

## **Research Proposal**

**Title** – “Love Me, Love Me”: An Empirical Investigation of Love Languages

**Program of Study** – Psychology

**Presentation Type** –Print Poster

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**Category** – **Choose one of the following:** Experimental (Applied)

**Abstract:** For years, theorists have struggled to clearly define love; however, most agree love is multi-dimensional (Mallandain & Davies, 1994). Rubin initiated research on love by developing the first psychological measurement of romantic love, in which he theoretically separated the construct of love from other types of interpersonal attraction (Masuda, 2003; Rubin, 1970). Since then, many have proposed theories about the components of love. Hatfield (1987) wrote about the differences between companionate and passionate love. Lee theorized about how people have three primary love styles and three secondary love styles (Mallandain & Davies, 1994). Sternberg (1986) formulated a triangular theory of love, which discusses intimacy, passion, commitment, and the various combinations of the three. Well known author and pastor Gary Chapman utilized his experience from many years of relationship counseling to write *The Five Love Languages*, a book which proposes his theory on expressions of love. Chapman’s aim is to help couples communicate and understand one another in order to remain in a state of mutual love (Chapman, 2015). These five love languages include physical touch, quality time, acts of service, gifts, and words of affirmation. Each person has a primary “love language” that they give and receive. The idea that people have a “love language” by which they best experience

love has gained popular acceptance among some groups. This study seeks to examine the factor structure of a questionnaire that represents the five love languages advanced by Gary Chapman. A convenience sample of college students completed a scale assessing preferences in receiving love. This was comprised of both Chapman's scale and a revised scale, which employed a Likert-type question format instead of the original forced choice format. Reliability and confirmatory factor analyses of the scale will be run. Data analysis is in progress. The results, conclusions, and implications will be included on the poster following analysis.

**Christian worldview integration:** It is important to do everything to the glory of God, and that includes academic research. All truth belongs to God, so from a Christian standpoint, the findings of research are important to communicate. God has revealed Himself through His creation and by studying the world and the intricacies of the human expressions of love, we can uncover the truth revealed therein. Having a Biblical perspective adds depth to the research, since love is a major theme in the Bible and in Christianity. Understanding the nature of love and expressions of love is meaningful in both Christian and secular environments. In popular culture, love languages are commonly discussed as fact. Many people describe themselves and their encounters with others based on their assigned love language, internalizing the results. Churches and youth groups often encourage their members to know their love languages, using them to better relate to and express affection for each other. As a result, it will be beneficial to empirically validate Chapman's scale. Validity and reliability are extremely important in any type of scale, particularly when the results are so frequently discussed. Since so many people complete the scale in Christian settings and assimilate their results into the framework of their

own identity, it is beneficial to address the validity of the scale from a Christian perspective. The importance of the information generalizes to secular contexts as well, as love languages are also discussed in non-Christian environments. Communicating this information through the research symposium will allow Liberty students and any attending community members to better understand love languages.