomes a trap that only further subjugates the woman because the risking of her self in feminine devotion is not reciprocated equally in male devotion: 'The conditions of the couple cannot be met within patriarchy because the categories essential and inessential other distort the realities of our being' (1997, 198). Pettersen, in a similar way, calls authentic love 'post-patriarchal', possible only at the ending of sexism (2017, 164). Indeed, there are times when Beauvoir herself seems to explicitly claim the same kind of idea: 'for woman to love as man does – that is to say, in liberty, without putting her very being in question – she must believe herself his equal and be so in concrete fact' (1997, 705), a little later on she also says: 'when we abolish the slavery of half of humanity, together with the whole system of hypocrisy that it implies, then the "division" of humanity will reveal its genuine significance and the human couple will find its true form'. (1997, 741) Are we then forced to chalk

the possibility of authentic love off as utopian at best and irrelevant to our current situation at worst?

Alternatively, might we find some considerations in Beauvoir to resist this conclusion? I think that there are two considerations that are particularly relevant to our discussions of the conditions of authentic love above that are worth going over here. These are that (1) Beauvoir's treatment of freedom in other works should give us pause to reconsider this idea of a stable authentic love, and (2) that since love itself is a mechanism of woman's subjugation, it also has liberatory political potential.

With regards to the first, by saying that authentic love can only be achieved after dismantling patriarchy, we risk setting up a static and fixed idea of what an authentic love looks like. We freeze this vision of love as a concrete end that, once achieved, needs only to be maintained as is. Such a moral project seems to go against the kind of freedom that Beauvoir builds up in *The Ethics of Ambiguity*. There, Beauvoir places emphasis on the need for moral freedom to always be moving beyond, always reaching towards new situations through new projects, and then in turn, transcending those new situations in new actions again (de Beauvoir 2015, 30). Indeed, even the description of freedom as a 'movement' seems at odds with an ideal of authenticity that could be fully achieved. An idea more in keeping with Beauvoir's comments on freedom would be to suggest that we can never reach the apex of authentic love; rather, even in an egalitarian sexual utopia, we ought to still be being creative, and move forwards beyond our situation to carve out new ways of being with each other. If that is the case, then it is less clear why, if even love outside of patriarchy would still require a constant striving towards more authentic modes of loving, we cannot similarly talk of some kinds of love within patriarchy as striving towards greater degrees of authenticity. Therefore, the conditions of authentic love above are best understood, not as fixed states of affairs that need only be maintained, but as values that should guide our choices in how we love, and as values that require recommitment in new and creative concrete realisations. That is, of course, unless love is unable to challenge patriarchy at all.

This brings us to the second consideration: that of the political potential of love. To declare that all love under patriarchy is equally inauthentic, is to risk separating our 'personal' lives from a more conventional 'public' political project. Such a deferring of love's use till after transformation runs counter to much of the analysis in TSS. Clearly, for Beauvoir, love, when engaged with authentically, can have profound existential and

moral effects on us (de Beauvoir 1997, 737). To argue that heterosexual romantic love is impossible under patriarchy would be to fail to grasp the existential, philosophical, social (and therefore political) importance our most intimate relationships have. Indeed, Beauvoir can be read as giving the erotic encounter a profound and transformative role in how we engage with and understand ourselves and others (Bergoffen 1997, 181). In TSS, Beauvoir herself says, ‘already, indeed, there have appeared between men and women friendships, rivalries, complicities, comradeships – chaste or sexual – which past centuries could not have conceived’ (1997, 740). This certainly sounds like Beauvoir is expressing a positive attitude towards some of the social and personal change that has happened so far in the ways in which we love each other. Given all that Beauvoir says about freedom, politics, the transformative effects of the erotic, and so on, it seems that we can talk of different ways of loving under patriarchy as being more or less authentic. Whether they count as more or less, will depend on whether they are taken up with a conscious attitude, within a broader anti-oppression net of projects, and sensitive to those conditions outlined above, or whether they fall into premade forms that reproduce patriarchal ideals, ideas, and relationships. The conditions of authentic love above, then, take on not only a moral importance, but a political one as well.

