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Monday, August 2, 1999 Published at 13:22 GMT 14:22 UK

Crazy little thing called love?



Love and obsession are two entirely different things. Love is that enviable state, that knows no envy or vanity. Love is more than an emotion, it is the substance of our being!

Deepa Pant, Kuwait

Can not falling in love drive you just as mad?
Laura Willoughby, UK

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The Vote:

Does falling in love drive you mad?

Yes ☐ No ☐ [Vote](#)

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The Background:

Can't eat, can't sleep, can't stop grinning like a Cheshire cat, can't stop thinking about that certain someone — classic symptoms of love? Well actually, you could be going mad.

An Italian researcher has found that people in the first flush of love have a lot in common with sufferers of obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD).

People with OCD and people in love both get fixated with things, and both have very low levels of the feel-

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good chemical Serotonin – which has a soothing effect on the brain.

The research published in the New Scientist has received mixed reactions in the science community, but Thomas Insel, of Emory University, thinks it's about time falling in love was studied as a relevant human emotion.

"Any of us who have fallen in love know that this is a profoundly biological process. Now somebody's actually trying to understand how," he said.

Do you think falling head over heels for someone sends you a bit crazy? Have you spent hours on end fantasising about your latest hot romance, when you should be getting on with something else? Do you think love and obsession are the same thing? Send us your views and experiences.

Background ! Vote ! Your reaction ! Have your say

Your Reaction:

"To be wise and to be in love is scarcely granted even to a god." Latin proverb

Kirk O'Connor, UK

YES!!! Falling in love drives you totally crazy...I've fallen in love with a beautiful creature...and I don't know where he came from...the only way I can describe him is as a bronzed Adonis...whenever I look into his eyes...I just melt...

WW, UK

I can not believe that someone actually funded this project. There are so many worthwhile causes that go unnoticed, so we can examine another superficial aspect of our lives. Love is not a disease that needs to be cured or avoided. If they have all this money to throw away maybe they should look at it from another angle...Why do people allow themselves to fall out of love? Are they mad? If you ask me, those are the ones that need help!

Bonnie, USA

I am so gob-smacked by the BBC putting something up that equates having obsessive compulsive disorder with 'being mad'. That is certainly discrimination! There are a whole lot of us out here with OCD and I can assure you we ain't mad. Having OCD is not the same as 'being obsessed' about a person – and we certainly aren't like stalkers. Like being in love? This scientist needs HIS head examined I am afraid.

People who are depressed (is this like love?) also have problems with serotonin levels – serotonin is associated with many problems, with emotions. This theory is equivalent to saying being in love must be the same as heart disease because it affects your heart beat!

Leaving OCD out of this, yes, there are aspects of

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falling in love, sometimes, that are similar to temporary insanity.

It depends how it takes you – falling in love is different for different people and their behaviour varies greatly. Some ways of falling in love seem like insanity and that I believe is why the ancient Greeks regarded the experience as being 'possessed' by Aphrodite. It can be a divine experience of possession, of course. Or it can make you mad.

Imogen Woolf, UK

I can't believe that this research is being funded. What's the point? Love is a wonderful emotion and to study it takes its fun away. Feelings are feelings, not research subjects!

Gareth Hagger-Johnson, UK

http://news1.this.bbc.co.uk/ht/english/talking_point/newsid_40/000/40/080.asp

02/08/99

16 Does the illustration below the main title contain any implicit message against or in favour of 'love'?

- (A) The pictures reveal that love and hate are the same thing.
- (B) Well, it's difficult to say.
- (C) Yes, against.
- (D) Yes, in favour.
- (E) You can't really grasp much from the pictures.

17 There are two reactions below the illustration, namely, "Love is more than an emotion, it is the substance of our being!" and "Can not falling in love drive you just as mad?".

How would you best describe these reactions?

- (A) Descriptive
- (B) Instructive
- (C) Formal
- (D) Conclusive
- (E) Emotive

18 What is the point made by the Italian researcher in the first part of the text, in 'The Background'?

- (A) Being in love may never drive you out of your mind.
- (B) There are similarities between love and madness.
- (C) Love and obsession are two entirely different things.
- (D) Love and hate are the same thing.
- (E) Love has been studied as a relevant human emotion for long.

19 How do the readers react towards the article?

- (A) All of them are for.
- (B) All of them are against.
- (C) Their reactions reflect different views on the subject.
- (D) Their reactions are supported by research.
- (E) Their reactions do not make any sense.

20 In "Have you spent hours on end fantasising about your latest hot romance", **on end** means:

- (A) continuously, without stopping
- (B) stopping here and there
- (C) to the very end
- (D) to the end of time
- (E) in the end

21 In "I can not believe that someone actually funded this project" (Bonnie, USA), **actually** means:

- (A) as it happens
- (B) nowadays
- (C) theoretically
- (D) really
- (E) by the way

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22 The Italian researcher claims that “People with OCD and people in love both get fixated with things, and both have very low levels of the feel-good chemical Serotonin – which has a soothing effect on the brain”.

What argument does Imogen Woolf use to oppose such a claim ?

