

CAN YOU BE HYPNOTIZED?

- 10** percent of people truly are susceptible to hypnosis
- 70** percent have a small susceptibility rate
- 20** percent nearly are incapable of going into a trance

*According to professional hypnotist Bob Walsh's article on selfgrowth.com

Hypnosis should be used for fun, not medical cures



Lauren Kellett

On my eighth grade mystery trip in 2007, I volunteered to be hypnotized. I climbed on stage, sat down, slowly was instructed to say the ABCs backwards, think of a happy place and listen to the soothing voice of the hypnotist to ease me into semi-consciousness. I slowly found myself falling into a deep, deep ... nothing. I still was alert and in control of my own body. It was at this moment I realized how ridiculous the whole concept of hypnosis really is.

Just ask Lisa Nasseff, a St. Louis woman who is suing her therapist for hypnotizing her into thinking she had a past with a satanic cult and suffered from multiple personalities, according to a Dec. 1 article on KSDK.com. Whether or not this woman truly was hypnotized into believing this, hypnosis should not be used to cure mental or physical health problems.

If you are a little fuzzy on the details of hypnosis, it usually goes something like this: A swinging object or rotating sphere is your eye's target, and your

ears are subjected to a low, soft voice rocking you to "a state of daydreaming, where you are fully conscious yet tune out all of the stimuli around you," according to science.howstuffworks.com.

In Nasseff's case, and in the case of many psychiatric patients, the hypnosis method used simply was the therapist, Mark Schwartz of the Ballwin, Mo. Castlewood Treatment Center, talking the patient into such a relaxation that they are susceptible to a higher imagination.

She was supposed to be treated for her anorexia. Instead, Schwartz persuaded Nasseff that during her hypnosis, she admitted to being raped countless times and to participating in horrific satanic acts of sacrificing a baby and passing around the flesh to be consumed by all members of the supposed cult. At least 12 other patients came forward with similar claims against Schwartz, with variations to the story.

Only about 10 percent of people are truly susceptible to hypnosis, about 70 percent have a small susceptibility rate and 20 percent nearly are incapable of going into a complete trance, according to professional hypnotist Bob Walsh's article on selfgrowth.com. This susceptibility is based on an individual's openness to the idea of hypnosis.

Maybe this was my problem — I thought it was crazy from the start. It is this data that makes me wonder, if hypnosis really an effective way to treat mental illnesses like anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder or, in

Nasseff's case, eating disorders. If it only genuinely works for 10 percent of the population, I think the answer is no. Despite this, hypnotherapy still is used frequently at many mental health facilities throughout the nation.

Before you call me out as a skeptic, I do think there are certain situations in which hypnosis can be effective and acceptable. Sal Costa, Truman State psychology professor, uses hypnosis on his students as a demonstration for those interested. Costa "once told a student that he would see the face of Sylvester Stallone on everyone. The student went into the hallway and laughed when he saw everyone's faces, including then University President Jack Magruder," according to an Oct. 5 Index article. I am not going to argue that isn't hilarious.

When it is for the purpose of entertainment and general interest, it is fine to use hypnosis. The results just are not effective enough for it to be a legitimate treatment for serious health issues. If you want a good laugh, or perhaps a nice, relaxing pseudo-nap, then maybe hypnosis is for you. But if you are hearing voices or feeling depressed, go to a real psychiatrist, not a pocket-watch swinging magician.

Lauren Kellett is a freshman communication major from Florissant, Mo.

Liberal arts experience requires change



Connor Stangler

To celebrate the 25th anniversary of Truman State's mission change Dec. 5, University President Troy Paino called for a University-wide lecture series to reflect on the modern value of a liberal-arts education. The Truman as we know it now is in its mid-20s and has begun asking the same quarter-life-crisis question we students ask ourselves: What does it all mean?

After the second of the three lectures this semester, faculty and students exchanged ideas about what the liberal arts means to us now. There was a general, if uneasy, consensus that the liberal arts still are practical and students still benefit from a well-rounded education. In the face of serious criticisms of the liberal arts, the crowd was proudly defiant. They silently agreed the status quo was the best way to defend their progressive philosophy. What was missing was action.

Why not celebrate our silver anniversary in a classically liberal fashion? Why not change? To celebrate 25 years of forward-thinking, why not think a little more forward? To expand students' opportunities to take a broader range of classes and thus reinforce the value of the liberal arts, Truman should reduce the number of major requirements.

Philosophically, Truman would only be reinforcing what it preaches: a liberal education. By requiring students to take fewer classes within their majors, it would free them to take whatever courses they want, including those within their major. Liberal arts students and faculty constantly struggle with the balance between the enjoyable and the practical. In a world that places so much market value on skills conventionally considered "practical," the liberal arts are facing increasing pressure to conform to demand rather than interest. For defenders of the intellectual value of the liberal arts, this change would be a victory because students would not be required to take all the courses a material culture has deemed useful.

