



**MIDDLE TENNESSEE  
PSYCHOLOGICAL  
ASSOCIATION  
SPRING MEETING**

**April 19, 2008**

**Keynote Speaker**

**Dr. Kenneth Steele**

**Appalachian State University**

**Bad Science, Good Science, and the  
Mozart Effect**

# **PRESIDENT TIM HALL ADDRESS 9:00 AM MORGAN UNIVERSITY CENTER 307**

## **POSTER SESSION I 9:15-10:00 Morgan University Center 303-305**

### **1. DOES READING FOR PLEASURE CREATE BETTER STUDENTS?**

Shain Pounds & Cassandra Parish

Advisor: Dr. William Langston

Middle Tennessee State University

The question we addressed was is there a correlation between reading for pleasure and reading textbook assignments. We surveyed Middle Tennessee State University college students and presented a scale designed specifically to inquire about reading habits and attitudes. We hope to find a high correlation between those who read for pleasure and those who read textbook assignments. This will mean that those who engage in ludic reading may be better students as they will be more likely to complete their textbook assignments.

### **2. INVESTIGATION OF EMPATHY: AIDING DISTRESSED OR NON-DISTRESSED INDIVIDUALS**

Tyler Hubbard, Robyn Rhodes & David Wood

Advisor: Dr. William Langston

Middle Tennessee State University

The purpose of this study was to measure individuals' empathy towards distressed or non-distressed individuals. We observed whether or not individuals helped or did not help our confederate after dropping papers when they were on and not on crutches. We ran sixty trials (thirty with crutches and thirty without crutches) in three different places on the Middle Tennessee State University Campus. We measured the number of times individuals helped, or did not help, our confederate after they dropped papers. We hypothesized that the confederate on crutches would be helped more than the confederate not on crutches.

### **3. IS THERE A DIFFERENCE IN RACE AND GENDER AND THE TIME IT TAKES A PERSON TO EXIT A PARKING SPACE WHEN SOMEONE IS WAITING TO PARK OR WHEN NO ONE IS WAITING TO PARK?**

Erica Beasley, Maranda Carney, Lindsay Graham & Letisha Grayson

Advisor: Dr. William Langston

Middle Tennessee State University

We observed parking spaces on and off the campus of MTSU to see how long it would take a person to exit a parking space when someone is waiting to park or when someone is not waiting to park. Our method was to observe 40 males and 40 females and record their race and gender hoping to find that race and gender do not affect the time it takes an individual to back out of a parking space. We were also interested in replicating an effect on the amount of time it takes an individual to back out of a parking space when someone is waiting vs. when someone is not waiting.

### **4. COGNITIVE APPRAISAL VERSUS EMOTIONAL REACTIONS TO HUMOROUS STIMULI**

Jacob Goings, Walter Roberts & Christopher Grant

Advisor: Dr. William Langston

Middle Tennessee State University

How does repeated exposure to humorous stimuli affect the cognitive and affective components of humor processing? Past research on humor processing has focused largely on incongruity resolution theory. More recent research has attempted to separate the cognitive and affective components of humor processing. We hypothesized that if individuals are exposed to humorous stimuli repeatedly then different mechanisms may be responsible for appreciation of the humor of repeated stimuli. Observing repeated exposure to humorous stimuli could give insight into the separation of the cognitive and affective sub processes. We exposed individuals to humorous cartoons on a slide show presentation. Half of the cartoons were presented in humorous versions repeatedly and the other half were only shown in their humorous version once. We compared the ratings of the humorous versions shown once to the rating of the humorous versions shown repeatedly using an independent  $t$  test. This study could give insight into the separation of the cognitive and affective sub processes of humor processing and could help to better understand the cognitive and affective sub processes involved in other distinctive stimuli which cause emotional reactions.

## **5. IS THERE A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PSYCHIC BELIEF AND PERSONALITY TYPE?**

Lynzi Tyus & Sarah Kleopfer  
Advisor: Dr. William Langston

Middle Tennessee State University

The question we addressed was: is there a relationship between psychic belief and personality type? We surveyed undergraduate MTSU students. We hope to find a relationship between psychic belief and personality type. This will mean a person's level of Type A or Type B personality will correlate with their level of psychic belief.

## **6. DOES FEMINISM PLAY A ROLE ON REACTION TIMES IN REGARD TO GENDER-NEUTRAL PRONOUNS?**

Kelli Perrien, Laura Gibson & Kirsten Phillips  
Advisor: Dr. William Langston

Middle Tennessee State University

We recruited female students from MTSU to participate in this experiment investigating preferred gender pronouns. We hope to discover if being a feminist makes a difference in gender-neutral pronoun preference. The study has the potential to provide knowledge as to the role of gender stereotyping in academic settings, as well as in modern day society.

