



MCTFR *update*

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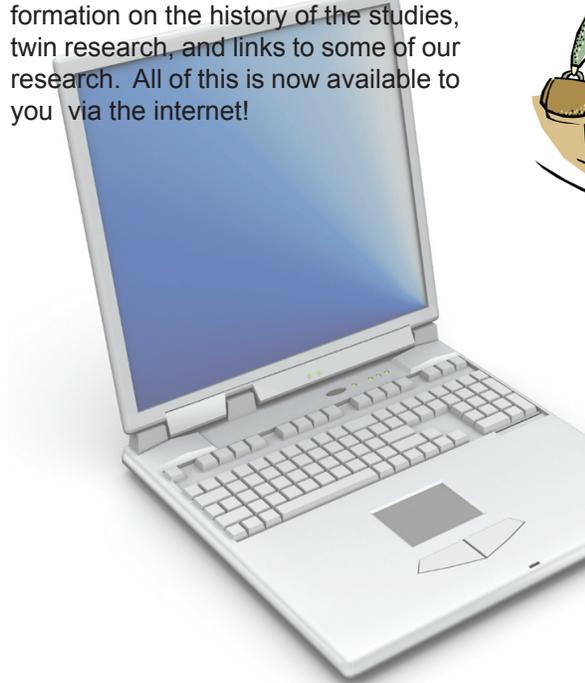
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The MCTFR is proud to announce the arrival of a new website for the study! See us at <http://mctfr.psych.umn.edu> Our staff and researchers have worked hard to develop a site that is useful and informative. This new website also showcases our new logo and new look.

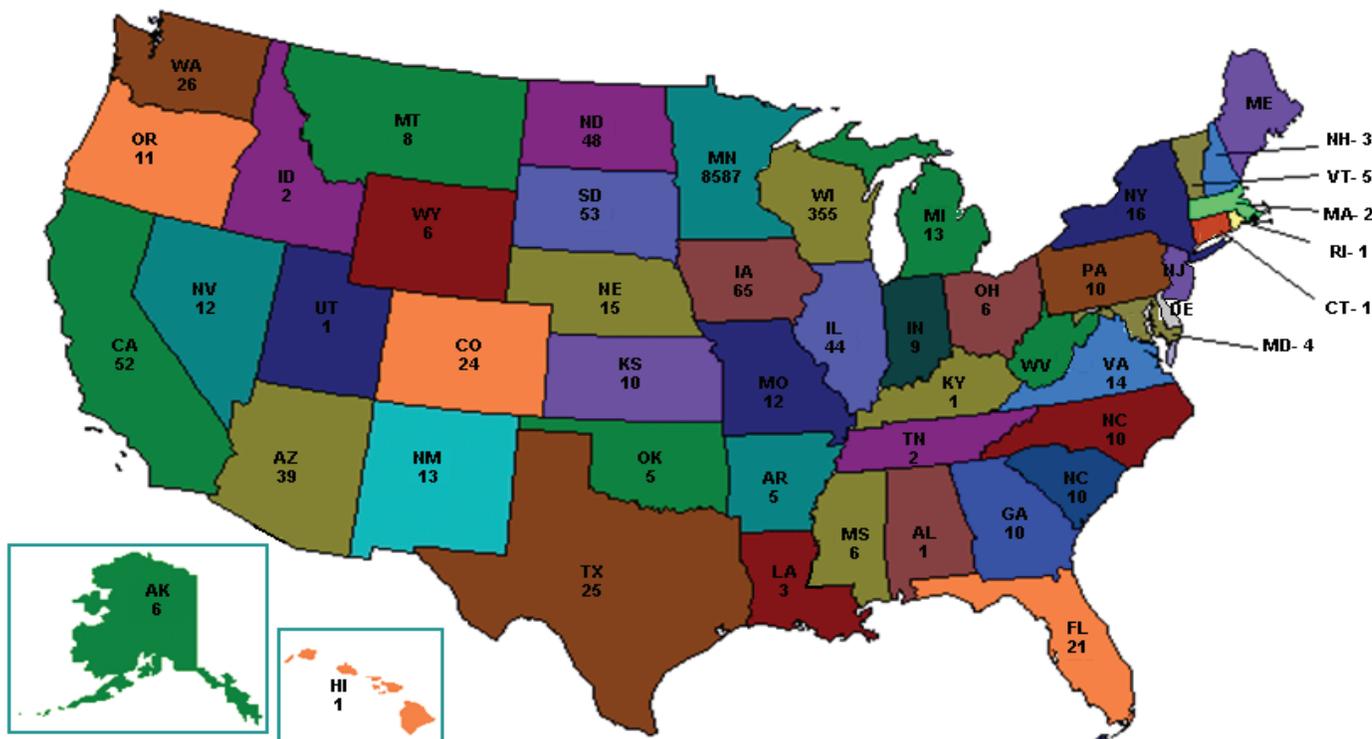
If you want information about an upcoming visit or need directions to the study, that's one thing you can find on our new site! We've also provided information on the history of the studies, twin research, and links to some of our research. All of this is now available to you via the internet!