With that said, there still would be certain requirements to ensure students graduate with the critical thinking skills and knowledge Truman values. The minimum credits for graduation should remain at 120, but those hours that formerly had gone toward major requirements now could be free credits. Students could take 300 and 400-level courses in any department. Students still could choose to take those classes in their major department, but they would not be required.

Students would then have four-year access to interdisciplinary education. They would not stress about completing their major courses while balancing the other requirements. In some majors, required classes fill up quickly during registration, so students often have to overhaul their schedule or request three or four overrides just to make sure they're meeting the requirements. This would relieve some of that pressure. Additionally, students, including myself, sometimes have a wish list of about 10-15 courses they eventually would like to take if their schedule allowed. The new requirement structure could allow them to pursue their own passions instead of losing interest in a required course they simply would ace for the grade. If Truman liberates the students, they would be happier and more likely to engage intellectually in the course work.

Faculty might worry that, under this system, they will graduate unspecialized, unfocused and unprepared students. Considering the aim of a liberal arts education, this might not be a problem. Students will graduate as experts in their field or multidisciplinary thinkers, or both. They came to Truman not to learn the tricks of the trade, but to expand their worldview, to take classes in physics, English, health science, French and music.

Fewer major requirements would allow students to more extensively construct their own education. For a University that is looking to refine its liberal mission, there seems to be no better idea.

Connor Stangler is a junior English and history major from Columbia, Mo.

What is your dream Christmas gift?

"A trip to France to visit a friend who teaches there."

Derek Franklin
junior



"A trip to Europe."

Christen Masaitis
senior



"A world pass to travel through Europe, Asia and South America for free."

Corbin Williams
junior



"A trip to India. I'd rather have experiences than more things."

Jaime Chambers
senior



AROUND THE QUAD

Craigslist users must practice safe online interactions



Molly Skyles

It struck again. No long hours of planning or research were needed, just one deranged person with an Internet connection. It was easy, really.

It — a potential job, cheap used camera or even just a new friend to get to know — always sounds great, and with an outlet to get it right at your fingertips, life was good. Craigslist was great.

Until people began abusing it. They foolishly put up personal information. It was their own fault, people must use more caution online.

Then, Philip Markoff, aka the Craigslist

Killer, struck, and why wouldn't he? His victims were readily available. Markoff, an unsuspecting Boston University medical student, was charged with the armed robbery and murder of one woman and two other armed robberies, all of whom he met through their Craigslist ads. They made it too easy. Markoff committed suicide in his Massachusetts prison cell during August 2010, but his criminal ingenuity already had inspired other disturbed people.

The latest Craigslist-related murder was in Ohio, according to a Nov. 27 CNN article. Three men were killed after answering a Craigslist ad to work on a cattle farm.

It's sounds like something out of a horror movie. A woman meets her soulmate through Craigslist. They exchange a series of emails and pictures before they decide to meet in person. He lives in her same small town, they went to the same college. He has to be perfect. After their first date, the woman goes missing. She is found days later, dead and buried in a shallow grave. The victim never saw it coming. In fact, Lifetime made a movie called "The Craigslist Killer" in January 2011 to tell Markoff's story.

Sadly, there are some sick people in this world, and there might have been no way to know this cattle farmer really was a Craigslist killer. Does that mean you should live in a bunker and only share information face-to-face in public settings, fearing a quick bullet if alone with a stranger? Probably not.

The lesson of all this is: Don't share personal information via Craigslist. Even more importantly, don't build trust through a computer screen.

Craigslist, unlike online dating sites, is not reliable. Anyone of any age and background can put anything on the site. While most users have good intentions, like wanting to sell a TV or looking for a maid, it isn't always easy to weed out the creeps. Craigslist also doesn't do much to help with security. In their safety policy, it says, "trust your instincts" among other less than helpful tips regarding online safety.

Craigslist is a completely open forum and that's what makes it such a useful tool — you can search in your area for just about anything you need, from a used car to a "casual encounter." That's also what makes it the perfect resource for someone with a little pent up

anger who is ready to kill. There are no limits, meaning right now I have access to hundreds of people's phone numbers and addresses in the Kirksville area and anywhere else in the country. They might just be advertising their automotive services, but the ad recipient could have other plans for the skilled mechanic.

I want the crazies of the world to have it hard. I want them to give up on plotting my murder because it's too difficult. I want them to have no idea where I live, what my phone number is or what I do on the weekends. So, I'm not going to tell them.

Craigslist can be a useful tool when used with caution. While it would be nice if they could implement some type of screening process before being allowed to enter the site, the chances aren't likely. In the meantime, I guess you'll have to do as they say and "trust your instincts." Don't let your search for a part-time job become the premise for the next horror movie.

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