## **2. Application to two contemporary problems in the philosophy of love**

Having set out the conditions for an authentic love, I will now start, in this section, to motivate acceptance of that account. In this section I will apply Beauvoir’s account to two commonly discussed aspects of our ordinary experience of love. These two features will be negative and mundane evaluations of the beloved, as well as the partiality of love. I have chosen these two because they are often discussed in connection to approaches to love that include a moral element, as Beauvoir’s clearly does.

### **2.1. Negative and mundane evaluations**

One such ‘everyday’ feature of love that is often used as a kind of ‘test’ is that of mundane and negative evaluations of the beloved. The idea being that, intuitively, it seems plausible that we can love someone while simultaneously holding some negative evaluations of them (Zangwill 2013,

307). This kind of thing seems to be a fairly ordinary feature of our everyday experience of love. For example, I might find a relative a bit annoying to be around, and nevertheless still love them. Similarly, when we talk of people we love, we often point out properties that, from the outside, seem mundane or even arbitrary (Abramson and Leite 2011, 687). For example, how are we to make sense of someone who, when asked what they remember about a lover, responds with talk of how they used to fuss over their hair in the morning, or fidgeted with their pen, and so on.<sup>3</sup> These kinds of judgements about a beloved person appear to cause problems for any account that argues that love is, at bottom, some sort of evaluation, affirmation, or reaction to, some positive or good property(ies) of the individual. For instance, if love just is the proper emotional response to personhood or rational agency, then it's difficult to see how that could be squared with these sorts of judgements. This is a problem for Beauvoir because, if an essential feature of authentic love requires the recognition of the freedom of the other, and if freedom ought always be recognised as a (moral) good; then it looks like love becomes essentially a positive affirmation of the other's freedom. But if that is the case, then either love is somehow lessened by acknowledging negative features of the beloved, or the importance I attach to that person's negative/mundane features is mistaken, and ought to count for nothing; neither of which seem to align with my actual experiences. If I sometimes find my friend's sense of humour boring, for instance, neither the response that that judgement is irrelevant to, or somehow lessens, my love for them, seems to fit with our intuitions about love. This could be a further problem for Beauvoir, for if our experience of love includes reserving an important place for these kinds of negative/mundane judgements, which seem fairly unique to particular individuals, then the conditions above might start to look overly abstracted and far away from love in practice.

However, the conclusion that negative judgements either lessen love or are mistaken, would only be entailed if Beauvoir's account *identified* love with respecting the freedom of the other exclusively. While it's true that consciously recognising the freedom of the other is a necessary condition for authentic love, it's not sufficient for it. On a metaphysical level, Beauvoir, at various points, draws a distinction between our fundamental ontological freedom and our 'moral' freedom (2015, 24–25). The

---

<sup>3</sup>For a good discussion and example of this kind of grasping of the mundane and negative aspects of one's beloved, see Tenno (1979, 31–32).

former being a mere fact, a property of our being that holds universally regardless of situation; the latter being the result of the conscious willing of freedom in the form of projects. This, taken with the importance Beauvoir gives to engagement with concrete projects,<sup>4</sup> implies that she is best read as claiming it's the engaged individual – who is free – that is the object of our love, not their ontological freedom as such. And since we are all complex people in a situation, and all possess negative and mundane characteristics, an authentic love that grasped us as individuals would have to recognise, if it was to be a true grasping of us, those characteristics. Furthermore, positing the abstract freedom of the other as the proper object of love seems to be in tension with Beauvoir's stress on the relevance of the political and economic situation to the possibility of a generous and reciprocated love (de Beauvoir 1997, 488,689).