- (A) Different people behave differently since levels of Serotonin vary greatly.
 - (B) Depression and love are the same emotion because both require low levels of Serotonin.
 - (C) Being in love is the same as having a heart disease.
 - (D) Being in love is temporary insanity.
 - (E) Low levels of Serotonin can be associated with other emotional problems.
-

23 Bonnie associates ‘madness’ and ‘illness’ with:

- (A) a worthwhile cause
 - (B) falling in love
 - (C) lack of love
 - (D) a superficial aspect of someone’s life
 - (E) love
-

24 How is WW using the phrase ‘driving crazy’ in her reaction?

- (A) In a figurative and positive sense
- (B) In a figurative and negative sense
- (C) In a literal sense
- (D) In a scientific sense
- (E) In a literal and negative sense

Bonnie and Gareth find such research pointless for different reasons. What are they? (See questions 25 and 26 and decide what they are)

25 What is Bonnie’s reason?

- (A) Emotions cannot be investigated objectively.
 - (B) There are other more important subjects to be investigated.
 - (C) Love is not a disease.
 - (D) The research is based on a questionable theory.
 - (E) Love is a superficial aspect of human experience.
-

26 What is Gareth’s reason?

- (A) Love is an emotion.
- (B) The investigation of emotions is not a research priority.
- (C) Science should be fun.
- (D) Emotions cannot be investigated scientifically.
- (E) Scientific research must be impartial.

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TEXT II

NewsUnlimited | 'Ebola' turns out to be yellow fever

<http://www.newsunlimited.co.uk/international/story/0,3604,71888,00.html>.



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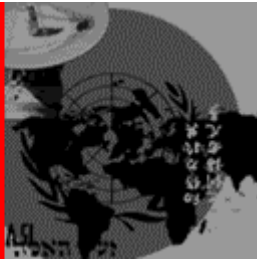
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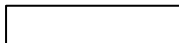
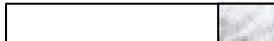


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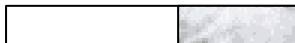


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'Ebola' turns out to be yellow fever

Gary Younge in Berlin
Saturday August 7, 1999

The Ebola virus panic gripping Germany finally subsided yesterday when the man suspected of having contracted the disease was diagnosed as having died of yellow fever, five days after returning from west Africa.

Olaf Ullmann, 40, died at 7.24am yesterday - the first person to be killed by yellow fever in Germany for more than 50 years. His health had deteriorated rapidly in the last 24 hours as his liver and kidneys failed and he lost consciousness.

Ebola was ruled out late on Thursday night, but there was a delay in diagnosing yellow fever partly because Ullmann had been vaccinated in 1993.

The doctor who treated him said yellow fever and Ebola had similar symptoms of heavy breathing and high fever, but little else could have been done to save him.

"Even had we known from the beginning he was suffering from yellow fever it would not have changed the treatment," said Norbert Suttrop of Berlin's Charité hospital.

The yellow fever vaccination, considered effective for at least 10 years, fails to provide immunity in 1% of cases. Ullmann was probably bitten by an infected

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News Unlimited | 'Ebola' turns out to be yellow fever

<http://www.newsunlimited.co.uk/international/story/0,3604,71888,00.html>

North Korea's war-game
plan drives a global
weapons race

mosquito during his trip to Ivory Coast,
where he was filming a documentary on
local wildlife.

Barak gets PLO on board
Israeli offer. Wye peace
deal on track

Experts in tropical medicine wearing
plastic suits had been treating him since
Tuesday. A 6ft fence was erected around
his isolation ward.

Russia on brink of new
Caucasus war

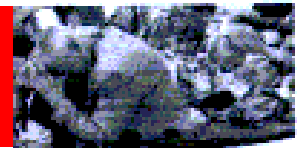
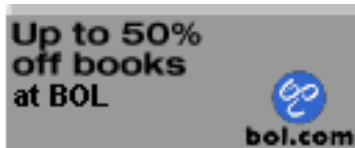
An outbreak of yellow fever is considered
unlikely: his three travelling companions,
including his wife, are in good health.

Greek wine reborn in ash of
Atlantis. Greeks are toast of
the wine world

Swissair, which flew the Ullmanns back
from Ivory Coast, has given the
passenger list to the German authorities
but the risk of contagion is considered
negligible.



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Story index



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27 What is 'Ebola'?

- (A) A web site
- (B) Yellow Fever
- (C) A disease
- (D) A bacteria
- (E) An infected mosquito

29 Which type of text is **Ebola turns out to be yellow fever?**

- (A) Informative
- (B) Emotive
- (C) Appealing
- (D) Descriptive
- (E) Argumentative

28 Where was Mr. Ullmann when he died?

- (A) In West Africa
- (B) In Berlin
- (C) On a plane
- (D) In Ivory Coast
- (E) On the Swiss border

30 "Even **had** we **known** from the beginning he was suffering from yellow fever it **would not have changed** the treatment" (§ 5). The verb phrases in bold indicate that the change in treatment:

- (A) will happen in future
- (B) may happen in future
- (C) could have happened but didn't
- (D) can happen but will not any way
- (E) might still happen

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