

To Love, Honor, and . . . No Way?

Dr. Lisa Neff, Assistant Professor in Human Development and Family Sciences,
Awarded National Science Foundation Grant to Investigate New Marriages

AUSTIN, Texas—Have you ever wondered how social scientists come to understand something as complex as a marriage?

Data, in the form of personality profiles, questionnaires, or taped interviews, construct the very framework on which theoretical models of intricate and evolving human relationships are fashioned. Social scientists collect data—both quantitative and qualitative—over a few months or over a lifetime. When data collection is completed it is the work of the social scientist to make sense of the loose conglomeration of facts and figures by carefully and deliberately analyzing the data and searching for patterns. The relentless efforts of the faculty of the Department of Human Development and Family Sciences are yielding invaluable insights into the intricate and intimate machinery of the most fundamental human connections:

parent/child bonds, marital interactions and outcomes, family interconnection.

Have you ever wondered where the faculty of the Department of Human Development and Family Sciences gets all of that data: the personality profiles, the questionnaires, and the taped interviews?

In short, they get their data from people like you.

For example, Dr. Lisa Neff, Assistant Professor in Human Development and Family Sciences, has been awarded a grant totaling \$600,000 from the National Science Foundation to expand the scope and size of her research project entitled “Marriage in Context: Linking External Stress and Relationship Maintenance Processes in Newlyweds.” Dr. Neff, aided by the NSF grant, will expand the size of her already successful [Austin Marriage Project](#) and is currently searching for 240 couples to participate in her new study which will begin in January of 2010. Dr. Neff’s research particularly examines the early years of marriage to ultimately find out what factors lead to successful marriages.

If you are interested in participating in Dr. Neff’s study and you would like more information of if you would like to sign up, you can contact her lab by phone at

512-475-7527

To be eligible:

**Couples should be recently married (within 6 months) or planning to get married (fall of 2009 or the spring/summer of 2010)*

**This should be the first marriage for both partners*

**Neither partner should have children*