In addition, recall that one of the complaints Beauvoir had about the married woman is that what becomes important is that she marries a man in the general 'ideal' sense, not the particular individual that is her husband (1997, 454). This suggests that emphasising the positive evaluation of the other's abstract freedom, as the above objection needs to do, misses one of the other important aspects of Beauvoir's theory, that of grasping the other as the concrete, particular individual they are. To do otherwise, to see them as only an instance of a universal masculinity say, would be to risk being 'serious' in Beauvoir's sense.<sup>5</sup> Beauvoir writes,

an authentic love should accept the contingency of the other with all his idiosyncrasies, his limitations, and his basic gratuitousness [...] Idolatrous love attributes an absolute value to the loved one, a first falsity that is brilliantly apparent to all outsiders. (1997, 664)

In another place, she claims that to be loved in one's humanity, one must be viewed with a 'critical severity' by one's lover, which is the necessary other side of the 'genuine esteem' one also finds in love (1997, 629). In these passages, Beauvoir seems to be suggesting that, far from love being an unconditional exaltation of the absolute good of freedom, love requires us to grasp the individual in their entire situation, their entire particularity; and it seems plausible, perhaps even desirable, for that grasping to include some negative judgements and the approbation of mundane characteristics.

---

<sup>4</sup>For example, see de Beauvoir (2015, 75–78).

<sup>5</sup>Where seriousness is to take values as pre-made and absolute, independent of human freedom (de Beauvoir 2015, 49).

## 2.2. Partiality

Another intuitive feature of love that is often talked about in the literature is partiality; the idea that it's okay, or even necessary, that we love some people and not others. This is often presented as being problematic when it comes to any theory of love that includes a moral element. For example, Velleman goes to great lengths to attempt to defend a Kantian inspired view of love as a moral emotion from partiality objections (1999); Wolf, similarly, uses the partiality of love to critique the impartiality that dominates ethical thinking, highlighting the *prima facie* tensions between ethics and love: 'many have called attention to the fact that relationships of friendship and love seem to call for the very opposite of an impartial perspective' (1992, 243).<sup>6</sup> So, the objection goes, if love is, even in part, morally good, then that entails that we have an obligation to love everyone (Zangwill 2013, 301). This is a potential problem for Beauvoir because, as we have seen, while recognition of the freedom of the beloved is a condition for authentic love, it's also morally required of us to will the freedom of the other. Thus, it appears that she is vulnerable to this tension, and risks having to abandon the partiality of love. And since the partiality of love is fairly fundamental to our ordinary experience of love, it would be hard to accept a theory of love, on phenomenological grounds, that rejected it. For example, imagine how you might feel if your closest friend said they were also friends with everyone they met.<sup>7</sup>

There are at least two avenues open to Beauvoir in attempting to diffuse this tension that are compatible with her broader project. The first of these is related to a kind of 'compatibility'. As we've seen, loving someone involves grasping them as the particular individual they are, and since, for Beauvoir, who we are is a result of our engagement within our concrete situation (de Beauvoir 2015, 26) – including projects and actions – then loving someone will also include grasping their world (beliefs, commitments, etc.) for these are essential to the person's identity. As Beauvoir says at one point, 'He must be loved as he is, not with reference to his promise and his uncertain possibilities [...] Fellowship with

---

<sup>6</sup>In slightly different ways, Neera Badhwar Kapur has used the partiality of love to critique consequentialism (1991) and Julia Annas has used it to critique Kantian ethics (1993).

<sup>7</sup>It should be noted here that Beauvoir's commitment to non-monogamy in her personal life, while not completely irrelevant to how we think of love as being partial, is not immediately pressing for us here. Being committed to non-monogamy in no way entails the complete abandonment of all kinds of partiality. Thus, for this paper, we are limiting ourselves to the question of whether or not, if love is ethical, that means we have to love in a way analogous to the impersonal impartial perspective often assumed to go along with traditional moral theory. The question of the relationship between monogamy and authenticity, while interesting, cannot be addressed here.

him is impossible unless she approves of his acts, his aims, his opinions' (1997, 701). Similar to the response to negative evaluations, respecting the other-as-free does not entail a wholesale endorsement of all their projects. Thus, it seems plausible that, even if we see the other as a fellow free subject in order to avoid objectifying them in ethically problematic ways, we might find enough of their projects, commitments, personality, etc. disagreeable as to preclude a loving relationship with them.