Our goal is to make your experience with us as pleasing and convenient as we can. We value your interest, so we hope our website will sufficiently answer your questions and convey to you how important you are to us!

Where are you now?

In order to be eligible for the study, twins or siblings needed to be born or adopted in Minnesota. Although you all started here, you have not all stayed. Check out the map below to see how many participants are currently living in each state.



Additionally, we have participants living in Japan, United Kingdom, Finland, Australia, Canada, Switzerland, Paraguay, France, and Africa! We are proud to say we even have participants currently serving overseas.

To update your address, please follow the link to "Update Your Contact Information" located on the upper right hand side of our homepage at <http://mctfr.psych.umn.edu> Thank you!

Is left handedness more common among twins? By Jennifer Donnelly and Dragana Vidovic

As part of your lab assessment, we have you fill out a Dominance Questionnaire to determine your hand, ear, eye, and foot preferences. Most research studies determine hand dominance solely on your writing hand preference. However, here at the MCTFR, we ask you questions about several routine-daily tasks in order to obtain a more complete hand dominance assessment.

The tables below show handedness percentages from our intake data.

TWINS	LEFT HANDED	RIGHT HANDED
Males	227 or 13%	1550 or 87%
Females	200 or 11%	1685 or 89%

In the general population, the incidence of left-handedness is roughly 10-15% (Springer&Deutch, 1989 at O'Boyle&Benbow 1990, p.343). The studies done in the past showed that left-handedness is much more common among twins, however recent studies show this not to be true. Our data confirms the findings of these present studies; there are no significant differences between the general population and our sample of twins in the prevalence of left-handedness. In addition, twins in our sample are likely

PARENTS	LEFT HANDED	RIGHT HANDED
Mothers	152 or 8%	1697 or 92%
Fathers	199 or 12%	1457 or 88%

to use the same hand that they use for writing for other tasks that we ask about, such as throwing a ball and brushing teeth.

Since most of the population is right handed, items such as tools, appliances, music instruments, sports equipment, utensils, and others have mainly been designed to suit right-handed people. Until recently, left-handed people have had to either learn how to use these items with their left hand or learn how to use their right hand to perform certain tasks. Nowadays there are products made for left handed people that can be found in stores like Target, for instance. The first left-handed spe-

Left handedness continues...

More interesting “Leftie” finds

cialty shop in the world opened in London in 1968. (<http://www.anythingleft-handed.co.uk/shop.html>)

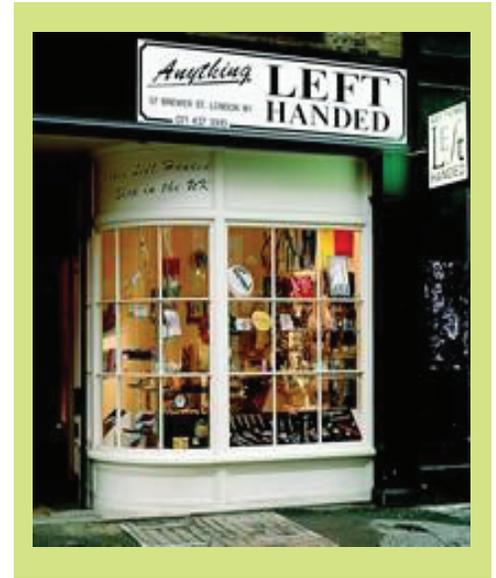
Many famous musicians like Bach, David Bowie, Celine Dion, and Sting are left-handed. There are also many famous actors who are left-handed such as Angelina Jolie, Brad Pitt, Sarah Jessica Parker, Nicole Kidman, Jim Carrey, Pierce Brosnan, Julia Roberts, Drew Barrymore, and Marilyn Monroe. Athletes such as Diego Maradona, Pele, Babe Ruth, Jonny Damon,

Bjorn Borg, and Barry Bonds are also lefties. Many famous people throughout history have also been left-handed. These include Aristotle, Da Vinci, Einstein, Napoleon, Helen Keller, and Neil Armstrong.