## **7. WHICH PERSONALITY FACTORS WORK TOGETHER TO MAKE PEOPLE BREATHE UNDERWATER?**

Samantha Emerson  
Advisor: Dr. Skip Kendrick

Middle Tennessee State University

The question we addressed was: which personality factors work together to distinguish between cave divers, scuba divers, nondivers, and wannabe divers? In a previous study, we used various surveys to determine the personalities of cave-, scuba-, non-, and wannabe divers. We used this same data to find correlations among the different personality factors of each group. We hope to find trends between the different correlations between groups. This will mean that certain combinations of personality factors are present in various types of divers.

## 8. IS EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE NECESSARY FOR SUCCESS?

Joshua Sisco, Chelsie Jones & Derek Perryman  
Advisor: Dr. Sharon Guttman

Middle Tennessee State University

Emotional Intelligence (EI) has been shown to have a positive correlation with success in school according to an article involving emotionally aware kindergartners being more successful in school. EI encompasses being aware of one's own emotions and the emotions of others surrounding the person. We produced the study by going to different collegiate classrooms and distributed a 23 question survey that involved questions that gauge emotional intelligence and different aspects of success in college. We found no correlation between success in college and high emotional intelligence. However, we believe that a longer, more detailed survey could produce better results that are more similar to older studies showing a positive correlation between the two.

## 9. SEPARATING DISTINCTIVENESS AND THE EMOTIONAL MEMORY EFFECT

Daniel J. Cassie, Walter M. Roberts, Robyn N. Rhodes, George R. Taylor,  
& Steven R. Schmidt

Middle Tennessee State University

It has been established that negative emotional words are better remembered than matched neutral words. The discrepancy in recall may be due to the emotional content of a word, or a confound associated with word distinctiveness. In our study, participants were asked to read sentences containing common (more dominant) versus distinctive (less dominant) usages of emotional and non-emotional target words. Participants rated the target words based on their emotional reaction, and then were asked to freely recall the targets. The more emotional (dominant) usage of emotional words led to better recall than the less dominant meanings. With non-emotional words, dominance had no effect of word recall. These results suggest that emotion, instead of distinctiveness, is responsible for increased memory for emotional words.

## 10. PHARMACEUTICALS, THE FDA AND THE PEOPLE

Erin Hill, Michaela Buchanan & Gloria Hamilton  
Middle Tennessee State University

The purpose of this research project is to study the attitudes and perceptions of various social groups concerning the pharmaceutical companies and the FDA.

## 11. THE EFFECTS OF SMOKING SATIATION AND DEPRIVATION ON A SMOKING-RELATED STROOP TASK

LeAnna Fischer & Chelsea Meadows

Advisor: Dr. Thomas Brinthaupt

Middle Tennessee State University

Participants were assigned to one of three groups, non-smokers, deprived smokers, and satiated smokers. Each participant filled out a modified version of the Obsessive Compulsive Drinking Scale (OCDS) and then performed a Stroop task, including neutral and smoking-related words. Surprisingly, non-smokers and satiated smokers exhibited almost equal reaction times, while deprived smokers performed significantly faster. The scores from the OCDS have not yet been analyzed.

## 12. WHICH PERSONALITY FACTORS WORK TOGETHER TO MAKE PEOPLE BREATHE UNDERWATER?

Samantha N. Emerson

Advisor: Dr. Donald F. Kendrick

Middle Tennessee State University

The question we addressed was which personality factors work together to distinguish between cave divers, scuba divers, nondivers, and wannabe divers. In a previous study, we used various surveys to determine the personalities of cave, scuba, non, and wannabe divers. We used this same data to find correlations among the different personality factors of each group. We hope to find trends between the different correlations between groups. This will mean that certain combinations of personality factors are present in various types of divers.

## 13. PERCEIVED STRESS EXPERIENCED BY COLLEGE STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES COMPARED TO COLLEGE STUDENTS WITHOUT LEARNING DISABILITIES

Karen Baxter, Angela Hooten, Michelle Shires & Linda Dunn, PhD

Middle Tennessee State University

The present study measured and evaluated the perceived stress levels experienced by college students with learning disabilities (LD) in comparison to college students without learning disabilities (w/o LD). Seven hundred, eighty-seven students attending a large university in Middle Tennessee completed the study. Of these participants, 55 students w/o LD were randomly selected in order to compare stress levels to the 55 students with LD for a total of 110 participants (n = 110). The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10; Cohen, 1983) was administered to measure the perceived stress levels experienced by college students with LD compared to students w/o LD. Perceived stress levels of

college students with LD who currently use the Disabled Students Services (DSS) at the university (n = 12) also were compared to a random sample of college students with LD who do not use the services (n = 12). The PSS-10 consists of 10 questions which specifically assess an individual's perceived stress. Students also completed a demographic questionnaire (Baxter & Hooten, 2007) that provided general information about the participants including age, gender, academic standing, GPA, and learning disability status. Students with LD completed the Students with Learning Disabilities Awareness, Current Use, and Need for Services Questionnaire (SLDA; Baxter & Hooten, 2007), which evaluates the services and accommodations they receive through DSS at the university. Results indicated college students with LD experience similar levels of perceived stress compared to college students w/o LD. Results did, however, indicate students with LD who use DSS experienced statistically significantly less perceived stress than students with LD who do not use the services.

