

Let's Settle This: Is Love at First Sight Really Possible?

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By Halie LeSavage

The ancient Greeks called this romantic trope *theia mania* (madness from the gods), linking it to the whole "Cupid's arrow" thing. And in medieval texts, the gaze of a beautiful woman is compared to the sight of a basilisk. (Haha, this is a basilisk.) But in these modern days, has loooooove at first sight withstood the test of time and science? I got four relationship experts' opinions on the matter. Read what they have to say and then tell me where you stand.

Dr. Rachel Needle, Psy.D., *licensed psychologist and certified sex therapist at the Center for Marital and Sexual Health of South Florida:*

"Love remains one of the big scientific and theoretical mysteries. Some say that there is such thing as love at first sight but more so for men because they are more visual than women. However, in my professional opinion, attraction or even lust at first sight seems to be more fitting. There are different types of love so it also depends on how you define love... but that's a topic for another time.

Within the first three to five minutes of seeing and talking to someone, we often determine whether they are a potential mate or an appropriate match. However, even if you don't feel that instant attraction or lustful feeling towards someone, the more time you spend with someone the more attracted you can become as you get to know them and discover positive qualities about them and similarities between the two of you... unless, of course, something you really don't like comes to light."

Rev. Linda M. Martin, co-author of *Ego & Spirituality* with husband **Dr. Nickolas Martin:**

"If you feel a strong familiarity with someone immediately, it could be a soul connection or recognition. You could have been connected to someone in the past. People who live more through their egos versus knowing who they truly are--if there's an imbalance that way--that tends to lead us to ideas of expectation and then disappointment, as if they're looking for someone to complete them, which is obviously impossible. We have to find that completeness in ourselves. And if one person's ego is stronger than another's, their ability to share the feeling might be blocked."

(Smitten: So is it possible for the soul connection to be one-sided?

Rev. Linda: Yes.

Smitten: Whoa, that sucks.)

Rachel DeAlto, creator of *FlipMe*, teaches classes on flirting and love at *The Learning Annex* :

"Love at first sight? Not so much. Lust at first sight? Absolutely! You can feel 'love'-type feelings when you first meet or see someone. That infatuation stage can last up to four to six months. Real 'love' is built on communication and compatibility, which takes a bit longer than an instant."

Sodah Minty, *group therapy facilitator and independent living specialist in Los Angeles, friend of mine:*

"In my experience, yes, love at first sight is real. I remember seeing [my husband] walk into the Ethiopian restaurant the first time I ever saw him, and something happened to me. He said he loved me the first time he saw me, and it was the same for me. Not to be too mushy."

Do you believe in love at first sight? Have you ever experienced it? How indicative do you think it is of a relationship's success?