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Abstract:

This article responds critically to a recent article by Lemieux and Tighe (*Communication Research Reports*, 21, 144–153, 2004) in which the authors conclude that recipients of comforting efforts prefer messages that exhibit a moderate rather than high level of person centeredness. It is argued that an erroneous assumption made by Lemieux and Tighe about the status of "receiver perspective" research on the comforting process led to faulty interpretations of the data and unwarranted conclusions about recipient preferences regarding comforting messages. Alternative interpretations of Lemieux and Tighe's data are presented; these are guided by the extensive previous research that has assessed evaluations and outcomes of comforting messages.