#### 14. IS THERE A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARKING TERRITORIALITY AND GENDER?

Ashley Gregory, Stacy Lawrence, Leanna Landry  
Advisor: Dr. William Langston  
Middle Tennessee State University

We will survey 25 males and 25 females about parking territoriality. Then we will observe 10 males and 10 females to rate parking territoriality. We hope to find a difference between gender and parking territoriality. We also hope to find a difference between what was reported in the surveys and what we observed. This will mean that there is a difference between gender and parking territoriality and what people reported.

#### 15. THE EFFECTS OF SELF-ESTEEM AND MOOD ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Amanda Borys, & Megan Lunsford  
Advisor: Dr. Thomas Brinthaup  
Middle Tennessee State University

The purpose of this experiment is to determine the effects of mood and self-esteem on consumer attitudes. The self-esteem of participants was measured using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale. Participants were randomly assigned to two groups: negative mood group and positive mood group. Mood induction was accomplished through autobiographical recall. Participants attitudes towards the purchase of a product viewed on an infomercial were assessed using a questionnaire. Results will be reported.

## 16. MUSIC AND PERCEPTION OF PERSONALITY

Andrew Robinson, Jonathan Bryan, Riki Spence  
Advisor: Dr. Thomas Brinthaupt  
Middle Tennessee State University

Different studies have shown that music can affect aspects of someone's mood and even cause physical responses such as chill bumps. We looked at different types of music to see if it can affect someone's perception of himself or herself. We hypothesized that the participants listening to happy music would score lowest on the introversion scale, highest on the LOT/R (optimism/pessimism) scale, and highest on the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale; participants listening to sad music would score highest on the introversion scale, lowest on the LOT/R (optimism/pessimism) scale, and lowest on the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale; participants listening to aggressive music would score low on the introversion scale, low on the LOT/R (optimism/pessimism) scale, and low on the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale; and participants listening to no music would serve as the control and would score neither low nor high on any of the scales.

## 17. CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN ADULTS' PERCEPTIONS OF CHILDREN'S EMOTIONAL DISPLAYS

Theresa Nicholls, Teresa L. Davis PhD, Jwa K. Kim, PhD, Dana K. Fuller, PhD  
Middle Tennessee State University

This study examined cultural as well as gender differences in adults' perceptions of a fourth grade boy's emotional display in two hypothetical vignettes. Sixty-four African American and White participants read two vignettes in which the child might be expected to hide his emotions in order to protect his self esteem. One vignette contained a name often associated with a White child and the other, an African American child. Participants then answered questions about the appropriateness of the display as well as likely reactions of teachers and peers. The results of this research indicate that adults' perceptions of a child's expression of fear differed by race and gender of participant.

## 18. COCA-COLA ADDICTION IN THE PRESENCE OF A CONDITIONED TASTE AVERSION IN ADOLESCENT RATS

Corinna J. Schmidt, Randall Schmidt & Brian J. Hock, PhD  
Austin Peay State University

The following study examines the addictive nature of Coca-Cola® in the presence of a conditioned taste aversion, thereby demonstrating a behavioral model of addiction in rats. The



rats were split into two groups; the control group, which received diet, caffeine free Coca-Cola® and the experimental group, which received Coca-Cola®. Rats in each group were given a 30 minute exposure to their respective soft drinks daily for two weeks in order to allow the animals' time to demonstrate a tolerance to caffeine (Griffiths & Woodson, 1988). On day 15, rats were given access to a 10% apple juice solution for 30 minutes, followed by a 0.15M lithium chloride injection in order to induce a conditioned taste aversion (Domjan, 1977; Spear & Riccio, 1994). On day 16, 17, and 18, the control group was given a choice between 10% apple/diet caffeine free Coca-Cola® or Coca-Cola® and the experimental group was given a choice between 10% apple/Coca-Cola® or diet caffeine free Coca-Cola®. The study found that there was a significant reduction of drinking a 10% apple solution between controls and the treatment group, which shows that the rats in the control group drank considerably less 10% apple solution at test than did the treatment group after twenty-four hours following exposure to the LiCl injection. The study also found the control group demonstrated a statistically significant preference for the non-10% apple solution over the 10% apple solution, and the treatment group demonstrated a statistically significant difference in preference of the 10% apple solution over non-10% apple solution. This shows that the rats in the control group avoided the 10% apple solution while the rats in the treatment group did not.

## **POSTER SESSION I 9:15-10:00**

### **Morgan University Center 306-308**

#### **1. COLLEGE STUDENTS' ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS, BODY IMAGE, AND SEXUAL BEHAVIOR**

Michelle L. Smith & Kimberly Ujcich Ward, Ph.D.  
Middle Tennessee State University

Although numerous studies have examined the relationship between body image and sexual behavior, few have considered how involvement in a romantic relationship affects the association between these two factors. The current study investigated if variables related to being involved in a relationship have an impact on the already demonstrated associations between body image and sexual behavior. One hundred eighty-two undergraduate students completed questionnaires assessing demographic variables, relationship status, commitment, body image, body image support, sexual behavior, and self-consciousness. The results indicated that relationship involvement did not moderate the relationship between body image and sexual behavior. Additionally, level of commitment and level of perceived support from a partner did not mediate the relationship between body image and sexual behavior. Results are discussed in terms of potential gender differences and challenging measurement factors. Future directions for research are suggested.