The other avenue is to show that part of what makes love valuable requires that it be partial. In order to show this, let us start with an idea already expressed above, namely that morality (indeed any commitment whatsoever) requires expression in concrete projects. Such realisation is, for example, how women's liberation is to be accomplished (de Beauvoir 1997, 614), and it's working to open up new possibilities in the future that freedom (as a moral value) is realised (de Beauvoir 2015, 30). Therefore, love too, as a project, cannot be realised, at least authentically, in the abstract alone; it requires manifestation through action in the world. Indeed, to love without realisation in concrete projects would fail to grasp reality in general and the reality of the beloved; in a similar way that the narcissist loves only the illusion of their ego (themselves as object), and so would be inauthentic. Furthermore, this seems to be fairly intuitive, for it is the case that we value, deeply, spending time with loved ones, doing things together, experiencing things together. The explanation offered here is that we miss not doing these things precisely because a love that lacks them feels somehow deficient, in a sense, because any real commitment to a project concomitantly demands its physical realisation. This, taken with the fact that we only have a finite amount of time (in a day, a week, or a lifetime), means that we simply cannot love everyone, at least authentically. In addition, Beauvoir talks of commitment as requiring 'patience, courage, and fidelity' (2015, 27), implying that it requires continuous re-invention and rejuvenation. Moreover, as we have said, it's important that we love particular individuals, and these particular individuals are so in virtue of their situation and the projects they pursue within them. As Ulrika Björk argues, for Beauvoir, 'My individual existence is realised when I actively take up the possibilities created by others, through their actions, and when they also recognise my projects by their free engagement'. (2010, 48) So it's necessary for authentic love that love cannot be our sole pursuit, our *raison d'être*; Beauvoir stresses that love requires all parties be able to flourish, in principle, without the other (1997, 497), only then can love be given in liberty and generosity.



Although, having said that, one may worry that this type of argument raises another kind of issue by merely shifting the focus of the partiality problem. The worry is this, if you love a limited number of people because you simply don't have the time to love any extra people, then your love is partial, but it's partial for the wrong kind of reasons. It leads to the conclusion that, if you had more time, then you would love more people. But in our experience, it appears as if what we value in love is the idea that the particular people that someone loves are loved because they choose, voluntarily, to love only those people. The worry with morality is precisely that this voluntary limiting of who one loves is not ethically permissible.

However, this worry would only hold if the argument above was merely practical and devoid of any normative considerations; and it's clear that Beauvoir would not agree to this characterisation. Firstly, the engagement with projects that open up future possibilities is the essence of moral commitment for Beauvoir. And insofar as love also involves a collaborative opening up of the future, and is concerned with the willing of the freedom of those involved, then the practical relationship one spends time cultivating is of moral importance. Moreover, in relation to time restrictions, it's precisely in virtue of this finitude that love becomes valuable. As Sartre says, it's the choosing of one thing over another that gives it value (2007, 32); and such a choice is only possible given the fact that we cannot choose everything. In short, it's because we cannot do everything that the things we choose to do have value for us; it's because we cannot love everyone that those who we do choose to commit ourselves to have value. So, far from the need to express love in concrete action being an inconvenience that limits our loving potential, it is in fact, the very condition that allows love to take on the value that it does in our lives. In summary, the partiality of love is not in tension with morality for Beauvoir. Provided that we choose who we love with consciousness of our own, and their, freedom, we choose them as the concrete individual they are, and that the concrete expression of this love is directed towards an opening up of a shared future, then that very choice itself becomes morally valuable.