Jennifer and Dragana are Psychophysicists at the MCTFR.

For more on our research, please see <http://mctfr.psych.umn.edu/research>

The number of English words that are typed solely with the left hand is 1,447. Only 187 words are typed solely with the right hand. The longest English word typed only with the left hand is “stewardesses”.



Life as an Interviewer: A Profile of Chris Benefield *By Andrew Robertson*



Our interviewers ask you various questions when you come in for a visit. But what happens when the tables are turned? I recently had the chance to ask Chris Benefield about his life as an interviewer. Chris recently left the study after working here for seven and a half years. We estimate that Chris completed over 1500 interviews, a MCTFR record. He is the perfect person to ask about the ins and outs of interviewing. We also asked him, what happens when an interviewer hangs up the clipboard for good?

To begin, Chris said that to become an interviewer you need to have, “at least a four-year degree, typically in psychology.” Getting an interviewing job here is very competitive. Often, there are many qualified applicants for a limited number of positions. Why do so

many with psychology degrees want to be interviewers? Interviewing is a rewarding job that also provides great experience for those who wish to pursue graduate studies in psychology.

What does an interviewer do? An interviewer typically completes one interview per day, sometimes more. Chris said the other key elements to this position are, “coding files (from the interviews) and phone interviewing.” Interviewers also do coding projects, participate in monthly meetings and have additional committee responsibilities. There are also opportunities to participate in research, stay up to date on current research, and take courses to further their education and training.

Interviewing is a job for people persons. “I think the most enjoyable thing about interviewing is meeting Minnesotans from all walks of life. I think I’ve learned a lot about people and human nature after talking to about 1500 different kids and adults,” Chris said. An essential part of interviewing is making the participant feel comfortable and welcome. Occasionally, Chris said, that can be a challenge. “Maybe they’ve had a hard life they really don’t want to talk about or perhaps they’re just having a bad day.” Quality research

requires a lot of detailed questions that may leave the participant feeling tired. However, the interviewers make every effort to see that participants leave satisfied with their visit. “To have someone walk into my office hesitant about being here and leave with a smile is very rewarding.”

Along with the rewarding nature of the job, Chris also got what he called, “the best fringe benefit ever.” He met his future wife at the Twin Study. Meg (Spires) Benefield was also an interviewer here for many years. Meg and Chris recently had a son, who is the first child of a couple who met while working for the study. Chris joked that their son is the first part of a plan to breed a race of “super-interviewers”.

In his retirement from the Twin Study, Chris is at home caring for his infant son and step-daughter and building his “home-based business empire”. When asked about the possibility of having twins himself one day, Chris said, “all of our twin families have my utmost respect—one baby at a time is exhausting enough!” But, Chris said he enjoys his new role as a stay-at-home father. He has permanently traded in his clipboard...for a diaper bag.

Andy is a Senior Interviewer at the MCTFR and has worked here for six years. To meet more staff, visit <http://mctfr.psych.umn.edu/meetthestaff>



Thank You!

We can't thank you enough for your participation in our studies. Without you, our research would not be possible! Your willingness to participate over the years is one of the things that make our studies unique. We hope you enjoy your experiences with us and we look forward to having you participate again!!

Did you know?

Adoption is more common than you might think! According to Adoption Facts (www.adoptionfacts.org.) each year approximately 140,000 children are adopted by American families. Also, about 100 million Americans have adoption in their immediate family. Here are a few recognizable names that you might not have known were adopted as well!

Michael Bay (Director)
Daunte Culpepper (Football Player)
Eric Dickerson (Football Player)
Melissa Gilbert (Actress: Laura Ingalls)
Scott Hamilton (Olympic Gold Medalist)
Faith Hill (Country Music Star)
Steve Jobs (Founder of Apple)
John Lennon (Musician)
Ray Liotta (Actor)
Greg Louganis (Olympic Gold Medalist)
Sarah McLachlan (Singer)
James Michener (Writer)
Jim Palmer (Baseball Hall-of-Fame)
Dave Thomas (Founder of Wendy's)

This information is from adoptionfacts.org, associatedcontent.com, and adoption.about.com.

New Contact Information?

If you have made or plan to make any changes to your name, address, phone numbers, or email addresses please let us know!

You can call us at 1-800-IMATWIN, email us at doubles@tfs.psych.umn.edu or sibs@tfs.psych.umn.edu, or submit your changes through our "Update Your Contact Information" link on our website at <http://mctfr.psych.umn.edu>



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