#### **2. THE SEVEN O'CLOCK NO JUNK FOOD PLAN BASED ON THE TRANSTHEORETICAL MODEL**

Brandi Treadway, Courtney Bohanon & Taveres Jones

Advisor: Dr. William Langston  
Middle Tennessee State University

The question we addressed was, does the transtheoretical model promote healthy eating behaviors? We issued a living healthy lifestyle packet to eight people. The packet consisted of guidelines of what participants can and cannot eat past 7 pm, the steps of the transtheoretical model, consent form, and a personal log of the experiment that the participant must fill out and keep a daily log of their eating behaviors. We hope to find that by using the transtheoretical model that the participants will develop healthier eating habits, hopefully have positive results, such as weight loss. This will mean the transtheoretical model is successful in promoting healthy eating behaviors.

### 3. ARE PEOPLE WHO LIKE HORROR FILMS HIGHER ON THE SENSATION SEEKING SCALE?

Lindsey Perry, Monica Hicks, Adam Ries  
Advisor: Dr. William Langston  
Middle Tennessee State University

The question we addressed was whether people who like horror films score higher on the sensation seeking scale or not. We surveyed MTSU students using the Zuckerman Sensation Seeking scale. We hope to find that students who like horror films are higher on the sensation seeking scale than students who do not. This will mean that students who are more likely to seek sensations are more likely to enjoy viewing horror films

### 4. EXTAVERSION AND INTROVERSION: SOCIAL INFLUENCES ON DRINKING

Cameron Carpenter & Alexandra Wyatt  
Advisor: Dr. Brinthaupt  
Middle Tennessee State University

We believe that there is a relationship between social influences, a person's social orientation, and drinking habits, specifically the predisposition to drink in social situations. We set out to determine if extraversion or introversion influenced different social drinking situations and mentalities.

### 5. IS THERE A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARKING TERRITORIALITY AND GENDER?

Ashley Gregory, Leanna Landry & Stacy Lawrence  
Advisor: Dr. Will Langston

## Middle Tennessee State University

We will survey 25 males and 25 females about parking territoriality. Then we will observe 10 males and 10 females to rate parking territoriality. We hope to find a difference between gender and parking territoriality. We also hope to find a difference between what was reported in the surveys and what we observed. This will mean that there is a difference between gender and parking territoriality and what people reported.

## 6. SELF-EFFICACY AND STRESS IN COLLEGE STUDENTS

Ashley N. Meatte, Carrie A. Mundie & Linda W. Dunn, Ph.D.  
Middle Tennessee State University

This research tested the following research question; “Does self-efficacy and stress effect academic success in Middle Tennessee State University students?” In order to answer this question, 200 students, found to be comparably diverse in ethnicity to the MTSU population from whence they were drawn, were administered the Self-Efficacy Questionnaire for Students (Dunn & Kim, 1995) and a stress inventory (Perceived Stress Scale; Cohen, Kamarck, & Mermelstein, 1983) in exchange for class credit. The instruments were scored and analyzed with regard to the Student’s corresponding grade point averages. Our findings indicated that there was a moderate to high negative correlation between self-efficacy and student’s perceived stress ( $n = -.46$ ). A normal standard distribution of scores was produced when the perceived stress scores for all students were analyzed, but a statistically significant relationship appeared between self-efficacy and GPA. A statistically significant difference between students with low self-efficacy levels and high GPAs seemed to be evident. Thus, those students with higher self-efficacy had higher academic success then those students with low self-efficacy. The implications and limitations of this research are also described.

## 7. WEEKLY ACTIVITIES OF COLLEGE STUDENTS

Luke Somerfield, Kamilah Johnson, Michelle Shires, Richard Bauer, Ph.D.  
& Linda W. Dunn  
Middle Tennessee State University

The study sought to identify the predominant activities that college students participate in during a given week and then to investigate how these activities might influence their grades and study habits. The first part of this study included demographic variables such as age, gender, educational level, grade point average (GPA), total credit hours taken, and whether the student had ever been diagnosed with a behavioral disorder or a learning disability. The second part of this study consisted of 44 questions which asked the students to choose how much time (on a Likert scale from 0-15+ hours) they spend participating in traditional student activities (such as spending time in the library or reading assigned materials). The Weekly Activities Questionnaire-Revised Version (Somerfield and Bauer, 2007) was administered to general psychology classes and a preliminary sample size of 40 was obtained ( $n = 40$ ). More data will be collected for the main analysis. All data were analyzed using SPSS statistical software. The

findings in this research revealed that selected variables which the researchers viewed as potentially positive ways to spend time from an academic standpoint were related, and a relationship between selected negative behaviors was also indicated. Time spent in the library and time spent attending classes, for example, were correlated to a statistically significant degree ( $r = 0.428$ ,  $p < 0.006$ ). Likewise, GPA was negatively correlated with such activities considered as negative or non-value added academic activities such as the relationship between talking on a cell phone and reported GPA ( $r = 0.414$ ,  $p < 0.02$ ). More studies are needed in order to confirm these findings by way of replication as well as using different measures to determine academic competence. The implications of this study are discussed.