### **3. Unrequited love and vision-based accounts**

This section builds on the previous by illustrating how Beauvoir's account not only contributes to contemporary conversations around love by addressing particular problems, but also how it can aid attempts at

understanding the different varieties of love we find in our lives, and why they are experienced as *different*. In order to show the usefulness of Beauvoir's account I will be comparing it to vision-based theories of love; highlighting how it can be used to further a truly normative and comprehensive understanding of love. I should clarify that my aim here is not to show why Beauvoir's ideas should be preferred over, or instead of, vision-based theories; but rather, it's to show why Beauvoir's ideas deserve to be taken seriously by theorists of love, including those who have sympathy with vision-based accounts. In fact, I have chosen vision-based accounts, in part, precisely because I believe that it doesn't have to be a straight forward either/or choice between, say, Beauvoir's existentialism or a vision-based theory. Rather, my hope is to show the relevance of an expressly normative understanding of loving relationships, like Beauvoir's, to some of the more prevalent views that focus on what love *is*, in a metaphysical sense. Indeed, it's because I think theorists like Troy Jollimore are doing slightly different things to Beauvoir, that they are able to contribute to each other. Beauvoir allows us to see the crucial role that love can have in a life committed to authenticity (and also its opposite) using moral distinctions not immediately available to one who is concerned primarily with what love is, rather than what kinds of love we ought to desire. Likewise, views like Jollimore's could allow us to better grasp just what is going on in the relationships (both authentic and inauthentic) that Beauvoir describes.<sup>8</sup> What I hope to show is that Beauvoir has insights about how love is experienced that a purely vision-based account might struggle to articulate. For this paper, I will be taking any vision theory to be broadly arguing that love is, fundamentally, a way of seeing:

To see with love's vision is to see the world with the beloved at the centre and to see his attributes in a certain generous light; but it is also to see the rest of the world, to some degree, through his eyes. (Jollimore 2011, 25)

Before I start looking at how vision theories and Beauvoir might approach unrequited love, I would like to say that I don't think we ought to contest the naming of unrequited love as love. It may turn out to be a 'lesser' or somehow otherwise 'deficient' form of love compared to a fully reciprocated and authentic one, but that is not to say that it cannot be a form of love itself, or indeed that it might have

---

<sup>8</sup>However, since my focus is to defend and advocate the merits of Beauvoir's work, I won't be spelling out here exactly what these contributions might look like.

some positive and valuable qualities. Sara Protasi, for instance, has said of unrequited love that it can involve an enriching appreciation of another, the 'attributing [of] a special role to a person in one's emotional life without demanding that the other person do the same'. (2016, 218) My question in this section is why unrequited love, if it involves many of the things reciprocated love does, feels so different from a mutual love, and is often associated with suffering, painful longing, and so on. To help us along in this discussion, I'll be borrowing a scenario from Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. Part of the love triangle established towards the start of the play is that of Viola loving Duke Orsino, and Duke Orsino loving Countess Olivia, where none of the love is initially reciprocated. So, if Duke Orsino is looking at Countess Olivia in a loving way, and grasping them in the manner that love demands, then why should it matter so much that Countess Olivia doesn't return a loving gaze?

The first, and perhaps most obvious, attempt to show what is missing by the vision theorist might be to point out the importance not just of looking lovingly, but of being looked at lovingly. One might argue that love's gaze (with its attention to detail and generous appraisal of our properties, thoughts, values, and commitments) has such a profound experience on us that its absence is sorely missed. In fact, Jollimore argues that a lack of love leads one's experiences to matter less because they don't get manifested in the world outside one's mind, going as far as to say that: 'The great horror of not being loved is that one ceases to matter [...] To put the matter starkly, it is almost as if the unloved person does not exist at all'. (2011, 89) While that may be a slight exaggeration, we can still agree with the broad sentiment that a lack of love can cause real suffering in one's life. However, this type of response will not do. Would it really be the case that Duke Orsino's pain at his unreciprocated love for Countess Olivia would be assuaged if he were aware of the other person, Viola, who did love him? The intuition here is that, if he doesn't reciprocate the love of Viola, then he would still be pained at Countess Olivia being unmoved by his love for her. Perhaps this is an unfair way of characterising this kind of response by the vision theorist. After all, part of what happens when we love someone, is that we put ourselves into an epistemic and moral stance such that we are able to properly apprehend the value of the beloved as the person they are, and it's the very nature of this interested and personal commitment that we inevitably end up not being committed, in the same way, to the value of others. Love requires an immersion in the beloved's world (although, in line with our conditions, we should avoid falling

