

## Since Biblical Times

*My love is no longer innocent  
- Susan Sontag*

*Knowing has to do with embodied consciousness.  
Sexual connection with others, since Biblical times  
a way of getting to know them, in our century is  
valued primarily as a way of knowing oneself  
(and that's too much of a burden for the sex act to carry).*

*I have such strong tendencies to abandon myself  
with someone with whom I'm in love, to give up everything,  
to be possessed as well as possess totally.  
Can I love non-possessively, permissively,  
without withdrawing myself, setting up my own defenses  
and strategic retreats, or reducing the intensity of my love?*

For many, love means *a return to childhood:*  
*sensuality and play, hedonism  
and irresponsibility, being silly;*  
but it gets to be thought of in terms of dependence,  
emotional slavery, the loved one treated  
as some kind of parent figure or sibling.

*When a small child, I felt abandoned and unloved.  
My response to this was to want to be very good:  
'If I'm tremendously good, they'll love me.'*

*Man, the sick animal, has an appetite  
which can drive him mad — beyond good and evil, beyond  
love, beyond sanity (that cozy lie),  
one of the demonic forces of the mind pushing us  
at intervals close to taboo and dangerous desires  
that range from the impulse to commit sudden violence  
upon another person to the voluptuous yearning  
for extinction of our consciousness, for death itself.*

*Masochistic fantasies in which one needs  
to feel forced, to feel one has no choice,  
becoming mindless equated with the ability  
(the freedom) to love, to be a real woman  
(femininity, being strong through weakness).  
Self-respect . . . it's the secret of good sex.*

That sex is *primarily intelligible, uniquely precious, a source of emotional and physical pleasure* is the prevailing view: and *sexual love that is very pleasurable, sensuous, non-destructive, non-S&M* is both possible and desirable.

*I've never been in love with someone I haven't slept with; of course I've loved people passionately I wouldn't have slept with for anything, but that's friendship-love (my long series of desexualized pedagogic friendships to create a company of peers for myself). Friendship is very erotic, but isn't necessarily sexual. I think all my relationships are erotic: I can't imagine being fond of someone I don't want to touch.*

*Falling in love is a pathological variant of loving; being in love an addiction, obsession, exclusion of others, insatiable demand for presence, paralysis of other interests, a disease better to have often than only two or three times' in one's life. Or maybe better always to be in love with several people at any given time.*

*All I want is to be fully present in my life.***Since Biblical Times**

*My love is no longer innocent  
- Susan Sontag*

Since Biblical times sexual connection with others, a way of getting to know them, in our century is valued primarily as a way of knowing oneself — too much of a burden she said for the sex act to carry. When a small child, I felt abandoned and unloved; my response to this was to want to be very good: 'If I'm tremendously good, they'll love me.'

For many, love means a return to childhood sensuality and play, hedonism and irresponsibility, being silly but that gets to be thought of in terms of dependence, emotional slavery, the loved one treated as some kind of parent figure or elder sibling. All I want is to be fully present in my life.

I have such strong tendencies to abandon myself

with someone with whom I'm in love, to give up everything,  
to be possessed as well as possess totally.

Can I love non-possessively, permissively,  
without withdrawing myself, setting up my own defenses  
and strategic retreats, or reducing the intensity of my love?  
Knowing has to do with embodied consciousness.

Man, the sick animal, has an appetite  
which can drive him mad — beyond good and evil, beyond  
love, beyond sanity (that cozy lie),  
one of the demonic forces of the mind pushing us  
at intervals close to taboo and dangerous desires  
that range from the impulse to commit sudden violence  
upon another person to the voluptuous yearning

for extinction of our consciousness, for death itself —  
masochistic fantasies in which one needs  
to feel forced, to feel one has no choice,  
becoming mindless equated with the ability  
(the freedom) to love, to be a real woman;  
femininity: being strong through weakness  
made ever weaker through consensual submission).

I've never been in love with someone I haven't slept with;  
of course I've loved people passionately I wouldn't  
have slept with for anything, but that's friendship-love  
(my long series of desexualized pedagogic  
friendships to create a company of peers for myself).  
I think all my relationships are erotic: I can't  
imagine being fond of someone I don't want to touch.

That sex is primarily intelligible, uniquely  
precious, a source of emotional and physical pleasure  
is the prevailing view: and sexual love that is very  
pleasurable, sensuous, non-destructive,  
non-S&M is both possible and desirable.  
Self-respect . . . it's the secret of good sex.

Falling in love a pathological variant  
of loving; being in love an addiction, obsession —  
exclusion of others, insatiable demand for presence,  
paralysis of other interests, a disease  
better to have often than only two or three times  
in one's life. Or maybe better always to be

in love with several people at any given time.