## 8. THE EFFECTS OF COMMUNICATION AND PARENTING ON COLLEGE STUDENTS

Linda W. Dunn, Ph.D., Kamilah Johnson, Luke Somerfield, Michelle Shires & M. Ellen Pitts  
Middle Tennessee State University

This study examined the relationship between parent-child communication and interpersonal exchanges occurring in late adolescence. One hundred and twenty ( $n = 120$ ) eighteen year-old college students were surveyed to examine their communication specifics from childhood as well as those of their current interpersonal exchanges. Most of those who participated were selected from the Middle Tennessee State University undergraduate research pool. There were an almost equal number of males and females who participated in the study. Two instruments of strong reliability and validity—the Parent-Child Relationship Inventory (Gerard, 1994), and the Interpersonal Communication Inventory (Bienvenu, 1971)—were used as well as a brief demographic questionnaire (The Communication Demographics Questionnaire; Dunn, Johnson, and Somerfield, 2007) which gathered specific background information about the participants, including race, gender, and socioeconomic status. The parent most participants reported communicating with primarily in childhood was the biological mother (who in the case of this sample was in the home in 95.80% of the instances). Among the results of this research, the findings indicated that the ability to talk with a parent while growing up was statistically significantly related to the student's ability to communicate with others in adulthood ( $p < 0.01$ ). Also, the amount of eye contact made with the parent in childhood was correlated with the ability to communicate with others in the now-adult or late adolescent student ( $p < 0.05$ ). The results of this investigation confirmed the researchers' hypotheses regarding the relationship between communication in childhood and that of adolescence or young adulthood. These results indicate that successful communication with the primary caregiver during childhood does lend itself to better abilities as an adult to communicate and, as indicated by most every other measured parameter, more success in functioning with others as an adult.

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS 10:10-11:10**  
**Morgan University Center 307**

**Dr. Kenneth Steele**  
**Appalachian State University**

**Bad Science, Good Science, and the  
Mozart Effect**

**ORAL PRESENTATIONS 11:15-12:00**  
**Morgan University Center 307**

**1. IS THERE A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SHOPLIFTING AND  
SENSATION SEEKING?**

Sarah L. Ferguson, Sonny C. Virgin & Judy Salacuse

Advisor: Dr. William Langston

Middle Tennessee State University

The question we addressed was whether or not there is a relationship between shoplifting and sensation seeking. We used the SSS-V to assess sensation seeking and a brief survey of opinion statements to assess participants' attitudes towards shoplifting. Participants included MTSU college students and employees at a Nashville-area mental health services center. We hope to find a positive relationship between sensation seeking and participant attitudes about shoplifting as this may help us to uncover one of the possible motives for shoplifting.

**2. THE EFFECTS OF INTERNET-MEDIATED COMMUNICATION ON  
HUMAN EXPRESSION**

Daniel Brown, Paula Sasser & George DeJesus

Middle Tennessee State University

The effect of new communication mediums on levels of anonymity and perceived accountability to messages exchanged using such mediums is worth examining as new generations develop viewing this type of communication as normative behavior. In the present study, the authors predicted significant differences between opinions of art communicated to the artist anonymously via internet mediation and those opinions expressed directly to the artist. The explanation proffered for such a phenomenon is the communicator's perceived "distance" between the content of a message and the recipient of that message.

## **POSTER SESSION II 12:00-12:45**

### **Morgan University Center 303-305**

#### **1. GROUP DIFFERENCES IN ANXIETY BASED ON REPORTED MARIJUANA AND ALCOHOL USE**

Mary Wilde, Phil Pegg, Ph.D., Elizabeth Murray, & Elisabeth Knauer  
Western Kentucky University