into the dream of unity with the beloved), and it's simply not possible from that position (or any other) to compare other people's worlds to each other (Jollimore 2011, 101,160). So in this example, what that means is that Duke Orsino's love for Countess Olivia commits him to her in a way that precludes his valuing and caring about Viola, who does love him, to the same (or *kind of*) extent. In short, because he loves Countess Olivia, he cares more (and in a qualitatively different way) about what Countess Olivia thinks and feels, than Viola. So the love of Viola, who Duke Orsino does not love back, appears as small and unimportant next to the possibility of Countess Olivia loving him. As such, the love of Viola is unable to perform, in Duke Orsino's life, the profound and transformative effect that love can have.

However, while this thought is interesting and no doubt has some truth to it, I worry that it still misses a crucial aspect of unrequited love. Specifically, if the reason for the pain of unrequited love is the lack of being loved back, then it starts to look as if the complaint of Duke Orsino is one of loneliness or separation from other people that he cares about. This in itself can be a real complaint about being unloved. But in the context of unrequited love, it leads to the conclusion that it's not Duke Orsino's love for Countess Olivia that is painfully lacking or somehow insufficient; in fact, it implies that in the event of Countess Olivia reciprocating Duke Orsino's love, his love for her would remain largely unchanged. If that is all that is missing from unrequited love, then we have to say that the love Duke Orsino feels for Countess Olivia, whether reciprocated or not, is exactly the same, and that her reciprocation won't alter the actual thing that is Duke Orsino's love for her. It might alter Duke Orsino in profound and worthwhile ways, but not the specific love he feels for Countess Olivia. While I find this conclusion intuitively questionable, I hope that my appeal to Beauvoir here, as an attempt to capture what is missing from Duke Orsino's love itself, will vindicate that intuition – and motivate it in others.

Recall from the discussion on partiality above the importance that Beauvoir gives to realising projects in concrete actions in the world. She argued that concrete action is constitutive of what it means to take our moral freedom as an end, and, conversely, that the lack of the ability to perform such actions is part of what makes woman's situation oppressive. We used this to ground the idea that love too, insofar as it's to be a part of an authentic life, must be given concrete expression. It's through such action that we are able to open up the future to further possibilities and thus how we make freedom a concrete goal in the world.

Love, I argued, similarly requires some kind of concrete expression. In that section, that thought was used to defend the partiality of love against a claim of a conflict with moral interests. Here, I hope that thought can shed light onto how exactly the love itself is different when it's unrequited. The concrete realisation of our projects is immensely important to us; indeed, part of what commitment involves is precisely a drive to see those commitments manifested in the world. In Beauvoir's ethics, for example, because our projects are necessarily connected and effected by the projects of others, in order to really be committed to freedom we need to be committed to realising it on the intersubjective plane (de Beauvoir 2015, 76). So, in the case of love, for it to be genuinely authentic, it must include a will to realise it in concrete actions rooted firmly in freedom. For example, Rosalyn Diprose argues that Beauvoir's stressing of the role of acting in the world and our existence as both subject and object, allows her to give things like sex the value they tend to have for us in love: 'eroticism is generous because it involves opening up the lived body to the other and because it is, in virtue of this, creative in transforming the other's embodied situation'. (1998, 10) This idea can be extended to all sorts of concrete projects. For instance, we might seek to realise our love through shared projects of parenthood, shared hobbies, shared experiences of art or travel, or, to take Beauvoir and Sartre as an example, engaging with each other's work. Importantly for us, it's this stress on love as immersed in an authentic life constituted, partly, by authentic projects and the valuing of freedom, that allows us to see why the love itself, when it's unrequited, feels very different to reciprocated love, often felt as a painful kind of lacking. A love not realised in concrete intersubjective projects, is a love that lacks an important element of what it means to be committed. Unrequited love, therefore, is itself transformed by mutual reciprocation, precisely because such reciprocation opens up the possibility for the realisation in action that authentic commitment demands. Whereas, on an account like a purely vision-based one, we are left with the unsatisfactory conclusion that the love itself is exactly the same, and that the source of our anguish is due to other factors that, while indirectly effected by our love, do not change the actual thing that is that love. This is just one example of why, I believe, we should take Beauvoir's account of love seriously. It has the potential to further our understanding of the many nuances that love can take in our lives and the evaluations we consequently make of those different kinds.

