



Love in a Time of Loneliness: Three Essays on Drive and Desire

Paul Verhaeghe

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Noted Belgian psychoanalyst Paul Verhaeghe shows us what it is about sex that both keeps us moving and inhibits us at the same time. The first essay, “The Impossible Couple”, is both a humorous and razor-sharp analysis of the contemporary relationship between man and woman. In the second essay, “Fleeing Fathers”, the author demonstrates that today the Freudian Oedipus complex has disappeared, with a resulting shattering of classic gender roles. Post-modern morals are strange compared to previous morality, because they convey an obligation to enjoy. Things become even stranger when one finds that the expected enjoyment fails to come and, instead of that, we are faced with boredom, anxiety, and anger. The reasons for this are discussed in the third essay, “The Drive”. Today, sexual abuse is omnipresent, with the male in the role of offender, women and children reduced to his victims. Paul Verhaeghe reconsiders the opposition between Eros and Thanatos as an opposition between two forms of sexual pleasure. The fact that this opposition is ever present in heterosexual love demonstrates that gender differentiation goes beyond temporal cultural forms.

Accessibly written and provocatively argued, *Love in a Time of Loneliness* is a polemic whose very informality belies its serious intent. In these three fascinating essays, Professor Verhaeghe leaves the ordinary paths of thinking and sets out to discover what drives us in sex and love.

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