In the present study, a total of 1,251 undergraduates completed demographic questionnaires and various measures of general and medical anxieties. Of these participants, 85 participants admitted to using marijuana, ranging in frequency from unspecified to multiple times daily. Approximately 49% of all the participants reported alcohol use (of these participants, 19% reported daily or weekly use, 17% reported using one to two times per month, 11% reported using one to three times per year, and 11% reported never using alcohol). The present study had two primary aims. The first of which was to investigate the relationship between marijuana use and various measures of anxiety. Secondly, we examined the frequency of alcohol consumption and scores on various anxiety scales. Our hypothesis was that persons who admitted to using marijuana regularly and persons who consumed alcohol on a regular basis (ie. weekly or daily) would have higher mean scores on various measures of anxiety including general measures, contextual medical anxieties and phobias. One-Way analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were performed to test these hypotheses, followed by post-hoc LSD tests for the alcohol groups. Scores on the Beck Anxiety Inventory, a measure of current levels of global anxiety, (BAI; Beck, Epstein, Brown, & Steer, 1988) and both the state and trait versions of the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI; Spielberger, Gorsuch, Lushene, Vagg, & Jacobs, 1983) were obtained. Between self-reported users and non-users of marijuana, scores on the BAI ( $F(1, 1,144) = 3.54, p > .05$ ), state anxiety ( $F(1, 1,197) = 1.48, p > .05$ ) and trait anxiety, ( $F(1, 1185) = 3.6, p > .05$ ) did not differ significantly. Between groups on frequencies of alcohol consumption, scores on the BAI,  $F(3,694) = .335, p > .05$ , state anxiety  $F(3,735) = .379, p > .05$ , and trait anxiety,  $F(3,733) = 1.5, p > .05$ ) were also non-significant. To examine the differences between self-reported recreational drug users and frequent alcohol imbibers on fears and objects of phobias, scores generated on the Fear Schedule Survey-II (FSS-II; Geer, 1965) were analyzed. To investigate group differences in context-specific types of

anxiety, several measures of other types of anxiety were employed in this study. Specifically, to examine differences in medically related anxieties, the three-factor Medical Avoidance Survey (Med Avoid; Kleinknecht et. al., 1996), the five-factor Medical Fears Survey (MFS; Kleinknecht, Kleinknecht, Sawchuck, Lee, & Lohr, 1999), and the Patient Invalidation scale, and the Patient Involvement and Self Treatment scale of the Medical Anxieties Scales (MAS; Pegg, 2007) were used. Largely contradicting our hypotheses were findings that suggested few substantial differences between groups determined on the basis of use of either substance. Explanations for non-significant results will be described in greater detail.

## 2. SICK AND JUST DEALING WITH IT: GROUPS DIFFERENCES IN BROAD & CONTEXT-SPECIFIC ANXIETIES BASED ON PERCEPTIONS OF UNTREATED HEALTH CONCERNS

Elizabeth R. Murray, Phil Pegg, Ph.D., Mary Wilde & Elisabeth Knauer  
Western Kentucky University

When seeking medical advice or treatment, a small portion of the population experiences elevated levels of medical anxiety, sometimes to the extent of total medical avoidance. The purpose of the current study was to see whether there are group differences between those who have medical conditions for which they are not receiving treatment, and those who do not have untreated concerns. We sampled 1251 participants from a larger study, and 12.4% (155) of them indicated that they have one or more health concerns for which they are currently not receiving treatment e.g., some minor woes such as headaches and muscle pain and some more serious concerns, such as potential cancer and obesity. Participants were asked to list those concerns, and 96% (149) of the 155 listed one or more untreated ailments. We coded these into 14 categories, which were psychological concerns; obesity/weight/body image concerns; respiratory ailments; blood, heart, & circulatory problems; diffuse pain laments & fatigue; musculo-skeletal concerns; headache/migraines; urinary/vaginal/rectal concerns; gastrointestinal problems; dental problems; diabetes; skin problems; cancer concerns; and other/uncategorizable. One of our hypotheses was that those with untreated medical conditions would be significantly different on multiple scales from those who did not report untreated concerns. We ran a one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and used F-tests and comparisons of means and found that there were indeed substantial differences. Those with untreated health concerns had significantly higher mean sums on the Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI; Beck, Epstein, Brown, & Steer, 1988) as well as on the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (Form Y; STAI; Spielberger, Gorsuch, Lushene, Vagg, & Jacobs, 1983). Of particular interest were those who listed two or more untreated health concerns. We hypothesized that there would be some significant differences between those complaining of two or more ailments and those reporting only one or none. We did find some differences here, one of which was higher scores on the BAI for the two or more concerns group. Furthermore, we believed that there would be differences between different clusters of untreated ailments among those 149 respondents who listed their concerns. Psychological and musculo-skeletal concerns were the two most frequently cited

untreated problems, and we looked to see what some of these differences are, which will be discussed.

### 3. GENDER DIFFERENCES IN FEARS, PHOBIAS, & ANXIETIES

Elisabeth A. Knauer, Phil Pegg, Ph.D., Mary Wilde, & Elizabeth Murray  
Advisor: Phil Pegg, Ph.D.  
Western Kentucky University