#### 4. Beauvoir's authentic love defended

I started this paper by sketching out the conditions that we might expect an authentic love to be required to meet. This was done by paying attention to the way in which Beauvoir argues that love goes wrong and becomes inauthentic, especially in an oppressive situation, with the focus being on her work TSS. As a result of this analysis five criteria were found for authentic love: (1) it must be freely given and recognised as such; (2) it must include a grasp of reality beyond oneself; (3) it must have the possibility of reciprocation; (4) one must retain one's sense of individuality; and (5) one must grasp the other as a concrete and engaged individual, as well as a free subjectivity. In the next section, I applied these criteria to two commonly discussed issues in the philosophy of love, the kinds of properties we are responding to and the partiality of love, in order to demonstrate the explanatory power of Beauvoir's account. While doing this I emphasised the importance of resisting a straightforward identification of love with the valuing of the freedom of the other, at the same time advocating the need to grasp the other in their entire being – including their objectivity. During this discussion, Beauvoir's account was shown to have the explanatory power necessary to address two contentious issues in the literature (those of negative evaluations and the partiality of love) that any account of love, especially one that emphasises its ethical dimension, must respond to. This section also sketched out how love gets its value in the context of our existential condition and laid the groundwork for exploring the role of concrete action in love. This idea was further developed in section 3. Here, the phenomenon of unrequited love was used to demonstrate how Beauvoir's account could be valuable to further any attempt to comprehensively understand the varieties of love we find in our lives. I used vision-based theories to provide an example of what kinds of contributions Beauvoir's existential phenomenological account can make when understanding why certain kinds of love might *feel* differently to others. In this case, it was shown how vision theories alone might struggle to articulate how the love we feel for others might itself be changed by the stance that that other takes towards us (i.e. whether it's reciprocated or not). In addition to highlighting the possible contributions Beauvoir's ideas can make to current theories, section 3, as well as the examples from section 2, also showed how Beauvoir's ideas are not only compatible with our first-person experiences of love, but also deepen our understanding of what is going on; in the case of unrequited love, by

arguing that the love we feel is itself transformed by reciprocation. I hope to have shown that Beauvoir can be used to understand not only why and how love goes wrong, but also why and how love can go right and be part of an authentic life. Such an account, I contend, is invaluable to articulating not only the experience of love, but also how love can authentically play the valuable, morally relevant, and existentially profound role in our lives it's capable of.

## Acknowledgments

I would like to thank several anonymous referees for their comments across multiple iterations of this paper, with thanks in particular to the referees from *Inquiry*. I would also like to thank Joe Saunders, for their supervision of the essay that started this paper, and their guidance since.

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

## ORCID

Matthew Robson  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-2441-5230>

## References

- Abramson, K., and A. Leite. 2011. "Love as a Reactive Emotion." *The Philosophical Quarterly* 61: 673–699. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9213.2011.716.x.
- Annas, J. 1993. "Personal Love and Kantian Ethics in Effi Briest." In *Friendship: A Philosophical Reader*, edited by N. B. Kapur, 155–173. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Bergoffen, D. B. 1997. *The Philosophy of Simone de Beauvoir: Gendered Phenomenologies, Erotic Generosities*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Björk, U. 2010. "Paradoxes of Femininity in the Philosophy of Simone de Beauvoir." *Continental Philosophy Review* 43: 39–60. doi:10.1007/s11007-010-9134-9.
- Cleary, S. 2015. *Existentialism and Romantic Love*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- de Beauvoir, S. 1997. *The Second Sex*. Translated by H.M. Parshley. London: Vintage.
- de Beauvoir, S. 2015. *The Ethics of Ambiguity*. Translated by Bernard Frechtman. New York: Open Road Integrated Media.
- Diprose, R. 1998. "Generosity: Between Love and Desire." *Hypatia* 13: 1–20. doi:10.1111/j.1527-2001.1998.tb01349.x.
- Hansen, L. 1979. "Pain and Joy in Human Relationships." *Philosophy Today* 23: 338–346. doi:10.5840/philtoday19792346.
- Jollimore, T. 2011. *Love's Vision*. Woodstock: Princeton University Press.

