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KORY FLOYD, *Communicating affection: Interpersonal behaviour and social context*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. Pp. xiv, 222. Hb \$80.00

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Kory Floyd sets out to establish a comprehensive theory of affectionate communication. The text discusses the bioevolutionary and sociocultural paradigms of affectionate communication as well as related empirical knowledge in order to present a thorough theory of the subject at hand. At the outset, considering the complexity and wide-ranging nature of the phenomena of communication and affection, the task appears to be overwhelmingly ambitious. However, through detailed and well-outlined argumentation, the author manages to delineate an interesting and thought-provoking framework for future research.

Chaps. 1 and 2 introduce the subject by reflecting upon the concepts of affection and affectionate communication in general and reviewing the theories behind the two paradigms of affectionate communication. These introductory chapters are written with such lucid style that they could serve as a text for undergraduates. Chaps. 3 and 4 offer a detailed overview of the existing empirical research on affectionate communication within the field of communication studies. The chapters adopt the "conduit model" of communication where affective communication is understood in terms of encoding and decoding affectionate messages. Chaps. 5 and 6 draw attention to some interesting empirical questions concerning the (physical, mental and social) benefits and risks of affectionate communication: risks, such as deterioration of a relationship. Floyd asks, for example, why an affectionate message, such as "I love you," leads to a positive outcome on one occasion but a negative one on another. This paradox paves the way to chap. 7, which proposes a new theoretical approach to human affectionate communication. This theory, tentatively named Affection Exchange Theory (AET), states that affectionate behavior is, most of all, adaptive in its character. However, AET is not intended to be an extension of Darwinian or any related theory; rather, it treats affectionate communication as human behavior that both serves evolutionary goals (survival and procreation) and is influenced by humans' motivations to meet such goals. A set of five postulates (and subpostulates that provide empirical applications) specify the variables that govern human affectionate communication. Finally, chap. 8 offers concluding remarks.

As an ethnomethodologist and conversation analyst, I read *Communicating affection* both as a deep insight into affectionate communication as well as an illustration of the limitations of such a line (and methods) of research. Nevertheless, the book provides a competently grounded theoretical approach to affectionate communication and invites the reader to contemplate her own academic approach.

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