The purpose of the study is to examine the gender differences in dental fears, scores on the Beck Anxiety Inventory and Body Sensations Questionnaire, fear of blood-injection-injury, medical avoidance, medical fears, trait anxiety, hospital anxiety, scores on the Medications Anxiety Scale, fear of surgery and anesthesia, reports of patient invalidation, and specific phobias. Due to foregoing research and findings, researchers hypothesized that women, in general, would show greater anxiety and higher levels of fears and phobias than men. Questionnaires containing a demographics section (for background information regarding age, gender, year in college, and history of medical care), Medical Anxieties Scales (MAS; Pegg, 2007), containing a Patient Involvement and Self-Treatment and Invalidating Experiences Scale, Doctors Anxiety Scale, Treatment Anxiety Scale, Hospitalization Anxiety Scale, and Medications Anxiety Scale), and a compilation of current anxiety measures (BAI, BSQ, BISS, DFS, GMAI, MAS, MFS, STAI, and FSS II) were sent to 1251 college students at a university in the South Central United States. Consistent with hypotheses, after performing one-way ANOVAs, women's results produced higher levels of dental fear ( $F(1, 1205) = 13.38, p < .001$ ), trait anxiety ( $F(1, 1193) = 30.487, p < .001$ ), and patient invalidation ( $F(1, 1159) = 12.171, p = .001$ ). Women also scored higher on all of the factors of phobias. Factor one of phobias, comprised of a fear of failure, looking foolish, arguing with parents, being criticized, being alone, making mistakes, being misunderstood, not being a success, and losing a job ( $F(1, 803) = 51.355, p < .001$ ); factor two, comprised of a fear of worms, rats and mice, spiders, storms, snakes, cemeteries, the dark, strange dogs, and stinging insects ( $F(1, 804) = 147.128, p < .001$ ); factor three, comprised of the fear of suffocating, illness or injury to loved ones, and death of a loved one ( $F(1, 805) = 64.175, p < .001$ ); factor four, comprised of the fear of swimming alone, boating, and deep water ( $F(1, 805) = 48.175, p < .001$ ); factor five, the medically related fears, comprised of the fear of sharp objects, dead bodies, hypodermic needles, and blood ( $F(1, 806) = 67.156, p < .001$ ); factor six, comprised of the fear of being a passenger in a car, driving a car, being in an automobile accident, crowded places, and mental illness ( $F(1, 802) = 90.639, p < .001$ ); factor seven, comprised of the fear of meeting a member of the opposite sex, meeting someone for the first time, seeing a fight, being in a fight, being a leader, and speaking before a group ( $F(1, 806) = 41.205, p < .001$ ); factor eight, comprised of the fear of life after death, death, illness, and untimely or early death ( $F(1, 807) = 47.485, p < .001$ ); factor nine, comprised of the fear of being self-conscious and meeting authority ( $F(1, 804) = 21.208, p < .001$ ); and factor ten, comprised of the fear of being a passenger in an airplane, roller coasters, and heights ( $F(1, 808) = 33.272, p < .001$ ). There was no significant difference between men and women, however, on fear factor eleven, the fear of God ( $F(1, 802) = 1.830, p = .177$ ).



#### 4. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A “NONE OF THE ABOVE” ANSWER OPTION IN MULTIPLE CHOICE GRAMMAR TESTS

Andrea B. Sides & Reagan D. Brown  
Western Kentucky University

This study examines the use of “none of the above” (NOTA) as an answer option in a multiple-choice grammar test. Results from previous research on this topic have been mixed. Two forms of a grammar test, one without a NOTA option and one with a NOTA option, were developed and administered to a sample of 160 undergraduate students. Differences between the forms in item difficulty and discrimination were examined. Analysis revealed no differences in item discrimination or item difficulty between items without a NOTA option and items with a NOTA option. A discussion of the results, limitations, and suggestions for future research is provided.

#### 5. THE EFFECTS OF EMOTIONAL WORDS ON MEMORY FOR SURROUNDING WORDS

Austin G. Starchman, Laura E. Gibson, Brittany S. Martin & Stephen R. Schmidt  
Middle Tennessee State University

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of word position, in relation to an arousing word, on the likelihood of remembering a word. The experiment consisted of trials containing three words: a neutral word, then a modulator word, followed by another neutral word. Modulator words were either taboo, negative emotional, or clothing words. As they were presented, words were rated for emotional intensity. After the rating task, participants performed a recognition task, containing both old and new words. It was found that modulator words had no effect on the likelihood of remembering a neutral word. It was also found that negative emotional words were more likely to be remembered than neutral words, and that taboo words were more likely to be remembered than both. This indicates then that the presence of an arousing word had no effect on memory for surrounding neutral words.

#### 6. COULD PETS BE MORE THAN JUST A WARM CUDDLY COMPANION?

Laura Lamb & Brittany Anderson  
Advisor: Dr. Sharon Guttman  
Middle Tennessee State University

Siegal (1990) found that pet ownership in older adults resulted in fewer visits to the doctor. We hypothesized that this better health may result from pets reducing stress levels. In the current study, we surveyed 104 MTSU students regarding school-related

stress levels and pet ownership. However, we did find a negative correlation between age and pet ownership; the younger students were more likely to have a pet than the older students. We suggest that these younger students may experience more stress than older students because they are in a new environment, just starting college, counterbalancing the stress-relaxing properties of pets.