- Kapur, N. B. 1991. "Why it is Wrong to be Always Guided by the Best: Consequentialism and Friendship." *Ethics* 101 (3): 483–504. doi:[10.1086/293313](https://doi.org/10.1086/293313).
- Keefe, T. 1996. "Beauvoir's Early Treatment of the Concept of "Situation"." *Simone de Beauvoir Studies* 13: 151–164. doi:[10.1163/25897616-01301015](https://doi.org/10.1163/25897616-01301015).
- Lundgren-Gothlin, E. 1997. "Simone de Beauvoir's Ethics and its Relation to Current Moral Philosophy." *Simone de Beauvoir Studies* 14: 39–46. doi:[10.1163/25897616-01401006](https://doi.org/10.1163/25897616-01401006).
- McMullin, I. 2011. "Love and Entitlement: Sartre and Beauvoir on the Nature of Jealousy." *Hypatia* 26: 102–122. doi:[10.1111/j.1527-2001.2010.01145.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1527-2001.2010.01145.x).
- Morgan, K. P. 1986. "Romantic Love, Altruism, and Self-Respect: An Analysis of Simone De Beauvoir." *Hypatia* 1: 117–148. doi:[10.1111/j.1527-2001.1986.tb00525.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1527-2001.1986.tb00525.x).
- Pettersen, T. 2008. "Freedom and Feminism in Simone de Beauvoir's Philosophy." *Simone de Beauvoir Studies* 24: 57–65. doi:[10.1163/25897616-02401008](https://doi.org/10.1163/25897616-02401008).
- Pettersen, T. 2017. "Love – According to Simone de Beauvoir." In *A Companion to Simone de Beauvoir*, edited by L. Hengehold, and N. Bauer, 160–173. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons Ltd.
- Protasi, S. 2016. "Loving People for who They are (Even When They Don't Love you Back)." *European Journal of Philosophy* 24: 214–234. doi:[10.1111/ejop.12077](https://doi.org/10.1111/ejop.12077).
- Sartre, J-P. 2003. *Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology*, Translated by Hazel E. Barnes. London: Routledge
- Sartre, J-P. 2007. *Existentialism & Humanism*. Translated by Philip Mairet. York: Methuen.
- Simont, J. 1992. "Sartrean Ethics." In *Cambridge Companion to Sartre*, edited by C. Howells, 178–210. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tennov, D. 1979. *Love and Limerence: The Experience of Being in Love*. Lanham: Scarborough House.
- Velleman, J. D. 1999. "Love as a Moral Emotion." *Ethics* 109 (2): 338–374. doi:[10.1086/233898](https://doi.org/10.1086/233898).
- Vintges, K. 1996. *Philosophy as Passion: The Thinking of Simone de Beauvoir* Translated by Anne Lavelle. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Walker, M. B. 2010. "Love, Ethics, and Authenticity: Beauvoir's Lesson in What it Means to Read." *Hypatia* 25: 334–356. doi:[10.1111/j.1527-2001.2010.01104.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1527-2001.2010.01104.x).
- Wolf, S. 1992. "Morality and Partiality." *Philosophical Perspectives* 6: 243–259. doi:[10.2307/2214247](https://doi.org/10.2307/2214247).
- Zangwill, N. 2013. "Love: Gloriously Amoral and Arational." *Philosophical Explorations* 16: 298–314. doi:[10.1080/13869795.2013.812739](https://doi.org/10.1080/13869795.2013.812739).