Date: 1/01/11

Word count: 199

Sentence count: 9

The Times (London)

Love actually is the same for everyone  
  
**BYLINE:** Mark Henderson

Falling in love sets brain circuits racing in the same way, regardless of sex or sexual orientation, according to research.

When lovers think about their beloved, their brains light up in similar fashion whether they are straight or gay, male or female, a brain scanning study published in the journal Public Library of Science One has shown.

In the research, a team led by Professor Semir **Zeki** and John **Romaya,** of the Wellcome Laboratory of Neurobiology at University College London, asked 24 volunteers to look at pictures of their partners, while their brains were scanned using functional magnetic resonance imaging.

The subjects ranged in age from 19 to 47 and reported themselves as being passionately in love and in a sexual relationship.

They included six straight men, six straight women, six homosexual men and six lesbians.

In each case, the scans showed a similar pattern of brain activity, particularly in regions that are involved in processing feelings of reward.

The lovers' brains also showed considerably lower activity in large parts of the cerebral cortex, which are involved in judgment.

This may explain why people in love tend to be blind to the faults of their partners, the researchers said.

Date: 31/12/10

Word count: 264

Sentences: 11

The Daily Telegraph (London)

Men are from Mars ... and so are women  
  
**BYLINE:** Richard Alleyne

THE 20th-century war cry from the battle of the sexes that Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus is untrue, according to research that suggests that our brains are wired exactly the same way when it comes to love.

The self-help book that introduced the idea, published in 1992, suggested that when it came to relationships, men and women thought and acted so differently it was as if they were from different planets.

Researchers at University College London said their research showed that we act very similarly when we are in love, whether we are male or female, heterosexual or homosexual.

Prof Semir **Zeki** and John **Romaya** looked at brain activity during a love affair.

Twenty four volunteers, aged between 19 and 47, viewed pictures of their romantic partners, as well as pictures of friends of the same sex as their partners but to whom they were romantically indifferent.

At the same time, their brains were scanned with functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI).

The results, published in the journal PLoS One, showed a very similar pattern of activity between the different groups and involved activation of both cortical and subcortical areas, mainly in areas that are rich in dopaminergic ("feel good") activity.

Dopaminergic activity is strongly linked to other neurotransmitter activities that are thought to be important in regulating emotional relationships and bonding between individuals.

The research also found that there is extensive deactivation of large parts of the cerebral cortex when lovers view pictures of their romantic partners.

The deactivated areas involved parts of the brain thought to be critical in judgment.