

Spring 2006 SABBATICAL REPORT

Ken Olson, Department of Psychology

During the Spring semester of 2006 I took a sabbatical leave from Fort Hays State University. This report lists the research activities I conducted during this sabbatical and the resulting papers that have been accepted for publication, as well as the papers that are still in preparation that were started during the sabbatical. Several of these documents are attached.

1 In a previous publication I identified what I believe are the two fundamental dimensions of personality traits, labeled Engagement and Self Control. During the sabbatical I designed a research study to empirically test how the traits interact with each other in producing different styles of interpersonal conflict (assertiveness, aggressiveness, conflict avoidance, and passive-aggressiveness). This study served as the basis for a thesis by Desi Pfortmiller that I chaired. The study was completed and the thesis was defended this month in the Psychology Department. Final revisions are being made prior to submission to the Graduate School.

2. I made revisions to a paper titled "A Literature Review of Social Mood." Social mood has been posited as a primary causal variable in a wide range of economic, social, cultural, and political phenomena. My paper delineated the individual psychological basis of social mood. Specifically, it described the substantial empirical evidence for, and links between, three major mood-related domains of human personality: positive and negative affect (emotion), psychological motives (approach and avoidance motivation), and personality traits. Also discussed was research on emotional contagion, the process by which the moods of individuals spread and ultimately manifest in mass social mood. Also covered was the manner in which the mood-related personality variables relate to major trends in economic and financial cycles. This paper was accepted for publication in the **Journal of Behavioral Finance** and will be published at the end of 2006 (see Attachment).

3. I wrote a paper titled "Why do Geographic Differences Exist in the Worldwide Distribution of Extraversion and Openness to Experience? The History of Human Emigration as an Explanation." (see Attachment). This paper has been submitted for publication and is currently under journal review. Research has found that Europeans and Americans are higher than Asians and Africans in the traits of extraversion and openness to experience. The reason for this is unknown. I posited that selective emigration by individuals with these traits, beginning with prehistoric humans, may explain this worldwide geographic distribution of traits. I noted that the current geographic distribution of these traits parallels the "Out of Africa" pattern of emigration of humans from their origin in Africa to Asia, and later to Europe and America, as revealed by behavioral genetic and paleoanthropological data. This paper involved an interdisciplinary integration of research in the fields of psychology with behavioral genetics and paleoanthropology.

4. I wrote a draft of a paper that included results of a completed masters thesis by Brad Chapin that I chaired. This paper is part of a larger paper that combines results from a study by a former FHSU faculty member, Greg Turek. A rough draft of my portion of this paper is attached; Turek's portion of the paper has not yet been completed. Also, data from this paper is being included in an invited chapter that I am writing for the book, **Psychology of Motivation**, published by Nova Science. The due date for the completion of this chapter is November 1, 2006.

5. I conducted a review of the psychological literature to ascertain additional empirical evidence and correlates of the two fundamental personality trait dimensions I identified (Engagement and Self Control), and began writing a paper on this subject. This paper is still in preparation.

This sabbatical was more productive than I had originally anticipated. In particular, the paper on human emigration and the worldwide geographic distribution of traits emerged from the reading I did after the commencement of the sabbatical. I am grateful for the opportunity to pursue my research during the sabbatical. I believe my teaching will be enhanced and future research projects will also emerge. I will also be presenting results of some of this research during a sabbatical lecture series at FHSU being developed by Steve Trout this academic year.