

Coy, Anthony, and Lindsey Rodriguez. 2023. "Affection Preference, Enactment, and Relationship Satisfaction: A Dyadic Analysis of Love Languages." *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* 49:737-994.

PRIMARY ARGUMENT: The authors argue that individuals understanding their own preferences and their partner's preferences for expressions of affection in an unbiased manner can lead to greater relationship satisfaction as partners can then accurately exhibit preferred expressions of affection towards each other.

IMPORTANT DEFINED CONCEPTS:

- The Five Love Languages: The ways in which one can express affection towards a partner that manifests through acts of service, words of affirmation, physical touch, quality time, and gift giving.
- Responsiveness: The intentional process of choosing to behave in a manner that attends to a partner's needs and wants within a relationship, promoting trust and intimacy and strengthening relationships.
- Truth and Bias Model: An analytical approach used to separate interpersonal perceptions into a truth component, the extent to which one partner's perception aligns with the other partner's report of the same variable, and the bias component, the extent to which one partner's perception is based on their own report of the same variable.

PRIMARY FINDINGS:

1. People who know their partner's preferences—and presumably respond to them—are more likely to have an increase in relationship satisfaction.
2. Individuals overestimate how much their partner prefers each mode of affection, and this overestimation is biased by their own preferences. These perceptions are more strongly biased for acts of service and words of affirmation.
3. If individuals become aware of their own biases, they are less likely to express affection based on their own preferences. This awareness of bias is especially strong when one prefers acts of service or physical touch.
4. Individuals who have a more accurate understanding of their partner's preferences tend to think their partner expresses affection in the way that partner prefers to receive it. The exception to this is acts of service.

KEY QUOTE: "Although the psychometric findings indicate that these are conceptually distinct preferences for expressing (Egbert & Polk, 2006) and receiving affection (Goff et al., 2007), neither study suggested that individuals have only a single preference. Instead, by using continuous measures, this work demonstrated that people can have a degree of preference for each type of affection rather than a "single preference" interpretation." (743)

QUESTION: When it comes to overestimating a partner's preference, is this difference bigger in heterosexual couples compared to same-sex couples? Why is that a partner overestimates the other partner's preference particularly in words of affirmation and acts of service compared to the other love languages?