St. Valentine --Phooey!!

David D Pettus, Liberty University
St. Valentine-phooey! Cupid is in my Brain!

With Apologies to St. Valentine:

While munching my pita sandwich, I read an article that will forever change my view of love and St. Valentine's Day. All my life, I have been under the delusion that the acts of love I did and received from beloved others on that sacred saint's day of love were acts of volition-the tender results of love expressed or responded to. How could I have been so deceived? But, today I have been enlightened. I have experienced another Aufklärung (Enlightenment). I now know the awful truth and that truth has set me free!!

Cupid is real! He does shoot arrows that command those so wounded to fall deeply under the spell of love but he does it in my brain!! The arrows that force me to go buy chocolates or roses for my wife are brain secretions, just neurotransmitters--the same chemicals that cause addictions!! So says Dr. Jennifer Berman commenting on new research on brain chemistry and love on MSNBC's Scarborough Country.

And, ideally, we would be able to control our brains, but unfortunately, what all the research and what you are alluding to is, our brains control us, and there are real neurobiological reasons for our behavior.

Just think of how liberating this will be for me!! Next year, if I fail to remember to celebrate St. Valentine's, I can now chalk it up to 'love neurotransmitter malfunction'. What a relief. And think of the broader societal implications of such reductionism. The stalker can claim his 'love neurotransmitters are in overdrive' and just need adjustment. The spouse who abandons home and family can claim the same. No need for legal measures there!

Wow! The theological implications are staggering as well! Think of the new hermeneutical twist on John 13:35. 'By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if you have 'biochemical neurotransmitters of love' one to another. On second thought, the 'love neurotransmitters' must fire on their own. Oh well. My 'love neurotransmitters' are commanding me to go and get the chocolate my wife's 'love neurotransmitters' commanded her to give me. I guess I'll have to go now.

David D. Pettus, Ph.D.

Assoc. Prof. of Old Testament

Liberty Theological Seminary/DLP

P.S. For the full story on why love commands you go to http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/11368992/