## 7. HOW OLD IS OLD?

Jennifer Rybolt, Joe Beavers & Melanie Gavami  
Advisor: Dr. Sharon Guttman  
Middle Tennessee State University

In American society, many people hold negative attitudes towards elderly individuals (Schmidt & Boland, 1986); however, attitudes may be changing for the better. We predicted that college students enrolled in courses focusing on aging and elderly populations would have a better attitude towards the elderly than students enrolled in a general curriculum. Participants responded to a standard twenty question survey probing attitudes towards the elderly. Our results showed similar, positive attitudes in both groups. However, students enrolled in specialized courses believed the word “old” referred to someone of a significantly later age and those further along in school were more impacted than those beginning college. These findings suggest that becoming educated about aging may improve our understanding of older adults.

## 8. IT'S CALLED MYSPACE, NOT YOURSPACE!

Brandon Wright, Jessica Garner & Claire Poteet  
Advisor: Dr. Sharon Guttman  
Middle Tennessee State University

Previous research has shown that individuals exhibit territoriality over spaces that have no value to them. Our study addressed this issue in a scholastic setting. We observed 50 men and 50 women in the James Walker Library at MTSU, regarding exhibition of territoriality including placing feet on a chair, placing a bag on a chair, and spread of materials on the table. Results indicated that men and women showed similar amounts of territorial behavior, but displayed it in different ways. Men were more likely to place feet in a chair, whereas women were more likely to place bags in a chair. These behaviors show that men use the body more to display overt behavior, and women use possessions.

## 9. DO DOGS MAKE US HEALTHIER?

Jodi Smith & Taylor Dugger  
Advisor: Sharon Guttman

## Middle Tennessee State University

Previous research suggests that pet ownership is positively correlated with physical health. We hypothesized that this relationship may exist, in part, because dog owners engage in more healthy behaviors than non-dog owners. In the current study, we surveyed 83 MTSU students asking about their lifestyle and dog ownership. We found that dog owners did, in fact, exercise significantly more than those who did not own dogs. However, there was no significant difference in the overall health behaviors, such as diet and smoking, of dog owners and non-dog owners. Although it may not change a person's entire lifestyle, it appears that owning a dog helps people get out and get their body moving more than not owning a dog.

### 10. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RELIGIOSITY AND SEXUAL ACTIVITY

Dani Bodkin, Debra Fulcher and Nathan Lesnak  
Advisor: Dr. William Langston  
Middle Tennessee State University

The question we addressed was whether or not there is a relationship between religiosity and sexual activity. We surveyed 100 Middle Tennessee State University students ages 18 and older. We hope to find a strong correlation between moderate levels of religiosity and sexual activities. This will be important because it will help to evaluate whether church attendance has an effect on sexual behavior.

### 11. THE STRUCTURE OF FEARS

Thomas Reece  
Advisor: Dr. Phil Pegg  
Western Kentucky University

A sample of college students were administered the Fear Survey Schedule-II. The results were analyzed using principle components analysis to examine the structure of fear inducing stimuli. Differences between the top five most highly endorsed fears of men and women are also reported.

### 12. PATTERNS OF LIBRARY USE & ITS EFFECT ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Kamilah Johnson, Jonathan LaBonte, Lorenzo Olive & Michelle Shires  
Advisor: Linda W. Dunn, PhD.

## Middle Tennessee State University

Studies have been done to investigate undergraduate students' use of their university or college library systems. One such study, conducted at Mississippi State University (Grimes & Charters, 2000), suggested that females, mainly Black students who live on-campus, spent more time in their university's library than do males, Caucasians, and also those students who were currently living off-campus. Ethelene Whitmire (2003) suggested that library use may be indicative of one's level of education, age, race, and background, with Blacks engaging in more frequent library use. The current study investigated the frequency of utilization of the library at a major university in Middle Tennessee, as well as academic performance and competence levels of those utilizing the library and its services. A total of 4,264 library patrons were observed, and eighty-six library patrons were surveyed for the purposes of this research. To assess the number of people entering the library at various times of the day, a naturalistic observation technique was used. Library patrons were later solicited to assess academic performance and competency by way of survey using two instruments; the Academic Competence Evaluation Scales—College Version (ACES; DiPerna & Elliot, 2000) and a brief demographic survey (Johnson, LaBonte, & Olive, 2007) (N = 86). The findings suggested that students, faculty, and other patrons were more likely to utilize the library's services at mid-day and afternoon times rather than early morning times as predicted by the researchers. In addition, results revealed that students who spent six or more hours per week studying in the library averaged a higher GPA than those who spent one to five hours per week studying in the library. Other findings and implications of this study are also discussed.

### 13. OPINIONS ON THE ETHICS OF GENETIC ENGINEERING OF FOOD CROPS

Alaina Gauss & Dr. Gloria Hamilton  
Middle Tennessee State University

Genetically engineered (GE) food was introduced in the early 1990s. Now, over 70% of the foods sold in supermarkets have GE foods or food products in them. However, not many people are aware of this. Studies have been conducted in the past few years to examine public awareness of GE foods, and their opinions on GE foods. This study was designed to determine the opinions of undergraduate students on GE foods and issues that involve consumers. The potential benefits from this study would be a greater understanding of opinions on the ethics of genetic engineering in food crops.